

**The Presbytery of Long Island  
Committee on Ministry**

**POLICY ON INTERIM PASTORS**

1. The Book of Order assigns to the Session the responsibility of providing for worship and pastoral leadership during the time of being without an installed pastor (G-10.0102c,m).
2. There are two options available to the Session during this time of transition. The Book of Order suggests “temporary supply” and “interim supply” (G-14.0513). The first option is usually used when a pastor is temporarily unable to serve, and the second option when a church is without a pastor but is actively seeking a new pastor.
3. The Committee on Ministry through its liaison team will work with the Session to determine the most advantageous approach for the congregation. Ordinarily, the Session will use the temporary supply alternative for immediate day-to-day needs, and initially during a vacancy transition, then move to interim supply during the more extended transition and search period.
4. The vacancy period following the dissolution of a pastoral relationship is an important transition in the life of the congregation. This can be, and often is, a creative and vital time of spiritual growth. It is desirable to have continuing interim leadership wherever possible. The committee on Ministry will work with the Session seeking such leadership as quickly as possible.
5. The Committee on Ministry seeks skilled interim leadership for churches in the Presbytery of Long Island. The Committee will give attention first to recommending those Ministers of Word and Sacrament who have been certified as trained interim supplies, those who have engaged in interim training, or those who are willing to do so early in their tenure as interim supplies.
6. Interim arrangements are three-way: between the Session, the Presbytery, and the minister involved. The Committee on Ministry provides sample interim arrangement agreements for use by Sessions. Ordinarily, the terms of call are guided by those of the previous pastor. Normally, the interim pastor will serve until a new pastor begins.
7. The Book of Order prohibits interim pastors and interim associate pastors to succeed to the offices of pastor and associate pastor (G-14.0501f). An associate pastor is not eligible to succeed immediately the pastor of a church in which they have served together (G-14.0513). The Committee on Ministry counsels Sessions and congregations to this effect, and interim supplies shall make this clear in their ministries.

The Presbytery of Long Island  
June 24, 1997