

## APPENDIX E

### A Self-Study Tool for Congregations

#### Section One Basic Questions

A number of years ago, the Council of Presidents of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod began the practice of asking each pastor to fill out a Self-Evaluation Tool (SET) describing his basic approach to ministry and his practice with regard to selected issues. Congregations have found this SET to be extremely helpful in evaluating the qualities of candidates for the pastoral office in their congregation.

The instrument below is based on the pastoral SET. It is our hope that it will be a help in discerning the proper match between pastor and congregation.

Name of Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is your understanding of the mission of the church?

2. Why was your congregation founded? Why does it exist today? What have been the joys and struggles you've experienced over the past 5-10 years?

3. Describe your commitment to the doctrine and practice of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

4. What are the chief priorities in your present ministry?

5. Our congregation's strengths in ministry are . . .

6. Areas in our ministry needing improvement are . . .

7. In what community outreach or service activities does your congregation participate?

8. Briefly describe your congregational practice and/or preference toward the following:

a. The Lutheran Hymnal / Lutheran Worship / Lutheran Book of Worship / Other

b. Pastoral services (weddings, funerals, visitation, etc.) to non-members, non-Lutherans. or the unchurched.

c. The Charismatic / Renewal Movement

d. Describe how women serve in your church

In our congregation women may serve as . . .

\_\_\_\_\_ Voters

\_\_\_\_\_ President

\_\_\_\_\_ Board members

\_\_\_\_\_ Vice President

\_\_\_\_\_ Board chair

\_\_\_\_\_ Elders

\_\_\_\_\_ Lectors

\_\_\_\_\_ Ushers

\_\_\_\_\_ Communion Assistants

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (Describe)

e. The place and participation of lay people in the life of the church. What is your understanding of the role of the laity in the congregation?

9. Describe your church's relationship with the previous pastor, and the relationship with him going forward:

10. What is your understanding of the role of the ordained ministry in the church?

11. If there is a multi-staff ministry at your church (i.e. Lead/Senior Pastor – Assistant/Associate Pastor, Pastor – DCE, Pastor – School staff, etc.), describe how that's conducted at your church?

12. Describe your feelings about the church's involvement in social ministries in the community.

13. Describe briefly your congregational practice or preference toward the following:

a. Writing of "own liturgies" or special services.

b. The frequency of the Lord's Supper

c. The priority of the Lord's Supper in parish worship.

d. The use of common or individual cups.

e. The use of lay people to assist in worship.

f. Do you have a Lutheran School or are you planning to start one? How do you understand the ministry of the Lutheran School?

g. An interview by a calling congregation before a call is issued.

h. First communion: Before or after confirmation

i. What is your communion policy with regard to those who are not members of your congregation? If you print a communion policy in your Sunday bulletin, please include it here. (See definitions of close, closed and open communion in the Glossary)

j. Inter-Lutheran relationships (relationships between your church and other Lutheran organizations)

k. Inter-Christian relationships (relationships between your church and other Christian organizations)

14. What provision in time and finances do you make for the pastor's continuing education?

15. How can the District / Synod assist you to have a more effective ministry?

16. What strengths or ministries would you like to share with other congregations?

17. What provision for housing is offered to the pastor?

\_\_\_\_\_ parsonage (please provide condition, floorplan, photos, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_ housing allowance

\_\_\_\_\_ negotiable

18. Is there anything else in your present ministry that you would like to share that might be pertinent to a new pastor?

19. Use of this Self Evaluation Tool:

a. Who prepared the answers to this document?

b. Was the District and Circuit Visitor consulted? (Note that the outgoing pastor should not be driving the self-evaluation. The District and Circuit Visitor will provide invaluable assistance and perspective as you undertake your self-evaluation – it is highly recommend that you consult with them.)

c. Was this information shared with and discussed by the congregation?

d. Was a congregational survey done? If so, attach results.

e. It is very important that you share this information with the pastor you are calling. Has it been shared with him? When and how?

Date completed: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section Two Demographics

1. Please complete the following:

	Current	5 years ago	10 years ago
Average attendance			
Baptized membership			
Communicant membership			
Sunday School enrollment			
Bible Class enrollment			
Total budget for current expense			

2. An incredible, free tool to help you easily access powerful information on your context is Lutheran Church Extension Fund's (LCEF) MissionInSite. MissionInSite's PeopleView System™ uniquely integrates information about your congregants with demographic information to determine the best opportunities for advancing your ministry. To gain access to this information, simply contact Gail Kanneg in the District office at [gail.kanneg@psd-lcms.org](mailto:gail.kanneg@psd-lcms.org).

Please describe your community giving attention to . . .

Size of community:

Economy:

Racial composition:

Growth projections:

General description:

Does your congregation reflect the general population of the community? Explain:

### **Section Three**

## **Financial Information**

1. Please provide your latest plus 1-3 years of financial reports, including budget, indebtedness, profit/loss statements, etc.
  
2. What salary did you pay your last pastor? (Include housing in salary figure.)
  
3. What salary do you plan to pay your next pastor? Give a figure or a range. (Include housing in salary figure.)
  
4. Do you offer Concordia Plans Benefits? Describe coverage. If not, how do you make allowance for your pastor's and family's care?
  
5. Compare your compensation figures with the District guidelines. If your figures fall short, how will this impact your ability to call a pastor? (Note that the pastor determines his housing amount, which can be included within the total. The pastor is responsible to annually designate his housing amount, which should be recorded in congregational minutes for tax recording purposes.)
  
6. When was the last time you had an organized stewardship campaign directed primarily towards financial commitment? What kind of program did you use? What was the effect/results?
  
7. If you have a preschool and/or day school, please provide a description of its current status and health. What is the financial situation? What are the enrollment trends? What are your accreditations?



## Section Four

### Missional Information

1. If possible, attach a missional history of the congregation -- not just dates and names, but the story of significant attempts at mission and outreach. Share stories of how you shared the Good News of Jesus Christ with individuals and your community.
2. If you have one, attach a copy of your mission statement or vision statement.
3. If you have a list of your core values, please attach. If not, please answer the following question:  
  
Any pastor coming to serve this congregation should know the following things about us -- for good or for bad: (List things like "We are a conservative/ progressive/ traditional congregation." "We value diversity" "We don't know how to handle conflict." "We like to fight." "We like variety in our worship." "We are very liturgical and want someone who can chant well." etc.) Include a congregational history that describes your "DNA".
4. Is there an ethnic group within your church? If yes, is this a rental/landlord relationship, or are you in ministry partnership together?



## Desired Pastoral Skills, Abilities and Attitudes Profile

Using the scale below, select a rating from 1 to 5 for the desired skills, abilities and attitudes in the new pastor you are seeking. Then select the top preferred skills per the instructions below.

- 1 - Least important
- 2 - Somewhat important
- 3 - Important
- 4 - Very important
- 5 - Most important

**Congregation Name, City, State:**

**Pastoral Role being sought (Senior, Associate, Sole):**

(See *Profile Definitions* below for more information on these categories.)

PERSONAL SKILLS			PASTORAL MINISTRY SKILLS		
<i>Indicate top 4 preferred of all personal and pastoral ministry skills with a check.</i>					
	Rating	✓		Rating	✓
Tact			Children's Ministry		
Patience			Youth Ministry		
Cooperation			Young Adult Ministry		
Initiative			Singles Ministry		
Administration			Older Adult Ministry		
Team Ministry			Family Ministry		
Leadership			Ministry to Inactives		
Innovation			Small Group Ministry		
Creativity			Assimilation of New Members		
People Skills			Lay Leadership Development		
Community Involvement			Personal Witnessing		
Personal Grooming			Counseling		
Participation in Continuing Ed			Preaching Content		
Conference Participation			Preaching Delivery		
Use of Computer			Teaching Ability		
Use of Social Media			Worship		
			Music Ministry		
			Stewardship		
			Outreach/Evangelism		

ATTITUDE TOWARD			VISITATION		
<i>Indicate most preferred with a check.</i>					
	Rating	✓		Rating	✓
Christian Day School			Sick and Shut-in Visitation		
Home Schooling			Outreach Visitation		
Synod			Home Visitation		
District					

LITURGICAL ATTITUDES (check all that apply)		Rigid	Flexible
Traditional		1.	5.
High Liturgical		2.	6.
Blended		3.	7.
Contemporary		4.	8.
Comments			

THEOLOGICAL POSITION (Select one)
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <hr/> <b>1</b> <b>2</b> <b>3</b> <b>4</b> <b>5</b> <b>Evangelical</b>

To aid you in using the above scale,  
1=ultra-liberal, 3=centrist/evangelical, 5=ultra-conservative.

## PROFILE DEFINITIONS

**TACT:** Speaks and acts in a manner to maintain good relations with people, and works at not intentionally giving offense. Works to deepen good relations with all people, and loves people as redeemed souls in the blood of Jesus Christ. Is careful and sensitive in regard to what he says and does in order not to impede the proclamation of the true Word of God.

**PATIENCE:** Bears the burdens of the ministry without complaining, gives people the benefit of the doubt and is a good model of putting the best construction on what people say and do. Is not hasty or impetuous in his actions and decisions. Exhibits the Scriptural virtue of "longsuffering."

**COOPERATION:** Cooperates with the people as the Priesthood of Believers, seeks to work in concert with the leaders of the congregation. Is a team player, and makes a conscious effort to maintain a good working relationship with all the people of the parish, being particularly sensitive to local traditions, practices and concerns.

**INITIATIVE:** Works at being a good leader, is a self-starter and energetic and faithful in his work. Can be depended on to do his work well and without constant supervision.

**ADMINISTRATION:** Exhibits good leadership and management skills. Works well with boards and committees of the congregation so that the work of the church is faithfully carried out in an efficient, orderly, evangelical, and doctrinally sound way. Works at equipping people in the parish for their tasks and takes the time to properly inform and train them for their duties. Evangelically calls people responsible for various tasks to be accountable for those tasks. Maintains parish records in a responsible manner, and completes reports in good order and in a timely fashion. Supervises staff in an efficient, caring, and responsible manner.

**LEADERSHIP:** Keeps before the people of the congregation a vision of where they are to be going and what they are to be doing. Has a good understanding of the mission of the church and the priorities necessary to accomplish that mission. Encourages the support and participation of the people in the work to be one without being dictatorial.

**INNOVATION:** Being faithful to the Scriptures, he brings ideas and advice to matters which the congregation is addressing or needs to address. Will examine or try new ideas, methods or devices.

**CREATIVE:** Is imaginative and able to affect a course of action or behavior with new techniques or approaches.

**PEOPLE SKILLS:** Works conscientiously at getting along with all people, has a pleasing personality, and is sensitive, pleasant, and empathetic. Is well regarded by his people and peers.

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:** Is engaged with the community in ways that he is able to help and assist, and is visible and known in and by the community. Is sensitive and responsive to the needs of those outside the congregation.

**PERSONAL GROOMING:** Is clean and well appearing and dresses in a way that does not offend nor draw undue attention to himself. His appearance is consistent with his position, and does not reflect poorly on his congregation.

**PARTICIPATION IN CONTINUING EDUCATION:** Is willing to continue studying and learning in order to remain well informed and well trained in his Calling.

**CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION:** Is faithful in attending pastor's conferences, and takes an active role in such conferences, convocations, and the like.

**USE OF COMPUTER:** Is familiar with computers and able to use them competently in his work and in service to his congregation.

**USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA:** Is familiar with social media and able to use it competently in his work and in service to his congregation.*(If not applicable to your congregation, you may skip.)*

**CHILDREN'S MINISTRY:** Relates well to children, and communicates effectively with them. Has a high regard for the Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and other children's ministries in the congregation.

**YOUTH MINISTRY:** Has an interest in and skill for working with young people. Understands that young people are also the church and works to equip them with God's Word, saving faith, and the ability to live the Christian life. Is patient with youth, and understands the special challenges that they face.

**YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY:** Works well with this age group (18-30), and is sensitive to their special perspective on things and the needs in their lives.

**SINGLES MINISTRY:** Is comfortable and able to work with single adults and is sensitive to their special challenges and circumstances in the world. He understands that they do not at times fit into social structure that caters to couples and families.

**OLDER ADULT MINISTRY:** Has an interest in and skill for working with older adults. Is sensitive to their needs, willing to listen to their concerns, and gentle and patient with them in their weaknesses. Is faithful and conscientious in providing Word and Sacrament ministry to the shut-ins.

**FAMILY MINISTRY:** Is sensitive to the needs of families, is helpful in bringing biblical truth to bear on such issues as parenting, discipline in the family, and special issues arising in single parent families.

**MINISTRY TO INACTIVES:** Is concerned about members who are not active in the parish, visits in their homes, and works at bringing them back into the active life and service of the congregation.

**SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES:** Works well with small groups, such as Bible study groups, peer groups, special interest groups, and the like. He understands small group dynamics, and can identify and train small group leaders.

**ASSIMILATION OF NEW MEMBERS:** Is good at nurturing new members and helping them feel at home in the congregation. He assists the new members in becoming active and contributing members of the parish. He is sensitive to the special needs of people who are new to a congregation.

**LAY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT:** Is capable of identifying people with good leadership qualities and then training and encouraging these people to assume leadership roles in the parish. Works at equipping people to carry out duties and responsibilities in the congregation.

**PERSONAL WITNESSING:** Has a genuine concern for the lost, and conveys that concern to the people of the parish. Makes evangelism calls and encourages and trains the congregation to do the same. In his personal life he is an example of a good witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**COUNSELING:** Is open and accessible as a pastoral counselor to God's people with God's Word, but clearly understands his limits in terms of needs outside of the spiritual realm. Knows when he can help, and when he should refer to others. Carefully keeps all information in regard to counseling confidential. Is a good listener, is not judgmental, and uses God's Word appropriately.

**PREACHING CONTENT:** Understands that preaching is more than a presentation of biblical narrative and Confessional soundness, but must communicate and proclaim Law and Gospel. Knows that preaching which edifies is presenting Law and Gospel in such a way that even a child can understand it. Makes the Gospel prominent in preaching, but preaches the whole Word of God with faithfulness. Makes clear application of the Word of God to lives of the people of the congregation. Is faithful to the Scriptures and Confessions in his sermons.

**PREACHING DELIVERY:** Preaches in a manner that makes the sermon interesting and understandable. Preaches with confidence and with a passion for the Word of God and for the people that God has placed in his care. Preaches in an engaging manner using good communication skills, and makes good use of illustrations.

**TEACHING ABILITY:** Understands that teaching is more than lecturing, and uses methods appropriate to his hearers, whether children or adults. Works to present material so that people grow in knowledge, attitude, and skill in regard to the Christian faith and life. Works to train teachers in the parish so that others in Sunday School classes or Bible classes may assist him in his work of teaching God's Word in the congregation.

**WORSHIP:** Understands the nature of worship and leads the congregation in worship on a regular basis, and in an appropriate manner and form. Carefully prepares for each worship service, and leads the congregation in understanding that in true Christian worship, that God is present in His Word and Sacraments and through these means of grace is delivering to His people the gifts that He has for them in Jesus Christ. He teaches and encourages the people to attend the worship services in God's House faithfully, and works hard to make each service spiritually rich and nourishing.

**STEWARDSHIP:** Teaches God's people the biblical principles of Christian stewardship, and models those principles in his own life. Works to help the people understand and practice what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

**VISITATION (SICK AND SHUT-IN, OUTREACH, AND HOME):** Understands that personal contact with members of the congregation and prospective members is very important. Makes visits to the homes of the people of the congregation, and also maintains a posture of availability to members who want to come and visit with him. Reaches out to people and is accessible to all, and is sensitive to the needs of the sick and shut-in. Gives high priority to individual soul care.