

Associate Pastor Call Process

Form call committee

Council will carefully select a call committee consisting of an odd number of qualified people from the church membership, council and elder board.

Seek available candidates

An advertisement for the open position will be prepared and placed in publications such as Faith & Fellowship magazine and other sources.

Our regional pastor can assist in providing names of potential pastors that may fit the needs of our congregation. We may also want to consider seminary students to fill this position.

Review process

As the call committee receives the names of pastors who might be available they will establish a review process as they prayerfully seek to determine who best meets the needs of the congregation.

The call committee will prepare standardized interview questions that will help them further understand the strengths, weaknesses, and gifts of the candidate.

Resume

Each candidate will be asked to submit a resume along with references. Members of the call committee will review the resumes and do the necessary reference checks. Copies of the resumes will be distributed to all parties who will be conducting phone interviews.

Phone interview

Candidates will have several phone interviews. The first will be with selected members of the call committee followed by more phone interviews with various ministry leaders, and selected elders including the pastor. During the phone interviews, candidates will be asked to respond to standardized questions.

Background check

If the candidate is still under consideration, we will perform a background check. Otherwise, he will be notified by phone and mail.

Church visit

It is important that the call committee present the congregation with only one pastor recommendation, otherwise there may be division among the congregation. When the call committee is satisfied that they have an associate pastor to recommend, they will invite the candidate and his family to visit the congregation. There are several goals for this visit. The visit will provide the pastor and other church leaders an opportunity to meet with the candidate to determine their potential for working together and the degree to which they share a mutual vision and approach to ministry. Another important goal is that the candidate can meet the church leaders and the congregation and assess his interest and comfort level. Finally, the visit provides the congregation with an opportunity to meet the candidate.

Designated members of the call committee, the elders, and others in leadership will interview the candidate in small groups or separately. The interview team will use a list of targeted questions created by the call committee during these interviews. After all interviews are concluded, the interview team will meet and share their interview experiences with one another and discuss any concerns that may have arisen as a result of the interviews.

During this visit the candidate will be given the opportunity to preach at the Sunday worship service.

The congregation should have an opportunity to meet with the candidate in an informal setting such as a coffee hour during Sunday school or after church.

The pastor or one of the elders will host the candidate and his family along with a few other church leaders for an informal meal.

If the candidate is successful with this step of the process, a call will be extended, otherwise, he will be notified by phone and mail.

The extension of a call

After a candidate has visited, the call committee will make their recommendation to the congregation. The call committee will meet with the trustees to work out the details of the compensation package and any other financial details that will make up the letter of call. The details of the call letter should be made known to the congregation and must be voted on by the congregation at congregational meeting. A three-fourths majority is required for approval.

When a call is approved by the congregation, the pastor, an elder, or the congregational chairman will telephone the candidate to notify him that the call has been approved, and the letter of call should be issued as quickly as possible.

Acceptance of the call

Once the call is accepted, an elder or other designated leader should be assigned to coordinate the arrangements for the pastor's move. An official welcome to the congregation should be planned along with other opportunities for the associate pastor to get to know the people of Pilgrim Lutheran Brethren Church.

At this point, the call committee should turn over all documentation and correspondence to be filed for future reference.