

Check List for Conducting Divine Call Meetings for WELS Lutheran School Teachers

1. Contact your District President to request a call form at least two weeks prior to your call meeting date to allow sufficient time for the Commission on Lutheran Schools director to work with the District President to develop a call list of suitable candidates.
2. After receiving the list, you are to keep the Divine Call List CONFIDENTIAL both until the time of the meeting and after. Inform the voters that no good service is offered to the Lord's church or his workers if there is a publication of the names of those individuals whom the Holy Spirit chose not to have called to this place at this time.
3. Please see that all of the teacher's names are printed on a Divine Call list. The list of names may simply be printed on an agenda or listed in some other way for the voters. The form with names and data can also simply be used.
4. Sometimes there are requests from the floor of a voters' meeting to add names to the Divine Call list that has been prepared and sent. If the District President does not have access to his computer and the synod database, it is not possible for him to verify whether or not a given teacher is eligible, available, qualified and not holding a call. Good order and our practice of having the District President responsible for doctrine and practice would therefore preclude additions at a given meeting. Such nominations could be considered at subsequent meetings. Interested individuals should contact the District President's office with such a request. If the question comes up, it would be good for you to emphasize that not everyone who is a relative, friend or neighboring teacher may be eligible, available, qualified and not holding a call. They certainly would also not want to give the impression to anyone in the congregation or to the teacher called that some behind the scenes "lobbying" accomplished his or her election. Contacting the District President is particularly important if there is a desire to extend a Divine Call to someone serving in the ELS, our sister Synod. We have a working relationship with the ELS which requires that we seek the approval of their President and that their President seeks the approval of our District Presidents before using the names of pastors and teachers on respective Divine Call lists. Certainly, one of our congregations would not want to cause difficulties for a relationship between our sister Synods. Please read the following if there persists a desire to add a name at this meeting:

The District President is responsible for the Divine Call lists that congregations use to extend Divine Calls to Pastors and Teachers. Sometimes, voters in a congregation will want the District President to consider adding the names of certain individuals. That is possible. It's important to remember, however, that the Divine Call list the District President prepares and submits is based on the needs of the congregation and school as well as the gifts and availability of other teachers. That's why the information gathered regarding your needs is so important.

Remember that it can be very difficult to have family members and in-laws serve in a congregation. It's also important to remember that just because an individual has served well in one place does not mean that he or she would be gifted by the Lord with the ability to serve the specific needs of your congregation

If you are inclined to submit a name for the District President to consider, please provide the following information. Too many names can actually slow down the process, as it is necessary to research each. Without complete and sufficient detail, the District President would not be inclined to authorize use of a name.

If you are inclined to submit a name for the District President to consider, please provide the following:

- Your Name:
- Name of the teacher you want considered:
- Relationship to you or members of your family, if any:
- Reason(s) for requesting consideration of this teacher:
- Personal knowledge of the individual's gifts and abilities:
- What, if any, contact have you had with the teacher about the possibility of his name being used on this list?
- Finally, if they insist on adding a name, that action cannot be stopped. Please ask, however, for the secretary to note in the minutes that the name is added without the advice and consent of the District President.

5. Be sure to have on hand:

- A sufficient number of Divine Call forms for teachers.
- The most recent Statistical Report (in case of questions about LES sizes)
- The most recent WELS Yearbook (to provide mailing address & phone)
- The Divine Call List
- The Resume sheets I've provided. (These may be duplicated and handed out but ALL are to be returned to you after the meeting. It will be your personal responsibility to destroy them after we confer, following the meeting.)
- A Copy of the Divine Call form (or verify that the congregation has one)
- Your Bible for devotion - if called upon

6. Answer questions for the voters using the resume sheets provided. They may be distributed and marked on, but they are all to be returned.

7. Have the chairman call for appropriate motions along the way, and at the end of the meeting, specifically verify that all the Divine Call information sheets have been returned to you for destruction. The following items need to be addressed as the meeting progresses.

- Acceptance of Divine Call list
- Voting by ballot
- Casting of unanimous ballot
- Return of Divine Call Information sheets
- Destruction of ballots
- Notification of the Teacher-elect

8. Before the ballots are first counted, verify with the congregation the way they want to proceed. Some congregations are choosing to vote for two candidates on the first ballot. That increases choices of individuals; narrows the field more slowly for consideration and sometimes prompts further discussion of school needs and individual's gifts. Usually they eliminate the individual with

the fewest ballots on each round. If there is a tie for low or a 0 and a 1 you may ask (before announcing names) if they want to eliminate the two lowest. Of course, whenever there is a majority (51% of all votes cast), an election has taken place. When the ballots are counted, check with the tellers (where they are counting so that it remains private) what the counts are for each ballot. Keep a record on a master sheet of the ballots each candidate receives on each ballot. The District President will want this from you for discussion after the meeting. Please email the information after the meeting or the next morning, depending upon your schedule.

Once the Lord has led the congregation to a decision about the Divine Call, the following salary and financial items need to be addressed and finalized:

- Base amount: \$_____per year
- + Travel Allowance: \$_____or reimbursement - Code presently \$0.40
- + Housing: Provided or allowance of: \$_____. If housing is not provided, it will be important to include information about the housing market in your area (including the median home prices in surrounding communities or areas).
- + Utilities: Paid directly or allowance of: \$_____
- + WELS VEBA and Pension: deductible: \$_____
- + Vacation:
- + Other benefits (description and amount):

9. Offer to the congregation your willingness to make the initial contact with the teacher elect, understanding that they will have follow up contacts through their president, board of education and/or pastor.
10. Emphasize that the Divine Call form and cover letter need to go out the next day. Because of the importance of the documents they should be emailed as soon as possible after the meeting and mailed no later than the next day air; express mail; or certified mail, special delivery. A return receipt may be requested. Most teachers (properly so) will not acknowledge or announce a Divine Call until they have the documents in hand.
11. Include the "Courtesies to Follow When Receiving a Divine Call" as a helpful reminder to the teacher being called.
12. Inform the District President by the next day, the name of the individual to whom the Holy Spirit directed the Divine call. You may do so by email. It's helpful to include a tally of the balloting.
13. If you have a question regarding the call list that you have received and are unable to contact the District President, you should use only the names that you have received. Of course, the entire list could also be returned, unused, and another list could be requested.
14. Contact the District President if other directions or comments would be helpful for future meetings.