

Appendix 5F – Hearing the Candidate Preach

Arrangements for the call committee to hear the candidate preach normally take place after the committee's initial interview with the candidate. Although with the advent of the internet, many pastors have their sermons available online.

The ideal setting for listening to a candidate preach and lead worship is in his or her current parish, with all members of the committee present on the same Sunday. Remember to observe more than the sermon! How does the pastor interact with the worshippers—before, during and after worship? How is the pastor's worship leadership? How do the worshippers respond to the pastor? (please keep in mind the culture of this congregation might be vastly different from yours) To determine when to do the visit, the call committee contacts the candidate before its visit, making certain that the candidate will be preaching that Sunday.

Discretion and confidentiality are important, since a group of six or seven visitors who seem unrelated are quite conspicuous at Sunday morning worship. Please be aware that the congregation currently served by a pastoral candidate may not be aware that its pastor is involved in a call process.

If the call committee is unable to witness a sermon—either in person or online—the synod office can assist the call committee in scheduling the candidate to preach in a neighboring parish. If unable to attend a worship service where the candidate is preaching, the call committee may ask the pastor to submit a video of a recent sermon.