

Interim Ministry Is—

- ❖ ministry with congregations that have experienced the termination of a pastor's call by resignation, removal, disability, or death.
- ❖ pastoral care in a continued, consistent, focused, and intentional manner while a congregation works on its search for a new pastor.
- ❖ preparation and planning within a congregation leading to a new vision of ministry and mission for God's work in that place.

Interim Ministry Logo

The logo for Interim/Transitional Ministry features three overlapping churches depicting the movement of ministry through time. The central one, blurred by motion, highlights the "in-between" time of transition when reflection and searching take place—a time of learning from the past, visioning for the future, and preparing for new pastoral leadership.

Please Note

Transitional Ministry guidelines specify that no interim pastor shall be available for a regular call as the installed pastor of a congregation in which that person has served as interim pastor.

For further information on Transitional Ministry, contact

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The Benefits of Interim Ministry for Congregations in Transition



**Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

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How Do We Implement Interim Ministry?



- ❖ The congregation requests it at the time of the termination of a pastor's call.
- ❖ The bishop, associate of the bishop, and/or a mission district dean may recommend it.

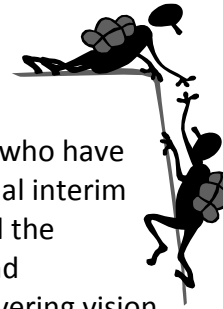
When Might It Be Helpful?

When—

- ❖ a pastor has served a congregation for a long time, especially pastorates of 15 years or more.
- ❖ a congregation has experienced a successive series of very short pastoral calls, possibly indicating difficulty within congregational dynamics.
- ❖ the missional direction or financial viability of the congregation is unclear.
- ❖ a pastor dies while serving a congregation.
- ❖ there is a boundary violation on the part of the pastor such as an incident of sexual misconduct or financial malfeasance.
- ❖ severe conflict erupts between pastor and congregation.
- ❖ any time a pastorate comes to an end, for any reason.



Who Are Our Guides in the Process?



Intentional interim pastors who have advanced training. Intentional interim pastors are prepared to lead the congregation in historical and contextual analysis, in discovering vision and mission, in identifying new leadership, in improving relationships with the denomination, and in preparing for the arrival of a new pastor. Intentional interim pastors also sustain the on-going ministry of the congregation throughout the transition period.

Maintenance interim pastors who sustain congregational ministries during the transition period.

Consultants who have special background training as psychologists, sociologists, pastoral counselors, social workers, etc. for assisting congregations working through traumatic circumstances.

Combinations of the above where special circumstances of availability, time, training, and contextual difficulty may require teamwork and special approaches.

How Is This Financed?



The local congregation that uses the services of interim pastors and/or consultants finance the program in this manner:

1. Full-time on-site interim pastors usually contract with the congregation for a

package based on the compensation agreement of the prior pastor or a compensation agreement that reflects the salary guidelines of the synod for the number of years the interim has served in pastoral ministry.

2. Part-time interim pastors usually contract as in #1 but as a percentage of the full-time rate.
3. Consultants contract for an hourly rate or for a stated fee for a specific number of sessions.
4. The specialized training and experience of intentional interim pastors and consultants should be factored into the compensation negotiations.

How Can We Arrange for Interim Ministry in Our Congregation?



1. Consult the bishop, the bishop's associate for your mission district, and/or the dean of your mission district.
2. The bishop recommends an Interim pastor for the congregation council's consideration and acceptance.
3. The interim pastor, the congregation president (or other officer), and the bishop sign a formal letter of agreement specifying the term of service, the responsibilities of the interim pastor and the congregation, and the details of the compensation agreement with the interim pastor.