



# Upstate New York Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

## SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATE

Here are some suggestions of questions to consider asking a pastoral candidate in an interview. By asking a mix of questions you'll get a broader sense of who the candidate is as well as how they approach their spiritual life and ministry. Consider carefully what questions would be most important in your setting considering your pastoral needs. Some call committees find it helpful to conduct a mock interview with a neighboring pastor to gain experience in asking questions and to get feedback before interviewing a candidate.

1. Tell us about your faith journey.
2. Tell us about your prayer life. How do you nurture your spiritual life or your relationship with God?
3. Who is Jesus Christ to you?
4. Tell us one of your "core" scripture texts - one that you lean on or has meaning in your life of faith.
5. How would you describe the role of the pastor?
6. As you reflect on your ministry, what are your strengths? What are your spiritual gifts?
7. What aspects of your ministry do you enjoy the least?
8. What is your goal in your preaching? Would this change from week to week? How would you describe your preaching style?
9. How do you stay connected to members? Do you enjoy visitation? How do you prioritize your calling? How often do you visit?
10. What is your approach to counseling? How much of your total time should you feel be given to counseling? What has been your practice?
11. Describe your most recent continuing education experience and how it impacted your ministry. Do you have areas of interest or challenge that you hope to pursue?
12. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being "I avoid conflict if I can" and 10 being "I see conflict as an opportunity for growth" - where would you fall? What experience do you bring to helping people work through disagreements with you or with each other?

13. How have you handled controversial social issues in the past? How have you served the pastoral needs of members who are angry at you or on the other side of an emotional issue in your congregation?
14. What has been your role in getting former congregations involved in the community?
15. Where does “the buck” stop in terms of church programs and leadership?
16. What are your aspirations for this congregation?
17. How have you grown adult discipleship in the congregation?
18. How do you describe your worship leadership? Describe how you plan worship, what resources do you draw upon? What is your vision of lay involvement in the worship life of the congregation? What is your favorite liturgical season and why?
19. How important is it to you to be involved in the community and the wider ministry of the church? How have you been involved in community and synod activities in previous calls?
20. How do you relate to people of various ages in a congregation? Is there one age group where you are especially gifted or challenged?
21. What was the most creative or new program that you stimulated in the last five years in your ministry?
22. Our mission statement says: . . . What experience do you bring that can help us to live it out?
23. How do you take time each week for yourself and your family? How do you attend to your self care?
24. What is your background? Ex. family education, health, congregations served, community and synod involvement.

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*Resurrection People who pray first, walk together and change lives.*