

N/W Lower Michigan Synod

Supply Pastor List

January 2012

Greetings! We are pleased to provide this resource to support your congregation during times when you need a Supply Pastor. Attached is a copy of the current Pulpit Supply List, which includes Rostered Leaders, other clergy, Lay Worship Leaders, and seminarians who are available to serve your congregation.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

What's a "Conference"?

A conference is a regional community of congregations, ministries, and leaders within the North/West Lower Michigan Synod, and represents between 10 and 40 of your closest ELCA neighboring congregations. For your convenience, the conference where each pastor listed resides is printed next to his/her name in parenthesis.

What's a "Rostered Leader"?

Rostered leaders are clergy, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers who are currently on the "Roster" of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod. Each Synod has its own roster, and typically, all clergy and associates in ministry in good standing are on the roster of one of the 65 synods of the ELCA. Being "on the roster" means that you have been recognized and authorized as available for call to the public ministries of the ELCA.

What's a Synodically Authorized Minister? Synodically Authorized Ministers have completed the Lay Ministry Training Program and the Synodically Authorized Minister programs offered by the North/West Lower Michigan Synod. They are members of ELCA congregations and have undergone special training to equip them to preach and lead worship.

Who else is on the Pulpit Supply List? In addition to Rostered Leaders and Synodically Authorized Ministers, you will also find a few additional clergy from other denominations with whom the ELCA is in full communion partnership. These ministers are equipped to lead worship and preside over communion.

What if we can't find anyone?

For starters, broaden your horizons. Some individuals will be willing to travel farther than others. Let them decide. If you are still unable to find a supply pastor, there are a couple of other things you can do. First, there might be some other ELCA rostered folks available who are not on the list. You might check and see if any of the ELCA congregations in your area have more than one rostered person on staff. Perhaps the pastor who is not preaching in their home congregation might be available on the Sunday you need supply. There are also some rostered folks who are not available on a regular basis for pulpit supply, but might be on occasion. These would include some retired folks, chaplains, and professors.

Yet another option would be to find someone from one of our ecumenical partners. We stand in full altar and pulpit fellowship with the Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church USA, the United Church of Christ, the Reformed Church in America, and the Moravian Church in America. Ordained clergy in any of these church bodies can preach and preside. Check your local phone book. If one of these church bodies has a congregation in your community, you might call their parish office and see if they have suggestions.

What if we want to celebrate the Eucharist?

If you regularly celebrate Holy Communion, and wish to do so for this worship service, then you will need to find someone who can both preach and preside at the Eucharist.

If you are unable to find an ordained pastor to supply, Bishop Schleicher can authorize a Synodically Authorized Minister to preside. Simply call the synod office and request a letter of authorization, including the name of the person supplying and the date on which they will preside.

Another option would be to find another ELCA clergyperson who is not on the pulpit supply list but resides close by. These folks might include pastors (such as associate pastors, assistant pastors, and any pastors in staff situations), chaplains, professors, and retired pastors. Frequently, you will discover that some of these have chosen not to make themselves available for regular pulpit supply, but are willing to do so on occasion.

A third option to consider would be with one of our ecumenical partners. We are in full communion partnership with the Episcopal Church USA, the Presbyterian Church USA, the United Church of Christ, the Reformed Church in America, and the Moravian Church in America. Ordained clergy in any of these church bodies could preach and preside. There are some candidates for ordination who have a one-year license from the Bishop to preach and preside.

Finally, if you normally celebrate Holy Communion every Sunday and you have exhausted all of these resources; your Congregation Council may send a letter to the Bishop requesting that a specifically named layperson be authorized to celebrate the Eucharist on that particular Sunday in your particular congregation.

WHEN YOUR CHURCH HAS A GUEST PREACHER AND/OR WORSHIP LEADER:

1. Send a letter of welcome to the supply person. Include details related to the person's duties, a map to the church, and a sample bulletin MARKED to indicate the pulpit supply person's involvement. Be sure to request information in advance so the bulletin can include the supply person's name (spelled correctly) and so you can add information that will clearly identify your guest.

2. List any extra activities which the supply person might be expected to participate in, such as a children's sermon, Sunday Church School, a special meal, etc. If possible, mail the bulletin for the service. At the very least, make certain there is one available upon his/her arrival at the church.

3. Call the supply person a few days before the service. Make certain the supply person has a name and phone number of the contact person, as well as a “live” phone number for the day of the service. Check directions to the church, and make certain the supply person has the map that was sent with the sample bulletin.

4. A member familiar with the worship practices should be on hand to meet the supply person on the day of the service at the time of his/her arrival. Acquaint the supply person with the church building – coat closet, rest room, room in which to robe, etc. Point out all the physical aspects of the sanctuary – clergy seating, acoustics, fans, etc. Be certain the supply person knows where and when to enter and leave the service, (do you process and recess?) microphone arrangements, cassette system, choir, and where to stand for greeting members following the service.

5. Have the contact person or church officers available during the greeting period to assist the supply person if needed and to identify, welcome and follow-up on visitors and guests attending the service.

6. As you and your congregation are hosting the supply person, try to do everything possible to make your guest feel comfortable and welcome at your church.

The North/West Lower Michigan Synod Compensation Guidelines honorarium recommended for one worship service is \$150.00, and \$50.00 for each additional service. Mileage should be paid at the IRS standard mileage rate for employee reimbursements (see www.irs.gov for the current rate). The rate as of 01/01/11 is \$0.51 per mile.

Thank you for your partnership in mission!

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