

## **STEPS TOWARD AN INTERIM PASTOR**

A Session may, with the concurrence of the COM through the liaison, proceed with the process to secure an interim pastor prior to the departure of the installed pastor. The primary staff person for the process is the COM liaison. The installed pastor may be interviewed by the Interim Search Committee but shall not be involved in the selection process.

1. The COM liaison meets with the Session for orientation for the transition. This orientation includes helping the Session identify tasks and assignments which will need attention when the pastor leaves, attention to the departure of the pastor and the grief process, time lines for the transition, and a look at immediate and interim pastoral needs during the transition period.
2. The Session creates a transition plan including tasks and assignments.

And the Session names an interim (or temporary supply) search committee. Ordinarily, the Interim Search Committee is a special task force of Session members or the Personnel Committee. The Session may add congregation members to the Interim Search Committee. A search committee of 3 - 5 members is sufficient. It is important to recognize that the search is for temporary pastoral service for a particular time and circumstance. This is not the permanent call process.

3. The COM liaison orients the Interim Search Committee on the search process, position description, compensation, AA/EEO requirements, reference checks, interviews, contractual matters, and helps the search committee identify special needs that may exist.

The COM liaison sends a letter of introduction and explanation to the congregation.

4. The Interim Search Committee develops a position description, determines salary guidelines, determines term of service and consults with the COM liaison (who consults with the COM Chair and Executive Presbyter) and COM Compensation and Benefits Committee to secure their approval.

The terms of the interim pastor's contract shall meet Presbytery minimums for installed pastors and can normally be expected to be at the approximately the level of the outgoing pastor's salary while taking into account the skills and experience of the interim pastor. It is ordinarily expected that the amount of pastoral service shall be continued during the transition period.

5. The Session approves plan. The position description and preliminary contract is sent to the COM Liaison, COM Chair and Executive Presbyter.
6. The Interim Search Committee seeks interim pastor candidates through: a) Suggestions from Presbytery Executive, COM, General Assembly Churchwide Personnel Services, Synod of the Northeast,

b) Presbyterian Interim Network, c) advertizing in church publications, d) Personal contacts.

7. The Interim Search Committee

- a. Screens interim candidates.
- b. Checks primary and secondary references (be sure to secure a the permission of the candidate to check secondary references).
- c. Interviews candidates
- d. Hears candidates preach and lead worship.
- e. Secures approval of the COM liaison who checks the candidates governing body references (this may involve the COM Chair and Executive Presbyter).
- f. Selects the candidate.

8. The Interim Search Committee presents the candidate and proposed contract to Session for interview and action.

9. The Interim Search Committee presents the candidate and the contract approved by Session to the Committee on Ministry.

- a. The Liaison reports on the process and recommendations.
- b. The Interim Search Committee reports and the candidate responds. Discussion. The Interim Search Committee is excused.
- c. Committee on Ministry interviews the candidate. The candidate is excused.
- d. Committee on Ministry discussion and action. Motion to approve candidate, contract, term and dates.
- e. Report to Interim Search Committee and Candidate.

10. Session completes arrangements for Interim start-up.

11. Presbytery action.

12. Interim pastor begins service.

Committee on Ministry  
June, 1997.  
August, 1998