

~ COMPENSATION GUIDELINES for 2020 ~
Ministers of Word and Sacrament,
No Parsonage provided

A. BASE SALARY

Table 1 Shows the *Base Salary* figures for ordained ministers.

Year	Base	Housing Allowance	SECA	Defined Comp	Cash Comp
0	42,375	12,712	4,214	59,301	59,301
1	42,888	12,866	4,265	60,019	60,019
2	43,400	13,020	4,316	60,736	60,736
3	43,913	13,173	4,367	61,453	61,453
4	44,425	13,327	4,418	62,170	62,170
5	44,938	13,481	4,469	62,888	62,888
6	45,450	13,635	4,520	63,605	63,605
7	45,963	13,788	4,570	64,321	64,321
8	46,475	13,942	4,621	65,038	65,038
9	46,988	14,096	4,672	65,756	65,756
10	47,500	14,250	4,723	66,473	66,473
11	48,013	14,403	4,774	67,190	67,190
12	48,525	14,557	4,825	67,907	67,907
13	49,038	14,711	4,876	68,625	68,625
14	49,550	14,865	4,927	69,342	69,342
15	50,063	15,018	4,978	70,059	70,059
16	50,575	15,172	5,029	70,776	70,776
17	51,088	15,326	5,080	71,494	71,494
18	51,600	15,480	5,131	72,211	72,211
19	52,113	15,633	5,182	72,928	72,928
20	52,523	15,756	5,223	73,502	73,502
21	52,933	15,879	5,264	74,076	74,076
22	53,343	16,002	5,304	74,649	74,649
23	53,753	16,125	5,345	75,223	75,223
24	54,163	16,248	5,386	75,797	75,797
25	54,573	16,371	5,427	76,371	76,371
26	54,880	16,464	5,457	76,801	76,801
27	55,188	16,556	5,488	77,232	77,232
28	55,495	16,648	5,518	77,661	77,661
29	55,803	16,740	5,549	78,092	78,092
30	56,110	16,833	5,580	78,523	78,523
31	56,418	16,925	5,610	78,953	78,953
32	56,725	17,017	5,641	79,383	79,383
33	57,033	17,109	5,671	79,813	79,813
34	57,340	17,202	5,702	80,244	80,244
35	57,648	17,294	5,733	80,675	80,675
36	57,955	17,386	5,763	81,104	81,104
37	58,263	17,478	5,794	81,535	81,535
38	58,570	17,571	5,824	81,965	81,965
39	58,878	17,663	5,855	82,396	82,396
40	59,185	17,755	5,885	82,825	82,825

Notes about this table. The column labeled “Cash compensation” is what the pastor will actually be paid. The column “Defined Compensation” is a technical term used by Portico. It includes all compensation to the pastor and is used to calculate the cost of the pastor’s pension and health care plan. The Defined Compensation is the same for all pastors, parsonage or not, however when no parsonage is offered Defined and Cash Salary are the same. These figures can be broken down further as Table 1 shows.

HOUSING ALLOWANCE

United States tax law allows the congregation to designate a part of the pastor's salary as housing allowance. The benefit to the pastor is that the housing allowance is not taxable for income tax purposes.

SELF EMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION ALLOWANCE (SECA)

Congregation should provide a minimum allowance that corresponds to the employer portion of social security taxes (7.65% of salary plus housing allowance for 2020) as is done by the Southern Ohio Synod. Congregations may further choose to provide for some or all of the remaining social security taxes (7.65% for 2020). The pastor reports it as salary regardless what is provided.

AUTOMOBILE EXPENSES

When a pastor is required to use her/his automobile in carrying out his/her ministry and responsibilities, the use of the automobile should be considered a business expense of the congregation. The congregation may negotiate with the pastor to:

1. Lease or purchase an automobile for use by the pastor and pay all related expenses; or
2. Pay a cents-per-mile reimbursement for actual business miles driven at the current IRS rate when the pastor uses his or her automobile (Check the IRS website at www.irs.gov for the latest mileage reimbursement rate.); or
3. Pay the pastor an equal monthly allowance sufficient which is reported to the IRS as taxable income

It is recommended that the congregation budget \$3,000/year as Automotive Expenses, depending on local conditions.

PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES

Professional expenses include books, professional journals, magazines, vestments and other costs that help a pastor carry on an effective ministry in the congregation. The congregation may negotiate with the pastor to either:

1. Pay all professional expenses as they occur with no maximum; or
2. Pay all professional expenses as they occur up to a maximum allowance; or
3. Establish an expense allowance paid in equal monthly installments, which must be reported as taxable income.

Reimbursing the pastor for the use of his/her personal phone in the conduct of day-to-day ministry needs to be considered as a professional expense.

It is recommended that the congregation budget professional expenses in these amounts:

\$400/ year — general expenses

\$1200/ year — single line cost of cell service. (\$100 per month)

Congregations may want to consider increasing professional expense allowances at certain times, such as after a move or during periods of increased continuing education. It shall be understood that purchases are the property of the pastor.

CONTINUING EDUCATION ALLOWANCE

Continuing education is an investment in the ministry of our pastors. It is important for pastors to improve or acquire skills, and experience personal and professional growth for a more effective ministry. The ELCA recommends that pastors have a minimum of 50 contact hours of continuing education per year. In addition to vacation, therefore, congregations are encouraged to make available at least two weeks per year (including two Sundays) for pastors to engage in continuing education.

It is recommended that the congregation budget a minimum of \$1,200 per year to assist the pastor in meeting the costs of tuition, books, supplies, travel and living expenses while on educational leave, as well as continue the pastor's regular compensation.

Continuing education time and allocated funds accrue to an individual pastor in relation to a call in a particular congregation. When a pastor leaves that specific call, accrued continuing education time and funds are forfeited. Additionally, continuing education time and funds may not be transferred to a pastor who replaces a pastor in a place where such time has accrued.

PENSION, HEALTH, SURVIVOR AND DISABILITY BENEFITS

Congregations shall sponsor the pastor in the Pension and Other Benefits Program of the ELCA, Portico Benefit Services, which provides retirement, disability, survivor, and medical-dental coverage. Sponsorship will include medical-coverage for the pastor’s spouse and children unless they have other employer-provided group medical insurance coverage and the pastor consents to waiving medical-dental coverage for them under the ELCA program. Portico currently offers a range of plans to best match the pastor’s healthcare needs. Some plans offer a healthcare spending account that allows both the pastor and the congregation to set aside money the pastor can spend on any medical expenses. Whichever plan the pastor believes is best fit to the pastor’s family, **the congregation should budget for Portico’s GOLD level coverage, regardless of which plan the pastor chooses.**

Portico Benefit Services adjusts contribution rates annually based on current economic and regional realities. The board sends a letter to each congregation in mid-August that delineates the figures for the next year. The most current contribution rates may also be acquired by visiting the Board of Pensions web site and following the instructions for its easy-to-use contribution rate calculator at <http://www.porticobenefits.org>. Portico Benefit Services is happy to answer questions about their benefits programs. Call them at their Service Center at 1-800-352-2876 or 1-612-333-7651.

AN EXAMPLE

As an example let us consider a congregation, which is calculating the salary and cost of a pastor’s ministry, who is 40 years old and a 12 year veteran. Using the figures in Table 1., they would arrive with the following.

TABLE2: A SIMPLE SALARY STATEMENT:

	Negotiated Comp	Cash Comp Guideline
Salary & Housing		
Salary	48,525	
Housing Allow	14,557	
FICA Reimb (SECA)	4,825	
Total	67,907	67,907
Benefits		
Health & Pension	30,470	
Continuing Education	1,200	750
Professional Exp	1,600	1,600
Automobile Exp	3,000	3,000
Total	36,270	
Total Compensation	104,177	

In this example, the congregation chose to designate \$14,557 as a housing allowance. This designation has to be made by a meeting of council or congregation that sets this amount by a recorded motion in the meeting. This can easily be done at the adoption of Congregational Budget. Here, a SECA of \$4,825 has also been designated.

This congregation chose to budget \$1,200 to invest in its pastor's continuing education. They also chose to use the recommended amounts for professional expenses and cell phone usage, as well as for the Automobile Allowance.

In this example, the pastor has a family, so the congregation has contacted Portico and has been quoted a cost of medical, pension, and survivor benefits of \$30,470. The total for the pastoral ministry budget line in this congregation would then be: \$104,177.

DETAILED CALCULATIONS

Though the above example is sufficient for understanding the salary of the pastor further detail is needed for the **congregation's treasurer**. Here the salary is broken down further so the proper filings with the internal Revenue Service can be made and so that the proper contributions to Portico can be calculated.

TABLE 3: DETAILED SAMPLE CALCULATION

Ln	Item	Negotiated Comp	Guideline	Comment
1	Salary			
2	Guideline Base	48,525	48,525	
3	Merit Increase			
4	Local Cost of Living Adj			
5	Additional Negotiated Salary			
6	Total Salary	48,525		Sum of Lines 2 to 5
7	Housing Allow	14,557		
8	Salary plus Housing Allowance	63,082		
9	FICA Reimb (SECA)	4,825		Recommended: 7.65% of Line 8
10	Cash Compensation	67,907	63,951	Line 8 + Line 9
11	Defined Compensation	67,907	63,951	Line 8 + Line 9
12	IRS Taxable Compensation	53,350		Line 6 + Line 9
13				
14	Benefits			
15	Health & Pension	30,470		Recommended: Portico Gold, 10% Retirement using Line 11
16	Continuing Education	1,200	750	
17	Professional Exp	1,600	1,600	
18	Automobile Exp	3,000	3,000	
19	Total Benefits	36,270		
20	Total Compensation	104,177		Line 10 + Line 19

Note that SECA is calculated based on total salary in Line 8 and includes the portion of the pastors Cash Compensation that has been declared as Housing Allowance. Also note that Taxable Compensation does include the SECA allowance but excludes the Housing Allowance. However, when determining the Health and Retirement contributions to Portico, Total Defined Compensation, Salary plus Housing plus SECA is used.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Our congregations come in many sizes, yet these guidelines use years of service as the prime factor of setting the salary of the pastor. This is so because different size congregations require different skill sets, though these skill sets overlap to a certain degree. A larger congregation or one that finds itself financially well blessed might well afford to pay its pastors a higher salary than proposed in this document and can add an additional amount to line 5 in Table 3. Such a congregation is invited to prayerfully do exactly that.

Staff ministries require further consideration by the congregation. Invariably, one pastor is designated as the “lead pastor.” The congregation should strongly consider paying the lead pastor at a rate equal or higher than the associate(s). For example: A newly called lead pastor with less experience may share ministry with a more experienced associate pastor.

The Southern Ohio Synod territory is economically diverse. In 2018, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the average weekly wage in the synod’s territory ranged from \$576 at the low end to \$1,205 at the high end. The guidelines here offered are aimed at the average Lutheran pastor in Ohio. Both pastor and congregation need to look seriously and with prayer at the local realities to determine whether the call to and of the congregation is affordable or feasible.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR ALL ROSTERED MINISTERS

The church recognizes that its Rostered Ministers are gifts from God and, like all such gifts, require careful stewardship. Such care is the responsibility of every expression of the church. This section discusses the ways in which the congregation cares for its Rostered Ministers, and promotes the careful stewardship of their energies and gifts. Such careful stewardship is intentional care not only of the Rostered Minister, but also of the congregation and the larger church. People grow best in their discipleship in healthy congregations, and are best served by healthy leaders.

HEALTHY LEADERS: Resilient Leaders Shape Healthy Faith Communities

Healthy, resilient leaders shape healthy, resilient faith communities. Congregation members and organizations are called upon to provide their leaders with sustainable livelihoods as well as time to tend their well-being.

- The ELCA has long advocated for a careful stewardship of our Rostered Ministers health and wholeness.
- A 2002 ELCA study on Ministerial Health and Wellness found that many Rostered Ministers are currently suffering from stress, being overweight, high blood pressure and/or high cholesterol, much of which stems from their vocational responsibilities. These unhealthy conditions not only reduce their effectiveness and quality of life, but also contribute directly to the rising cost of the congregation’s cost for healthcare benefits.
- To ensure healthy ministers and to help control rising insurance costs, Rostered Ministers are encouraged to participate in Portico’s annual wellness program.
- Rostered Ministers and congregations are encouraged to work together to identify methods of safeguarding and improving the physical, emotional, social, intellectual, vocational, and spiritual health and well-being of their Rostered Ministers.
- Such a discussion should define specific and mutually beneficial practices that respect a Rostered minister’s personal time, establish reasonable work schedules, and encourage a healthy lifestyle.
- Additionally, congregations are encouraged to promote self-care to ensure healthy congregations and healthy leaders.

WORK WEEK

It often seems that the work of ministry is “never done” and that there are never enough hours in the week. However, Rostered Ministers, like anyone else, need time off from work to replenish and re-energize.

- Rostered Ministers should have two full days off per week. These days off should be granted and encouraged to be free from ministry-related responsibilities.
- For the well-being of the rostered minister and health of the congregation, Rostered Ministers should not schedule work that exceed 50 hours in a single work week.
- The Rostered Minister’s schedule (days/hours) may be negotiated as necessary.

HOLIDAYS

The responsibilities of Rostered Ministers often means that they are unable to take advantage of the three-day weekends and other holidays, such as Christmas and Easter, that most other people are able to observe.

- It is recommended, therefore, that the nine to eleven holidays observed by the general public, plus three floating personal days, should be designated as observed holidays by the congregation.
- Considerations should then be given, and Rostered Ministers should be encouraged to take these days off at another time during the week whenever they cannot be observed because of pastoral responsibilities.

VACATION

- A minimum of four weeks of paid vacation (including four Sundays) per year is recommended.
- Additional vacation time may be considered and negotiated between the Rostered Minister and their congregation.

CONTINUING EDUCATION, PERSONAL LEAVE FOR FAITH, AND SABBATICAL LEAVE

Rostered Ministers shall engage in Continuing Education each year. This time is for both professional and personal faith formation and development for more effective ministry.

- The ELCA recommends 50 contact hours each year for Continuing Education.
- This time is in addition to any other vacation time and should include two-weeks per year, including two Sundays.

Other time for Personal Leave for Faith or Sabbatical Leave may be offered by the Congregation for all Rostered Ministers.

- For Rostered Ministers serving in the Southern Ohio Synod please see the Personal Leave for Faith document for guidance in planning for this special time away for faith renewal.
- Personal Leave for Faith for faith renewal is designed to offer means for planning for time away for faith renewal in congregations that do not have Sabbatical leave policies or for whom extended leave may not be feasible.
- Personal Leave for Faith is as a means for faith renewal and does not override any Sabbatical leave policies a congregation may already have in place.
- Some congregations offer guidelines for Sabbatical Leave for Rostered Ministers. This time away is to be negotiated and planned in these congregations between the Councils and the Rostered Ministers.

HEALTH AND FAMILY LEAVE

Rostered Ministers shall be provided with six work-weeks (additional time may be negotiated) of paid leave, per year, with full salary and benefits for any of the following reasons:

- For the birth of a child, and to care for the newborn child,
- For the adoption of a child, and to care for the newly adopted child,
- For the care of an immediate family member with a serious health condition, and
- For a personal serious health condition in which the rostered minister is unable to work,
- Bereavement Leave to grieve and heal from the loss of a family member.*

*Rostered Ministers self-care is important to maintaining personal and professional health, therefore, it is recommended that Rostered Ministers take one week to ten days, per incident.

CHURCHWIDE AND OTHER COMMITMENTS

It is important to remember that Rostered Ministers are called by and to the whole church for service in both the church and in the world; this is the connectional nature of our church, serving together.

- Examples may include church-related activities such as serving as a Bible study leader or chaplain at a church camp, or on a synodical or ELCA committee or task force.
- In any case, this “extended ministry” should be carefully and prayerfully considered with the congregation council so that these duties do not disrupt the care for the congregation.
- This time should be regarded as an extension of the congregation's ministry and should not be considered as vacation time.
- Additional responsibilities outside the congregation may include, National Guard/Reserve duty, or a teaching assignment at a college or seminary, are not seen as an extension of the congregational ministry, but a personal responsibility of the Rostered Minister.
 - These responsibilities are often not negotiable in time and scope. The Rostered Minister and the ministry setting will need to address these in a case-by-case basis to ensure that leadership and pastoral care coverage is available during these times.