



**Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

**ROSTERED LEADERSHIP**  
**COMPENSATION GUIDELINES FOR 2017**  
Updated November 2016



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**ROSTERED LEADERSHIP COMPENSATION GUIDELINES FOR 2017**  
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**CONTENTS**

INTRODUCTION.....	1
COMPENSATION FOR CLERGY .....	2
Clergy Salary .....	2
Clergy Benefits .....	5
Professional Expense Reimbursement.....	5
<i>2017 Clergy Salary Range Development Worksheet</i> .....	7
COMPENSATION FOR ROSTERED LAY LEADERS.....	8
Rostered Lay Leader Salary .....	8
Rostered Lay Leader Benefits.....	11
Professional Expense Reimbursement.....	12
<i>2017 Lay Leader Salary Range Development Worksheet</i> .....	13
SUPPLY PASTORS .....	14
CHURCH MUSICIANS.....	14

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Rostered Leadership Compensation Guidelines are written to assist the members of a congregation in setting a salary for clergy and rostered lay leaders. A compensation package includes, but is not limited to, salary, housing allowance, medical and dental benefits, social security offsets and pension contributions. Included worksheets will indicate a fair salary range.

The guidelines are separated in sections for clergy and rostered lay leaders and with less detail for supply pastors and church musicians.

As with all matters, the consideration of the issue of rostered leadership compensation should be entered into prayerfully and in recognition of many factors. It is urged that congregations consider the following as a goal:

A rostered leader's total compensation package should, as much as possible, be comparable to the compensation received by members of the congregation in professional occupations, considering level of education and the years of experience.

As the congregation and rostered leader begin the process of determining a mutually agreed upon salary, please keep the following points in mind:

- Members of the congregation and the rostered leader should be as honest with each other as possible.
- At all times, speak to each other with the love of Christ.

## COMPENSATION FOR CLERGY

### CLERGY SALARY

Following are considerations and instructions for completing “Clergy Salary Range Development Worksheet” (page 7).

#### Section 1: Unadjusted Minimum Salary

“Unadjusted Minimum Salary” is set annually by the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod Assembly for clergy. Unadjusted minimum salary includes salary, housing allowance and social security offset, and it assumes up to \$200,000 as the minimum price of a home in the service area of the congregation. This definition is consistent with the term “defined compensation” as used by Portico.

The amount of a salary designated as a “Housing Allowance” must be recorded as a vote of the congregation’s Church Council/Board prior to the beginning of the year.

##### Box 1: “Unadjusted Minimum Salary”

Write the 2015 minimum unadjusted salary amount of **\$58,844** in Box 1. If the terms of call are less than full-time, this figure should be adjusted accordingly in consultation with synod staff. If use of a parsonage is included as a portion of compensation, enter the unadjusted minimum amount of **\$46,245** in Box 1.

#### Section 2: Regional Cost of Living Salary Modifier

There is great value in having the pastor living and identifying with the same parish community in which most of the members live. The Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod covers a large, economically diverse area where the cost of living varies widely within and between the Northern Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C. areas. A regionally-based cost of living modification to the unadjusted minimum salary acknowledges this diversity.

##### Box 2: Median Housing Cost

Enter in Box 2 the median single-family home price near the congregation, using the primary zip code(s) served by the congregation. The figure can be obtained by contacting a local realtor or by using the RealEstate Business Intelligence site on the web (steps follow, personal information not required).

1. Log onto [www.rbintel.com](http://www.rbintel.com)
2. Browse Statistics (upper right)
3. Select State (expand)
4. Select County
5. Select Zip Code

##### Box 3: Cost Over Threshold

If the figure in Box 2 exceeds \$200,000 (the minimum cost of housing within the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod), subtract \$200,000 from Box 2 and enter the resulting figure in Box 3.

**Box 4: Housing Cost Adjustment**

Multiply Box 3 by .03 (3%) and write the result in Box 4.

(Example: The price of a median single-family home in area served by congregation is \$300,000.  $\$300,000 - \$200,000 = \$100,000$ .  $\$100,000 \times .03 = \$3,000$  is recorded in Box 4.)

If use of a parsonage is included as a portion of compensation, a housing equity allowance should be calculated instead. This number will be a minimum of 30% of the amount determined above.

(Example:  $\$3,000 \times .30 = \$900$ .)

In no case should this number be less than the equity allowance the pastor is presently receiving.

**Box 5: Regionally Modified Minimum Salary**

Add Box 1 and Box 4 to obtain the Regionally Modified Minimum Salary for the congregation, and enter this figure in Box 5.

**Section 3: Determining Clergy Salary Adjustment**

This section seeks to quantify the value of experience and education a pastor may possess and the unique aspects of the congregation. These factors will become a basis for adjustment to the minimum salary.

**Box 6: Years of Pastoral Experience**

As per most professional salary systems, the synod seeks to reflect the value of acquired skills, wisdom and experiences that can only come from actual pastoral experience. Credit one point for each year of service as an ordained pastor and enter in Box 6.

**Box 7: Worship Attendance**

Pastors of large churches often bear increased responsibilities and expectations. The synod seeks to acknowledge these responsibilities with this adjustment. Credit is given for primary leadership in congregations where the average weekly worship attendance exceeds 100 persons at a rate of one point for each 12 persons over the 100 worshiper threshold. Associate pastors would receive one-half point for each 12 persons over the 100 worshiper threshold.

To calculate the figure for Box 7, subtract 100 from the average number of worshipers (as reported on the congregation's annual parochial report). Divide that difference by 12, round to the nearest whole number, and enter the figure in Box 7.

(Example: Congregation reports an average of 265 worshipers.  $265 - 100 = 165$ .  $165 / 12 = 13.8$ . Round up to 14 points.)

**Box 8: Advanced Education**

Lutherans have long expected that their pastors be well-educated. This credit seeks to account for and encourage life-long learning for leadership in divinity or related fields. Credit is given (5 points) to those who have taken the time and made the commitment to earn a ministry-related degree in addition to the Master of Divinity. If such is the case, enter 5 points for each degree earned in Box 8.

**Box 9: Longevity in Current Call**

Research has established that vibrant, long-term pastorates are often associated with congregational growth. This adjustment seeks to reflect the shared valuing of healthy, longer-tenured pastorates. Credit one point for each year of service in the pastor's current call in Box 9, to a maximum of 10 points.

**Box 10: Related Non-Pastoral Experience**

Increasingly, persons with prior experience in related fields are entering rostered ministry in our church. This adjustment seeks to acknowledge the value of prior experience in related fields that are helpful to the ministry (e.g. teaching, administration, financial, counseling, social work, etc.).

Credit is given for each year of prior experience in a related field up to ten years. Multiply the pastor's years of significant prior experience by 0.5 (# years x 0.5) and write either that figure or the number 5 (whichever is lesser) in Box 10. If the pastor does not have any years of significant prior experience, enter "0" in Box 10.

**Box 11: Total Points**

Add together the credits in Boxes 6 through 10 to create a point total and write that number in Box 11.

**Box 12: Salary Adjustment**

The number recorded in Box 11, multiplied by the pre-determined adjustment factor of **\$577**, generates the minimum salary adjustment. Transfer that dollar figure to Box 12.

**Section 4: Determining Clergy Salary Range**

**Box 13: Minimum Salary**

By adding the Regionally Modified Minimum Salary (Box 5) and the Salary Adjustment (Box 12) figures together, the appropriate minimum salary limit is determined. Write that figure in the Box 13.

**Box 14: Median Salary**

The median salary is calculated by multiplying Box 13 by 1.15 (15%). Enter that figure in Box 14.

**Box 15: Maximum Salary**

The higher salary range limit is calculated by multiplying Box 13 by 1.30 (30%). Enter that figure in Box 15.

**Box 16: Mutually-Negotiated Pastoral Salary**

Although the synod may produce helpful guidelines and suggested ranges for appropriate salary, congregations need to annually review and revise salary for their rostered leaders. Using the figure in Box 13 as a minimum and Box 15 as a maximum, it is the responsibility of the congregation to determine actual annual salary.

During the course of the conversation between the pastor and those responsible for annual salary recommendations, consider using the following questions as guides for allowing one to move up or down in the range presented.

- Does our pastor bring any additional or special skills to the position that ought to be rewarded?
- Do we expect our pastor to take on any significant additional responsibilities as a leader of our congregation?
- Does the pastor face any unique financial issues that ought to be addressed by the congregation?

- Are we in an area where housing costs are unusually high such that special consideration may need to be made?

The figure entered in Box 16 represents the mutually-negotiated pastoral salary (adjusted accordingly if the terms of call are less than full-time).

## **CLERGY BENEFITS**

### **Pension and Major Medical**

Congregations should also be responsible for providing pension and major medical coverage. Sponsorship will include medical-dental 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 Pension and Other Benefits Program. Current contribution rates for the ELCA's Portico coverage can be found at <https://porticobenefits.org>.

### **Vacation**

A minimum of four weeks of vacation shall be provided.

### **Study Leave**

A minimum of two weeks paid study leave is recommended annually with the provision for the accumulation of unused study leave up to six weeks.

### **Parental/Family Leave**

It is recommended that congregations develop a program for parental leave which includes childbearing and childcare leave. The program should include both the birth and adoption of children and cover full salary, housing and benefits with the understanding that the individual would return to work for a minimum of six months after taking the leave. It is recommended that congregations provide paid childbearing leave of at least eight weeks. This allows time to recover from the physical demands of childbirth as well as time for the emotional adjustment to a new child. It is also recommended that congregations provide paid childcare (for mother or father) leave of at least four to six weeks. This leave recognizes the need for parents to spend time bonding with the child. Childcare leave could run consecutively to childbearing or be split into smaller increments.

Congregations are encouraged to consider the provisions of the federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) which allow for up to 12 weeks leave (which can be a combination of paid and unpaid leave). FMLA leave can be used for personal or family member care situations.

### **Sabbatical**

An extended leave/sabbatical of one to three months may be granted after the pastor has served a congregation three to five years beyond the First Call Theological Education Program.

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT**

### **Automobile Expense**

Pastors using personal cars for business shall be reimbursed for the actual costs they incur for church business, based upon the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) guidelines.

**Continuing Education**

A contribution of \$500 per year toward the pastor's continuing education is recommended. This shall include participation in a First Call Theological Education Program, where applicable.

**Books and Periodicals**

A minimum book allowance of \$300 per year is recommended.

**Conventions, Assemblies, and Pastoral Conferences**

Coverage of expenses for official meetings of the synod is required.

**2017 CLERGY SALARY RANGE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET**  
*Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod of the ELCA*

**Section 1: Unadjusted Minimum Salary**

Unadjusted Minimum Salary ..... 1

**Section 2: Regional Cost of Living Salary Modifier**

Median Housing Cost ..... 2

Cost Over Threshold (subtract \$200,000 from box 2) ..... 3

Housing cost adjustment (multiply box 3 by 0.03) ..... 4

(If parsonage provided, enter agreed upon housing equity instead.)

Regionally Modified Minimum Salary (add boxes 1 and 4) ..... 5

**Section 3: Determining Salary Adjustment**

Years of Pastoral Experience ..... 6

Worship Attendance ..... 7

Advanced Education ..... 8

Longevity in Current Call (maximum 10 points) ..... 9

Related Non-Pastoral Experience (maximum 5 points) ..... 10

Total Points (Add boxes 6 through 10) ..... 11

Salary Adjustment (multiply box 11 by \$577) ..... 12

**Section 4: Determining Clergy Salary Range**

Minimum Salary (add boxes 5 and 12) ..... 13

Median Salary (multiply box 13 by 1.15) ..... 14

Maximum Salary (multiply box 13 by 1.30) ..... 15

Mutually-Negotiated Pastoral Salary ..... 16

## **COMPENSATION FOR ROSTERED LAY LEADERS**

The term Rostered Lay Leaders applies to all lay persons who are on the roster of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod, ELCA in the categories of Associate in Ministry, Diaconal Minister and Deaconess. Compensation guidelines for rostered lay leaders are for those employed at least 20 hours per week in a paid position with programmatic responsibilities.

It is recognized that there are persons employed by congregations of the synod in specialized ministries who, in terms of hours of employment and ministry responsibilities, are functioning as lay ministers, but without being rostered. These guidelines may be applied to them as well.

Because of the diversity of skills, jobs and responsibilities, compensation guidelines for rostered lay leaders are more loosely framed and need to be subjected to a greater degree of interpretation than the clergy guidelines.

### **ROSTERED LAY LEADER SALARY**

Following are considerations and instructions for completing “2015 Lay Leader Salary Range Development Worksheet” (page 13).

#### **Section 1: Unadjusted Minimum Salary**

The Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod Assembly annually sets an Unadjusted Minimum Salary for rostered lay leaders.

##### Box 1: Unadjusted Minimum Salary

Write the baseline salary amount of **\$38,963** in Box 1

#### **Section 2: Lay Leader Regional Cost of Living Modifier**

Even though rostered lay leaders cannot be paid a housing allowance, it is commonly known that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod area has a higher cost of living than most other regions. In this step, it is recommended that the cost of living and housing should be considered and an allowance added to the unadjusted minimum salary of a rostered lay leader.

As stated in the clergy salary guidelines, it is recommended that the minimal amount required for a home in this area is \$200,000. Many of the regional areas in the synod have considerably higher housing costs.

##### Box 2: Median Housing Cost

Determine the median single-family home prices near the congregation, using the primary zip code(s) served by the congregation. The figure can be obtained by contacting a local realtor or by using the RealEstate Business Intelligence site on the web (steps follow, personal information not required).

1. Log onto [www.rbintel.com](http://www.rbintel.com)
2. Browse Statistics (upper right)
3. Select State (expand)
4. Select County

5. Select Zip Code

Box 3: Cost Over Threshold

If the figure in Box 2 exceeds \$200,000 (the minimum cost of housing within the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod), subtract \$200,000 from Box 2 and enter the resulting figure in Box 3.

Box 4: Housing Cost Adjustment

Multiply Box 3 by .03 (3%) and write the result in Box 4.

(Example: The price of a median single-family home in area served by congregation is \$300,000.  $\$300,000 - \$200,000 = \$100,000$ .  $\$100,000 \times .03 = \$3,000$  is recorded in Box 4.)

By increasing the baseline salary of the rostered lay leader in this fashion, the congregation recognizes the higher cost of living and cost of housing in the synod. However, the congregation may choose to make no adjustment in this category and would write "0" in Box 4.

Box 5: Regionally Modified Minimum Salary

Add Box 1 and Box 4 to obtain the Regionally Modified Minimum Salary for the congregation, and enter this figure in Box 5.

It is not a requirement that the congregation consider the cost of housing to set the rostered lay leader's baseline salary. It is strongly recommended that the congregation perform this exercise so that it is clearly understood the total costs in this synod and strive to pay rostered lay leaders a "living wage" to retain these gifted partners in the ministry.

**Section 3: Determining Salary Adjustment**

This section seeks to quantify the value of experience and education a rostered lay leader may possess. These factors will become a basis for possible adjustment to the minimum salary.

Box 6: Years of Experience

As per most professional salary systems, the synod seeks to reflect the value of acquired skills, wisdom and experiences that can only come from actual rostered leadership experience. Credit one point for each year of service as a rostered lay leader in Box 6.

Box 7: Worship Attendance

Rostered lay leaders of large churches often bear increased responsibilities and expectations. The synod seeks to acknowledge such with this adjustment. Credit is given for leadership in congregations where the average worship attendance exceeds 100 persons at a rate of 1 point for each 24 worshipers over the 100 worshiper threshold.

To calculate, subtract 100 from the average worship attendance as reported on the congregation's annual parochial report. Divide that difference by 24 and enter the figure in Box 7.

(Example: Congregation reports average worship attendance of 155.  $155 - 100 = 55$ .  $55 / 24 = 2.2$ . Round to 2 points.)

**Box 8: Advanced Education**

Lutherans have long expected that their lay leaders be well-educated. This credit seeks to account for and encourage life-long learning for leadership in Divinity or related fields. Credit is given (5 points) to those who have taken the time and made the commitment to earn a ministry related degree beyond the Master of Divinity level. Depending upon the types of tasks the congregation calls their rostered lay leader to perform, these degrees may be in music, counseling or other related fields. If such is the case, enter 5 points for each degree earned in addition to the Master's degree in Box 8.

**Box 9: Longevity in Current Call**

To effectively establish a vibrant and growing ministry, the synod seeks to recognize rostered lay leaders' long-term calls. Credit one point for each year of service in the rostered leader's current call in Box 9 up to a maximum of 10 points.

**Box 10: Related Non-Pastoral Experience**

Increasingly, persons with prior experience in related fields are entering rostered lay leadership roles in our church. This adjustment seeks to acknowledge the value of prior experience in related fields that are helpful to the ministry of the rostered lay leader. Credit may be given for each year of prior experience in a related field up to ten years. Multiply the rostered lay leader's years of significant prior experience by 0.5 (# years x 0.5) and write either that figure or the number 5 (whichever is lesser) in Box 10.

**Box 11: Total Points**

Add together the credits in Boxes 6 through 10 to create a point total and write that number in Box 11.

**Box 12: Salary Adjustment**

The number recorded in Box 11, multiplied by the pre-determined adjustment factor of **\$382**, generates the minimum salary adjustment. Transfer that dollar figure to Box 12.

**Box 13: Specific Responsibilities Adjustment**

It is not a requirement that the congregation consider the Specific Responsibilities Adjustment to set the rostered lay leader's baseline salary. It is strongly recommended that the congregation perform this exercise so that it is clearly understood the total role of the rostered lay leader in their congregation and strive to pay rostered lay leaders a "living wage" to retain these gifted partners in the ministry.

As noted previously, the skills, jobs and responsibilities of rostered lay leaders are widely diverse through the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod. Therefore, in considering an appropriate salary for the rostered lay leader, the responsibilities, education and performance of the rostered lay leader should be taken into consideration. This adjustment cannot be given clear guidelines in this document due to the diversity of skills, jobs and responsibilities of the rostered lay leaders throughout the synod. This adjustment should be discussed between the rostered lay leader and the congregation or the Church Council.

If, as recommended, an adjustment to recognize the Specific Responsibilities of the rostered lay leader is made, it should be a dollar figure that is entered into Box 13.

**Section 4: Determining Lay Leader Salary Range**

**Box 14: Minimum Salary**

By adding the Regionally Modified Minimum Salary (Box 5), the Salary Adjustment (Box 12) and the Specific Responsibilities Adjustment (Box 13) figures together, the appropriate minimum salary limit is determined. Write that figure in Box 14.

**Box 15: Median Salary**

The median salary is calculated by multiplying Box 14 by 1.15. Enter that figure in Box 15.

**Box 16: Maximum Salary**

The higher salary range limit is calculated by multiplying Box 14 by 1.30. Enter that figure in Box 16.

**Box 17: Mutually-Negotiated Lay Leadership Salary**

Although the synod may produce helpful guidelines and suggested ranges for appropriate salary, congregations need to annually review and revise salary for the rostered lay leaders. Using the figure in Box 14 as a minimum and Box 16 as a maximum, it is the responsibility of the congregation to determine the actual annual salary. During the course of the conversation between the rostered lay leader and those responsible for annual salary recommendations, consider using the following questions as guides for allowing one to move up or down in the range presented.

- What are the duties and responsibilities of the rostered lay leader in our congregation?
- Does our rostered lay leader bring any additional or special skills to the position that ought to be rewarded?
- Do we expect our rostered lay leader to take on any significant additional responsibilities in our congregation?
- Does our rostered lay leader face any unique financial issues that ought to be addressed by the congregation?
- Are we in an area where housing costs are unusually high and special consideration may need to be made?

The figured entered in Box 17 represents the mutually-negotiated rostered lay leader salary. If the terms of call are less than full-time, this figure should be adjusted accordingly.

**ROSTERED LAY LEADER BENEFITS**

**Pension and Major Medical**

Congregations should also be responsible for providing pension and major medical coverage. Current contribution rates for the ELCA's Portico coverage can be found at <https://porticobenefits.org>.

**Vacation**

A minimum of four weeks of vacation shall be provided.

**Study Leave**

A minimum of two seeks paid study leave annually with the provision for the accumulation of unused study leave up to six weeks.

**Parental/Family Leave**

It is recommended that congregations develop a program for parental leave which includes childbearing and childcare leave. The program should include both the birth and adoption of children and cover full salary, housing and benefits with the understanding that the individual would return to work for a minimum of six months after taking the leave. It is recommended that congregations provide paid childbearing leave of at least 8 weeks. This allows time to recover from the physical demands of childbirth as well as time for the emotional adjustment to a new child. It is also recommended that congregations provide paid childcare (for mother or father) leave of at least four to six weeks. This leave recognizes the

need for parents to spend time bonding with the child. Childcare leave could run consecutively to childbearing or be split into smaller increments.

Congregations are encouraged to consider the provisions of the federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) which allow for up to 12 weeks leave (which can be a combination of paid and unpaid leave). FMLA leave can be used for personal or family member care situations.

**Sabbatical**

An extended leave/sabbatical of one to three months may be granted after the rostered lay leader has served a congregation three to five years beyond the First Call Theological Education Program.

**PROFESSIONAL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT**

**Automobile Expense**

Rostered lay leaders using personal cars for business shall be reimbursed for the actual costs they incur for church business, based upon the IRS guidelines.

**Continuing Education**

A contribution of \$500 per year towards the rostered lay leader's continuing education is recommended. This shall include participation in a First Call Theological Education Program, where applicable.

**Books and Periodicals**

A minimum book allowance of \$300 per year is recommended.

**Conventions, Assemblies, and Conferences**

Coverage of expenses for official meetings of the synod is required.

**2017 LAY LEADER SALARY RANGE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET**  
*Metropolitan Washington, D.C Synod of the ELCA*

**Section 1: Unadjusted Minimum Salary**

Unadjusted Minimum Salary.....1

**Section 2: Regional Cost of Living Salary Modifier**

Median Housing Cost .....2

Cost Over Threshold .....3

Housing cost adjustment (multiply box 3 by 0.03).....4

Regionally Modified Minimum Salary (add boxes 1 and 4).....5

**Section 3: Determining Salary Adjustment**

Years of Experience.....6

Worship Attendance.....7

Advanced Education.....8

Longevity in Current Call (maximum 10 points).....9

Related Non-Pastoral Experience (maximum 5 points) .....10

Total Points (Add boxes 6 through 10).....11

Salary Adjustment (multiply box 11 by \$382).....12

Specific Responsibilities Adjustment.....13

**Section 4: Determining Lay Leadership Salary Range**

Minimum Salary (add boxes 5, 12 and 13).....14

Median Salary (multiply box 14 by 1.15) .....15

Maximum Salary (multiply box 15 by 1.30) .....16

Mutually-Negotiated Lay Leadership Salary.....17

### **SUPPLY PASTORS**

Compensation to visiting pastors is the responsibility of the host congregation. Congregations should consider the following to be a guideline in compensating supply pastors:

One Service	\$150.00
Each additional service	\$ 50.00
Preparing for and Teaching Bible Class	\$ 50.00

Mileage over 25 miles round trip should be paid at the IRS approved rate for business travel.

### **CHURCH MUSICIANS**

The makeup of individuals employed in the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod as a church musician has changed from predominately Organists to Choir and Music Directors. Although this document cannot suggest specific salary information, the following should be taken into consideration:

Compensation should increase along with the congregation size. As with clergy and rostered lay leaders, the larger the congregation, the more likely the musician will lead choir(s) and have more responsibilities than simply instrumental. As such, the salary should increase along with the responsibilities.

Regional costs of living should be considered when setting a church musician's salary. Compensation should increase based on education. Individuals working in the church in the capacity of Music Director may have college and advanced degrees. This knowledge and background should be recognized in salary considerations.

Longevity in a position should be acknowledged in salary considerations. As with rostered leaders, length of service in a call should be considered in compensation discussions.

Benefits should be provided to church musician staff members that are in full-time roles. Fringe benefits should be comparable to that of rostered members of the staff.

#### **Supply Organist**

When the congregation needs a supply organist, they should be compensated a minimum of \$100.00 on any given Sunday. Of course, this compensation should be altered depending upon the number of services, requirement for choral direction and rehearsals.