

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
Conference of Presidents

Guidelines for Retirement Calls

Semi-Retirement Calls (should be reported in Call system)

Qualifications

1. Should be in general good health.
2. Should be flexible regarding type of service and willing to work toward congregational growth (not just in a holding operation of a “dying” congregation).
3. Should be able to identify major problems in a congregation and work specifically to solve them.
4. Should be reasonably knowledgeable in financial matters and able to assist in setting annual congregational budget.

Steps for Recruiting

1. Periodically send questionnaire to all pastors 60 years of age and older to determine those interested in a semi-retirement call.
2. Consideration of semi-retirement man should be made before retirement plans are crystallized.
3. Place recruitment of semi-retirement pastors on conference agendas for discussion.
4. Encourage brothers who are interested in a semi-retirement call to identify themselves to the district president.
5. List of potential semi-retirement pastors may be obtained from the district presidents.
6. Actively seek potential candidates in each district through personal contact with the district president.
7. District presidents should supply locations where semi-retired men are needed and encourage response through reports to district conferences.

Criteria for Congregations

1. The congregation should be urged to pay the maximum salary allowed by Social Security and Medicare regulations for service less than 20 hours per week.
2. The congregation must be able to provide adequate housing.
3. Health care facilities should be relatively close.
4. The congregation must maintain reasonable congregation mission offerings.

5. Pastoral work should be limited in scope and hours and be spelled out in writing. It is preferable for the pastor and the congregation to work this out together.
6. A call should be issued with the right of mutual renewal after a period of two years.

Financial Arrangements

1. Is able to provide proper financial remuneration for a semi-retirement ministry. Normally 2,250-2,500 per month.
2. The congregation is to arrange for all allowable tax deductions, including utilities, internet, mileage allowance, and health insurance at the VEBA rate for retirees.
3. A parsonage or housing allowance (suitable for the area) should be provided.
4. Reasonable moving expenses should be provided for the pastor when he arrives and when he leaves.
5. The congregation must make health insurance payments. Note: If the pastor is listed as retired in the synod yearbook, the congregation does not make pension payments.

Services to be provided by the semi-retired pastor

1. The pastor should limit his hours to less than 20 per week. The congregation is cautioned not to expect full-time service.
2. Preaching: regular schedule with exception of vacations. Liberal vacation time should be provided as mutually agreed upon (minimum of six weeks per year).
3. Instruction: Bible class(es), adult information class(es), youth instruction class(es)
4. Visitation: hospital, shut-in, and new member / evangelism calls.

Vacancy Calls (not reported in Call system)

1. Arrangements are made by or in consultation with the district president.
2. A retired pastor is asked to serve a vacancy for approximately 3-4 months. Occasionally a pastor serves for a longer period of time.
3. The following is a guideline and may be adjusted as needed.
4. The vacancy pastor is asked to provide the following:
 - a. Service part-time, 20 hours per week (about three days). The retired pastor should feel free to take a couple of days each week to see the area or visit other sites in the state.
 - b. Sunday preaching and Bible class
 - c. A fellowship (Bible class) during the week
 - d. Adult and/or youth confirmation class
 - e. Church council/ladies meetings
 - f. Visitation (important for contact with visitors and for encouragement of existing members during a vacancy). It is good for members/leaders of the congregation to

- accompany the pastor on visits and/or participate with him in calling on existing members.
5. The congregation is asked to provide the following:
 - a. Modestly furnished parsonage (bed, dresser, linens, towels, kitchen table and chairs, microwave, tableware pots and pans. Utensils, coffee pot vacuum cleaner, broom, dustpan, recliner, sofa, easy chair, television, telephone service, etc.)
 - b. Pay mileage for the pastor's trip to and from the church as well as motel and food expenses.
 - c. Pay utilities, cable TV (no premium channels), basic telephone (pastor pays long distance) and internet.
 - d. Pay salary of \$2,250 - \$2,500 per month which includes insurance; therefore no pension or separate insurance costs. The congregation may pay the supplemental insurance for a retiree and his wife in lieu of part of the salary and thereby reducing the tax liability for the vacancy pastor.

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