

BROAD OVERVIEW OF THE INTERIM PROCESS

The interim task is to help the congregation, to whatever extent possible, work through any existing issues so as to remove or lower barriers to their ministry, so that they can be as healthy as possible when they move into the next phase of their ministry and life together with their next settled pastor. This is what makes an interim “intentional.”

During the interim time the congregation will have the opportunity to:

- Define themselves within the context of their ministry setting rather than as an extension of their pastor.
- Discern their individual and corporate God-given gifts, talents and abilities for the work of the Kingdom of God through their congregation
- Acknowledge and address issues existing in their life together that inhibit the full expression of their ministry
- Acknowledge and celebrate their individual and corporate strengths for the work of the Kingdom of God;
- Seek a positive partner in their next settled pastor who will work with them in their ministry;
- Become as healthy and alive as possible in preparation for their partnership with their next settled pastor.

Over the coming months the interim pastor will work with the Congregation Council to address these opportunities through the appointment and work of a Transition Team.

The Transition Team works with the interim pastor to plan and guide a process that will help prepare the congregation for a new future under the leadership of a new pastor, involving the congregation by addressing five Focus Points (see document “The Work of the Congregation During the Interim Period: Focus Points”)

- **Heritage**: *reviewing how the congregation has been shaped and formed*
- **Leadership**: *reviewing the membership needs and its ways of organizing and developing new and effective leadership*
- **Mission**: *defining and redefining sense of purpose and direction*
- **Connections**: *discovering all the relationships a faith community builds outside of itself*
- **Future**: *developing an honest assessment of the other focus points so that the congregation can turn its energy toward proactive decision making for the future.*

Reflecting upon these five Focus Points helps a congregation to answer the questions, ***“Who are we”, “What is God calling us to do” and “Who are our neighbors”***

What would the team do? Some possibilities:

- Personal interviews, cottage meetings, or surveys to get input from congregation
- Analysis of the needs in the neighborhood and community
- Work on the vision and purpose of the congregation.
- Complete the Ministry Site Profile, the multi page document that will describe Grace to potential pastoral candidates.

A Possible Schedule for this work:

July - August

Complete the formation of the Transition Team, and together with Council participate in a training workshop (approximately 3 hours needed)

September - November

Transition Team meets to do its work

- Research necessary to complete Ministry Site Profile
 - Analysis of Community Trends
 - Analysis of Congregation Trends
 - Determine congregation's goals, energy, partnership
 - Ministry Site Characteristics (e.g. formal vs. informal, inward focus or outward focus)
 - Congregation's Purpose, gifts, mission
 - Top Five Ministry Tasks needed in new pastor (e.g. administrator, pastoral care)
 - Top Five Gifts for Ministry needed
 - Five areas of ministry for first year of ministry
 - Commentary which will illustrate vision, opportunities, and challenges of ministry site
- Scheduling and Hosting of Historical Reflection event, and Small Group Meetings for congregation input.
- Completing the Ministry Site Profile

January - February

Nomination and appointing Call Committee by Council

March and beyond

Call committee begins its work of reviewing Rostered Leader Profiles, conducting interviews, and eventually recommending a candidate to council and congregation for call

An Alternative Schedule for this Work:

July - August

Complete the formation of the Transition Team, and together with Council participate in a training workshop (approximately 3 hours needed)

September - November

New Learning by Congregation and Council - Sunday morning or other time

Possibilities:

- A ten week study of the expectations the pastors and congregations have of each other, using the book "Healthy Churches
- Learning about congregation as an emotional system
- Healthy Congregations workshops by synod Congregational Resource Team

January - May

Transition Team meets to do its work

- Research necessary to complete Ministry Site Profile
 - Analysis of Community Trends
 - Analysis of Congregation Trends
 - Determine congregation's goals, energy, partnership
 - Ministry Site Characteristics (e.g. formal vs. informal, inward focus or outward focus)
 - Congregation's Purpose, gifts, mission
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June - July

Nomination and appointing Call Committee by Council

July and Beyond

Call committee begins its work of reviewing Rostered Leader Profiles, conducting interviews, and eventually recommending a candidate to council and congregation for call