



Upstate New York Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

PREPARING FOR A CANDIDATE

When preparing to meet, interview or share information with a pastoral candidate, you may wish to consider the following:

1. Include an enthusiastic cover letter to accompany the packet of materials that you prepare.
2. Provide several editions of the community's newspaper (or its web address), which will help interpret the life of the community where the pastor and family will live and serve. Additionally, employment ads for spousal consideration might give an idea of employment potential. Include the real estate section also (if no parsonage is provided). In general, offer to assist the candidate in locating the information that would be most helpful to them.
3. Provide a few examples of worship bulletins, copies of recent newsletters and the congregation's most recent annual report to give the candidate a feel for the congregation's current ministry.
4. A photo/video walk through of your church building/parsonage (if applicable).
5. The site for the interview should provide a comfortable setting which helps to put participants at ease. Have a glass of water and a box of tissues available for the candidate.
6. Accommodations for the pastor's stay need not be luxurious, but certainly should speak of the care one would provide for an honored guest. Be sure arrangements for the billing of the room/meals have been made before the candidate's arrival. Occasionally parishioners are willing to open their homes to pastoral candidates. Although we don't want to discourage hospitality, it is important that candidates have a place where they can have some "down time" during their visit, this can sometimes be difficult in the home of a parishioner, so use discretion.
7. During the interview prepare questions other than the "standard" questions that reflect that you have read and "digested" the candidate's mobility papers. Ex: If you desire a candidate who will have strengths for youth ministry, you may wish to ask them to describe their ministry to youth, particular programs, emphasis, experiences, etc.

Grounded, Growing, Giving, Graced

8. Ensure that reimbursement for expenses is made promptly.
9. If the candidate's spouse accompanies the pastor but is not involved in the actual interview, there should be some consideration for them that could be made while the interview is underway.
10. *A well-thought through tour of the community and surrounding area – especially those points of interest that will illustrate the quality of life available in this location.
11. *Especially in a smaller community, an introduction of two or three community leaders, such as a neighboring pastor, school principal, hospital administrator, etc.
12. *Invite the Conference Dean to meet briefly with the pastoral candidate – provide them an opportunity to speak briefly and confidentially.
13. *Are there staff members, significant leaders from the congregation with whom it would be helpful for the candidate to meet?

*This would be done at the time of meeting with the council.