

**INTERIM MINISTRY**

**POLICY AND PROCEDURES**  
**&**  
**RESOURCES**

The Presbyterian Church in Canada  
Ministry & Church Vocations  
2014



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# INTERIM MINISTRY

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## **POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR INTERIM MINISTRY**

*The policy and procedures for interim ministry were established by General Assemblies as follows: approved in 2001 (A&P 2001 p.391-396, 40); revised in 2013, with final confirmation of changes under the Barrier Act in 2014 (A&P 2013 p. 387-402, 19; A&P 2014, p. 469, 39).*

### **A. Pastoral Leadership During Times of Transition (Definitions)**

Whenever the pastoral tie between a minister and congregation is dissolved, one major decision to be made is the type of pastoral care and leadership the congregation/pastoral charge will require during the period until a new minister is called. There are three basic types of pastoral leadership for times of transition:

1. Occasional supply refers to various individuals invited by the interim moderator to provide worship leadership Sunday by Sunday.
2. Stated supply refers to the appointment by the presbytery of an ordained minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for a specified period of time not to exceed 12 months. This is a sustaining ministry that ordinarily provides worship leadership and may include other pastoral duties to be determined by the session and the presbytery.
3. When there are circumstances that require more than sustaining ministry, an interim minister may be appointed. Interim ministry refers to the appointment by the presbytery of an ordained and specially qualified minister for a specified period of time not to exceed two years. Such ministry will include a covenant with specified goals and a timeline agreed to by the presbytery and the session. Persons who accept the role of interim minister in a congregation are not eligible to candidate for a call in that congregation.

Each of the three types of pastoral leadership proceeds under the supervision of the interim moderator, who is appointed by the presbytery as its representative in the pastoral charge.

### **B. Rationale for Interim Ministry**

Interim ministry is an intentional short-term ministry designed to help a congregation get to a “state of readiness” for the next stage of its ministry. It is deliberately temporary ministry in a time of transition, such as the time between settled ministers.

Interim ministry recognizes that a transition time, with proper leadership, can be a time when a congregation grows significantly in its self-understanding and ability to minister effectively to its community. However it may also be a time of emotional upheaval. For example, in the time between settled ministers, the task of bringing closure to one relationship and preparing to begin a new one requires sufficient directed opportunities to experience the reality of the change that is occurring. Moving too rapidly to the calling of a new minister may short-circuit the congregation’s ability to do the developmental tasks that transitions require. The need is increased where the departing minister has had a long tenure or where there have been serious unresolved conflicts in the congregation. Interim ministry is a mechanism to help a congregation to resolve grief and conflict, to work out problems and to make changes so that it is truly ready to welcome a new minister. It is a mechanism for providing assistance through a temporary minister who, by training and experience, can help a congregation prepare for a new pastoral relationship and open a new chapter in its story of worship, witness and service.

The temporary nature of interim ministry is critical to its effectiveness.<sup>1</sup> Interim ministers are strictly ineligible to be called to the pastoral charge where they are serving as interim ministers. The realization that the interim minister cannot stay keeps the congregation aware that it is in a time of transition. As uncomfortable as the sense of being unsettled may be, that awareness may greatly increase the congregation's capacity for change above its usual level. Change is an essential part of every interim ministry. The temporary nature of interim ministry also brings the potential for freedom and objectivity to the interim minister. With no vested interest in a long-term call to the congregation, the interim minister is free to focus on enabling the congregation to make the shifts in understanding, relationships and leadership for which the particular interim ministry has been designed.

### **C. When is Interim Ministry Appropriate?**

Interim ministry is appropriate whenever there are specific goals or changes that a congregation needs to accomplish before preparing a congregational profile and searching for a minister to call. When the congregation is in extraordinary circumstances (that may include trauma or elevated levels of conflict) the presbytery and/or the session may deem that interim ministry is essential.

The range of circumstances in which interim ministry may be appropriate includes the following:

1. There has been a long pastorate. Some denominations with interim ministry experience use 10-12 years as a guide.
2. The pastoral charge is experiencing considerable grief over the departure of a minister who has been much appreciated.
3. The pastoral charge has experienced the death or long-term disability of their minister.
4. Two amalgamating congregations face the challenge of becoming one worshipping community with common identity and mission.
5. The presbytery and the pastoral charge need to determine whether or not the congregation is viable.
6. The pastoral charge needs to change the functioning of its lay leadership before issuing a call.
7. The pastoral charge has experienced a number of short-term pastorates where the 'fit' seems to have been wrong.
8. There has been significant conflict or polarization.
9. The minister has been deposed from ordained office or removed from the denomination.
10. The minister has been charged and placed on an extended leave of absence during an investigation, or has been found guilty of misconduct of an ethical or moral nature and has left the pastoral charge.
11. The pastoral charge has not yet come to terms with past ethical or moral misconduct on the part of its leaders, clergy or lay.

## **D. Qualifications of an Interim Minister**

Interim ministers need skills in healing, conflict resolution, management of change, organizational development, setting short-term objectives, and entering and exiting a situation. Though all interim ministers are to be ordained, not all ordained ministers can serve effectively as interim ministers.

They need to be:

1. ordained ministers in good standing of The Presbyterian Church in Canada or ordained ministers with demonstrated good standing in denominations represented in the Ecumenical Shared Ministries Handbook, with the approval of the appropriate judicatory in the ministers denomination (BF 213.3).
2. clear about their own identity and being called to this role to facilitate the church's mission.
3. willing to prepare the way for another who is to come.
4. aware of being a significant but limited part of the congregation's history.
5. able to honour the work of others, past and present.
6. a non-anxious presence in the midst of transition, grief and conflict.
7. able to join congregational systems quickly and with ease.
8. able to diagnose a situation accurately and develop action plans quickly.
9. able to provide honest and accurate feedback.
10. able to communicate clearly to the congregation that, as interim ministers, they are ineligible to be considered for a call to that congregation<sup>1</sup>.

A significant amount of satisfactory pastoral experience as an ordained minister is essential. Ministers appointed by presbyteries to interim ministry positions will normally provide certification of completion of or participation in interim ministry training.

Presbyteries appoint interim ministers who have demonstrated that they can provide the specialized leadership the congregations require. Careful checking of references and evaluations is an integral part of selecting and approving the best candidate for the particular situation.

To help the Church meet its future needs for interim ministers, presbyteries should encourage ministers with particular gifts for interim ministry to consider this specialized ministry, and provide assistance with the cost of training if possible.

## **E. Presbytery Process and Accountability for Interim Ministry**

The presbytery process and accountability for interim ministry is grounded on our Church's understanding that the presbytery has responsibility for the care and good order of the congregations within its bounds (Book of Forms, section 200). This means that decisions about an interim ministry appointment in a particular congregation rest ultimately with the presbytery. Nevertheless the process anticipates the presbytery consulting fully with the session and seeking session concurrence on decisions about the interim ministry, except in rare cases when that is not possible. The session, for its part, consults with the congregation about the plans for an interim ministry, as appropriate. However, an interim ministry appointment is not a call, and the signed

agreement of members of the congregation is not required. In all cases and at all levels, good communication about decisions is imperative.

1. The presbytery shall conduct an exit interview with the session and with the departing minister, review presbytery visitation reports, and discuss the selection of an appropriate interim moderator.
2. After discussion with the session about the particular skills needed in an interim moderator, the presbytery shall name an appropriate interim moderator.
3. The session, with the guidance of the interim moderator, shall: i) assess ministry needs, ii) review ministry options, and iii) consider the type of leadership required during the transitional time.
4. When interim ministry is chosen, the session, with the guidance of the interim moderator, shall draft a statement of ministry needs and present it to the presbytery, requesting authorization from the presbytery to seek an interim minister. The presbytery can require a period of interim ministry without session concurrence.
5. The presbytery shall approve a period of interim ministry for the congregation and authorize the session to seek an interim minister.
6. The session, with the guidance of the interim moderator, shall seek and covenant with an appropriate interim minister. The covenant will include interim ministry goals to be achieved. Stipend and allowances must meet all General Assembly or presbytery minimum standards. Consideration should be given to providing the stipend level of the previous minister, when this exceeds the minimum standards.
7. The presbytery shall approve the covenant with the interim minister and appoint the interim minister. Whenever the interim minister belongs to a different presbytery, the appointing presbytery shall take the necessary action to seek concurrence of and transfer from the interim minister's presbytery. Whenever the interim minister belongs to another denomination, before making the appointment the appointing presbytery shall obtain confirmation that the appropriate judicatory of the minister's denomination has approved the interim ministry covenant.
8. The presbytery shall specify the roles of the interim moderator and interim minister, communicate this to the session and congregation, and ensure that the interim moderator and interim minister have established an effective working relationship. The presbytery has the responsibility for the continuing quality of this working relationship, especially to provide a ready point of reference should difficulties arise between the interim moderator and the interim minister.
9. The presbytery shall arrange for a worship service to recognize the beginning of the interim ministry.
10. In the case of ministers of The Presbyterian Church in Canada: The presbytery shall place the interim minister on the constituent roll of the presbytery, provided s/he is serving at least half-time. Otherwise, the interim minister is placed on the appendix to the roll.

Ministers of other denominations do not become members of the presbytery. Such ministers are subject to the same restrictions as those serving under ecumenical shared ministry agreements, as outlined in Book of Forms section 200.13.2.

11. The presbytery shall receive reports on the interim ministry from the interim moderator, and, in many cases, also from the interim minister. Regular reports should include ways in which the goals and objectives of the interim ministry are being met and identification of any support required from the presbytery. When the presbytery has delayed the search for a settled minister, the interim moderator shall obtain the approval of the presbytery before the search begins.
12. The presbytery shall encourage the session of the congregation to arrange a worship service to recognize the completion of the interim ministry.
13. The presbytery shall conduct evaluations of the interim minister and of the interim ministry. These evaluations may occur near the end of the period of interim ministry, but in no case should they occur later than one month after the conclusion of the covenant. The presbytery shall receive and consider the report of the evaluations.

#### **F. Roles and Relationship of the Interim Moderator and Interim Minister**

When a minister leaves a congregation, the minister's judicial responsibilities are assigned to the interim moderator appointed by the presbytery. This means that, as the executive of the presbytery in that congregation, the interim moderator is responsible for the conduct and content of public worship and for the supply of the pulpit. The interim moderator is also responsible for moderating the session. The interim moderator is accountable to the presbytery for the nature of the transitional ministry, and reports regularly to the presbytery on the progress of the congregation. The interim moderator is responsible for facilitating the search process.

Whenever the presbytery appoints an interim minister, the division of duties between the interim moderator and the interim minister must be clear. The basic underlying principle inherent in these procedures is that the interim moderator is responsible to the presbytery for the interim ministry. There is considerable flexibility in how the two ministers work out their respective roles.

The interim minister is a constituent member of the presbytery, provided s/he is serving at least half-time. S/He has voice and vote and can share fully in the life of the presbytery, including opportunities to comment on the progress of the interim ministry.

The interim moderator shall initiate a meeting with the interim minister to agree on their respective roles and to discuss how they can support one another. Thereafter, the interim moderator shall participate in regular open communication with the interim minister.

The interim moderator is responsible for moderating the session; the interim minister shall attend the meetings of session. The tasks of interim ministry, however, often require intensive work on the part of the interim minister with the session. In these and other situations, in consultation with the interim minister, the interim moderator may delegate the moderating of session to the interim minister. In all cases, the interim moderator needs to be kept regularly apprised of the activities of the congregation. Whether the interim moderator attends session meetings moderated by the interim minister shall be worked out between the two ministers.

The interim moderator recommends to the presbytery when the congregation should be permitted to begin its search for a new minister, in those cases when the presbytery has delayed the search process. The presbytery can expect the interim moderator to consult with the interim minister about the state of congregational readiness.

Ordinarily the interim minister is responsible for weekly worship, organizational and pastoral leadership to achieve the goals and objectives of the interim ministry as set by the presbytery and session. The interim minister may have input into congregational self-study as it prepares its congregational profile and may meet with the search committee at the request of the interim moderator at any time prior to consideration of candidates. The interim minister shall withdraw from all involvement in the search process once candidates are being considered.

#### **G. Financial Considerations**

The stipend and allowances provided for an interim minister should be based on the stipend and allowances of the previous minister and should take into account the special expertise and experience of the interim minister. If the appointment is less than full-time, the terms should be pro-rated accordingly, keeping in mind that the expectations should be similarly decreased. Allowances should include continuing education, vacation, pension contribution and Health and Dental plan premiums. Consideration should also be given to a gift of one month's stipend and allowances at the conclusion of the interim ministry appointment to assist the interim minister during the time between appointments.

In presbyteries where there are set amounts for honoraria to interim moderators, consideration should be given to decreasing that amount for interim moderators of pastoral charges where interim ministers are appointed, as the responsibilities of interim moderators in these situations will be greatly reduced.

#### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup>The temporary nature of interim ministry is critical to its effectiveness. Interim ministers are ineligible to be considered for calls to the congregations where they are serving as interim ministers. The rationale for the 'no candidacy rule' is as follows:

1. The temporary nature of interim ministry may greatly increase the congregation's capacity for change. The realization that the interim minister cannot stay keeps the congregation aware that it is in a time of transition. As uncomfortable as the sense of being unsettled may be, that awareness may greatly increase the congregation's capacity for change above its usual level. Change is an essential part of every interim ministry.
2. The temporary nature of interim ministry also brings the potential for freedom and objectivity to the interim minister. With no vested interest in a long-term call to the congregation, the interim minister is free to focus on enabling the congregation to make the shifts in understanding, relationships and leadership for which the particular interim ministry has been designed.
3. Consideration of the interim minister as a candidate for the call might short-change the search process. When the possibility of calling the interim minister exists, some in the congregation will likely try to influence the search committee to "stay with what we already know". However, when a search committee decides to consider the interim minister, the natural tendency will be to focus on the personality of the interim minister, rather than on the congregation's goals for the future and the skills, strengths and abilities needed in the next minister. When the search committee decides to find a way "to keep the interim", it can no longer be objective in the crucial task it is performing on behalf of the congregation.

4. The Church needs to be fair to all possible candidates, and to protect the concept of what an intentional interim ministry can provide for congregations. Allowing the interim minister to be considered for the call is unfair to others who might wish to be considered for it. The interim minister will have a decided advantage in the call process. If interim ministers become the called ministers, this trend will engender distrust of interim ministry and do irreparable harm to the concept of intentional interim ministry.
5. It is risky to call an interim minister when there may be underlying opposition to that individual by persons in the congregation. The interim minister may be liked by many, but usually there are some people who do not like the interim minister for a variety of reasons. Perhaps the interim minister has needed to push, confront, challenge or strongly discourage certain behaviour, actions or policies. This may have angered or alienated the interim minister from some individuals or groups. The anger or hostility can usually be tolerated knowing the interim minister will one day (not too far in the future) be leaving. But if the interim minister is called, there will likely be strong opposition and undermining of the interim minister's ability to be effective over the long term.
6. It is best to keep clear the strictly interim nature of the congregation's covenant with the interim minister, and not complicate the relationship with considerations of her/him being a candidate for the call. Suppose the interim minister is considered as a candidate for the call and then is not chosen by the decision-making bodies during the process? This situation will likely make it extremely difficult for the interim minister to continue as an effective interim minister in that congregation. Feelings experienced by the interim minister and those who either supported or opposed her/his candidacy cannot be discarded easily after a decision has been made.
7. Trust that persons keep their word is essential in covenantal relationships; changing the 'rules of the game' may foster distrust in the minister and the congregational leaders who 'changed the rules'. When an interim minister becomes a candidate for the call, it changes the terms of the covenant under which s/he was appointed to the congregation for a specific term and for specific tasks. Interim ministry covenants are signed by the session on behalf of the congregation, with the approval of the presbytery. Usually there has been no general congregational involvement in the process. Therefore if the interim minister is called to the congregation, some people may feel betrayed, fooled or manipulated, and distrust may permeate the climate in which the new long-term relationship will begin.

## **DEVELOPING AN INTERIM MINISTRY COVENANT**

The interim minister serves under a covenant, not a call, by appointment of the presbytery. The covenant must state specifically the names of the congregation and the interim minister, the goals and tasks for ministry in this interim period, the roles and responsibilities of the interim minister, the length and terms of service, and the stipend and allowances to be provided by the congregation. The session (with the possible involvement of the congregation) should have input into the terms of the covenant. Both session and congregation should be made aware of the terms of the covenant before the interim minister arrives.

The covenant document should include sections on the following topics:

Preamble

Statement of Commitment

Goals and Tasks of the Interim Ministry

Roles and Responsibilities of the Interim Minister

Length and Terms of Service

Stipend and Allowances

Criteria for Evaluation.

Sample covenants have been provided at the end of this document. Portions of several of these may be useful as a particular covenant to fit a particular situation is developed.

### **PREAMBLE**

This section is similar to the narration of steps in the call procedure. In general terms (without using names), it provides background information outlining the current situation. It summarizes the steps taken by the session, possibly in consultation with the congregation, leading up to the request to the presbytery for an interim ministry.

### **STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT**

This section states the intention of the session to commit the congregation to an interim ministry covenant with a particular minister, with the agreement of the congregation and the presbytery.

### **GOALS AND TASKS FOR INTERIM MINISTRY**

These goals and tasks should flow from the statement of ministry needs that was developed by the interim moderator and the session and was presented by the interim moderator to the presbytery as part of the process for authorization of an interim ministry. They reflect areas of concern and/or ministry that are to be the primary focus during the interim period.

In his book *The Interim Pastor's Manual*, Alan Gripe describes five developmental tasks of congregations seeking to “develop greater maturity in self-understanding and greater skill in doing what needs to be done” prior to calling a new minister. These five developmental tasks may provide a useful framework for the development of the goals and tasks of the interim ministry.<sup>1</sup>

1. **Coming to Terms with History**

Congregations often need “to come to terms with history, to review it, and to acknowledge it, beauty and blemishes alike. Then, having acknowledged the past, ... (they need to consider) what it means for the present and how it can be understood to help to shape the future productively.”<sup>2</sup>

2. **Discovering a New Identity**

Following the departure of a minister, some congregations are left wondering who they are and who they will be. The in-between time provides an opportunity for the congregation to assess its current ministry and its potential for ministry in the present and immediate future. It is an opportunity for the congregation to look not only at itself, but also at the challenges of the community it serves.

3. **Allowing and Empowering New Leaders**

Congregations often need to become aware of the various forms and uses of power in the congregation and to ensure effective leadership in the congregation. This frequently involves managing leadership shifts.

4. **Renewing Denominational Linkages**

This task involves the strengthening of communication and the renewal of relationships between the congregation and other bodies in the church, especially the presbytery. The desired outcome is a congregation that is able to acknowledge its sense of pride in its heritage and its membership in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and to reaffirm its responsibilities to the denomination.

5. **Committing to New Leadership and a New Future**

Throughout the in-between time, the congregation needs to be working consciously towards its future, a future in which the interim minister will not have a leadership role. As the first four tasks are completed, the congregation prepares itself to make the commitment its new future will require.

Additional or revised goals and tasks may be established during the term of the covenant by mutual agreement of the session and interim minister and with the approval of the presbytery.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INTERIM MINISTER**

The interim minister is responsible for providing leadership in two key areas: the work of the session and congregation on the specific goals and tasks of the interim ministry; regular duties associated with pastoral ministry.

It is essential that the particular roles and responsibilities of the interim minister be delineated clearly in the covenant document.

The interim minister will become a constituent\* member of the presbytery and serve under its care and discipline. (\*As long as the appointment is to a position that is half-time or more; otherwise the interim minister remains on the appendix to the roll of the appointing presbytery.)

The interim moderator is accountable to the presbytery for the nature of the interim ministry and reports to the presbytery on the activities and progress of the congregation towards the achievement of the goals and tasks of the interim ministry. It is expected that the interim moderator will involve the interim minister in the preparation and presentation of such reports.

The division of duties between the interim moderator and the interim minister must be clear and an effective working relationship developed.

The interim moderator may delegate the moderating of the session to the interim minister, recognising that the interim moderator must be kept regularly apprised of the activities of the congregation.

The interim moderator is responsible for facilitating the search process. The interim minister may have input into the congregational self-study as it prepares its congregational profile and may meet with the search committee at the request of the interim moderator at any time prior to consideration of candidates. The interim minister must withdraw from all involvement in the search process once candidates are being considered.

The presbytery shall conduct evaluations of the interim minister and the interim ministry. These evaluations may occur near the end of the period of interim ministry, but in no case should they occur later than 1 month after the conclusion of the covenant. The presbytery shall receive and consider the report of the evaluations.

## **LENGTH AND TERMS OF SERVICE**

The covenant is always for a specific length of time, not to exceed two (2) years. Flexibility may be built into the covenant so that it can be renewed or shortened if the presbytery, congregation and interim minister agree such action is advisable. Changes in length of term might arise to suit the timing of the new minister's arrival or a redefining of the goals and tasks of the interim ministry.

The covenant must state clearly that the interim minister is not eligible for a call to this congregation.

Expectations for the number of hours per week and the division of time between office, visitation, and other duties should be clarified.

Provision for vacation, study leave, absence due to illness, and other special release time provision should be listed in the covenant.

## **STIPEND AND ALLOWANCES**

The terms of the covenant relating to stipend and allowances should be set by mutual agreement of the session and the interim minister. However, all aspects of the covenant must be approved by the presbytery, as with a call.

The presbytery must ensure that the stipend and allowances are at least at the minimum levels set by the General Assembly (and by the presbytery, when applicable), and preferably at a level commensurate with the qualifications and experience of the interim minister. There should be a reasonable relationship between the level of stipend and allowances given to the interim minister and the level given to the previous incumbent. (The Interim Ministry Network recommends that stipend and allowances given to the interim minister be at least 80% of the stipend and allowances given to the previous inducted minister.)

## **CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION**

The specific goals and tasks of the interim ministry will form the basis for evaluating the interim ministry. To what degree has the congregation made progress toward its goals? To what degree has the interim minister offered effective leadership?

In cases when the interim ministry appointment might be extended for an additional period, these specific goals and tasks will provide the basis for that decision as well.

The evaluation committee should include session representatives, the interim moderator, representatives of the presbytery and the interim minister.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Gripe, Alan G. *The Interim Pastor's Manual, revised edition*. Louisville: Geneva Press, 1997, p. 38-50

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

## **PREPARING YOUR INTERIM MINISTRY COVENANT**

The sample covenants that follow have been provided as illustrations. They have been taken from covenants used in specific situations within 3 different congregations of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. As the sample covenants indicate, these three congregations were dealing with a broad range of issues, in contexts which included conflict within a specific area, serious questions of congregational viability, and widespread congregational conflict. The sample covenants have been edited to make the covenants more generic.

You may find some parts are relevant to your situation, while others are not. As you write the interim ministry covenant that suits your context, use and adapt any sections from the sample covenants that prove helpful.

**SAMPLE COVENANT #1**  
**A congregation with localized conflict**

**PREAMBLE**

The congregation of (name of congregation) met, in a duly called meeting, with the interim moderator, on (date) to discuss the goals and priorities of an interim ministry in this congregation.

The session approved the decision of the congregation to request the permission of the presbytery to proceed with the tasks of establishing an interim ministry for (name of congregation) as per this covenant, and to request the appointment of the Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ as the minister to carry out this interim ministry.

The congregational decision-making process included consideration of the information and feedback provided by both small group discussions and those of the gathered congregation as a whole. They reflected on such things as the highlights and memories of the congregation's life, activities, finances (past and present), a recent conflict, and what they consider to be their priorities concerning the focus of an interim ministry and the congregation's life and witness within the congregation and in the community of \_\_\_\_\_.

**STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT**

The session, being satisfied with the qualifications of the Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ and trusting that his/her ministry in the Gospel will be to our spiritual benefit, hereby, with the agreement of the congregation and the Presbytery of \_\_\_\_\_, commits our congregation to engage the Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ to provide full-time interim ministry according to the stated priorities.

**GOALS AND TASKS OF INTERIM MINISTRY**

Following a time of discussion the congregation identified and prioritized the following areas of concern and/or ministry to be the primary focus of an interim ministry. These priorities were approved by session on (date) in a duly called meeting moderated by the interim moderator.

**1. Healing and reconciling pastoral care**

This ministry needs to pay special attention to those involved in and/or affected by the recent conflict involving the choir, choir director, minister and session. The congregation's hope is for better understanding and reconciliation between those who are estranged both within the attending congregation and those who have withdrawn. It is realized that while significant progress may be made toward this goal, the resumption of attendance and participation by all these members may not be the result.

## **2. Improved and continuous communication between session, board of managers, choir, groups and congregation**

Communication received only four votes less than healing and reconciliation (item #1). There is an urgent need for the congregation to put in place and use appropriate vehicles of communication and to more fully develop and utilize the many gifts embodied in the congregation.

Leadership development should include help with this aspect of congregational life.

To aid in this matter, the request was made that a booklet containing a comprehensive explanation of the role, authority and responsibilities of the presbytery, session and board of managers be made available to the congregation, so that the members may be more informed, and to eliminate misunderstandings that exist.

## **3. Youth and Young Families**

There is a general concern regarding ministry to, with and amongst children, young adults, and young/new families – both within the congregation and the surrounding community. Interim Ministry should provide opportunities for:

- a. leadership training
- b. congregational workshops or studies that reflect on the needs of those referred to above, and to plan ways this congregation may helpfully respond
- c. determine timeline and budget to implement responses.

## **4. Community Outreach**

The congregation has a genuine desire to reach beyond itself and minister effectively in and to the community. This is currently expressed in their participation in a local community ministry. They expressed a need for guidance and training of leadership to further enhance their ability to expand their outreach ministry and to include, as active participants, more members of the congregation.

## **5. New ideas and motivation for ministry both within and beyond the congregation**

The congregation expressed a need for the introduction of new ideas that would interest and motivate more individuals in the congregation to become actively involved in some aspect of the congregation's activities and ministries, either those already available or new ventures into ministry yet to be established. This will include necessary training and/or support needed by the congregation.

## **6. Elder Training**

The elders and congregation agreed that there is a need for further training of elders in all aspects of their responsibilities including those of leadership, pastoral oversight of the congregation, conflict management and church polity. The congregation, too, would like to develop a better understanding of presbyterian government, and the relationship, authority and responsibilities of the various courts of the church.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INTERIM MINISTER**

In addition to the goals and tasks of the interim ministry stated above, the Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ will be responsible for the following:

- To lead worship and preach weekly, celebrate the sacraments, and ensure that pulpit supply is arranged for those Sundays s/he is not present.
  - To carry out pastoral duties such as funerals, weddings, crisis care.
- To inform the interim moderator as to the progress of the interim ministry/congregation.
- To attend presbytery regularly.
  - To moderate session meetings as authorized by the interim moderator. This arrangement requires the Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ to report to and/or meet with the interim moderator on a regular basis (e.g. once a month).
- To provide training programs in keeping with the priorities established by this covenant. Leadership of these events will be done by the interim minister or, with the approval of the session, by a qualified person recommended by the interim minister.

## **LENGTH AND TERMS OF SERVICE**

It is understood that the interim minister will receive the usual benefits including medical-dental plan, group insurance premiums (presbytery), and employment insurance premium.

It is understood that:

the initial appointment will be for 1 year, and that the interim ministry will not exceed 2 years; the interim minister will not be eligible for consideration as a candidate for a call to this congregation.

It is further understood that an evaluation of progress regarding the priorities of the covenant will be made not later than the end of the first eleven months of this ministry, and that if the evaluation process reveals that such would be beneficial, the session will request the presbytery to approve the continuation of the interim ministry for up to an additional 12 months.

## **STIPEND AND ALLOWANCES**

The terms below have been set according to the particular circumstances of the Rev. \_\_\_\_\_, who is a retired minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada:

Stipend - \$36,000, inclusive of travel allowance (\$4,200).

- Housing Allowance - \$13,200 (based on fair rental value of present home of interim minister.)
- Utilities - \$3,200 (based on cost of utilities at present home of interim minister.)
- Telephone – upon monthly voucher submissions to Church Treasurer or Finance Committee
- Health and Dental Plan of PCIC - premium paid by congregation.
- \$600 allowance and 2 weeks of study leave, or as set by General Assembly, yearly inclusive of pulpit supply; these benefits are cumulative in the event the contract is extended for valid reason.
- Provision of 5-week holiday annually and payment of pulpit supply.

Enrollment in the presbytery's group insurance plan.

- In the event of disability or extended illness, to continue to provide stipend and allowances for a period of not less than that set by the General Assembly, and to pay the cost of pulpit supply.

**Notations:**

- No CPP deductions, only EI
- No group-insurance deductions
- Income tax deductions in negotiation with church treasurer (based on normal income tax bracket, PLUS additional deduction, per month, as allowed in tax regulations.)

**CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION**

Evaluation will be based on the stated goals and tasks of the interim ministry. The decision whether to request a continuation of the interim ministry appointment beyond 1 year will be made at the 11-month point, according to the progress and current needs of the congregation with respect to these priorities.

The evaluation committee will include 3 session representatives, the interim moderator, the interim minister and 3 representatives from presbytery.

**EXIT REPORT FROM INTERIM MINISTRY**

At the conclusion of the interim ministry the interim minister will write and provide the presbytery and the interim moderator with a written exit report.

**SAMPLE COVENANT #2**  
**A congregation questioning its viability**

**PREAMBLE**

The session, board and congregation of \_\_\_\_\_, met with the Rev. \_\_\_\_\_, on \_\_\_\_\_(date)\_\_\_\_\_, to discuss the viability of the congregation and its Christian witness in the community. It was decided that to establish viability, the congregation would require a consistent ministry provided by a minister qualified in providing interim ministry and leadership for congregations experiencing the effects of an aging and declining membership.

The session approved the decision of the congregation to request the permission of the presbytery to proceed with establishing, as soon as possible, an interim ministry for \_\_\_\_\_ as per this covenant.

The congregational discussions included consideration of the information provided by the demographic data of the area immediately surrounding the church building, as well as information regarding the life, activities, and finances of the congregation over the past 5 years, and projections of what could be expected in these areas over the next 5-10 years if there is little or no change. It became obvious that without significant change the congregation could not sustain, financially or otherwise, its life and witness in its present location and facilities.

It was agreed that the boundaries of the \_\_\_\_\_ parish, and therefore the area of focus for ministry, would be as indicated on the attached map. There are a number of denominations established in the area. However, \_\_\_\_\_is the only Presbyterian church on the east side of the city. The demographic information, though somewhat out of date, indicates that there is a reasonable expectation of fruitful outreach ministry in the immediate area. It was noted that there has been some growth in this area of the community and further development is planned.

The congregation's active membership is approximately 50 people, the large majority of which are 60 or older. Although coping with change is difficult for individuals of all ages, age is not limiting the desire of the congregation to attempt identifying and making necessary changes, and moving in new directions of Christian witness.

The congregation recognizes that becoming a reasonably viable congregation may not be, for them, an attainable goal. Nevertheless the congregation is certain it wants and is able to make this effort, and would appreciate having the encouragement and the support of the presbytery.

**STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT**

The following covenant between the session of \_\_\_\_\_Presbyterian Church and the Rev. \_\_\_\_\_, is for the purpose of providing interim support, guidance and pastoral oversight to the congregation and the leadership of \_\_\_\_\_Presbyterian Church, \_\_\_\_\_.

The session, being satisfied with the qualifications of the Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ qualifications and trusting that his/her ministry in the Gospel will be to our spiritual benefit, hereby, with the agreement of the presbytery and the congregation, commits our congregation to the following covenant with this minister.

The Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ is invited to be interim minister, \_\_\_\_\_ hours per week (or \_\_\_\_\_ per month), of \_\_\_\_\_ Presbyterian Church. (Stipend and benefits to be negotiated and appended to this covenant agreement.)

### **GOALS AND TASKS OF INTERIM MINISTRY**

1. The establishment of a Pastoral Care Team, which will be responsible for pastoral visiting of newcomers, and of members in homes, hospitals, nursing homes, and for other visiting as authorized by the session.
2. Provision of Christian Education for all ages.
3. Leadership development for session and board of managers, especially in the areas of:
  - skills development, visioning and planning for present and future needs of the congregation;
  - discerning and fulfilling their ministry;
  - familiarity with and use of the Book of Forms;
  - understanding the function of the various courts, boards and committees of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the relationship of these one to the other.
  - equipping lay leaders in the congregation.
4. Organization of an outreach ministry.
5. Development of an effective practice of reception of new members.
6. Lay leadership development, especially in the areas of fellowship, education for discipleship, stewardship, outreach and worship.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INTERIM MINISTER**

The interim minister will be responsible to do the following:

- Lead worship and preach \_\_\_\_\_ Sundays per month. This will include establishing and working with a Worship Team.
- Assure that pulpit supply is arranged for those Sundays s/he is not present.
- Officiate at the sacraments of baptism and holy communion. Officiate at funerals and weddings and/or arrange for another minister of word and sacraments to officiate at these when s/he is not available. (The session must be advised/consulted regarding all such arrangements).
- Attend session meetings (see note below). Meet with the interim moderator and clerk of session to set the meeting agenda.

NOTE: The interim moderator may authorize the interim minister to moderate the session as his/her representative. This arrangement requires the interim moderator and interim minister to meet regularly.
- Officiate at weddings and funerals as requested, and as available.
- Attend board meetings at least 5 times per year.

- Guide and/or support the session and congregation in their work on tasks/goals approved by the session, including those the session, in consultation with the interim minister, may establish during the term of this covenant. With respect to the goals and tasks of interim ministry outlined above, the interim minister will do him/herself or recommend another qualified person to do the following:
  - support the session and board of managers in their areas of growth and learning;
  - train and guide the Pastoral Care Team;
  - train leaders for Christian Education;
  - oversee the organization of the outreach ministry, and train the participants;
  - provide help for the congregation in its reception of new members;
  - assist the session in the task of identifying, engaging and nurturing potential lay leaders/ministers in the congregation.

**LENGTH AND TERMS OF SERVICE**

It is understood that:

- a) the interim ministry will not exceed 2 years;
- b) the interim minister will not be eligible for consideration as a candidate for a call to \_\_\_\_\_.

It is further understood that if, at the end of the first 12 months, the evaluation process reveals that the congregation is not making significant progress, the presbytery will help the congregation move in a meaningful way toward amalgamation with another congregation or dissolution.

**STIPEND AND ALLOWANCES**

The stipend and allowances will be:

- \$\_\_\_\_. Stipend, per annum paid at the beginning of each month, inclusive of travel.
- \$\_\_\_\_. Housing allowance, including utilities.
- \$\_\_\_\_. Continuing education allowance with 2 weeks paid leave per annum, with pulpit supply costs paid by the congregation.
- 5 weeks vacation, with supply costs paid by the congregation.

It is understood that the interim minister will receive the usual benefits including: Medical-Dental Plan, Group Insurance Premiums, and other usual employee costs will be paid by the congregation (as required), including, O.H.I.P., U.C.C., Church Pension Plan, and travel.

Stipend and allowances are negotiable depending on the candidate’s qualifications and the hours of service agreed upon.

**CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION**

The stated goals and tasks of the interim ministry will form the basis for evaluating the degree of progress being made by \_\_\_\_\_(name of congregation)\_\_\_\_\_ toward an ongoing viable ministry, and for the decision whether to continue the interim ministry for a second year.

## **SAMPLE COVENANT #3**

### **A congregation with widespread conflict**

#### **PREAMBLE**

The session of \_\_\_\_\_ is aware that conflict has overshadowed much of its work for the last two years. They have employed a professional conflict mediation consultant, but those efforts did not result in a mediated solution to their difficulties. Since the departure of their minister, they have come to the realization that time for healing and learning is needed before they proceed to call a new minister.

During the period of conflict, communication between the session and the congregation became an important area of concern. It is hoped that a more effective means of communication can be developed that will help the church avoid similar experiences of conflict in the future.

Training of leadership was also identified as a need within the congregation. During the interim period, it is hoped there will be opportunities for training in effective leadership for elders, managers, and laity.

#### **STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT**

The session, being satisfied with the qualifications of the Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ and trusting that his/her ministry in the Gospel will be to our spiritual benefit, hereby, with the agreement of the congregation and the Presbytery of \_\_\_\_\_, commits our congregation to engage the Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ to provide full-time interim ministry according to the stated priorities.

#### **GOALS AND TASKS OF INTERIM MINISTRY**

The focus for \_\_\_\_\_ (name of congregation) \_\_\_\_\_ during this period of interim ministry will be:

1. Learning to discuss differences openly.
2. Developing lay leadership.
3. Promoting healing and reconciliation.

During this period, the session will seek to accomplish the following:

1. Communication
  - To establish guidelines for discussion on the session, with emphasis on rules surrounding confidentiality.
  - To establish guidelines for discussion within the congregation
  - To develop mechanisms for receiving/addressing concerns within the congregation.
  - To develop guidelines relating to conflict of interest.
2. Leadership Development
  - To become better equipped to use and study Scripture and the Book of Forms.
  - To re-vitalize session committees.
  - To train a new Clerk of Session.

### 3. Healing and reconciliation

- To assist the congregation to understand the influence of the congregation's history on its present life.
- To implement a healing and reconciliation program for past conflicts.
- To develop ways to improve the congregation's perception of the session and other groups.
- To strengthen the ties between the congregation and the presbytery.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF INTERIM MINISTER**

- To carry out regular duties associated with pastoral ministry.
- To assist the session in its leadership tasks, and the congregation in accomplishing the goals of the interim ministry.

### **LENGTH AND TERMS OF SERVICE**

- To work full time with the congregation for a period of not less than one year from the beginning of the covenant.
- To review with the session and the appropriate committee of presbytery the congregation's progress after six months, leaving open the possibility of the congregation beginning the process toward calling a minister during the interim minister's term.
- To review with the session and appropriated committee of presbytery the congregation's progress after one year, extending the appointment, if necessary.
- It is understood that the interim minister will not be eligible to be considered for a call to this congregation.

### **STIPEND AND ALLOWANCES**

To provide stipend of \$30, 212.00 per annum, inclusive of travel.

To provide housing allowance of \$15,000.00 per annum, inclusive of utilities.

Two weeks study leave annually, and to provide at least the minimum allowance as set by the General Assembly.

To give five weeks holiday annually.

To pay pulpit supply during the periods of study leave and holidays.

In the case of disability or extended illness, to continue to provide stipend and allowances for a period not less than that set by the General Assembly, and to pay the cost of pulpit supply.

To enroll the Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ in the presbytery's group insurance plan.

## **INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES FOR AN INTERIM MINISTRY POSITION**

### **BEFORE THE INTERVIEW**

The **candidate interim minister** should be provided with the statement of reasons why a period of interim ministry has been chosen for the congregation.

The **interview team** should do the following:

- provide the candidate with the statement of reasons for the particular interim ministry
- review the congregational situation
- review the 5 developmental tasks of interim ministry
- know the proposed financial arrangements
- design the interview process, including questions that will be asked.

### **SUGGESTED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Congregations are understood to have 5 developmental tasks during an interim ministry:
  - coming to terms with historydiscovering a new identity  
managing leadership shifts  
renewing denominational links  
commitment to a new future.

Please comment on each of these tasks, and give us examples of how you have worked in assisting congregations to accomplish these tasks in other interim settings. What results were achieved?

2. Conflict is part of congregational life. Please describe your understanding and experience of conflict in the church, and describe your style of conflict resolution. Please illustrate with specific examples. What did you do? How did it turn out? What would you do the same/differently another time.
3. Interim ministry is a specialized form of ministry, requiring additional skills to those typically required in settled ministry. What are the special gifts, skills, experience and training that you bring to this kind of ministry? Please provide examples that illustrate how you have used these.
4. You will have read the statement of reasons why a period of interim ministry has been chosen for this congregation at this time. What insights and ideas do you have about how the interim ministry might unfold? What strategies would you recommend that the session and congregation consider throughout this interim period?

Further general suggestions for interviewing candidates for ministry positions are found in *Calling a Minister*, Supplement XI, p. 72-75.

# SAMPLE LITURGY

## FOR BEGINNING A TIME OF INTERIM MINISTRY

**A service of recognition conducted by the Presbytery of  
installing as interim minister, the Reverend**

*Note: Presbytery may conduct a regular service of worship, including the following liturgy during the response part of the service*

### ACT OF RECOGNITION

Narration of the Steps

**Interim Moderator**

The Preamble and Questions

**Moderator**

Prayer

The Declaration

The Right Hand of Fellowship

**Members of Presbytery**

Signing of the Formula

**Presbytery Clerk**

### Suggested Hymns

You are Called to Tell the Story #583

Called as Partners in Christ's Service #587

Here I Am Lord #592

### NARRATION OF STEPS

**Clerk of Session:** The session with the guidance of the presbytery has determined that our congregation will be well served by a time of interim ministry. The elders have committed themselves to undertake the special tasks of leadership that belong to them and to the congregation during this 'in-between-time'. We have agreed to search for Christ's direction for the future of this congregation, to examine who we are and what our mission is, to support and to pray for the search committee when they are appointed, and to prepare for and to welcome the next inducted minister of this church.

We gather today to welcome and affirm the Rev. (insert interim minister's name) as our interim minister. Our session has carefully selected and enthusiastically invite him/her to (provide spiritual leadership, pastoral care, and administrative oversight-**note: you may tailor these phrases to specific tasks you've assigned to the interim minister**) to our congregation during this time of transition. He/she has been blessed with a call from Christ and with particular skills, training and experience in interim ministry. Speaking on behalf of the session of this congregation, I am pleased to present the Rev. (insert interim minister's name) as our interim minister, and now ask the presbytery to install her/him.

**Moderator of Presbytery:** As Moderator of the Presbytery of (insert presbytery name), I am pleased to confirm that we have examined the pastoral credentials and experience of the Rev. (insert interim minister's name). Therefore we affirm your selection of him/her and encourage you to covenant with him/her as your interim minister.

*The Moderator reads the Preamble and addresses questions to the interim minister and to the congregation, as outlined below.*

**PREAMBLE TO THE ORDINATION VOWS** (see Book of Forms)

**QUESTIONS TO THE INTERIM MINISTER**

Do you believe in God the Father, made known in his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom the Holy Spirit witnesses in the scriptures of the old and new testaments?

Do you accept the subordinate standards of this church, promising to uphold its doctrine under the continual illumination and correction of the Holy Spirit speaking in the scriptures?

Do you accept the government of this church by sessions, presbyteries, synods and general assemblies and do you promise to share in and submit yourself to all lawful oversight therein, and to follow no divisive course but to seek the peace and unity of Christ among your people and through the Holy Catholic Church?

Do you promise in the strength and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to conduct yourself in your private and public life as becomes his gospel, and do you give yourself diligently and cheerfully to the service of Christ's work, sacraments and discipline, for the furtherance of his reconciling mission in the world?

**QUESTIONS TO CONGREGATION AND INTERIM MINISTER**

*Moderator:* We come now to specific questions about the interim ministry of (insert congregation name) and its relationship with its interim minister. Would the members and adherents of (insert congregation name) congregation please rise?

*Congregation:* During this 'in-between time' we have agreed to search for Christ's direction for this church; and to examine who we are and discover our mission. We ask the presbytery to proceed in appointing Rev. (insert name of interim minister) to be our interim minister, and we are ready to promise our support.

*Moderator:* (insert interim minister's name), do you, before God and in the presence of these witnesses, commit yourself to this new trust and responsibility as interim minister of (insert congregation name)?

*Interim Minister:* I do.

*Moderator:* (insert interim minister's name), will you serve the people of (insert congregation name) with energy, intelligence, imagination and love, and will you offer them guidance, challenge and encouragement in your journey together?

*Interim Minister:* I will, and I promise to pray for them and support them as we serve God in this important and changing time in the life of (insert congregation name).

*Moderator:* Do you, members and adherents of (insert congregation name) acknowledge and welcome the (insert interim minister's name) as your interim minister?

*Congregation:* We do.

**Moderator:** Do you agree to undertake the special tasks that will be yours during this ‘in-between time’ and will you regard (insert interim minister’s name) as a fellow servant of Christ and work with her/him in the ministry of this congregation?

**Congregation:** We do, and we also promise to pray for and honour (insert interim minister’s name) and in all things strive to live together in the peace and unity of Jesus Christ.

**Clerk of Session:** (presents set of keys to interim minister). Please accept these keys to our church, as a sign of your leadership among us. Keep them and use them well as you minister here, until the time comes for you to depart from us.

**Members of Presbytery:** We are witnesses to the promises you have made as you enter into this ‘in-between time’. We recognize the paths you have travelled in the past and the journey you are embarking upon as you look to the future. Be assured of our prayers and support as you minister together and discover the plans God has for you during this interim time at (insert congregation name). May God bless you and keep you.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **OTHER VOWS THAT MAY BE INSERTED**

**Interim Minister:** I pledge to you as a minister of the gospel among you that I will pray for you, listen to you, assist you in the tasks of this interim period, encouraging and challenging you as we move through this time together.

**Congregation:** We, the people of (insert congregation name) receive you as a servant of God and pledge our partnership as we continue to use the gifts God has given us, in the many ministries of the gospel in this place: in worship, education, witness, service and stewardship.

## SAMPLE LITURGY

### FOR COMPLETING A TIME OF INTERIM MINISTRY

The interim moderator shall ensure that a worship service to recognize the completion of the interim ministry is arranged.

The following sample liturgy is suggested for use during the response portion of a regular service of worship. This liturgy has been designed for situations in which the congregation has called a new minister. Please note that it would require adjustments to suit other situations, such as the installation of a new interim minister or the dissolution of the congregation.

#### **Suggested Hymns**

#614 “We Gather Here to Bid Farewell

#620 “Go Now in Peace”

#### **EXIT LITURGY**

*Interim Moderator* (could be another presbytery rep, or Clerk of Session): Would those members of the Search Committee please rise? You have worked diligently in searching for a new minister for (insert name of congregation). It has taken many hours of dedicated work, as well as thoughtful discussion and prayer. You presented the name of the Rev.(insert name of new minister) to the session and congregation and they supported your choice. It is now time to say thanks to you, and to dismiss you from your duties.

*Congregation:* We offer sincere thanks to the members of the Search Committee for their careful work in selecting a minister for us. We are grateful for the commitment each member was willing to make to the process, and that the committee answered God’s call to serve in this way. (Search Committee may be seated)

*Clerk of Session:* It is with rejoicing and with regret that we come this day to thank (insert name of interim minister) for his/her faithful service as our interim minister. We rejoice in the work that he/she has done in this ‘in-between-time’. We thank her/him for leadership in our worship services, for the pastoral care offered to those in special need. Above all, we thank her/him for helping us to prepare for new ministry, and to welcome and be ready to work with our new minister, the Rev.(insert name of new minister).

*Interim Moderator:* A church family is constantly changing. People come and go. Babies are born, children grow up. People commit themselves to one another. Loved ones and friends among us come to the end of their lives. Individuals move into our community and church life. Others leave us, moving away to new places, new experiences, and new opportunities. It is important and right that we recognize these times of passage, of endings and beginnings. Today we say farewell to (insert name of interim minister) whose time as our interim minister has come to an end.

***Interim Minister:*** I thank (insert name of congregation), its members and friends for the love, kindness and support shown me these last \_\_\_\_ months (years). I thank you for accepting my leadership. I recall with joy the many things we have been able to accomplish together. While it is difficult to say goodbye, it is an important part of my task as minister to leave and say good bye at the right time. There can be no new beginning until there has been an ending.

***Congregation:*** We accept that the time has come for you to leave us. Your influence on us will not leave us, even though you depart from us. We express gratitude for your ministry among us.

***Interim Moderator:*** Do you, the members and friends of (insert name of congregation) now release (insert name of interim minister) from the interim ministry covenant between him/her and this congregation?

***Congregation:*** With the help of God, we do release (insert name of interim minister) from the interim ministry covenant between him/her and us. We pledge to let him/her go and not to seek continued ministry support from him/her.

***Interim Moderator:*** Do you, (insert name of interim minister), release (insert name of congregation) from turning to you and depending on you?

***Interim Minister:*** With the help of God, I do release (insert congregation name ) from the interim ministry covenant between them and me. I pledge to leave them and not to provide continued ministry support to them.

***Interim Moderator:*** As a sign of the completion of this covenant, (insert name of interim minister), will you present the Clerk of Session with your keys to (insert name of congregation)? Go now (insert name of interim minister), surrounded by our love and led by the promises of God, the presence of Jesus Christ, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

***Interim Moderator:*** to offer prayer.

Thanks and dismissal of search committee, when appropriate.

## **REVIEW AND EVALUATION**

### **TWO PROCESSES**

These review and evaluation processes (and the forms that follow) may be adapted to a wide variety of situations. The situation in the individual congregation determines when and how to evaluate. The review of the interim minister should take place at a different meeting from the review of the session's performance. If the elders have had an opportunity ahead of time to complete the review forms, the entire process will be more productive. A review and evaluation takes place under the direction of the interim moderator.

### **EVALUATION OF THE INTERIM MINISTER**

The interim minister review and evaluation may take place at one or more of the following intervals: three months, six months, or twelve months. The session will participate in the review under the leadership of the interim moderator. Larger sessions may need to divide up into smaller groups to facilitate discussion. The interim minister is excused from the session room during the review of his or her performance. The discussion of each category should be limited to about five minutes. Ordinarily, the results of the review are shared with the interim minister at another time and place, in a conversation between the interim minister and the interim moderator.

### **SELF-EVALUATION OF THE SESSION**

When the termination date of the interim minister's service has been set (ordinarily about sixty days before the interim minister's departure) it is advisable for the session to set a date and time for a session meeting to review and evaluate the session's performance during the interim period. Each elder should be encouraged to complete the evaluation form and bring it to the meeting for personal guidance during the discussion. The forms ought not to be collected or preserved. Each is regarded as the personal property of the person who has completed it. The session should record the results of the review, share them with the interim minister, and use them for further reflection and action as desired.

*This resource has been adapted from The Interim Pastor's Manual © 1997. Alan G. Gripe. Used by permission of Geneva Press.*

## INTERIM MINISTER'S PERFORMANCE REVIEW

*(To be completed by each elder)*

Interim Minister's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*This form, to be completed by each elder, should be adapted appropriately for each situation. Its objective is to provide the interim minister with performance feedback from the session.*

The following questions concerning the performance of the interim minister are to be addressed by the session in each performance category:

1. What was expected of the interim minister in the performance period under review?
2. What strengths has the interim minister exhibited?
3. What are the opportunities for growth and improvement?

Performance Categories <i>(Consult the interim minister's job description)</i>	Meets or Exceeds Expectations	Growth Opportunity
<b>INTENTIONAL INTERIM LEADERSHIP</b>		
Guides the session and other leaders in these tasks:		
Coming to terms with history		
Discovering a new identity		
Allowing and empowering new leaders		
Renewing denominational linkages		
Commitment to new leadership and a new future		
<b>Examples and comments:</b>		

Performance Categories <i>(Consult the interim minister's job description)</i>	Meets or Exceeds Expectations	Growth Opportunity
<b>WORSHIP</b>		
Worship services – primary leader and coordinator		
With the session and its worship committee, determines policies relating to the worship services		
Study, preparation, and preaching of sermons		
Administration of the sacraments		
<b>Examples and comments:</b>		
<b>TEACHING</b>		
Primary responsibility for the confirmation classes		
Coordination and teaching/leading adult Christian education events		
Support of Christian education for children and youth		
<b>Examples and comments:</b>		
<b>PASTORAL CARE</b>		
Prayer with and for the church		
Visitation of the sick, troubled, and grieving		
Officiating at funerals, along with preparatory and follow-up visits with the family		
Weddings: premarriage counselling and officiating		
Ministerial care and counselling for troubled church members		
<b>Examples and comments:</b>		

<b>Performance Categories</b> <i>(Consult the interim minister's job description)</i>	Meets or Exceeds Expectations	Growth Opportunity
<b>COMMUNITY SERVICE</b>		
Active in the local clergy association, ecumenical groups, and community service organizations		
<b>Examples and comments:</b>		
<b>DENOMINATIONAL SERVICE</b>		
Active in presbytery, synod, and General Assembly as invited and as time allows		
Supportive of the national and worldwide mission of the church		
<b>Examples and comments:</b>		
<b>STAFF LEADERSHIP</b>		
Coordinator of volunteer and paid church staff		
<b>Examples and comments:</b>		
<b>CHURCH LEADERSHIP</b>		
Equip and encourage the members of the church to develop and use their gifts for ministry		
Moderate session and congregational meetings		
Attend session committee meetings in ex officio capacity		
Work with the session and its committees to develop and envision long-range plans for the congregation		
Primary responsibility for officer training		
<b>Examples and comments:</b>		

## ELDER'S PERSONAL REVIEW AND SELF-EVALUATION

Elder's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*This form is to be used by each elder to review his or her own performance during the interim period, as well as to review the performance of the session as a whole.*

The following questions concerning performance are to be considered before completing this form:

1. What was expected of the elder/session during the interim period?
2. What strengths have the elders exhibited?
3. What are the opportunities for growth?

Other categories may be added to this form as indicated by the situation.

<b>The Five Tasks</b>	<b>Individual Elder</b>			<b>Whole Session</b>		
	Well Done	Partially Done	Not Done	Well Done	Partially Done	Not Done
1. Coming to terms with history						
<b>Examples and comments:</b>						
2. Discovering a new identity						
<b>Examples and comments:</b>						
3. Allowing and empowering new leaders						
<b>Examples and comments:</b>						
4. Renewing denominational linkages						
<b>Examples and comments:</b>						
5. Commitment to new leadership and a new future						
<b>Examples and comments:</b>						

**Additional Comments:**

## RESOURCES

*The print resources may be purchased from the Book Room  
The Book Room, 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto ON M3C 1J7  
Phone: 416 441-1111 or 1 800 619-7301; Fax: 416 441-2825  
E-mail: bookroom@presbyterian.ca*

*The audio-visual resource is available for loan from the Book Room.  
Rental fee: \$6.00 plus postage. Free to members of the Audio Visual Resource Library.*

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### AUDIO-VISUAL

#### **So Your Pastor Is Leaving**

The videotape explains what to expect during the search process. It identifies a journey from endings through the in-between time to beginnings with various stops along the way: (termination, direction finding, self-study, search, decision, negotiation, installation and start-up) and outlines five tasks which need to be done during the journey. Brief illustrative skits are included. Allows opportunities for discussion. Comes with a guide. Produced by Alban Institute. (50 minutes)

## INTERIM MINISTRY TRAINING

Several institutions provide training for interim ministry - The Interim Ministry Network (IMN) and various theological seminaries of the Presbyterian Church (USA). The IMN program involves a 3-day introductory event followed by a week of training and finally some field work. The PCUSA programs involve one week of training followed by some field work and a final week of training.

### Interim Ministry Network

5740 Executive Drive, Suite 220, Baltimore MD 21228

Phone: 800 235-8414

Email: [info@imnedu.org](mailto:info@imnedu.org)

Website: [www.imnedu.org](http://www.imnedu.org)

### Princeton Centre for Continuing Education

20 Library Place, Princeton, NJ 08540-6824

Phone: 609-497-7990

Email: [coned@ptsem.edu](mailto:coned@ptsem.edu)

Website: [www.ptsem.edu/ce](http://www.ptsem.edu/ce)

Princeton's program provides certification for interim ministers in the PCUSA.

### Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Continuing Education

616 N. Highland Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15206-2596

Phone: 412 362-5610, ext. 2196

Email: [coned@pts.edu](mailto:coned@pts.edu)

Website: [www.pts.edu/conted6](http://www.pts.edu/conted6)

Pittsburgh's training for interim ministers is co-sponsored with the Synod of the Trinity in the PCUSA. The training is open to people beyond the synod but they request a signature from an officer in the enrollee's presbytery authorising the individual for the course.

For other PCUSA sites:

Website: [www.pcusa.org/ministers/interim](http://www.pcusa.org/ministers/interim)

For other providers of interim ministry training:

Website: [www.faithandwisdom.org](http://www.faithandwisdom.org)

An inter-denominational listing of Christian continuing education programs in North America.