

INTERIM MINISTRY COVENANT

This covenant between the Rev. _____,
who holds standing in _____, and
_____ Church
of _____ is effective beginning _____, 20____.
(city and state)

Responsibilities and Duties

The Interim Pastor shall:

1. Intentionally lead the congregation through the congregation's Developmental Tasks:
 - A. Coming to terms with the congregation's history
 - B. Discerning the congregation's purpose and identity
 - C. Supporting leadership change and development
 - D. Reaffirming and strengthening denominational links
 - E. Committing to new leadership and new ministry
2. Fulfill the normal duties of a pastor including:
 - A. Lead and preach in the congregation's worship services
 - B. Administer church business and oversee the church staff
 - C. Work with the congregation's governing body and its program committees
 - D. Oversee the preparation of worship bulletin and newsletter
 - E. Visit members who are hospitalized, homebound, and nursing facility residents
 - F. Conduct funerals for members and friends of the congregation
 - G. Officiate at weddings for members and friends of the congregation
 - H. Provide counseling and make appropriate referrals
 - I. Teach confirmation/new member class for youths and adults
 - J. Maintain a collegial relationship with the area clergy association
 - K. Provide counsel to the Pastoral Search Committee when requested and focused only upon the process, not upon potential pastors

The congregation shall:

1. Commit to the process of self-study by working through the Developmental Tasks
2. Seriously consider implementing programs suggested by the Interim Pastor
3. Actively pursue the calling of a settled pastor
4. Function as the "Body of Christ," making visits to worship guests, members in hospitals nursing facilities, homebound, and inactive members
5. Maintain education, mission, music, and other ministries of the congregation
6. Continue to provide staff support

7. Support the involvement of the Interim Pastor in denominational activities, clergy associations, and Interim Ministers' Support Groups
8. Provide resources for professional consultation with specialists, when needed, in order to assist the Interim Pastor in accomplishing the goals of interim ministry
9. Establish an interim ministry/transitional team (Pastoral Relations Committee or other group) to serve as a confidential support and advisory group for the interim pastor, to monitor progress in accomplishing the developmental tasks and to act as a link between the pastor and the congregation.

Accountability

The Interim Pastor shall:

1. Be accountable to the _____ (governing body) through the _____ (i.e. Elders/Deacons) and ultimately to the congregation for the successful completion of duties
2. Maintain ministerial standing in his/her denomination.
3. Maintain contact with his or her Association and home congregation.

The congregation shall:

1. Support the leadership of the Interim Pastor in the congregation and community
2. Inform the Interim Pastor regularly of the progress the Pastoral Search Committee is making in preparing to call a settled pastor.

Salary and Benefits

For all services rendered by the interim pastor under this agreement, the _____ (church) agrees to provide the following annual compensation:

- \$ _____ Cash salary (frequency of payment);
- \$ _____ Housing allowance
- \$ _____ Use of parsonage with all utilities;*
- \$ _____ Pension (14% of salary basis, i.e. cash salary + housing allowance or parsonage)
- \$ _____ Life Insurance and Disability Income Plan (1.5% of salary basis);
- \$ _____ Social Security Offset (7.65% of salary basis);
- \$ _____ Health Insurance;
- \$ _____ Dental Insurance

**Parsonage is valued at 130% of cash salary for purpose of calculating "salary basis" to determine benefits.*

Reimbursable Professional Expenses

- \$ _____ Continuing Education;
- \$ _____ Professional expenses (meetings, etc.)

\$ _____ Mileage to be reimbursed at the current IRS rate;
\$ _____ Other (telephone, etc.)

Compensation shall be reviewed and determined annually.

The congregation shall pay moving expenses as necessary and appropriate.

Paid vacation: one week for each 3 months of service, or 2½ days per month served.

NOTE: When an Interim Pastor is serving a great distance from his/her home, negotiation of "family time," in addition to vacation time, is encouraged.

One week of Continuing Education time for each 6 months of service.

Due to the itinerant nature of interim ministry, if the Interim Pastor does not have a call at the completion of the interim, he/she may wish to negotiate a severance equal to one month's income (numbers 1-6 above).

Review and Evaluation

There shall be regular six month reviews of the mutual ministry of the congregation and the interim pastor. Those participating in the review may include the named church administrative body, chairs of committees, and the interim pastor. The purposes are to:

- Determine progress on goals;
- Provide the interim pastor and congregational representatives an opportunity to assess how well they are fulfilling responsibilities and the ministries they share;
- Identify and isolate any areas of conflict or disappointment that have not received adequate attention and may be adversely affecting mutual ministry;
- Clarify expectations of all parties to help avoid or to deal with any possible future conflicts.

A mutually agreed upon third party (Conference staff or designee) may be engaged to facilitate the ministry review process.

Exit Interview

At the conclusion of the interim relationship, the local church and pastor agree to participate in an evaluation of the Interim Period. This evaluation would typically include the following:

1. An exit interview attended by the Interim Pastor and key lay leaders; and
2. Completion of evaluation process suggested by the Conference/Association staff.

Duration, Renewal, and Termination

This covenant is initially in effect for six months and is renewable in three-month increments, as appropriate and agreeable to both parties, following evaluation.

Either party may terminate this agreement with a thirty-day (30) notice. Changes in the above covenant may be negotiated between the Interim Pastor and the _____ (i.e. Elders) of the congregation.

Non-Candidacy Covenant

The Interim Pastor agrees to the following covenant: “*Under no circumstances will I allow my name to be considered as a possible candidate for the settled position.*” Likewise the church agrees that the Interim Pastor will not be considered as a possible candidate for the settled position.

In accepting this agreement, effective _____ (date), we hereby attach our signatures, making the Covenant binding upon us in accordance with the above outlined terms, subject to the approval of the governing board on _____ (date).

Interim Pastor

date

Congregational Representative

date

One copy should be made and forwarded to:

Wisconsin Conference UCC
4459 Gray Road
De Forest, WI 53532

(Adapted, Ohio Conference and Connecticut Conference Sample Interim Covenants)