

Floor Committee 08: Compensation Review Committee

Subject: Report of floor committee 08

Reference: *Book of Reports and Memorials*, pp. 100-122

Report No. 01

The floor committee thanks the Compensation Review Committee (CRC) for their service to our Savior. Special thanks is given for the Bible study portion of the report. We strongly encourage all calling bodies to review this Bible study on a regular basis. We also encourage that a link to the Bible study be included with the compensation calculator.

The principles underlying the compensation of called servants of the gospel are established by the inspired and unchanging Word of God. The specific application of these principles may vary according to time and circumstance. We pray that these synodical compensation guidelines and resources will challenge leaders in our local WELS churches and schools to have serious discussions regarding compensation for additional duties, funding of professional expenses and continuing education, assigning value to district and synodical service outside the local congregation, and the role of a compensation package in the calling process.

While this compensation plan applies only to synodical called workers, we encourage all calling bodies within our synod to make use of the CRC compensation guidelines and resources as they prayerfully, carefully, and thoughtfully determine the appropriate compensation for each of their called workers. While the topic of student loan debt was not specifically the purview of this committee, the committee encourages congregations calling new graduates to fully utilize all aspects of the guidelines, as well as to discuss student debt with each individual graduate.

We believe annual encouragement and instruction in determining called worker compensation will be a blessing for our church body. We note with appreciation that the CRC plans future Bible studies and instructional videos related to called worker compensation issues. We believe these resources will be valuable for district presidents, circuit pastors, and congregational leaders.

We concur with the CRC report when it states, “there is an ongoing role for the CRC.” The committee recognizes the following issues: 1) how to credit years of experience in other vocations for second-career pastors and teachers, 2) housing allowance for called workers without bachelor's degrees, 3) business expenses (per diem or reimbursement?), and 4) vacation time.

One final note. No guidelines or resources, no matter how well-crafted, will ever eliminate selfishness, greed, or discontent in the hearts of those serving in the public ministry or in the lives of those being served by faithful ministers of the gospel. That is the work of the Spirit. No guidelines or resources, no matter how well-crafted, will ever provide the financial means for struggling congregations to compensate their called workers according to synodical guidelines. That too is the work of the Spirit as God's people grow in the grace of giving. We confessional Lutherans know and confess that the Spirit works through the gospel in Word and Sacrament. We pray that the Spirit will preserve our synod from called workers who are "lovers of money" or "hired hands who care nothing for the sheep." We pray that the same Spirit will move God's people to honor those who serve them with the gospel by providing adequate compensation.

Pastor Michael Woldt, chairman

Pastor Nathan W. Strutz, secretary