

THE AUGUSTANA DISTRICT PASTORAL ENDORSEMENT

The Augustana District provides a Pastoral Endorsement that can be obtained in addition to LCMC's Certification Process. No Augustana District church is required to call a pastor with this endorsement, nor is any pastor serving an Augustana District church required to obtain the endorsement. For pastors, the endorsement should be considered a helpful designation for those who desire to identify and clarify their pastoral and theological commitments. For churches, the endorsement should be one of but many considerations when they are in a call process. The Augustana District has identified three areas for the endorsement – a pastor's theological commitments, his or her morality, and his or her professional competencies – and believes that some call committees will find it beneficial that their pastoral candidates have been examined by an outside body in these areas. The Augustana District Pastoral Endorsement requires a threefold process of application, written materials, and an interview.

The application is a cover letter and resume. A cover letter should share information about the applicant's current roster status, why he or she wants to be endorsed by the Augustana District, and what his or her family considerations are. Resumes need to include all of the traditional information: educational background, work experience, and references.

The written materials to be submitted are of two kinds: a) brief answers to the following questions, and b) certain documentation. Please send all the documents in one e-mail to the BTM chair at the e-mail below: btm.chair@augustanadistrict.org

- a) Please submit brief answers to the following questions:
1. Reflect on the meaning of the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed from the Small Catechism.
 2. Discuss the "uses" of the law, and how the law/gospel distinction functions in homiletics and ministry in general.
 3. Explain the theological rationale for infant baptism.
 4. What is a pastor?
 5. Describe the way you practice ministry.
 6. Describe your understanding of power dynamics between and pastor and a congregation.
 7. Tell us about your study habits and devotional practices.
 8. Disclosure of anything that would appear in a background check, and/or from a previous call, about which we should be aware.
 9. A written subscription to Augustana's and LCMC's Statements of Faith, Pastoral Core Convictions, and respective Constitutions and Bylaws.
- b) Please submit the following documentation:
1. A transcript from seminary or other theological educational institution
 2. A copy of a sermon.
 - 3a. For seminary graduates, a total of three assessments of theology, character and skill sets, and readiness for pastoral ministry: two from seminary faculty members and one from the internship supervisor.
 - 3b. For all other candidates, one theological reference should be provided.

The interview includes questions and conversation about:

- Ministry experience
- Strengths and weaknesses for ministry
- Style of one's pastoral care
- Pastoral conduct and its influence or obstruction of a pastor's role as a public figure and servant
- Examples of misuse of pastoral power issues, and how they adversely affect ministry
- Discussion of Lutheran theological issues: law/gospel distinction and how it applies to preaching
- Compliance with ministry standards of LCMC and the Augustana District.

Interviews are conducted by a member of the Board of Theology and Ministry or its designee. Decisions regarding endorsement status are made by the Board of Theology and Ministry.