



North/West Lower Michigan Synod ELCA  
“PULPIT SUPPLY LIST”  
The Rev. Craig Alan Satterlee, Ph.D., Bishop

## Introduction

The peace of Christ be with you!

The Lutheran Confessions define the church as “the assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel” (Augsburg Confession, VII). Worship is the heart of what the Christian Church is and does. As an ordained minister of Word and Sacrament, teacher of preaching and worship, and your bishop, worship is my heart as well. I therefore take the privilege to “have primary responsibility for the ministry of Word and Sacrament in the synod and its congregations” (S.8.12) most seriously. My pastoral assistants and I very much enjoy preaching and presiding in the congregations of our synod; we are ourselves resources when congregations need worship leadership.

*The Use of the Means of Grace: A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament*, adopted for guidance and practice by the 1997 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, directs,

While other persons may sometimes preach, the called pastor of a congregation has responsibility for this preaching, ordinarily preparing and delivering the sermon and overseeing all public ministry of the Word in the congregation. In congregations without a called pastor, the synodical bishop assumes this responsibility, often by providing an interim pastor (9B).

Turning to Holy Communion, *The Use of the Means of Grace* instructs,

In witness that this sacrament [of Holy Communion] is a celebration of the Church, celebrating its unity, an ordained minister presides in the service of Holy Communion and proclaims the Great Thanksgiving. Where it is not possible for an extended period of time to provide ordained pastoral leadership, a synodical bishop may authorize a properly trained lay person to preside for a specific period of time and in a given location only.

**So, the called pastor is responsible for who preaches in the congregation; the bishop is responsible for authorizing someone to preside at Holy Communion.**

The North/West Lower Michigan Synod is pleased to provide this resource to assist synod congregations in securing worship leaders both when called pastors are routinely away (vacation, continuing education) and during times of pastoral transition, when congregations are without a called pastor. I am genuinely grateful to these leaders for their gifts, commitment to the gospel, and service to the church. I expect that congregations will join me in honoring them for their ministry by providing compensation in accordance with synod guidelines.

In conversation with colleague bishops and our partners in the churchwide office, this introduction reflects my understanding of Lutheran theology and ELCA policies. As has become my practice, this introduction has a catechetical dimension as, where appropriate, I provide my rationale for the policies described in the document. This teaching dimension is balanced by the need to keep the introduction a reasonable length. If you have questions, please contact me. For a more detailed treatment of my approach to worship, I invite you to read my *Presiding in the Assembly* (Augsburg Fortress 2003).

I am regularly asked if I am aware that I am, in some instances, changing the way Bishops emeriti Hansen and Schleicher conducted the Office of Bishop, and if I am allowed to make changes. With sincere gratitude and genuine affection for Gary and John, I am aware that, on occasion, I do things differently, even as my brothers and I hold in common commitment to Christ, passion for proclaiming the gospel, zeal for mission, and love for this synod and its people. I expect the bishops who serve after me will faithfully and wisely discern what is best for this synod and its mission in their time and change the way I am doing things. In my own discernment and exercise of the Office of Bishop, I work diligently to keep my promise to conduct my ministry in harmony with the constitutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

#### I Definition of Terms:

- 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 congregations. For your convenience, the conference where each listed leader resides is printed next to her/his name in parenthesis.
- b) Rostered Leader – Rostered Leaders are pastors, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers who are on the “roster” of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and have been recognized and authorized as available for call to the public ministries of the ELCA. Rostered Leaders listed in this document are currently on the “roster” of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod. Out of respect for rostered leaders who are not pastors, the ELCA strives

to celebrate the unique gifts, roles, and contributions of each expression of public ministry and not use them interchangeably. Therefore, I do not expect and will not authorize rostered leaders not called to preach, lead worship, and administer the sacraments to do so.

- c) Full Communion Partner – Included on this supply list are pastors from denominations with whom the ELCA is in full communion partnership. These pastors are available to preach, lead worship, and preside at Holy Communion. These denominations are the Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church USA, the Reformed Church in America, the Moravian Church, the United Church of Christ, and the United Methodist Church.
- d) Synodically Authorized Minister - Synodically Authorized Ministers are members of ELCA congregations who have been trained and authorized to preach and lead worship (upon the request and authorization of the called pastor) and preside at Holy Communion (upon the request and authorization of the bishop).

In “A Statement of Understanding Concerning Synodically Authorized Ministry of Word and Sacrament” (adopted by the ELCA Conference of Bishops as an agreed statement, March 2005), the Conference of Bishops understands “that synodically authorized ministries are intended to honor the God-given office of Word and Sacrament (Article V, The Augsburg Confession) and this church’s commitment to ordained ministry as the primary means for fulfilling this office.”

Moreover, the Conference of Bishops “agree[s] that, in keeping with the policies of this church, synodically authorized ministry of Word and Sacrament is not intended for and should not be used to authorize an individual to provide for short-term, intermittent absences of a specific congregation’s called pastor.” At the same time, “we acknowledge that in some areas and at some times neither an ELCA nor a full communion partner church ordained minister is available to meet such a need.” In these instances, “flexibility” may be required.

As part of my commitment to the unity of our church, and in keeping with the promise I made when I was installed as bishop, “to carry out this ministry in harmony with the constitutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,” I honor these agreements by striving to exercise this “flexibility” judiciously. I authorize synodically authorized ministers of this synod to preside at Holy Communion, as an extension of my own ministry of Word and Sacrament as bishop, when neither an ELCA pastor nor an ordained minister from a full communion partner is available.

## II How To Use this Supply List - Follow these steps.

- a) Contact ELCA pastors in your conference. If you are not successful, broaden your horizon. Some pastors are willing to travel farther than others.
- b) If the worship service includes Holy Communion, seek out a pastor from a full communion partner church.

- c) If the worship service is a Service of the Word without Holy Communion, you may seek out an associate in ministry, deaconess or diaconal minister, synodically authorized minister, or lay leader who has been trained to preach, with the authorization of the called pastor. In congregations without a called pastor, authorization comes from the synodical bishop or interim pastor.
- d) If the worship service includes Holy Communion, contact the bishop to explain that an ELCA pastor and ecumenical partner is not available and to request the bishop to invite and authorize a synodically authorized minister.
- e) The Supply List is organized to reflect this process.

### III When Your Congregation Welcomes a Guest Preacher or Worship Leader

- a) Send a letter or email of welcome to the supply person.
  - i) Include details related to the person's duties, a map or directions to the church, service times, and a sample bulletin MARKED to indicate the supply person's responsibilities.
  - ii) Request in advance the supply person's name (spelled correctly) and information that will help to clearly identify your guest.
  - iii) It is gracious to ask if the supply pastor will be accompanied by anyone, such as a spouse, and if that person would like to be recognized. If so, ask for that person's name.
  - iv) List any additional activities in which the supply person might be expected to participate. These might include a children's sermon, Sunday school, coffee hour, or fellowship meal.
- b) Mail or email the bulletin or a leader's book to the supply person. Have hard copies available when s/he arrives.
- c) Call the supply person during the week prior to the worship service to (1) answer any questions, (2) provide the name and phone number of a contact person within the congregation, as well as a "live" phone number for the day of the service, (3) check to make certain the supply person has directions, and (4) confirm an approximate time when the supply person will arrive.
- d) Someone familiar with the congregation's worship should be available to meet the supply person on the day of the service at the time of her or his arrival.
  - i) Familiarize the supply person with the church building (coat closet, restroom, place to robe, etc) and the physical aspects of the sanctuary (seating for worship leaders, fans, acoustics, sound system, etc).

- ii) Be certain the supply person knows when and where to enter and leave the service (Is there a procession/recession?) and where to stand before and after the service.
  - iii) Walk through the service in the worship space with the supply person, choreographing especially how the offering is received and Holy Communion distributed, since these parts of worship are often unique to every congregation.
  - e) 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.
  - f) As you and your congregation are hosting the supply person, do everything you can to make your guest feel welcome and comfortable.
- IV Compensation - The North/West Lower Michigan Synod Compensation Guidelines honorarium is \$150.00 for one worship service and \$50.00 for each additional service. Congregations are also expected to pay mileage at the IRS standard mileage rate for employee reimbursements (see [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) for the current rate). The rate for 2015 is \$0.575 per mile.

Contact the Lansing Office if you have questions or need assistance. Please contact Pastors Friesen-Carper, Sprang, and me to see if we are available to preach and preside.

Thank you for your partnership in the gospel!

Peace,



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