Seven Steps in the Call Process for Congregations

1. The Current Pastor Resigns
   - Pastor’s resignation is announced.
   - A farewell celebration is planned and the ministry is celebrated.
   - Pastor and congregation each follow a new path.

2. Beginning the Interim
   - Synod staff helps congregation arrange for interim ministry.
   - Church council helps keep congregation focused on its mission.
   - Congregation continues its ministry.

3. Completing the Ministry Site Profile (MSP)
   - Synod staff leads an open forum to explain the call process to members of the congregation.
   - Information is gathered from the entire congregation as a “snapshot” of ministry.
   - MSP is prepared as an aid for call committee, pastoral candidates, congregation, and synod staff.
   - How is God at work in and through this congregation – past, present, and future?

4. Forming the Call Committee
   - A congregational call committee is formed and installed.
   - Officers are elected for the call committee.

5. Considering Candidates (Competency, Chemistry, Commitment)
   - Synod staff presents candidates to the call committee for consideration.
   - Names are surfaced through the synod office, interested pastors who self-nominate, and the congregation itself.
   - The goal of the call committee is to represent the congregation as it searches for a pastor who can lead them into the future God has in mind.
     - What do the congregation and new pastor expect of each other?
     - It’s not shopping at the store; it’s searching for a partner in ministry.
     - Confidentiality is crucial for the call committee in terms of detailed information concerning pastoral candidates.
     - Who does God have in mind for this congregation? Be prepared to be surprised!
     - The Holy Spirit is involved in this process – really.

6. Extending the Call
   - The call committee recommends a candidate to the council who will bring the name to the congregation for a vote.
   - A congregational meeting is scheduled for voting on the candidate.
   - Bid farewell to the interim pastor.

7. Welcoming Your New Pastor
   - Once the call has been accepted, an installation date is set with synod office.
   - Welcome your new pastor with open arms!
   - Throw a party! Call your friends! Praise the Lord!

Throughout the call process, the entire congregation is involved in three activities:
   - Prayer
   - Patience
   - Communication

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