

ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT – NON-PARISH

These Articles of Agreement will govern the *shared pastor* relationship between *church name, city, state and church name, city, state*, congregations of the Lower Susquehanna Synod, ELCA.

1. Purpose

- share pastoral ministry and other ministry opportunities
- share resources for ministry and mission for the good of the participating congregations

2. Guidelines

In this relationship, we will:

- Listen for God’s guidance through engagement with the Scriptures and prayer
- Be open to change, be flexible and be respectful of one another
- Pray for one another and support one another

3. Administration and Management

- A steering committee including members of both congregation councils shall help coordinate the relationship
- The steering committee shall meet at least quarterly to evaluate and implement goals for the shared ministry
- The steering committee in consultation with the Mutual Ministry Committee, shall address any concerns brought to it by the congregations or the pastor
- Special meetings of the steering committee may be called by either congregation council president in consultation with the pastor
- The congregations shall endeavor to work cooperatively for the sake of the mission of the church and the efficient utilization of the pastor’s time

4. Authority

- The purpose of the steering committee is to develop plans and make recommendations to the respective congregation councils
- Each congregation shall maintain authority for decisions regarding the individual congregation
- The steering committee shall have authority to recommend the compensation package for the pastor

5. Entry

- For each congregation, a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting at a Congregation Meeting called in accordance with the constitution, shall be required to adopt these Articles of Agreement and enter into this relationship

6. Time

- Based on ratification by each congregation, these Articles of Agreement shall take effect on (date) _____

7. Responsibilities of the Pastor

- *Worship Leadership: Coordinate times of Sunday worship with the steering committee*

Draft Template: Shared Ministry

Date document created

- *Coordinate Special liturgies – Advent, Christmas, Lent, Holy Week, Easter etc.*
- *Visitation: establish expectations, equip eucharistic ministers, and foster congregation self-care*
- *The Pastor, together with eucharistic ministers or other visitation ministers, will respond to the pastoral needs of the people in both congregations as they arise*
- *Provide crisis ministry as needed*
- *Preside at services of Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, Burial of the Dead, including preparation*
- *Shall be a voting member ex officio of all Congregation Council meetings and Congregation Meetings*
- *Provide educational opportunities as requested*
- *The Pastor at the pastor's discretion shall divide time between the two congregations for the successful enhancement of ministry of both congregations*

8. Call process

- The call of a pastor shall be under the guidance of the Bishop's Office. A two-thirds majority vote in each congregation shall be necessary for approval of the pastoral candidate. If the call is approved, _____ Lutheran Church will issue the call
- A Call Committee comprised of 6 to 8 persons, three to four from each congregation selected according to that congregation's constitution, shall be established
- The steering committee or the call committee shall prepare a ministry site profile which is descriptive of each of the partner congregations as well their shared ministry needs

9. Mutual Ministry Committee

- There shall be a Mutual Ministry Committee consisting of (6) members. The pastor shall select (2), and each congregation shall select (2)
- The Mutual Ministry committee shall be affirmed by the steering committee
- The Mutual Ministry committee shall assist the pastor and the congregations in facilitating healthy communication and in reviewing the ministry goals for the shared relationship

10. Shared expenses of this agreement include:

– using the Lower Susquehanna Synod's compensation guidelines to determine the following

- *Pastor salary*
- *Healthcare costs*
- *Retirement benefits*
- *Travel, continuing education, etc.*
- *Parsonage, housing allowance, etc.*
- *The total compensation package (salary, social security allowance, housing allowance/parsonage, benefits, mileage reimbursement and professional expenses) for the pastor, shall be divided equitably between the participating congregations.*

- *Programmatic expenses specific to a particular congregation are the responsibility of that congregation. Expenses for shared programs shall be divided equally*
- *The pastor's total compensation shall be reviewed annually by the steering committee*
- *The intention of this relationship is to share expenses equitably. If either congregation sees a dramatic shift in size (dramatic being in excess of 10% of voting members) the steering committee shall review the agreement and recommend a change at that time as necessary*
- *The place of residence of the Pastor shall be negotiated as part of the call process. If there is a parsonage available at either congregation, the other congregation shall pay an equal share of the housing*

11. Pastor's Compensation

- To be in line with the Lower Susquehanna Synod's Compensation Guidelines
- Salary and Housing \$ _____
- Social Security allowance \$ _____
- Mileage Reimbursement at IRS prevailing rates
- Health care \$ _____
- Retirement \$ _____
- Disability Insurance \$ _____
- Continuing Education \$ _____
- Books and Media Allowance \$ _____
- Professional Expenses Reimbursable Account \$ _____

12. Finances

- The congregation issuing the call shall be the fiscal agent of this agreement and Portico sponsor for the pastor and family. The other congregation shall provide its share to the calling congregation monthly on the _____ day of the month.

13. Review and Changes

- The participating congregations agree to an annual review of these articles of agreement by the steering committee
- Changes or modifications to these Articles of Agreement may be recommended by the steering committee and approved by the Congregation Council of each congregation

14. Terms of Dissolution/Termination

- After consultation with the Office of the Bishop, a congregation may terminate this agreement by a majority vote of the congregation at a legally called Congregation Meeting
- At least six months' notice will be given to the steering committee of a congregation's intention to withdraw from the shared pastor relationship

15. Specific Arrangements/Other

- *Expectations regarding relating to organizations or schools of the congregations, participation in special events, committee meetings, etc.*
- *Exceptions to above principles*
- *Background checks*

- *Office hours*

Council President _____ Lutheran Church	Council President _____ Lutheran Church	Bishop Lower Susquehanna Synod, ELCA
Date _____		