

**Policy Manual
for
Admission to the Pastoral Ministry
of The
Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
by
Colloquy**

Bylaw references are to the 2023 Synod Handbook

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I. Introduction

The word *colloquy* (from the Latin *colloquium*) means “a conversation.” As used in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) and this policy manual, the word in its narrow sense refers specifically to the theological interview which is central to the colloquy process and which also touches on the applicant’s background, history, etc., in order to determine his fitness for ministry¹ and whether or not to certify him for pastoral ministry in the LCMS.² In its wider sense, the term refers to the entire process, described below, by which a man who has been trained for the pastoral ministry in another church body can be certified for ministry in the LCMS.

The colloquy process in the LCMS dates back to the founding of the Synod and was described in the Synod’s first constitution of 1847 (Article V 10). Today it is primarily Bylaws 3.10.2–3.10.2.5 that govern the colloquy process. (See also Bylaws 2.7.2 and 2.7.5.) This policy manual is in fulfillment of Bylaw 3.10.2.2[a], which charges the Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral Ministry (CCPM) with “develop[ing] all necessary policies to govern eligibility and the process to be followed to determine qualifications and suitability for pastoral service in the Synod.” Please note, while our two seminaries offer a 16-course online Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) route, there is no longer any SMP *colloquy*.³

In our churches, no one takes up the office of pastor simply of his own volition. A man must be formed and trained as a pastor, examined by the church concerning both his character and his ability to teach the Word of God faithfully, and called by God through the church (most often through a congregation). In addition, because our congregations are not independent, but members of a confessional fellowship, we also seek to recognize in a public way, through the participation of the wider church, that a pastor is properly called. Ordination is the churchly rite that publicly acknowledges all these things.

In our Synod, there are several means for all of this to take place. Our two seminaries each have multiple programs with varying levels of formal education by which men are formed as pastors and then examined and certified by the seminary faculty to confirm that they are of good character and able to teach. In addition, as stated above, the Synod has, from its beginning, provided colloquy as a route by which men who have already been prepared in various ways outside of the formation that takes place at our seminaries may also be examined and certified for call and placement. However, no matter how the church forms, examines and certifies men, all are called by God through the church to the one pastoral office and recognized by the wider church, by means of the rite of ordination or subsequent installation rites, as being properly called and placed into the office.

¹ 1 Timothy 3:2–7; 4:1–16; 2 Timothy 2:2; 4:1–5; Titus 1:5–9 (See Appendix A)

² The bylaws of the LCMS use the terms “certify” and “declare qualified” almost interchangeably. Specifically, the bylaws speak of “certify for placement,” “declare ... qualified for the pastoral ministry” and “declared qualified ... [for a] first call.” (See Section VIII of this policy manual.) With a few exceptions, this policy manual primarily uses the word “certify” for simplicity’s sake.

³ SMP *colloquy* was offered to a limited group of men, for a limited amount of time, beginning in 2016. For more information about this, see the 2023 LCMS Convention Workbook, p. 33.

II. Eligibility and Categories for Colloquy

Applicants for colloquy must be male, men of good moral character⁴ who have been prepared for the pastoral ministry in some manner apart from the various routes leading to ordination that exist within the LCMS. As explained above (Introduction, paragraph 4), colloquy is not intended to be an alternative route to prepare or form men for the pastoral ministry. Rather, it is a route by which men who have *already* been prepared in various ways outside of the formation that takes place at LCMS seminaries may also be examined and certified for call and placement.

To be eligible for colloquy, applicants must meet the criteria for one of the following colloquy categories before proceeding with the application. Individuals who do not fit one these colloquy categories — including LCMS laymen and commissioned ministers — are to be directed to one of the seminaries of the LCMS.⁵

CATEGORY 1 is for a man who has completed preparation for the *pastoral* ministry⁶ in a non-LCMS institution and is currently serving in a non-LCMS church body at the time of application. Such an applicant must be a graduate of a program of study that leads to ordination⁷ from an accredited institution. Such an applicant must also have served at least *three years* in a recognized ministry of his church body.⁸ The pastor of a congregation that is not affiliated with a church body may apply but must also fulfill the requirements above and provide suitable references and documentation of his authorization to perform pastoral ministry.

CATEGORY 2 is for a man who has completed preparation for the *pastoral* ministry⁹ in a non-LCMS institution, but is NOT currently serving as a pastor in his former non-LCMS church body and is a communicant member of an LCMS congregation.¹⁰ Such an applicant must be a graduate of a program of study that leads to ordination¹¹ from an accredited institution. Such an applicant must also have been a communicant member in a congregation of the LCMS for at least *two years* immediately prior to the time of application.¹²

⁴ See footnote 1.

⁵ According to LCMS Bylaw 3.10.2.3, other colloquy “applicants for the ordained ministry, such as Ministers of Religion—Commissioned, laymen of a special ethnic or linguistic group, and laymen who have fulfilled at least ten years of significant service in a congregation, may make application to a seminary for the Residential Alternate Route or any other appropriate program.”

⁶ Though formal training for the *pastoral* ministry is a must, applicants need not necessarily be serving as a *parish* pastor, but may be serving as a professor, missionary, etc.

⁷ The CCPM defines such a program as ordinarily consisting of 60 semester or 90 quarter hours. In addition, transcripts must give evidence of exegetical, systematic, historical and practical theology as well as a vicarage or internship, though considerable pastoral experience may also suffice for the latter.

⁸ Should the sponsoring district president be convinced that the CCPM ought to consider an exception to the accreditation and/or three-year requirement(s) on the basis of an applicant’s special circumstances, the sponsoring district president must furnish with the application a written recommendation detailing the special circumstances and rationale for the recommended exception.

⁹ See footnote 6.

¹⁰ Such men should not be involved in any pastoral ministry for the time being. According to LCMS Bylaw 2.5.2, colloquy applicants are not permitted to serve as ministers of Word and Sacrament in LCMS congregations until they have completed colloquy.

¹¹ See footnote 7.

¹² See footnote 8, though for Category 2 it is a *two-year* requirement.

LCMS laymen and commissioned ministers who complete a program of study leading to ordination or its equivalent at a non-LCMS seminary are not eligible for colloquy on that basis (see Bylaw 3.10.2.4).

III. Application through the District President

An applicant for colloquy shall visit with the president of the LCMS district where he resides *prior to* beginning the application process. The district president shall have responsibility to help the applicant prepare a complete and thorough application packet in English using the current application provided by the CCPM on the LCMS website (lcms.org/about/leadership/president/pastoral-colloquy).

- 1) The district president shall personally interview the applicant to make an *initial* determination whether the applicant meets the eligibility and category requirements for colloquy (Section II).¹³
 - (a) Does the man fit all requirements for Category 1?
 - (b) Does the man fit all requirements for Category 2?
 - (c) Is the man an LCMS layman (other than as described in Category 2) or commissioned minister? If so, he is not eligible for colloquy (cf. Bylaw 3.10.2.3).
 - (d) Was the applicant an LCMS layman or commissioned minister at the time he completed a program of study leading to ordination (or its equivalent) at a non-LCMS seminary? If so, he is not eligible for colloquy (cf. Bylaw 3.10.2.4).
- 2) The decision whether to grant allowable exception requests (cf. fn. 8 above) shall be at the sole discretion of the CCPM.
- 3) The district president shall refer the applicant to the District Interview Committee, which shall give a report and recommendation to the district president. The CCPM's District Interview Report (DIR) form *for colloquy*, found at lcms.org/pastoral-colloquy-district-interview-report-form, lists questions for this preliminary interview. Please type responses into this form. The applicant's wife, if he is married (or fiancée, if he is engaged), must also be present for the interview.
- 4) If after reading the complete application packet, the district president believes the applicant to be qualified and is prepared to declare his strong endorsement and sponsorship, he shall do so via a cover letter accompanying the application.
- 5) Unless colloquy candidates are assigned a vicarage as part of the process, they should not be involved in pastoral ministry in LCMS congregations until they have completed colloquy (Bylaw 2.5.2).
- 6) Decisions to declare applicants qualified for the pastoral ministry and to certify for placement shall be at the sole discretion of the CCPM (Bylaw 3.10.2.2.[b]).

IV. The Application Packet

The applicant shall prepare or obtain all materials required for a complete application. This application packet shall be assembled by the applicant and the district president (or his office) and shall include the following.¹⁴

¹³ If he is uncertain, the district president is encouraged to consult with the chairman of the CCPM, who will make the final determination whether an applicant meets the eligibility and category requirements for colloquy.

¹⁴ See also the applicant's checklist in Section XIII of the colloquy application.

- 1) **Christian doctrine exam:** The applicant shall take the Christian Doctrine Entry Level Competency Exam (ELCE) from either LCMS seminary. The test will be used to gauge the applicant's level of competency for the interview as well as additional work that might be needed.¹⁵ The other ELCEs are not required. Information and instructions for this exam can be found at each seminary's admissions webpage (csl.edu or ctsfw.edu).
- 2) **Background check:** The applicant shall authorize the district president to request a background check through AAIM Employers' Association (AAIM). The applicant shall tender payment for all AAIM fees to the district in which application is being made. (Fees are established by each district.)
- 3) **Supplemental Information Form (SIF):** The district office will provide the SIF to the applicant. The applicant shall complete, sign and return this form to the district office. Please note that the applicant must *fully and completely* disclose all information that he feels may surface in a background check. Failure to do so may result in delay of the colloquy process or denial of the application.
- 4) **Autobiography:** The applicant shall prepare an autobiographical statement setting forth clearly his background and reasons for seeking admission to the Synod's ministerium by colloquy.¹⁶
- 5) **Essay:** The applicant will also prepare one theological essay of approximately 1500–1800 words on the topic assigned in the application form.
- 6) **Sermons:** The applicant shall submit two recently-written sermons, noting at the top of each sermon the date and location where preached, as well as the biblical text for each sermon. At the applicant's discretion, links to video or audio recordings of these sermons *may* also be provided *in addition* to the written copies.
- 7) **Recommendation letters:** The applicant shall arrange for recommendation letters, sent directly to the district president, which assess the applicant's Christian character and life, personality, abilities (especially in pastoral ministry) and previous service. These letters shall come from no fewer than three individuals who have known and observed the applicant for at least the two years immediately preceding his application.
 - a. For Category 1 applicants, one of these recommendation letters must come from the applicant's current ecclesiastical supervisor. The recommendation shall assess the applicant's current pastoral service, together with a declaration of the applicant's good standing in the church body.¹⁷
 - b. For Category 2 applicants, one of these recommendation letters must come from the applicant's former ecclesiastical supervisor at the time he left his previous church.

¹⁵ The requirement of a 70% minimum score for entrance to the seminary does *not* apply for colloquy.

¹⁶ Non-U.S. citizens will be required to provide proof of legal residency in the United States of America.

¹⁷ If the applicant has a very good reason, he may request an exception to this requirement and provide the committee with a recommendation letter from an alternate reference. This alternate must hold/have held membership and a supervisory position in the applicant's church body and be able to attest to the same criteria. Both the request for exception by the applicant, including his substantive rationale, and the letter from the alternate reference must be included in the application packet.

The recommendation shall assess the applicant's past pastoral service and provide a declaration of the applicant's good standing in the church body at the time of his departure.¹⁸

- c. For Category 2 applicants, one of the recommendation letters must come from the applicant's current LCMS pastor.
- 8) **District Interview Report form:** See Section III. This form will be completed and submitted by the district office following the district committee's interview of the applicant.
- 9) **Transcripts:** The applicant shall arrange for transmission to the district president of official transcripts from all colleges and seminaries he has attended.
- 10) **Signatures:** The applicant shall complete the Application for Admission to the Pastoral Colloquy Program of the LCMS. The applicant shall sign the application in Section XI and indicate whether he desires initial placement in the district of his sponsoring district president. His wife, if he is married, shall sign in Section VII. The district president shall also sign in Section XII and indicate whether he would like the applicant to be placed in his district.

Once completed, the district president shall transmit the entire application packet to: Office of the First Vice-President, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122.

V. Colloquy Process

The CCPM shall invite qualified applicants for an in-person interview. The interview shall normally be conducted in St. Louis, in English, by the four-member CCPM. The applicant is responsible for his travel-related expenses.

Normally, the CCPM shall publish notice of its intent to interview an applicant in *Reporter*. Under extenuating circumstances, the applicant may, for valid reasons, request that the committee make an exception to this requirement so that such notice is delayed until *after* his interview.

- (1) If no valid objection is received by the committee within 30 days after the publication of such notice, the application process may proceed. No final certification shall take place until after the close of this publication cycle.
- (2) If the applicant was interviewed first, notice shall then be published and, upon publication, 30 days given for valid objections to be received before the applicant may be finally declared qualified and certified for placement in the pastoral ministry of the LCMS.
- (3) The committee, in its sole discretion, shall decide whether an objection is valid. Its decision shall not be the subject of any appeal.

VI. Criteria and Standards for Colloquy

The committee's final decision on each applicant shall be made based on the colloquy interview and all application materials and shall be the sole prerogative of the colloquy committee (Bylaw 3.10.2.2.[b]). The criteria by which the colloquy committee shall determine an applicant's readiness for certification are

¹⁸ See footnote above.

based on the following standards, including but not limited to:

- (1) Areas of general education;
- (2) Understanding of and agreement with the scriptural and doctrinal positions of the LCMS;
- (3) Familiarity with the history and polity of the Synod;
- (4) Studies in theology assuring a well-rounded education in the major fields of theological disciplines;
- (5) Positive experience in the work of the pastoral ministry; and
- (6) Demonstrated moral character (“above reproach”).

The colloquy committee, at its sole discretion, shall determine the content and amount of academic work, personal study programs or supervised ministry that may be required prior to certification. To this end, the committee may request the assistance of the seminary faculties or of qualified pastors or teachers in other locations to serve as instructors or mentors. The committee may require a second colloquy interview following the completion of such requirements. Any affiliated costs, fees or honorariums resulting from these assignments are the responsibility of the applicant.

VII. Certification and Placement

The CCPM shall:

- (1) Declare qualified for a first call those applicants who have satisfactorily completed the colloquy interview and any other requirements as assigned by the colloquy committee (Bylaw 2.7.2).
- (2) Report this action to the chairman of the Pastoral Placement Committee of the LCMS Council of Presidents, the LCMS Office of Pastoral Education, the applicant’s district president, and the LCMS Office of Rosters and Statistics.
- (3) Publish a report of its favorable action in *Reporter*.

Every applicant whom the CCPM certifies for placement in the pastoral ministry shall be assigned his first call by the Council of Presidents acting as the Board of Assignments (Bylaw 2.9.1).

Once certified, a colloquy candidate should work closely with his sponsoring district president who will work to find the candidate a suitable call following Document 13.1.2 in the Council of Presidents’ manual.

VIII. Synod Bylaws Governing the Colloquy Process

- 3.10.2 The Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral Ministry shall be responsible for the reception and processing of applications for individual membership in the Synod through colloquy.
- 3.10.2.1 The Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral Ministry shall consist of the First Vice-President of the Synod as chairman, a district president appointed by the Council of Presidents, and the presidents of the seminaries or their representatives.
- 3.10.2.2 The Colloquy Committee for the Pastoral Ministry shall establish and monitor academic, theological, and personal standards for admission to the office of the pastoral ministry by

colloquy after consultation with the faculties of the seminaries.

(a) In consultation with the President of the Synod, it shall develop all necessary policies to govern eligibility and the process to be followed to determine qualifications and suitability for pastoral service in the Synod.

(b) Decisions to declare applicants qualified for the pastoral ministry and to certify for placement shall be at the sole discretion of the committee.

(c) Every applicant whom the committee declares qualified shall be assigned his first call by the Council of Presidents acting as the Board of Assignments.

3.10.2.3 Applicants for the ordained ministry recommended by the respective district president who are eligible for colloquy under the Colloquy Committee's published policies may make application to the committee. Other applicants for the ordained ministry, such as Ministers of Religion—Commissioned, laymen of a special ethnic or linguistic group, and laymen who have fulfilled at least ten years of significant service in a congregation, may make application to a seminary for the Residential Alternate Route or any other appropriate program.

3.10.2.4 The LCMS laymen and commissioned ministers who complete a program of study leading to ordination or its equivalent at a non-LCMS seminary are not eligible for colloquy on that basis.

3.10.2.5 All men desiring the ordained ministry who do not meet the eligibility requirements of the foregoing bylaws shall be directed to the seminaries for consideration in other programs.

2.7.2 Candidates who have satisfactorily completed an approved colloquy program of the Synod for the ordained or commissioned ministry must be declared qualified for a first call and be recommended by the appropriate colloquy committee (see Bylaws 3.10.2ff. and 3.10.3ff.) before the effective date of the first call to service in the church as assigned by the Board of Assignments as provided in Bylaw section 2.9.

2.7.5 A pastor emeritus from another church body, after having completed an approved colloquy program of the Synod, may be placed on the roster of the Synod without call by action of the Council of Presidents on the basis of policies adopted by the Council of Presidents.

(a) Such placement shall be acknowledged by a rite of recognition in a worship service, preferably of the congregation of the Synod where he holds membership.

(b) Such rite is to be authorized by the district president.

See also Bylaws 2.8.1 and 2.8.2 "Qualification for First Call" and Bylaw 2.9.1 "Assignment of First Calls."

IX. Composition and Meetings of the Colloquy Committee

The CCPM is an agency of the Synod.¹⁹ As such, in addition to Section 3.10.2 of the LCMS Bylaws, relevant portions of Section 1.5 of the LCMS Bylaws, "Regulations for Corporate Synod and Agencies of the Synod," also apply to the CCPM. In particular:

¹⁹ See the definition of "agency" on page 21 of the 2023 *LCMS Handbook*.

The CCPM consists of the First Vice-President of the Synod as chairman, a district president appointed by the Council of Presidents, and the presidents of the seminaries or their representatives (Bylaw 3.10.2.1).

The CCPM shall meet at least quarterly (Bylaw 1.5.3).

The CCPM shall announce its upcoming meetings (Bylaw 1.5.3).

The CCPM is free to select a manner of meeting, consistent with Board of Directors policy, that best enhances its ability to accomplish its mission (Bylaw 1.5.3).

Appendix A

Key Scripture Passages

by Which a Pastor's Fitness for Ministry Is Evaluated

1 Timothy 3:2–7

Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³ not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴ He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, ⁵ for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? ⁶ He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷ Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

1 Timothy 4:1–16

Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, ² through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, ³ who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. ⁴ For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, ⁵ for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.

⁶ If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed. ⁷ Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness; ⁸ for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. ⁹ The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance. ¹⁰ For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.

¹¹ Command and teach these things. ¹² Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. ¹³ Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching. ¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. ¹⁵ Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress. ¹⁶ Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

2 Timothy 2:2

And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

2 Timothy 4:1–5

I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. ³ For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, ⁴ and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. ⁵ As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Titus 1:5–9

This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you— ⁶ if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. ⁷ For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, ⁸ but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. ⁹ He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

Appendix B

Colloquy Application Checklist for District Administrative Assistants

Colloquy application packets are prepared by the colloquy applicant with the assistance of the sponsoring district president and his office. As part of this preparation, before transmitting a colloquy application packet to the Office of the First Vice-President, the sponsoring district president shall see that the following has been done.

1. Application from Applicant

The applicant shall forward the completed application to the district office. Please be sure it includes all of the following items.

- a. _____ Score from seminary Christian Doctrine ELCE (The score is reported by the seminary to the applicant via email. Please include the entire email. See Section IV. If the applicant also received a “coaching report” from the seminary, please include that as well.)
- b. _____ Completed and signed copy of the Supplemental Information Form (SIF)
- c. _____ The Application for Admission to the Pastoral Colloquy Program, all sections completed and typed. No handwritten copies will be accepted.
- d. _____ If the applicant is married, his wife must complete and sign her portion of the form. (See Section VII.)
- e. _____ Autobiographical statement as explained in Section VIII of the application
- f. _____ Two recently-written sermons, with date and location where preached at top of each sermon and biblical text referenced as explained in Section IX of the application
- g. _____ Theological essay (See Section X of the application.)
- h. _____ At least three written recommendation letters from references who have known and observed the applicant for at least the past two years, as to his Christian character and life, personality, abilities in ministry, etc. The recommendation letters should be mailed directly to the district office, not to the applicant. Original, hard copies are preferred, although in special circumstances emailed or scanned letters will be accepted.
 - i. _____ Category 1 Applicants (applicant is actively serving in pastoral ministry): One of these recommendation letters must come from the applicant’s current ecclesiastical supervisor. The recommendation shall assess the applicant’s current pastoral service, together with a declaration of the applicant’s standing in the church body.²⁰
 - ii. _____ Category 2 Applicants (if the applicant has previously served as a pastor): One of these recommendation letters must come from the applicant’s former ecclesiastical supervisor at the time he left his previous church. The recommendation shall assess the applicant’s past pastoral service, and provide a declaration of the applicant’s standing in the church body at the time of his departure.⁴
 - iii. _____ All Category 2 Applicants: One of the recommendation letters must come from the applicant’s current LCMS pastor.
- i. _____ Official transcripts from all colleges and seminaries the applicant has attended. The transcripts should be sent directly to the district office, not to the applicant. Official, electronic copies will also be accepted.
- j. _____ Be sure the form is signed by the applicant. (See Section XI.) Be sure the applicant has indicated whether or not he wishes to be placed in the sponsoring district.

2. AAIM/SIF

²⁰ If the applicant has a very good reason, he may request an exception to this requirement and provide the committee with a recommendation letter from an alternate reference. This alternate must hold/have held membership and a supervisory position in the applicant’s church body and be able to attest to the same criteria. Both the request for exception by the applicant, including his substantive rationale, and the letter from the alternate reference must be included in the application packet.

- a. _____ Complete AAIM background check, according to your district's procedures.
- b. _____ Have applicant complete the SIF (located in the COP manual).
- c. _____ Look at AAIM report and note red flags. Ask applicant to provide explanation if new information is revealed.
- d. _____ Examine SIF and AAIM to compare accuracy of things reported.
- e. _____ Include SIF with packet.
- f. _____ Include AAIM report with packet.

3. District Interview Report (DIR) (Please note: *The timing of this interview should be conducted according to your district's policy. Some district presidents prefer this to be the first step in the colloquy process, while others have alternate preferences.*)

- a. _____ Establish committee members and set up date for interview. This MUST be in-person, and it must include the applicant's wife, if married (or fiancée, if engaged).
- b. _____ Direct interview panel to use the DIR form from lcms.org/pastoral-colloquy-district-interview-report-form. This form is fillable. Please be sure it is typed.

4. Recommendation Letters

- a. _____ These should come directly to your office. Original, hard copies are preferred, although in special circumstances emailed or scanned letters will be accepted.
- b. _____ Verify that the recommendations are from the correct people listed in the Applicant's Checklist (Application XII.j.i, XII.j.ii, XII.j.iii).

5. Transcripts

- a. _____ These should be originals from EVERY school the applicant attended.
- b. _____ They should be sent directly to you.
- c. _____ Electronic transcripts are acceptable. Please include a statement that indicates that you were the one who opened the e-file, and verify that the transcript is an official, original document.

6. District President's Endorsement

- a. _____ Your district president should read the entire application, including the packet submitted by the applicant, the AAIM/SIF, recommendation letters and the DIR.
- b. _____ Your district president must sign the application (Section XII) and answer the placement question.
- c. _____ He should write a *strong* letter endorsing the applicant. If there are any exceptions he feels the CCPM should consider, he must also state that request in the letter.

7. Self-Evaluation Tool (SET) for Pastors

(Note: The SET is not to be forwarded to the OFVP as part of the application packet. It is for district office use only. This was requested by the DPAA's in August 2023. On 9/17/23, the COP affirmed this request and recommended that the SET process not begin until an applicant has been certified by the CCPM.)

- a. _____ Contact the Information and Technology Consultant to request that a Cornerstone Online account be created for the applicant.
- b. _____ Once the account has been created, ask the applicant to complete and submit a SET.
- c. _____ It is recommended that the installation not be authorized or scheduled until the SET has been received.

8. Final Steps

- a. _____ Copy the entire application packet for your records.
- b. _____ Send originals to: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Office of the First Vice President, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122.