

GUIDELINES FOR THE MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
New Hamburg, Ontario

These guidelines are provided to assist the community of Trinity Lutheran Church to participate in God's mission through the ministry of the Mutual Ministry Committee.

We must never assume that the pastors and other staff of Trinity Lutheran Church are solely responsible for our ministry. Instead, we understand that the whole people of God have a ministry to uphold with and to one another. It is a mutual ministry.

The congregation of Trinity Lutheran Church holds great expectations of our pastors and other staff. Every day, they are asked to lead, support, meet, call, visit, write, teach, plan, preach, prepare and speak. Every day, they are invited to laugh and cry with our community.

Often, these expectations overlap with their own personal time or with other professional commitments, and their need for mutual conversation and support could be overlooked.

The Mutual Ministry Committee is available to support the needs of staff by acting out of mutual love and concern for one another. Through listening, clarifying, communicating, affirming, forgiving, advising, reflecting as well as through job evaluation and the determination of appropriate compensation, the Mutual Ministry Committee will continue to strengthen the ministry of our pastors and other staff for the well-being of our congregation.

MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Mutual Ministry Committee is accountable to the Congregational Council and reports directly and regularly to Council. The Committee meets a minimum of 5 times per year following the agenda set forth below. In addition, it convenes to meet additional occasional needs as they arise.

The Committee is composed of members representing various leadership areas across the broad demographic within the congregation. It is important the members be skilled and available to serve as a forum for Council and staff consultation. New members are selected with the input of the Committee members and pastors. Appointments are ratified by the Congregational Council.

The Committee requires that members maintain confidentiality. Meetings of the Mutual Ministry Committee must serve as a "safe haven" where staff are able to talk about personal or professional issues openly and freely and with the expectation that such communications are confidential. It is a place where mutual conversation and consolation can occur. It is also a place where staff can proudly share personal joys about their life and ministry.

MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE MEMBER EXPECTATIONS

- Be cognisant of the spiritual, emotional and financial needs of Trinity's staff;
- Be available to listen attentively and sympathetically to Trinity's staff in times of personal or professional stress;
- Be available to insure the overall well-being of Trinity's staff and congregation;
- Be alert to signs of discontent or concern within the congregation;
- Be able to interpret concerns and perceptions and willing to assist in the resolution of staff-related issues;
- Be prepared to evaluate the mutual ministry of the staff and congregation;
- Be able to assist staff to support Trinity's direction and to set or revise appropriate ministry and continuing education goals.

MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

Staff Management

- Identify the professional leadership needs of the congregation, especially at the time of pastoral vacancy;
- Review and revise job descriptions for Trinity's staff;
- Assist Council in striking a call committee or search committee when required;
- Make provision for appropriate exit interviews when required;
- Serve as a "personnel committee" for staff.

Education

- Identify continuing education possibilities in light of concerns and ministry goals of the staff and congregation;
- Support staff in their need for continuing education by recognizing and affirming their needs and communicating these (time and/or financial) to the Congregational Council.

Evaluation

- Share with the staff the expectations and ministry goals of the congregation;
- Provide for the annual review and opportunity to discuss compensation/benefits, job description, working relationships and Ministry goals.

Support

- Serve as a personal and confidential support group to the pastors/support staff;
- Serve as an open channel regarding attitudes, communication, perceptions and concerns within the congregation and among the staff;
- Serve as agents of reconciliation in times of conflict within the congregation.

MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE RESOURCES

- CONGREGATIONAL MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE document and COMPENSATION SCHEDULE can be found on the Eastern Synod website (www.easternsynod.org);
- PASTOR AND PEOPLE MAKING MUTUAL MINISTRY WORK (2003) and MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE: A VISION FOR BUILDING UP THE BODY OF CHRIST (1989) are available from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (www.elca.org);
- The MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE HANDBOOK, CONTINUING EDUCATION PLAN brochure, the CALL PROCESS IN ELCIC and the EXIT INTERVIEW PROCESS are available from the ELCIC (www.elcic.ca).

MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE ANNUAL AGENDA

September-October

- Welcome new members and provide them with these Guidelines;
- Select a Committee chair;
- Review goals and agenda for the year;
- Meet with staff to review job descriptions, expectations and goals for the year.

November-December

- Meet with staff for annual review, and discuss goals for ministry (early November);
- Consider/review/revise compensation and benefit schedules;
- Present proposed compensation and benefits to staff (one on one) ahead of the proposal going to Council (early December);
- Ready recommendations for compensation and benefits for budget preparation ahead of the December meeting of Council;
- Prepare a report for the Annual Congregational Meeting;
- Consider appropriate recognition for the staff for their past year's work.

January-February

- Review Annual Congregational Meeting agenda, goals, emphases and priorities for the year.

March-April

- Review any issues-arising from the Annual Congregational Meeting;
- Support staff with any continuing education needs or requests;
- Assist in planning staff coverage for vacation time.

May-June

- Continue discussion of Trinity's ministry direction, goals and the well-being of the staff and congregation.