Review of the Pastoral Call Process

Southeastern District of
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

Connecting People with Jesus, so that lives are transformed and God's Kingdom grows.

When a congregation embarks on the journey of exploration and discernment to call a new pastor, the role of a Call Committee is never to "select" a pastor of its own choosing, but rather to help the congregation it represents to discern and recognize the pastor God has chosen to serve in their community at that time. Typically, the pastoral call process includes the following phases:

Phase 1: A Season of Ending

For St. Andrew, this phase began following Pastor Mark's announcement early this year of his intention to retire. It represented a time to reflect and give thanks for the years of ministry past, develop a transition plan as we look to the future that God is preparing for us, and through the process, care for one another well. The Board of Directors established the Call Committee in the spring of 2026. The goal was to gather a committee that represents the beautiful tapestry of diversity and faith the exists within our congregation. Among the members of our current call committee, there is collective involvement and experience in virtually all ministries of the church, as well as several who have previously served on the Board of Directors and/or the Board of Elders. We pray that our committee is a true representation of our growing, diverse, and energetic congregation.

Phase 2: A Season of Preparing

This phase is deliberate, prayerful, and rooted in conversation, Scripture, and unity. And this is where St. Andrew's Call Committee has done most of its work:

- **Learning** about the congregation's strengths, needs, and hopes through listening sessions, as well as the congregational profile & survey. Thanks to over 250 who responded to the survey; your feedback has been carefully and prayerfully considered throughout the process.

- **Gathering** nominations from the congregation and receiving a Call List from the LCMS Southeastern District (SED).
- **Evaluating** candidates, including the review of personal information forms and self-evaluation tools.
- **Interviewing** candidates virtually via zoom meetings.
- **Discerning** which pastoral candidates to recommend for the next phase, informed by prayer, scripture, and conversation.
- **Planning** the visit of a top pastoral candidate and his spouse - which brings us to the present, with the planned visit of a pastoral candidate later this month.

Following the visit of a pastoral candidate, there is a time of prayerful discernment about whether to recommend that a Call be extended to that candidate by our Board of Directors. If a Call is recommended, the committee will prepare for a Congregational Vote to approve and extend the Call. If a Call is not recommended or is not approved by the congregation, or if an extended Call is declined by the recommended candidate, the Committee will continue the process, by God's grace and trusting in God's timing.

Phase 3: A Season of New Beginnings

This phase begins when a pastor accepts the Call and includes a joyful time of preparation, welcome, orientation and open communication as the pastor and congregation begin a new season of ministry together.

Learn more about the Call Process:

https://se.lcms.org/resources/calling-a-worker/

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Meet Pastor Doug Mauss

A Family of Faith

My parents met in the Air Force, where my father was a C-130 pilot and my mother was among the first non-nursing female officers. When they married, they resolved to make God the center of their home. My mom was raised Roman Catholic and my dad LCMS, so they compromised… by becoming Lutheran!

Growing up in that household of faith showed me how much it matters to keep Christ at the center of life. Spending most of my childhood on Air Force bases in the Philippines and Japan also gave me an early appreciation for other cultures and faith traditions. My family eventually settled in Colorado Springs, where I went to high school.

Finding My Way to Ministry

I had been accepted to the Air Force Academy, but God placed people in my life who encouraged me to consider becoming a pastor instead. A full scholarship opened the door to Concordia University, Nebraska. Those years were spiritually hard, though, and I left college.

I spent a year waiting tables and volunteering at my home church. Then I joined Youth Encounter, a Lutheran mission organization, and traveled with a Christian music ministry team across the Northeast United States, Denmark, and Germany.

I later finished my English Literature degree at the University of Colorado–Colorado Springs and went to work for David C. Cook, a Christian publisher. There I spent two years writing and editing *The Action Bible*, an 800-page illustrated Bible created with Marvel artist Sergio Cariello. It has since reached more than 10 million readers in dozens of languages.

Answering the Call

When I was laid off from Cook, my wife and others urged me to revisit the pastoral calling I had set aside years before. My home congregation, Family of Christ in Monument, Colorado, called me as their associate pastor through the Specific Ministry Pastor program. After a decade away, I was back on God's path. Three years there confirmed this was my lifelong vocation, so our family moved to St. Louis for me to earn my Master of Divinity at seminary. During school, I served part-time as small groups director at Pathfinder Church (then St. John) in

Ellisville, Missouri. After graduating in 2017, I accepted a call to Pathfinder, where I have served ever since.

My role there has grown and changed over the years. I have led small groups, men's and women's discipleship, and missions, and for four and a half years I was Executive Director of St. John School, with about 350 students. Today I focus on teaching and preaching, pastoral care, and Christian counseling.

Life Outside the Pulpit

I love the arts, from musicals and movies to books and museums. I enjoy sports, board games, and video games, and I cheer for Colorado and Chicago teams. I love any and all food from anywhere in Asia. I care about history and philosophy, and I believe that Lutheran doctrine is the antidote to the heresy and injustice of Christian nationalism that is on the rise in our country.

I met my wife, Mia, at our home church in Colorado Springs. She is a mental health therapist who runs her own practice, Open Doors Counseling. We have three children: Fable (17) hopes to be a worship director or a lawyer. Cypher (14) loves sports and cares about justice. Ember (12) has a dark sense of humor and will be either a baker or an anarchist. Only time will tell!

What Guides Us

Our family verse is Micah 6:8: to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God. We try to live thoughtful lives and believe Christians are called to work for justice out of love for our neighbors.