

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
Camp Hill, Pa

Report of the Call Process Task Force

September 14, 2009

Objective: The Call Process Task Force was appointed by action of the Congregation Council in June, 2009 to consider the parameters for the formation of the Pastoral Call Committee following Pastor Hardy's retirement in January, 2010.

Task Force Members: Charles Armstrong, Douglas Bonsall (ex officio), Bishop Guy Edmiston (staff advisor), Craig Erdman, Barbara Kriebel and Roberta Weaver.

The Task Force has held two meetings at which excellent discussions led to the following conclusions:

A head of staff and spiritual leader for the entire congregation of Trinity Church is being called, not just a pastor to conduct the traditional services.

The selection of the Call Committee is critical to the future of Trinity and we must take the time to listen to God as we discern the selection of these persons. The position of Call Committee Chairperson is especially important and the selection of this individual should be made early in the process to allow that person to participate in the selection of the other committee members.

The Call Committee should be a diverse group of individuals. We recommend that persons with the following characteristics be considered and included inasmuch as possible when selecting Call Committee members: *age, gender, ethnicity, duration of membership at Trinity Church (both long-term and newer members), varying degrees of involvement at Trinity Church, willingness to discern God's will, openness to change and vision the future, familiarity with strategic planning process and the church's recently adopted Vision/Mission Statement, general understanding of Lutheran theology.*

The Call Committee should be representative of the congregation. It is recommended that persons actively involved the various areas of church life, including but not limited to the following, be represented on the Call Committee: *worship attendees from all services (Thursday, Saturday, Sunday traditional and Sunday contemporary), music program, missions, social ministry, educational ministry/Bible study, youth, leader with organizational knowledge of Trinity.*

(NOTE: It is expected that many persons will represent multiple characteristics outlined in the last two bullets.)

In the original charge to the Call Process Task Force, the following questions were considered and recommendations developed in response:

1) What number of persons should constitute Trinity's Pastoral Call Committee?

The task force recommends that Trinity's Call Committee be comprised of nine (9) members. Although the Lower Susquehanna Synod's *A Manual for the Calling of a Pastor and Other Rostered Leaders* suggests a Call Committee be comprised of six (6)

members, the larger number is recommended to be more representative of the size and diversity of Trinity. A Call Committee larger than nine members was viewed as being difficult to manage and reach the unanimous decision that is required for a pastoral candidate to be recommended to the Council and Congregation. The inclusion of alternate Call Committee members was considered and dismissed to avoid the perception of “second class” members on the committee. In the event an individual(s) needs to leave the committee prior to it completing its task, a seven or eight member committee will continue to be viable.

2) Should Council encourage interested members of the congregation to volunteer to be considered for appointment to the Call Committee?

The Task Force recommends against seeking volunteers and instead recommends that the members of the Call Committee be nominated for service by the Council and rostered staff members. Such a process will assist in forming a Call Committee that is a diverse group of members and representative of the entire congregation.

3) Is completing some kind of application answering specific questions to be considered for appointment to the Call Committee advisable?

A sample nomination form is attached (Exhibit 1) which the Task Force suggests be used for elected members of Congregation Council and Rostered Members of the staff to nominate eligible members to serve on the Call Committee. All nominations to the Call Committee must be kept confidential. The individuals nominated shall not be notified since it is expected that not everyone nominated will be selected to serve and some selected to serve may not accept.

The same form would be used twice in the process of forming the Call Committee; first, to nominate names for Chairperson and, later, to nominate committee members.

4) How specifically shall the members of the Call Committee be selected?

The selection of the Call Committee, requiring thoughtful consideration and prayerful discernment, is ultimately the responsibility of Congregation Council. The Call Process Task Force is willing to assist Congregation Council with the preliminary discernment of the Call Committee members. If Congregational Council accepts the continued assistance of the Task Force, no member of the Task Force will be considered for membership on the Call Committee. The continued participation of the Call Process Task Force should eliminate two or more additional (special) meetings of the full Congregation Council that would otherwise be needed to consider, discern and select the Call Committee.

The Task Force, through pray and discernment, would ultimately recommend to Council individuals for membership on the Call Committee willing to serve if elected. Guidance for this process is provided by the Lower Susquehanna Synod’s *A Manual for the Calling of a Pastor and Other Rostered Leaders* in a listing of expectations for a Call Committee in terms of prayer, openness to the leading of the Holy Spirit and a willingness to spend whatever amount of time and energy is required to discern the leading of the Spirit.

A suggested timeline for the overall process follows.

Recommended Timeline and Process for the Selection of the Chairperson and Members of the Call Committee

September 14, 2009 Council Meeting: Call Process Task Force Report and Recommendations presented to Congregation Council. Council is requested to consider and discern this report, the recommendations and names of individuals to be nominated for Call Committee Chairperson until the October Council Meeting.

October 12, 2009 Council Meeting: Council accepts Call Process Task Force Report and submits nominations for Call Committee Chairperson.

November 9, 2009 Council Meeting: Call Process Task Force submits recommendation for Call Committee Chairperson to Congregation Council for approval. Council is requested to submit nominations for Call Committee Membership by November 30.

December 14, 2009 Council Meeting: Call Process Task Force submits preliminary recommendation for Call Committee membership to Congregation Council for approval. *(This recommendation list will include more than nine names since not all persons contacted to serve are expected to accept.)*

December 15, 2009 to January 15, 2010: Individuals selected as members of the Call Committee are asked to serve on the Call Committee.

Late January, prior to Annual Congregation Meeting: Congregation Council holds a special meeting to approve final membership of Call Committee.

January 24, 2010: The members of the Call Committee introduced to the Congregation at the 2010 Annual Congregation Meeting.

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Nomination to the Pastoral Call Committee

NAME: _____

Nominated By: _____ Date: _____

Area(s) of Representation (*demographics, church involvement, etc.*):

Characteristics:

I believe this individual should be selected for the Call Committee for the following reasons: