

Interim Ministry Handbook

United Church of Canada

2001

**Interim Ministry Handbook
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2001

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At the 34th General Council (August 1992) the concepts of Interim Ministry and Interim Ministers were approved and declared to be appropriate for The United Church of Canada. The following definitions are now included in The Manual:

“Interim Ministry” means an intentional, time limited ministry established by the Presbytery, the purpose of which is to work toward specific goals identified by the Presbytery and the Pastoral Charge. (The Manual 001)

“Interim Minister” means a member of the Order of Ministry or a Lay Pastoral Minister who, based on appropriate training and experience, has been appointed by the Presbytery to an Interim Ministry. (The Manual 001)

At the 37th General Council (August 2000) the appointment of a Transition Committee was approved with the following definition:

“Transition Committee” is a joint committee made up of representatives from the Pastoral Charge and Presbytery who work with the Interim Minister on implementing, monitoring, and evaluating the goals of Interim Ministry. (See Section 6. of this handbook for details)

- 1.2 In the life and work of the Pastoral Charge, the time between regularly settled ministers often provides a critical opportunity for reassessment and growth. For most Pastoral Charges, this time of transition can be both exciting and challenging. For some, it may be a time of distress and/or conflict. In many such circumstances there may be a need for the leadership of persons with special skills who can help the Pastoral Charge to deal with the past, function in the present, and also prepare for effective ministry in the future.

2. CIRCUMSTANCES INVITING INTERIM MINISTRY

2.1 Interim Ministry is consistent with, and is an integral part of the United Church Pastoral Relations process. The experience of this process has shown that a period of Interim Ministry may be appropriate when:

- (a) there has been a long – term pastorate, normally more than ten to twelve years;
- (b) the Pastoral Charge wants to develop greater lay participation in its ministry;
- (c) the Pastoral Charge wants to develop a new role in or relationship with the community around it (e.g. overtaken by growth, boundaries changed, amalgamations);
- (d) the Pastoral Charge has experienced a number of short – term pastorates where the “fit” seems to have been wrong;
- (e) there has been conflict, polarization, or when the minister has been asked to leave or has been removed by Presbytery;
- (f) the Pastoral Charge is experiencing considerable grief over the departure of their minister who has been much appreciated;
- (g) the Pastoral Charge has experienced the death of their minister;
- (h) there has been a change in pastoral relations following decisions or allegations related to the Ministry Personnel and pastoral sexual misconduct;
- (i) the Pastoral Charge wants to clarify its ministry and mission before issuing a Call or requesting Settlement; or
- (j) reasons deemed appropriate by the Presbytery and the Pastoral Charge are identified.

NOTE: The Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee and the Pastoral Charge need to keep in the fore the question “Is Interim Ministry needed, or does the Pastoral Charge need time before a vacancy is routinely declared and filled through Needs Assessment and Search and Selection?”

3. PURPOSES OF INTERIM MINISTRY

- 3.1 Interim Ministry is an intentional ministry established by the Presbytery to address specific goals and objectives that have been developed in consultation with the Pastoral Charge and Presbytery.
- 3.2 Interim Ministry is time-specific, and not indefinite. The Interim Minister is not eligible for a continuing pastoral relationship with the Pastoral Charge. Beyond providing continuity of ministry in a Pastoral Charge or serving a time between called/settled ministers, their goals are limited and transitional.
- 3.3 Any change of pastoral relations leads into a period of uncertainty and adjustment. This is particularly true in circumstances inviting Interim Ministry, whether the relationship with the previous minister has been long and happy or short and problematic. The emotions engendered are real and require careful attention, and one of the purposes of Interim Ministry is to address these feelings and emotions.
- 3.4 Interim Ministry enables members to celebrate what has been good in the past and to clarify new directions for the future. It invites them to come to terms with unrealistic expectations, the need to identify and resolve conflict, healing of old wounds, the experience of grief, and building a new sense of community. One purpose of Interim Ministry is to facilitate such reassessment of mission, identity and relationships.
- 3.5 Interim Ministry provides an opportunity for individuals who feel called to serve in this way and who have been recommended by Conference to exercise their gifts for the good of the church. One purpose of Interim Ministry is to foster and make available Ministry Personnel with particular knowledge, experience, and skills to the church.
- 3.6 Interim Ministry is a mechanism that provides a unique opportunity for laity to be directly involved and provide leadership. One purpose is to develop lay leadership and ownership in the church.
- 3.7 Interim Ministry responds to what has gone before, and also prepares for the ministry that follows. One purpose is to establish a context of readiness for the pastorate to follow it.

4. GOALS AND TASKS OF AN INTERIM MINISTRY

- 4.1 Interim Ministry is intentional in relation to five universal goals. The Pastoral Charge together with the Presbytery determines the particular needs through determining these goals. These goals may be refined and developed, as the work progresses.
- 4.2 Pastoral Charge goals may be categorized in terms of five developmental goals. These categories come from the widespread literature and experience of Interim Ministry in North America:
1. Remembering Who We Are: Goals should be named in relation to the circumstances leading up to the Interim Ministry. The Community re-tells the story.
 2. Determining Who We Want to Be: Goals should be named in relation to the current and future identity of the church. The community re-names itself, and who and what it includes and intends.
 3. Allowing and Empowering New Leadership: Goals should be named in relation to the lay leadership of the church. Some members will step back or change roles, others step forward.
 4. Renewing United Church of Canada Linkages: Goals should be named in relation to the Presbytery and wider church. The relationships and resources of the whole church are identified and grow.
 5. Committing to New Future Leadership: Goals should be named in relation to finding and covenanting with new leaders, and to intentional endings of the Interim Ministry
- 4.3 Initial Goals for the Pastoral Charge may be general, or incomplete. As the Transition Committee works with the Interim Minister, they will develop and change.
- 4.4 Interim Ministry goals are interpreted by the Interim Minister and in consultation with the Transition Committee as process tasks which may include;
1. Joining the System: Goals should be named in terms of orienting the Interim Minister in to the community, including establishing relationships, and acknowledging grief and change.
 2. Analysing the Organization as a System: Goals should include applying systems theory from Interim Ministry training to offer analysis and response plans.
 3. Connecting with the United Church of Canada: Goals should include active Presbytery participation, and liaison with wider networks and resources to develop

GOALS AND TASKS OF AN INTERIM MINISTRY continued

denominational linkages and perspectives.

4. Focussing and Assuming Responsibility: Goals should not be limited to observation and interpretation. Active and often directive leadership is required in an Interim Ministry.
 5. Exit and Evaluation: Goals should include a plan for ending the time-limited ministry, from its beginning to ensure other goals are addressed, and good succession to the next pastorate.
- 4.5 The initial process task plans of an Interim Minister will develop and change in the course of the ministry. Not only the Interim Ministry as a whole, but also the Interim Minister's work will be evaluated.

5. ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERIM MINISTRY

- 5.1 In the establishment of an Interim Ministry, the Presbytery and Pastoral Charge both play important roles. Throughout the process, the Pastoral Charge and Presbytery need to study carefully the potential benefits of Interim Ministry.
- 5.2 In some situations, the Pastoral Charge will be quite clear in recognizing the need for Interim Ministry, or at least be aware that something needs to happen before a vacancy can be declared and filled.
- 5.3 In other situations, it may be Presbytery that first sees the need for Interim Ministry. In this case, it will be the task of Presbytery to help the Pastoral Charge understand the need for, and the benefit of, Interim Ministry. In every situation, the discussions and negotiations need to be conducted with care and sensitivity.
- 5.4 When notice of a change of pastoral relations is received by the Secretary of the Official Board (or equivalent) of the Pastoral Charge, and by the secretary of the Presbytery, it is the responsibility of the Presbytery, through its Pastoral Relations Committee, to assist the Pastoral Charge in considering its next step.
- 5.5
 - a) The Pastoral Charge and Presbytery may immediately indicate a needs assessment by a Joint Needs Assessment Committee (JNAC) during which time Presbytery may appoint a Pastoral Charge Supervisor, and if needed, a supply minister or
 - b) an Interim Minister will be appointed according to section 7. of these guidelines.
- 5.6 Sometimes, the appropriateness of an Interim Ministry becomes clear only after a Joint Needs Assessment Committee has begun its work. When this happens, the JNAC is to make its recommendation known to the Pastoral Charge and Presbytery.
- 5.7 Whether proposed directly by Presbytery and Pastoral Charge consultation or through a JNAC, initiation of an Interim Ministry is based on careful joint review of the needs and/or benefits of Interim Ministry as outlined in sections 2., 3. and 4. above, and accompanied by initial draft goals, timeline, Transition Committee and terms of proposed adjustment.
- 5.8 If an Interim Ministry is established by the Presbytery, either in consultation with the Pastoral Charge or upon Pastoral Charge request, any current JNAC or Joint Search Committee (JSC) activity will be suspended or postponed pending recommendations through the Interim Ministry regarding needs assessment, vacancies and searches.

6. TRANSITION COMMITTEE FOR INTERIM MINISTRY

- 6.1 The initial tasks of the Transition Committee relate to the appointment of an Interim Minister (see section 7. below). The membership of the Transition Committee may change after the Presbytery makes its appointment, recognizing the urgency and distinctiveness of these initial tasks compared to the ongoing work of the Transition Committee, but some continuity from initial proposal through selection to implementation of the Interim Ministry is valuable.
- 6.2 The continuing tasks of the Transition Committee relate to implementation of the goals of the Interim Ministry, including regular meeting and reporting to review and develop the goals and plan, monitor and evaluate activities that help the Pastoral Charge to work on the goals of the Interim Ministry.
- 6.3 Presbytery and Pastoral Charge meetings initiating an Interim Ministry will appoint members to an Interim Ministry Transition Committee as outlined in the initiating proposal.
- 6.4 The Transition Committee will include one or two representatives of the Presbytery appointed by the Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee and five to seven members appointed by the Pastoral Charge. Subsequent appointments to add or to replace initial membership may be made through the Presbytery and/or Pastoral Charge.
- 6.5 Transition Committee members appointed by the Pastoral Charge should be well acquainted with the Pastoral Charge and enjoy the confidence of their membership. Efforts should be made to represent the full range of membership and adherents in terms of gender, age groups, activity groups, points of view about the church(es), but not key individuals in recent conflicts.
- 6.6 The Transition Committee is encouraged to operate in a collaborative manner for decision making and must decide early on whether to use a consensus model or majority vote.
- 6.7 The quorum required for the Transition Committee meetings must include at least one representative from Presbytery, three members from Pastoral Charges and the Interim Minister as a resource.
- 6.8 The Transition Committee is responsible to ensure that there is a clearly defined process of support, accountability and evaluation for the Interim Minister. The Transition Committee does not replace the Ministry and Personnel Committee, whose mandate through the Interim Ministry is consultation.
- 6.9 The Transition Committee shall be represented on the Official Board (or equivalent) of the Pastoral Charge during the Interim Ministry for liaison and reporting purposes, including progress reports. Recommendations including the

TRANSITION COMMITTEE FOR INTERIM MINISTRY continued

initiation of a needs assessment process at the appropriate point in the Interim Ministry will prepare for succeeding pastoral relationships.

- 6.10 The Transition Committee shall participate in an evaluation of the Interim Ministry at its conclusion, including evaluation of the work of the Interim Minister.

7. SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM MINISTER

- 7.1 The Transition Committee appointed by the Presbytery and Pastoral Charge will review the terms of the proposed Interim Ministry, and clarify them as necessary, to establish a Position Description and terms including remuneration for an Interim Minister. Grievance or conflict resolution procedures for the period of Interim Ministry are part of these terms.
- 7.2 The Transition Committee may consider special transportation and moving costs, special training and ability, personal support systems (home base), and flexibility around time off in order for the Interim Minister to maintain connections with personal support systems, and unique costs that would not normally be incurred on a settled pastorate.
- 7.3 The Transition Committee shall solicit names of eligible applicants (see section 10. below) from Presbytery and from Conference, invite applications, review credentials and references, and interview one or more applicants for appointment.
- 7.4 The Transition Committee will review and negotiate changes to the Position Description and proposed terms including remuneration with applicant(s).
- 7.5 The Transition Committee will recommend to the Pastoral Charge or its Official Board (or equivalent) and Presbytery a preferred appointee, Position Description and remuneration terms for approval and for appointment by the Presbytery.
- 7.6 Presbytery shall make a Decision with regard to the appointment of the Interim Minister, naming initial date and duration of the appointment, using form 433 IM (2001).
- 7.7 The Presbytery shall provide an act of covenant where this new relationship is established.
- 7.8 The Interim Minister shall not be available to serve the Pastoral charge in any Call, Settlement or Appointment that immediately follows the appointment as Interim Minister.

8. EXPERIENCE AND WORK OF INTERIM MINISTRY

- 8.1 The Presbytery with the assistance of the Transition Committee shall provide an Act of Covenanting.
- 8.2 The Transition Committee shall review the recent history of the Pastoral Charge to be familiar with existing identified issues and concerns, sharing this review with the church to inform and test its understandings.
- 8.3 The Transition Committee shall review the overall goals specified in the Position Description and Terms of Appointment. The goals will be clarified and developed. If the new or revised goals differ in a significant way from those originally proposed, agreement shall be sought from the Pastoral Charge and Presbytery.
- 8.4 The Transition Committee will review its membership and plans for meetings, participation in planning, implementing and evaluating activities and processes related to implementing goals, and reporting to the Pastoral Charge and Presbytery.
- 8.5 The Transition Committee will report to the Pastoral Charge or its Official Board (or equivalent), and recommend to the Presbytery, when the Joint Needs Assessment will resume or begin. The Needs Assessment will be informed by the work of the Transition Committee, and the membership of the Joint Needs Assessment Committee (JNAC) may include one or two members of the Transition Committee.
- 8.6 The work of the Interim Minister and the Transition Committee will continue to the end of the Interim Ministry appointment although goals and activities may change once a JNAC process, and in turn a Joint Search Committee (JSC), are initiated. The Interim Minister shall not be a member of a JSC, but may be consulted by the JSC. One or two Transition Committee members may be nominated for membership on a JSC.
- 8.7 Before the end of the Interim Ministry, the Transition Committee shall prepare a final evaluation of the Interim Ministry. Presbytery will provide recommendations on the type of evaluation required and how the evaluation will be accomplished, through its appointee(s) to the Transition Committee. The final evaluation deals with the original goals, and objectives added as a result of the ongoing process. In addition, the final evaluation is to identify work on goals and objectives not completed, and any specific items that remain to be dealt with.
- 8.8 At least 90 days before the end of the Interim Ministry, or as soon as possible after a Vacancy has been declared the Transition Committee shall report to the Conference Interim Ministry Committee its assessment of the effectiveness of the Interim Minister in light of the goals of the Interim Ministry.
- 8.9 Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee shall review the final report and evaluation of the Interim Ministry from the Transition Committee and will in turn

EXPERIENCE AND WORK OF INTERIM MINISTRY continued

report to Presbytery regarding the effectiveness of the Interim Ministry and the effectiveness of the Interim Minister. Presbytery will forward these reports and any recommendations to the Conference Interim Ministry Committee.

- 8.10 The Transition Committee will plan the closure of the Interim Ministry, including sharing its final evaluation with the Pastoral Charge, and dissolution on the last day of the Interim Ministry appointment.

9. CONFERENCE INTERIM MINISTRY COMMITTEE

- 9.1 Each Conference shall establish an Interim Ministry Committee. Members will include Ministry Personnel who have served as Interim Ministers and lay presbyters who have belonged to Presbyteries or Pastoral Charges implementing Interim Ministry.
- 9.2 The Committee shall provide consultation and co-ordination of Interim Ministry policies and procedures within the Presbyteries of the Conference, and liaison with other Conference Interim Ministry Committees and DMPE.
- 9.3 The Committee will have the responsibility for determining who has the eligibility to serve as Interim Ministers based on criteria named in the following section, and to maintain a list of individuals who are currently eligible (see section 10. following).
- 9.4 The Committee will interview the applicant seeking designation as an Interim Minister and determine their suitability for Interim Ministry.
- 9.5 The Committee shall make a recommendation to the Conference Executive for or against the applicant as an Interim Minister. The Conference Executive shall make a Decision and shall notify the applicant in writing.
- 9.6 Following an Interim Ministry appointment, the Committee shall evaluate the effectiveness of the Interim Minister and shall make a recommendation to the Conference Executive, for or against the continued designation of the person as an Interim Minister, with or without conditions. The Conference Executive shall make a Decision and shall notify the person in writing of the Decision.
- 9.7 The Committee shall provide annually to the General Council Division of Ministry Personnel and Education a list of those persons designated as Interim Ministers.

10. RECOGNITION OF ELIGIBLE INTERIM MINISTERS

10.1 Members of the Order of Ministry or Lay Pastoral Ministers are eligible to make application for designation as Interim Ministers.

10.2 A written request for recognition as eligible for Interim Ministry appointment must be sent to the Presbytery of which the Ministry Personnel is a member. The Presbytery through its Pastoral Relations Committee shall forward to the Conference Committee the application of those applicants that it recommends.

10.3 A Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee recommending recognition of an individual as eligible for Interim Ministry appointment will also name one person from the Presbytery to be present during the Conference Interim Ministry Committee Interview.

10.4 Having received a presbytery approved application the Conference Interim Ministry Committee will interview the applicant and obtain three letters of reference. With the applicant's permission, the committee may request information related to previous pastoral relationships.

10.5 The Committee shall make a decision regarding the person's suitability for Interim Ministry, and shall make a decision regarding appropriate training and its timing. These decisions will be guided by Conference standards and denominational minimum standards.

10.6 The minimum standards for Interim Ministry in any Conference will include:

a) Five years of experience in paid accountable ministry in the United Church of Canada;

b) thirty residential hours of training in theory, skills and personal issues related to Interim Ministry;

c) supervised field work that involves working on personal learning goals identified in (b) above.

(d) Thirty additional residential hours of further skill development, integration of learning from (b) and (c) above, and case study reviews.

It is at the discretion of the Conference Interim Ministry Committee as to whether training is completed before the initial appointment begins or within the first six months of employment.

10.7 The Committee will provide prompt written notice of its decisions regarding recognition of a person as eligible for appointment to Interim Ministry. Copies will be provided to the interviewee, to the recommending Presbytery, through the

RECOGNITION OF ELIGIBLE INTERIM MINISTERS continued

Conference MP&E Committee or equivalent to the Conference Executive, and to the interviewee's Ministry Personnel file held by the Conference Personnel Minister.

- 10.8 An Interim Minister completing appointment to an Interim Ministry shall be interviewed by the Conference Interim Ministry Committee. The interview will be informed by reports and recommendations from the Pastoral Charge and the Presbytery in which the appointment was served.
- 10.9 The interview shall address outstanding conditions (if any) or recommendations of training and its timing from the last decision of the Conference Interim Ministry Committee.
- 10.10 The interview shall address the evaluations of the Interim Ministry, its effectiveness in attaining its goals, and the effectiveness of the Interim Minister.
- 10.11 The Conference Interim Ministry Committee shall make a decision about the interviewee's eligibility for subsequent Interim Ministry, with or without conditions or recommendations.
- 10.12 The Committee will provide written notice of its decisions regarding recognition of a person as eligible for further Interim Ministry appointment. Copies will be provided to the interviewee, to the Presbytery, through the Conference MP&E Committee to the Conference Executive, and to the interviewee's Ministry Personnel files held by the Conference.

Appendix A

Special Characteristics of an Interim Minister

Anyone considering the possibility of Interim Ministry as a vocation should reflect seriously on the qualities and skills that are necessary for the task.

Interim Ministry tends to be relatively short term, individuals may find it necessary to move every year or so, sometimes every few months. In any case, Interim Ministry involves the individual in circumstances that are constantly changing, usually with new colleagues and associates. This can be difficult and stressful, both personally and professionally.

Interim Ministers must also be prepared to face criticism from people who do not understand the nature of Interim Ministry or who dislike their style of leadership. For this reason, they need to possess a relatively healthy self-image and be both self-aware and self-confident. Moreover, because Interim Ministry rarely offers a solid sense of belonging it is important that Interim Ministers be able to generate their own support systems.

Because of their variety of circumstances that lead to the establishment of an Interim Ministry, Interim Ministers need to develop flexible styles of leadership. Indeed, because of the need to develop and strengthen leadership within the Pastoral Charge, it is vital that the Interim Minister be one who knows how to encourage and empower others. At the same time, the Interim Minister may need to exercise appropriate personal power in the pursuit of the stated goals and objectives. A sense of humour helps!

Willingness to adapt is equally important. Often the Pastoral Charge has been coping with considerable grief over the departure of the previous minister. Other issues and circumstances may present themselves – sometimes quite unexpectedly – and these will need to be dealt with in a forthright and flexible way. Some situations, if left unresolved, might well undermine the future growth and development of the Pastoral Charge.

Skills in conflict management will also be helpful. During periods of transition, contentious issues, sometimes long-buried, may surface. The congregation(s) may have become over particular issues. Old decisions may need to be reviewed and possibly changed. New decisions may need to be made. In such circumstances, skills in crises intervention, problem solving, long and short-term planning, stress management, community and team building, management and administration will prove invaluable.

Appendix B

Professional Education for Interim Ministers

Vision

The vision which underlies the following goals and objectives is that of a ministry specifically adapted for those wilderness times in the life of a Pastoral Charge when surface structures are stripped away and fundamental issues of faith and discipleship are more readily discernible. It is a ministry particularly open to God's creative presence and the re-birthing activity of the Holy Spirit. It is a ministry of those who see themselves as consultative leaders, accompanying their congregations through an area of various potential pathways and different emerging visions.

Methodology

In this program the learning needs and learning styles of the participants as adults are respected. An experiential method will be employed which incorporates the experience of the participants; both prior to attending the program and that gained in the program itself. Reflection on experience will be encouraged in order to identify its patterns, analyze its nature, and draw generalizations on the patterns and nature of that experience as they apply to Interim Ministry. Relevant theory and other information will be presented by the faculty as appropriate to encourage learning.

Goals and Objectives

- I. To explore and experience Interim Ministry as different from settled pastoral ministry.
 - A. To understand and practise what it means to be a self-differential leader.
 - B. To understand the roles and responsibilities of an Interim Minister.
 - C. To understand various leadership styles and the criteria of deciding their appropriate use, and to explore one's own styles and ability to vary these according to the need of the situation.
- II. To recognise the role(s) of the Interim Minister in church systems in transition.
 - A. To be able to identify and describe moments when the congregation functions as a social system in transition.
 - B. To understand interdependence and interaction within the body of Christ in times of transition.
 - C. To be able to identify the process tasks of the interim minister.

- D. To articulate the structural and psychological dynamics of congregations in transition.
- E. To identify and develop skills for working in congregational systems experiencing conflict.
- III. To develop basic skills for helping congregational systems to function in a more vital way during critical times of church life.
 - A. To learn and practice healthy ways of entering a Pastoral Charge.
 - B. To learn and practice contracting and negotiating skills.
 - C. To learn and practice a variety of congregational analysis tools.
 - D. To be able to assess congregational progress on the developmental tasks and to develop some strategies and tools for enabling progress on these tasks.
 - E. To be able to assess power and to develop strategies for engaging it for the benefit of the congregation.
 - F. To be able to assess conflict and to develop strategies for utilizing it for the health of the system.
 - G. To learn and practise healthy ways of leaving the Pastoral Charge.
- IV. To enable groups of those exploring or participating in Interim Ministry to provide pastoral care for each other through attention to the life of the group and by preparing the participants for continued learning.

Appendix C
Standards for the Practise of Interim Ministry

Developed by the Interim Ministry Network

Revised June 15, 1992, used with permission

This is not United Church policy

- for information only

Introduction

Standards are references to be used by Interim Ministers, Conferences, Presbyteries and Congregations in settling job descriptions and guidelines for the performance of Interim Ministers. They are also references for those who seek to be competent interim ministers. The standards set forth by the Interim Ministry Network are based on twelve years of serving the church through preparing ministers to be Interim Ministers and evaluating the contributions made to congregational and church agencies by Interim Ministers. These standards are simply the basics, the bare bones of what should be expected of an Interim Minister.

The standards for Interim Ministry are the consequence of experience and study that have shown the value of the interim period in the life of churches and church agencies; the interim period is a time for problem solving, corporate renewal, reaffirmation of faith, planning, and preparing for new leadership (both professional and lay). A skilled, well-prepared Interim Minister is an invaluable resource for this interim period. As more experience is gained and research is suggested, the standards will be refined.

Setting and using standards is a way to encourage people to be Interim Ministers and to provide them with a minimal set of guidelines for the conduct of their work. The standards are not designed to exclude and control the number of Interim Ministers. By setting expectations for the practise of Interim Ministry, the standards serve to guide all related to the interim period in this selection of appropriate leaders and in the evaluation of their performance. Those who subscribe do so voluntarily, with a commitment to serve the Church well during the interim period.

Interim Ministry is an area of specialization like chaplaincy, campus ministry and counselling.

Because Interim Ministry is a specialized area of ministry, the standards are a guide for Conferences, Presbyteries and Congregations in choosing an Interim Minister.

The Agreement

An appointment to an interim ministry position should include a formal agreement or covenant between all parties (Interim Minister, Pastoral Charge or Mission and Presbytery) in which the following are included

1. Definition of the position, expectations (goals) for the interim period with clear statements of who is responsible for given tasks.

2. Relationship of the Interim Minister to the search process and to self-study and planning during the interim period, recognizing that study and planning are valuable prior to searching for new leadership.
3. Skills, abilities and preparation expected of the Interim Minister.
4. Specific agreement that the Interim Minister will not be a candidate and will not be considered for the permanent position for which he/she is the interim.

Preparation and Abilities

A person who serves the church as an Interim Minister shall have the following:

1. Education at the level required to meet their denomination's standards for ministerial standing.
2. Recognition or standing in a duly recognized denomination or church body.
3. Experience in at least two congregations in a leadership role with written performance evaluations available from a judicatory official, another minister, and a lay person.
4. Special training that deals with congregational dynamics, the process of organizational transition, developmental tasks of the interim period, planning human relations, group dynamics, consulting interventions, and church management.
5. Demonstrated ability to work effectively with volunteers in a church system.
6. Pastoral Training that includes: helping people deal with grief, anger, healing, conflict, and guiding individuals in congregations from hopelessness to hope.
7. Administrative preparation in: church management, communication, planning, corporate decision-making, negotiation, mediation.
8. Experience in planning and leading worship and preaching the Gospel.

Performance and Process Skills

To be an Interim Minister, a person needs to have proven expertise in the following areas:

1. Demonstrated ability to move into a new situation and adapt quickly, relate to a congregation on an interim basis, and be able to say good-bye when the interim period is finished.
2. Knowledge of developmental tasks associated with the interim periods of congregations and church agencies.
3. The dynamics of individual and organisational loss, grief, and adjustment.
4. Crises intervention
5. Dispute resolution and problem solving
6. Team-building among lay leaders and staff
7. Knowledge of, sensitivity to and an ability to work with the relevant church court.
8. Needs assessment and using the data for problem solving, long range planning and resource utilisation.
9. Relating preaching to the dynamics of the interim period.
10. Ability to deal with professional stress and to help others cope with stress related to the interim period.

11. Awareness of individual/personal needs in the context of interim work, including a program of self-care.

Desirable Personal Characteristics

For those who are Interim Ministers, the following personal characteristics have been identified as important to being an effective Interim Minister:

1. A clear sense of calling to the ministry and to the role of Interim Minister
2. Good ego strength, secure, mature, and emotionally stable.
3. Action/Goad orientated.
4. Flexible and adaptable
5. Patient, empathetic and understanding
6. Effective level of physical and emotional vitality
7. Sound positive and growing faith.
8. Optimistic attitude.
9. Good sense of humour
10. Strong sense of and commitment to an educated, well – prepared professional ministry.

Appendix C

Feedback and Suggestions

Your responses are an important source of ongoing policy and resource revisions.

Please indicate your response and evaluation of this resource and attach your suggestions for improvements and additions:

Name
Position
Postal Address
Phone
Fax
Email

Please forward feedback on this resource to the
Ministry Personnel Support Cluster
Division of Ministry Personnel and Education
3250 Bloor Street West
Etobicoke, Ontario M8X 2Y4
416-231-5931 ext. 4136
416-232-6004 (fax)