

Nebraska Synod, ELCA
LETTER OF AGREEMENT FOR TRANSITIONAL MINISTRY

In keeping with the policies and practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Nebraska Synod, and in order to set forth clearly the agreement for transitional ministry service between the congregation and minister,

First Lutheran Church, 2146 Wright St. Blair NE 68008

agrees that

Rev. Glen W. Thomas

will serve as Transitional Minister on a full-time

basis from 1/2/2023 to 12/31/2023

Together the Congregation and Transitional Minister will:

- A. Examine the history of the congregation and work through the transition dynamics that usually follow the departure of a minister.
- B. Seek to confirm and identify current issues facing the congregation and develop ways of dealing with them.
- C. Support the congregation's leadership in developing a vision for the congregation's mission.
- D. Examine the congregation's linkage with synod, cluster, churchwide and the resources that may be available for ministry.
- E. Prepare for the arrival of the new minister.
- F. Align the congregation in accordance with the constitutions and bylaws of the ELCA, the Nebraska Synod, and update the congregation's constitution and bylaws.
- G. During this transition period, agree to address the following specific concerns:
 - 1. Identify & develop ways to facilitate the return of members & former members to the church.

The Transitional Minister will:

- A. Preach and teach the Word of God.
- B. Preside at worship and administer the sacraments according to the practice of the ELCA.
- C. Provide pastoral care to all members of the parish according to their needs, visit as necessary, offer instruction, officiate at weddings, baptisms, confirmation, funerals, and uphold the members in prayer.
- D. Give leadership for the meetings, activities, and organizations of the congregation.
- E. Be responsible for the recording of baptisms, confirmations, marriages, funerals, attendance at Holy Communion, and the maintenance of the membership rosters; and report the statistics of the parish promptly and fully, as requested by the ELCA.
- F. Acknowledge that this congregation's constitution prohibits, under regular circumstances, the calling of the transitional minister to this congregation.

- G. Agree not to be involved in the congregation's call process except when the synod bishop requests such participation.
- H. Agree not to become a member of this congregation after this agreement terminates.
- I. During the period of service, a transitional minister shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council (FLC Constitution & Bylaws, *C9.07). This includes voice and vote at the congregation council.
- J. Participate with key leadership of the congregation and the appointed synodical staff person in evaluation of the transitional ministry at the end of six months and at the conclusion of the transition period.
- K. During this transition, give special attention to:
 1. Building a sense of team-work among church staff and holding regular staff meetings to coordinate the ministries of the church and facilitate communication.
 2. Ensuring that the Director of Children and Youth Ministries and the Director of Music and Worship have adequate and appropriate time away weekly from their responsibilities to the congregation, and that the Transitional Pastor is available during their time off should needs arise.
 3. Continuing education via bible study opportunities.
 4. Working with the Stewardship Committee to promote, educate, and advocate responsible biblical stewardship in the congregation.

The Congregation Will:

- A. Commit to the Gospel by faithful participation in worship, learning, and fellowship activities.
- B. Support the ministry of the congregation through service and gifts.
- C. Accept the Transitional Minister, uphold him/her in prayer, and accord him/her love, respect, and good will.
- D. Expect the Transitional Minister to preside at baptisms, celebrations of Holy Communion, and other rites of the church.
- E. Acknowledge that this congregation's constitution prohibits, under regular circumstances, the calling of the transitional minister to this congregation.
- F. Provide for an informal review of the Transitional Ministry after six months and at the conclusion of the transition period by the congregation council with the Transitional Minister and the appointed synodical staff person.
- G. Provide the following annual compensation:
 1. Pay an annual base salary of \$ 68,500
 2. Pay an annual Social Security allowance of \$5,240
 3. Contribute to the ELCA Pension Plan (Portico) at 12% of salary.
 4. Provide member only with medical and dental insurance through Portico, Gold + plan.
 5. Grant 4 weeks (including 4 Sundays) of vacation on 1/2/2023 that is to be used by 12/31/2023. Vacation days do not carry-over into the next year and any unused vacation days remaining at the end of the contract term will have no cash value. Vacation days shall be preapproved by Council 30 days in advance and shall not occur during the following Christian holidays: Advent, Christmas, Holy Week, and Easter.

- 6. Grant sick leave of 1 day per month, cumulative to 12 days.
- 7. Grant 1 day off per week.
- 8. Provide the use of a parsonage in lieu of a housing allowance.
- 9. Reimburse business mileage at the IRS Standard Mileage Rate upon substantiation of business miles traveled. Commuting expenses do not qualify as business mileage.
- 10. Provide a professional expense allowance during the term of the contract not to exceed \$1500. This allowance may be used for books, resources, or other materials necessary for continued learning, general ministry, or other needs as identified by the professional. These materials will remain the property of the professional. In addition, this allowance may be used for general expenses associated with the role of the professional including required registrations, meals, or fees for synod assemblies or other official meetings at which attendance is required. A formal, itemized receipt is required for reimbursement of these expenses.

Terminating, Amending, or Extending this Agreement:

This agreement terminates on the date specified on page one of this agreement or thirty days after a new minister has declared acceptance of the call to this congregation, whichever comes first; or upon thirty days written notice from the council, the Transitional Minister, or the bishop of the synod. All financial obligations between the Transitional Minister and the congregation will be fulfilled by or on the date of termination. Congregations are advised to contact their property/liability insurer immediately to inform them of change in pastoral leadership and to confirm coverages for Transition Minister(s) throughout the time of transition.

This agreement may be amended or extended upon the mutual agreement of the congregation council and the Transitional Minister, after consultation with the bishop of the synod, by written addendum attached hereto.

We, the undersigned, accept the terms of this agreement:

Leahy Gross
Council President

12/2/2022
Date

Heather Thomas
Transitional Minister

12/3/2022
Date

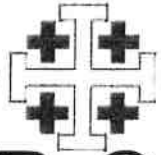
Received, reviewed, and filed by Synod Office

Synod Staff Member

Date

Once signed, distribute copies as follows:

- 1. Original to the Transitional Minister
- 2. Copy to the Congregation Council President or Secretary
- 3. Copy to the Assistant to the Bishop for your congregation
- 4. Copy to the Bishop's Office - 6757 Newport Ave, Ste 200, Omaha NE 68152-2191



LETTER OF CALL

TO AN ORDAINED MINISTER OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

**IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER,
AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.**

Glen Thomas

With prayers for the guidance of the Holy Spirit to do God's will,

First Lutheran Church, Blair
a congregation of the
Nebraska Synod
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
meeting on

July 17, 2024

extends to you this call to serve as

Pastor

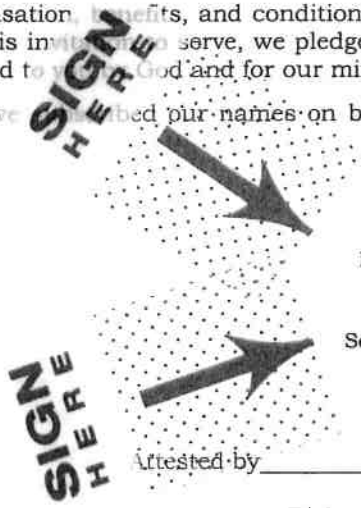
from August 1, 2024-January 31, 2026

We call you to exercise among us the ministry of Word and Sacrament which God has established and which the Holy Spirit empowers: To preach and teach the Word of God in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions; to administer Holy Baptism and Holy Communion; to lead us in worship; to proclaim the forgiveness of sins; to provide pastoral care; to speak for justice on behalf of the poor and oppressed; to encourage persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel; to impart knowledge of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its wider ministry; to endeavor to increase support given by our congregation to the work of our whole church; to equip us for witness and service; and guide us in proclaiming God's love through word and deed.

In accepting this call, you hereby promise to fulfill this pastoral ministry in accord with the standards and policies for ministers of Word and Sacrament of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Therefore, be diligent in the study of Holy Scripture, in use of the means of grace, in prayer, in faithful service and in holy living.

Specific responsibilities, compensation, benefits, and conditions of this call are contained in a document related to this invitation to serve. With this invitation to serve, we pledge our prayers, love, esteem, and personal support for the sake of the ministry entrusted to you by God and for our ministry together in Christ's name.

In testimony of this call, we have signed our names on behalf of the congregation on this **17th** day of **July 2024**, in the year of our Lord.



President *Gail Dussan*

Secretary *Deborah M. Katt*

Attested by _____

Bishop of the Nebraska Synod

Date of Bishop's signing _____

Addendum 3
LETTER OF AGREEMENT FOR TRANSITIONAL MINISTRY
Structured Transitional Ministry
First Lutheran Church, Blair Nebraska
and
Pastor Glen Thomas

This agreement has been affirmed by a vote of the congregation on July 7, 2024.

- This agreement is for eighteen months.
- It is recommended the council sets up to two large and up to two small goals for the agreement term. Goals are actions that will improve the healthy functioning of the congregation and address any recurring issues. Large goals are things like learning healthy communication practices. Small goals are things like a short series of events that build a sense of community in the congregation.
- ~~Council and pastor determines the steps to meet each goal and works the plan to meet the goals.~~
- The goals will be set within 60 days of the start of the transitional ministry agreement. The agreed upon goals are submitted to the Assistant to the Bishop at this time.
- Near the end of term call, the council and pastor will meet together to review progress on the current goals.
- At the end of the eighteen months, if progress on the goals has been made and the congregation is in a position to call and retain a pastor without past or present issues hindering effective ministry, the congregation may vote to call the pastor to a traditional open-ended call.

We have agreed to the following goals for the year beginning on August 1, 2024 .

Large Goals

1. Conduct full stewardship campaign
2. Improve organization of volunteer groups
3. Facility Improvements

Small Goals

1. Staff Updates
2. Establishing normal patterns of Pastoral leadership.



Council President's signature

7-17-2024

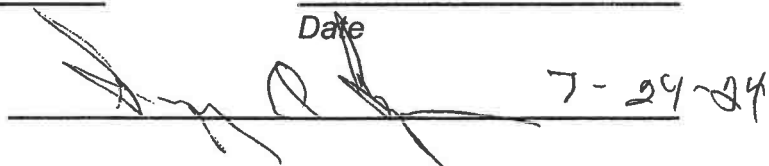
Date



Transitional Minister's signature

7-17-2024

Date

 7-29-24

Once signed, distribute copies as follows:

Received, reviewed, and filed by Synod Office; date, initials

Original to: Transitional Minister

Copies to: Congregation Council President or Secretary, Synod Office