

## Notes

### **Intentional Interim Ministry**

To become a called Intentional Interim Minister in the ELCA candidates:

- Need to complete interim ministry training.
- Agree to remain ineligible for call in the congregations they contract with.
- Are willing to serve in this call to Intentional Interim Ministry for a minimum period of years.
- Must be recommended for this call by his/her bishop.

The departure of a pastor means change. Things will not be the same as they were during that pastor's ministry to that congregation. Change is the new situation.

Intentional Interim Ministers are called, trained persons who bring additional skills to assist congregations in the times between called pastors. While providing Word and Sacrament ministry, and a full range of pastoral care, the Intentional Interim leads the congregation through a process that builds the bridge between "what was" and the "what will be" in the life of the congregation.

If you are interested in interim training or service as an interim you should contact your bishop in advance.

Additional information is also available at:

**The Interim Ministry Association of the ELCA**  
[www.elca.org/interimministry/](http://www.elca.org/interimministry/)  
**The National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors**  
[www.nalip.net](http://www.nalip.net)  
**The Interim Ministry Network**  
[www.imnedu.org](http://www.imnedu.org)

Recommended reading resources:

*A Change of Pastors*, by Loren B. Mead  
*Temporary Shepherds*, Edited by Roger S. Nicholson



## **In Time of Transition**



## **Are You Called to Intentional Interim Ministry?**

**Published by the Three Texas-Louisiana Synods of the ELCA**

Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod  
214-637-6865  
[www.ntnl.org](http://www.ntnl.org)

Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod  
281-873-5665  
[www.gulfcoastsynod.org](http://www.gulfcoastsynod.org)

Southwestern Texas Synod  
830-379-9900  
[www.swtsynod.org](http://www.swtsynod.org)

## A Time Between

The interim period for a congregation is a “time between.” A time between what was and what will be. A time between the resi-



dent pastors in the congregation. A time between saying “Goodbye” and saying “Hello.” A time between one chapter in the con-

gregation’s history and a new, yet unwritten, chapter.

It is also a time of uncertainty, a time of anticipation, a time of preparation, a time of apprehension, and a time of hope.

Synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America provide for the care of congregations during the time of pastoral vacancy through the appointment by the bishop of the synod, with the consent of the congregation or Congregational Council, of an Intentional Interim Ministry Specialist to provide pastoral care and other transitional services on an interim basis. These services are then provided on a contract basis between the Interim Minister and the congregation. The Interim Minister agrees that he or she will be ineligible for call to that congregation.

This brochure provides helpful information to assist potential Intentional Interim Ministers in discerning their call into this unique ministry.

## Are You Called Into Intentional Interim Ministry?

Whenever a congregation finds itself in pastoral transition with related significant concerns and stress, that congregation is a candidate for the leadership of a trained and experienced Intentional Interim Minister. Situations in which this is particularly appropriate include: the transition following a long pastorate, the transition created by new mission opportunities and/or changed context for ministry, a transition following the resignation of a pastor related to disciplinary action, or a transition marked by significant discord or upheaval within a congregation.

The calling of Intentional Interim Ministers is to bring a calm, thoughtful, objective, spiritual, caring, and mature leadership to congregations in these situations. It is important for these ministers to possess some or all of these gifts and skills:

- To love the Lord God.
- To love all people.
- To remain non-anxious in an extremely anxious ministry environment.
- To be adept serving in the role of consultant.
- To value the intentional focus on conflict.
- To have been formally trained in Intentional Interim Ministry.
- To be able to move toward a planned closure and termination of your ministry.

An Intentional Interim Minister brings with him/her an ecumenically tried and proven process. This process is designed to assist a congregation to:

1. Come to terms with its history.
2. Discover a new identity.
3. Facilitate shifts of power.
4. Rethink its denominational relationships.
5. Build commitment to new leadership and to a new future.

You may wish to consult the website of The Interim Ministry Association of the ELCA ([www.elca.org/interimministry/education](http://www.elca.org/interimministry/education)) for periodic discernment events.

## The Benefits of Intentional Interim Ministry

A good Intentional Interim Minister will “hit the ground running,” beginning his/her time with the congregation with intensity and energy. An Intentional Interim Minister is fully present with the congregation from the beginning to:

- Provide continuity in the ministry of Word and Sacrament.
- Provide pastoral care.
- Provide pastoral leadership with the church council, staff, and leadership.
- Provide administrative oversight to the operation of the church.
- Support the ministry programs and committees of the congregation.
- Provide a process which strives to make change of pastors a time of congregational renewal and growth.

Characteristics of the relationship between the congregation and the Intentional Interim include:

- A contract is agreed upon describing compensation and specific interim issues to be addressed.
- The Intentional Interim is viewed, in part, as a consultant.
- Both value the intentional focus on conflict.
- The Intentional Interim brings a “process” for engagement.
- A recognition of the unique personality and leadership style of the Interim.
- Movement toward a planned closure and termination of this transition ministry.

