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***Committee on Ministry
Congregational Transitions Commission
National Capital Presbytery***

INTENTIONAL INTERIM MINISTRY MANUAL

I. Introduction: Description of the Interim Period and Process

The interim period is the “between times: for a congregation, bridging the time when their installed pastor has resigned and departed and another pastor is called and installed. This period in the life of a congregation is not a tragedy; rather it is a creative and dynamic moment in their corporate faith journey and history.

“Whenever a minister leaves a congregation, for whatever reason (death, retirement, acceptance of a new call, being asked to resign, etc.), the departure always evokes some kind of crisis. It also provides a congregation with an occasion for new opportunity in ministry. It is indeed a time of freedom for you, as lay leaders, to make of this occasion what you will. It is one time in the life of a congregation when everyone expects change, and you have the choice of being victims of change or of taking advantage of the opportunity to share in the planning of that change.”

Philip Porcher, “What You Can Expect from an Interim Pastor and an Interim Consultant,” (The Alban Institute), p. 2.

Our denomination, along with other mainline denominations, has come to recognize that the interim period of ministry requires special skills. Certain tasks need to be accomplished during this bridging period in order to prepare the way effectively for the new pastor and his/her ministry.

Prior to calling an interim supply, the Session, the congregation, the Presbytery, as well as the candidate for interim ministry, need to be clear about the value, significance and meaning of intentional interim ministry. Again, this can be a very creative, healing, and vitalizing period in the life of the congregation, as well as the Presbytery.

II. Description of the Interim Congregation: The Five Developmental Tasks

Research with many congregations of various kinds has indicated that predictable dynamics happen in churches during times of leadership transition. Five basic areas need addressing.

1. Coming to Terms with History

Following a pastor's departure for whatever reason, a congregation usually needs to resolve its feelings: loss, grief, anger, relief, guilt, panic about the future. "Letting go" of that pastor is a critically important task for a congregation as it begins to prepare for a new pastoral leader. In addition, churches sometimes have "old issues" or conflicts which were never fully resolved and which tend to resurface in unsettled times. A congregation needs to be released from any inappropriate or crippling power of the past, in order to be fully ready for a future with a new leader.

2. Discovering a New Identity

Often congregations have a strong self-image, positive or negative, which may or may not truthfully reflect present realities. As the search for a new pastor proceeds, it is essential that both the Search Committee (PNC) and the congregation have a clear sense of the church's identity, recognizing both strengths and needs. This task, therefore, calls for a careful self-assessment by a congregation, so that it can envision more clearly what it wishes to become.

3. Strengthening Patterns of Lay Leadership

Congregations in an interim time often experience shifts in power or leadership among the laity, depending upon the relationships of individuals to the former pastor. This is also a time for considering whether, as a whole, patterns of lay involvement in the church are healthy or unhealthy, empowering or disempowering for most of the congregation. This task is to see that lay leadership develops in positive and creative ways for the good of the whole church.

4. Strengthening Denominational Ties

During the interim period, congregations find themselves working more closely than usual with the denomination, particularly with Presbytery staff and resources. A primary opportunity exists to reinforce and strengthen a congregation's sense of belonging to the wider church.

5. Preparing for New Leadership

During the search process, two significant tasks are going on simultaneously: the Search Committee (PNC), on behalf of the congregation, is fulfilling the necessary concrete steps in the process of finding a new pastor; and the congregation as a whole needs to be readying itself psychologically and spiritually to enter into partnership with a new leader. This task is to strengthen the church's capacity to be a growing, changing, forward-looking body.

The Interim Pastor brings skills and perspectives to help a congregation work through all of these tasks in creative and positive ways. The Interim Pastor is not solely responsible for the accomplishment of any of these tasks, but rather works as a partner with a congregation throughout the process. Therefore, the congregation's commitment to engage in this process is essential to its effectiveness.

The interim pastorate provides both the time and the focus by which a congregation can strengthen its ministries, rediscover and renew its goals and resources, and prepare positively for a new pastor. In a well-led interim period, the process of self-study, search, and call can occur in a climate of honesty, healing, dreaming, building, and celebrating as the Body of Christ. The church finds that far from being "on hold" during this period, it is directly and creatively engaged with the most essential issues of its common life. Freed from a sense of panic or crisis, the interim period can be a time of surprising renewal and growth.

III. Appropriate Goals for the Interim Period

A. To Maintain the Viability of the Church

The ongoing vital program that is expected of a lively congregation consists of pastoral duties plus the Christian activities of the laity. Continuing the needed programs already underway and efforts to help make them more meaningful are the responsibility of an interim leader.

B. To Resolve Feelings of Grief

Pastoral visitation and group meetings involving personal, direct contact with individuals, and intentional expression of interest in their feelings, more often than not, will provide healing catharsis.

C. To Reinforce the Ministry of the Laity

Encouragement of participation and leadership by lay persons is vital. The interim period is a particularly good time to develop lay leadership. A member of the laity may accompany the pastor when home communion is administered. Many responsibilities in the church may be carried out by lay persons rather than a pastor.

D. To Clarify the Mission of the Church

Congregations need to be reminded that Christians are here to serve, not only to be served. The interim may be the voice of the larger Christian community at a time when the church is turned inward to its own needs. The minister teaches by example, by preaching, and by formal training.

E. To Deal with Special Needs of the Church

Every church is different. As a result of diagnosis, the interim will learn of specific problems in the congregation. Through knowledge of techniques in conflict management and tactful suggestions by the "outsider" (the disinterested person, the interim minister), beneficial changes may be effected.

F. To Emphasize Fellowship and Reconciliation

Opportunities for encouraging Christian fellowship are many. For example, arranging for a coffee hour before or after worship service is helpful. The incorporation of “congregational concerns” during a worship service can be a time of real sharing.

G. To Strengthen Denominational Ties

The interim minister personally maintains a good relationship with the denomination and encourages the local church to participate in denomination-wide activities and programs.

H. To Increase the Potential for a Successful Ministry by the Next Regular Pastor

The interim minister is future-oriented. The interim minister is concerned with the coming of a new pastor and is helping to prepare the congregation for the arrival. In addition, he or she communicates with the new pastor information that might be helpful.

IV. Seven Additional Tasks (by Terry Foland, IBT Vol. 9, No. 1, page 3, September 1996)

At an annual conference of the Interim Network, 33 experienced Interim Pastors spent some time in an interest group on the “state of the art” of interim ministry. Those 33 persons represented a total of 182 interim pastorates (average of 5.5 interim pastorates) with an accumulated 196 years of interim ministry experience. The average interim pastorate for this group with 12.7 months.

Among other things discussed, the group identified seven agenda items most often dealt with in their interim experiences in addition to the normal developmental tasks of history, relationship to the denomination, leadership issues, establishing a new identity, and commitment to new leadership.

A. The Necessity to Rebuild the Congregational “Infrastructure”

That is, the administrative structures, processes, procedures, and “know how” efficiency. Joan Mabon, a Presbyterian interim minister, offered the observation/ theory that there is generally a three-year period of neglect to the infrastructure by the exiting pastor. One year of trauma or feeling of rejection, one year of struggle with a decision to stay or go, and one year of attention given to the search for a new position. With those concerns preoccupying the pastor there is unintentional but certain neglect of the administrative functions of the pastor. This seems like a reasonable theory—but of course we have no hard data to substantiate it. Perhaps we will some day.

B. Evaluation of and Removal of Staff Members if Necessary

Congregations seem to be more willing to deal with this difficult issue with the Interim Pastor’s leadership than with an installed pastor. The Interim Pastor will not have to live with consequences, and the new pastor won’t have to “hassle with” that problem in the start-up months of a new ministry.

C. Financial/Stewardship Issues

Often giving is down when a pastor leaves due to disillusionment, unrest, conflict, or disappointment around the pastor who has just terminated. Basic stewardship education and fresh efforts to secure financial commitment to the church can often be more readily received from interim ministerial leadership.

D. Conflicts of Issues or Congregational Agenda

An Interim Pastor can usually be more objective and have less personal vested interest in the outcome of such conflict and be more able to help facilitate some decision-making processes. It is a desirable goal that such conflict is resolved prior to the calling of the new pastor.

E. Interpersonal or Intergroup Conflicts

Again, an Interim Pastor will probably be able to serve as an objective third party mediator since he/she will not be concerned about long-term relationships with the individuals or groups who are in conflict. The principals involved can more readily focus on the issue rather than the question of “is the pastor on my/our side.”

F. Getting Closure with the Previous Pastor

Formal farewell is one thing. Weaning a congregation from the previous pastor is another. The Interim Pastor can help congregations understand this issue since he/she is not the future clergyperson with whom lack of closure is apt to be a lingering problem.

G. Communication Improvement

Among other things often neglected as a pastor begins to “look elsewhere” are the communication channels with the congregation. A natural interest and concern held by most members during the interim period makes this a prime time to enhance communications processes.

Awareness of these items as normal for the interim period may help those of us in judicatory positions be of assistance to congregations and Interim Pastors during an interim ministry. What do you think?

V. Book of Order Description of the Interim Pastor

Note: Some policies of the NCP Committee on Ministry are more restrictive than the current Book of Order. This presbytery-option with regard to COM policies is allowed by the Book of Order.

A. G-2.0504b (new Book of Order, 2013/2015) – Temporary Pastoral Relations

“Temporary pastoral relations are approved by the Presbytery and do not carry a formal call or installation. When a congregation does not have a pastor, or while the pastor is unable to perform her or his duties, the Session, with the approval of Presbytery, may obtain the services of a teaching elder, candidate, or ruling elder in a temporary pastoral relationship. No formal call shall be issued and no formal installation shall take place.

“Titles and terms of service for temporary relationships shall be determined by the Presbytery. A person serving in a temporary pastoral relationship is invited for a specified period not to exceed twelve months in length, which is renewable with the approval of the Presbytery. A teaching elder employed in a temporary pastoral relationship is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor.”

B. G-14.0553 (old Book of Order, 2009/2011) – Interim Pastoral Relations

(This is the policy upon which current NCP Interim Pastor policies are based.)

“When a Presbytery and Session determine that an interim pastor, interim co-pastor, or interim associate pastor is necessary and helpful, the Session may consult the committee on ministry and seek an interim ministry as soon as a date certain for departure has been announced by a pastor or associate pastor to leave. An interim pastor, interim co-pastor, or interim associate pastor is not eligible to serve that church as the next permanent or designated pastor.”

C. Presbytery Policy Regarding Succession of Interim Pastors

The old Book of Order (G-14.0553) stated that an Interim Pastor, Interim Co-Pastor, or Interim Associate Pastor is not eligible to serve that church as the next permanent or designated pastor. This understanding will be clearly communicated by the Committee on Ministry and the Interim Pastor to the Session and the PNC. In addition, the interim shall clearly announce such from the pulpit on the first Sunday of service, in the first newsletter after arrival (by special mailing if there is no newsletter), at the initial meeting with all boards of the church, and at every occasion throughout the interim period when someone raises a question about the interim being called to the permanent position.

VI. What to Seek in a Good Interim Pastor

A. Basic Standards for Interim Ministry

- Ability to work effectively with volunteers in a church system.
- Pastoral skills in such areas as: helping people deal with grief, anger, and despair; healing hurts and divisions; moving persons from a sense of hopelessness to a vision of hope.

- Administrative skills in such areas as: day-to-day operation of the institutional church; planning and implementation of plans; corporate decision making; and the ability to negotiate, compromise, and mediate differences.
- Ability to plan and lead worship experiences and preach the gospel.
- A personality that can move into a new situation and adapt quickly, relate to the congregation on an “interim basis,” and be able to let go and move on when the work is finished.
- Regular continuing education in the field of Interim Ministry. Congregations are encouraged to support their Interim Pastor in this effort.

B. Expected Specialized Skills/Competencies Acquired

- Awareness of the normal developmental tasks and the unique dynamics of a congregation in an interim period.
- Ability to enable a congregation to sort out a variety of feelings about itself, the previous pastor, the related Presbytery officials, and the unknown future “installed pastor.”
- Crisis intervention skills.
- Conflict utilization/resolution and problem-solving skills as a third party enabler.
- Skills for team building or development of a sense of “esprit de corps” among those who may have been previously divided.
- A knowledge of the Presbytery processes for helping a congregation search for and call (employ) a new pastor and clarity on his/her role in the processes.
- Organizational development skills, including the skills of assessing needs, analysis of situations, developing long-range goals, and identifying potential resources for reaching goals.
- Strategies for coping with one’s own stress and helping others to deal with stress.
- Participation in a continuing program for growth, evaluation, and development with peers/colleagues in specialized interim ministry.

C. Desirable Personal Characteristics of Persons Engaged in Interim Ministries

- A clear sense of calling; a sense of “professionalism” in regard to ministry.
- Ability to care for oneself and to sustain oneself in all kinds of situations.

- Good ego strength—secure, emotionally stable, mature.
- Action/goal oriented.
- Flexible and adaptable.
- Patient, empathetic, understanding.
- Physical vitality.
- Positive faith-stance, hope.
- Good sense of humor.

VII. How to Find an Interim Pastor

A. Representatives from Presbytery and COM meet with the Session of a church seeking an Interim Pastor. The visit will include:

1. A discussion of Board of Pensions requirements, the process for hiring an interim pastor, and salary and requirement guidelines.
2. A discussion of the importance of having an Interim Pastor, goals for the interim period and the interim tasks, and characteristics of a good Interim Pastor.
3. A description of the Former Pastors' Policy.

B. The Session elects an Interim Search Committee (ISC). It should consist of 3-5 members, with some from Session and some from the congregation. It is recommended that the Chair be on the Session.

C. The position description is developed by the ISC with input from the Session and/or the Personnel Committee. It should include:

1. duties and responsibilities of the interim,
2. whether full or part-time, and desired starting date,
3. salary and benefits to be offered,
4. accountability and supervision of interim,
5. name and contact information for the ISC point of contact

If a national search is desired, the ISC should file a MIF (Ministry Information Form on the PC(USA)'s Church Leadership Connection system. See VIII.A. below.

D. The position description and compensation package are approved by Session, and then the ISC emails them to the General Presbyter.

E. Presbytery sends a copy of the position description to every minister in the Presbytery who has requested to be on the list of those desiring Interim Pastorates.
The position is also posted on the Presbytery's website.

F. The ISC receives PIFs (Personal Information Forms) and resumes.

1. Potential interims contact the ISC.
2. Presbytery provides suggested names of potential interims (The Interim Network, PC(USA), and other presbyteries can be contacted.)
3. Matched PIF's will be provided by CLC, if an MIF is filed.

G. The ISC evaluates PIFs/resumes and selects the most attractive candidates.

H. The ISC emails these names and PIFs/resumes to General Presbyter Wilson Gunn who will vet all the candidates and determine which have the most appropriate qualifications and are approved for further consideration. In addition, the General Presbyter will do a Presbytery-to-Presbytery reference check for any/all candidates that are not minister members of NCP.

I. The ISC Chair calls the General Presbyter to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the candidates.

J. The ISC further evaluates only the approved candidates by: listening to sermons, checking references, conducting interviews, and hearing candidates preach.
(Presbytery can help provide neutral pulpits.)

K. The ISC brings name of the final candidate for interim position to Session, along with a written contract (consistent with Presbytery's salary guidelines).

- *Resource: Recommended Interim Pastor Contract, found on the Presbytery website.*

L. Session approves the invitation to the interim candidate and approves the interim contract:

1. If the candidate is a minister member of NCP, the contract is signed by the Clerk and Interim Pastor and a copy is sent to COM.
2. If the candidate is not a minister member of NCP, an examination is required. The ISC should let the Congregational Transitions Commission and the Examinations Chair know ASAP. The candidate should be given the Examination Process document so he/she can begin preparation. (See VIII.B. below.)

M. The COM Congregational Transitions Commission (CTC) approves the interim contract.

VIII. Additional Information for Searches Extending Beyond National Capital Presbytery

A. Filing a Ministry Information Form (MIF)

1. If a national search is desired, a MIF should be completed. Forms are available from the Church Leadership Connection (CLC) at www.pcusa.org/clc.
2. Completed MIFs are filed with CLC. Contact the Executive Administrator to COM for help with this.
3. CLC will then provide a list of “matched” candidates from this national database.

- *Resource: Handbook for PNCs and Sessions, found on the Presbytery website.*

B. An Examination is required before the start date if the candidate is not a minister member of NCP.

1. Contact the Executive Administrator to COM ASAP to schedule the examination.
2. Interim contract is signed by Clerk and Interim Pastor and copy is sent to COM before the start date.

C. Interim Pastors will be encouraged to join NCP.

1. If the Interim Pastor prefers to retain Presbytery membership in the Presbytery of origin, he/she may request permission to labor within the bounds. Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis and if the Presbytery of origin has granted permission to labor outside the bounds.
2. If the Interim Pastor is to become a member in NCP, the interim is recommended for approval at the next Congregational Transitions Commission meeting.

IX. Writing the Contract

There shall be a clear and equitable contract between the Session and the Interim Pastor which must be approved by the COM Congregational Transitions Commission, and which includes specifics, concerning:

- duties to be performed, including expectations of the interim period,
- time required,
- relationships with other church staff,
- compensation,
- duration of the contract, amendment policy, and termination arrangements,
- statement of non-candidacy for the installed position.

- **Resource: Recommended Interim Pastor Contract, found on the Presbytery website.**

Some details that should be considered for inclusion in the contract are:

A. General Duties and Responsibilities

The following is meant to be a checklist of duties that are most frequently required in interim ministry. Others may be added as appropriate to the given situation, but should be clearly negotiated.

- preaching/leading worship and administering the sacraments (including appropriate preparation time) on Sunday mornings and at special services such as Thanksgiving, Maundy Thursday, and Christmas Eve
- pastoral care (maintenance, crisis)
- moderating Session and congregational meetings
- working collegially with Session in program planning/review and organizational oversight
- committee responsibilities (specify)
- weddings, funerals (within congregation and community)
- short-term pastoral counseling (within congregation and community)
- officer training
- confirmation class
- administration (functioning as Head of Staff, or as defined)
- parish activities (dinners, clubs, fellowship groups)
- visitation (general, hospital, crisis, new member prospects)
- Presbytery meetings
- other governing body responsibilities
- other

B. Special Responsibilities of Interim Ministers

1. Accountability to Presbytery (COM requirements). The Interim Pastor will:
 - submit semi-annual reports to COM CTC
 - participate regularly (at least six times a year) in NCP interim support group
2. In moderating the Session, the Interim Pastor will guide the Session through its responsibilities in the search process of:
 - endorsing Presbytery's EEO/AA policy,
 - approving a request to COM to elect a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC),
 - seeing that a nominations committee proposes a slate for the PNC,
 - calling a congregational meeting to elect a PNC,
 - approving a budget for the work of the PNC,
 - conducting a mission study,
 - approving job description and compensation package for the pastoral position,
 - approving the completed Ministry Information Form (MIF),

- calling a congregational meeting to approve the final candidate
3. The Interim Pastor will lead the Session and congregation in working on the generally recognized interim period tasks, as described above.

C. Time Requirements

Early in the process the CTC shall counsel with the Session concerning the congregation's needs for full- vs. part-time interim leadership. Full-time is considered to be 50 hours per week.

This determination should be made before the position is publicized. Based upon that decision, the Session will draw up a basic job description with realistic time requirements assigned to each duty or responsibility, recognizing that some time designations may be approximate and subject to change during the course of the interim.

The Interim Pastor is strongly urged to keep a time log so that he/she can regularly confer with the Session regarding both the total time spent per week and the accuracy of the time designation for particular duties. This information is then available when the contract needs to be amended or renewed.

D. Staff Relationships

The contract shall list the various relationships with other ordained and non-ordained staff of the church and shall specify supervisory or collegial relations with or to each in accordance with the church's existing personnel policy. Where such policy is lacking, the CTC will counsel with the Session and the Interim Pastor to insure that those lines are clear.

E. Compensation

1. Salary. Ideally, the Interim Pastor's salary should be comparable to that of the departing pastor; however, it must be recognized that years of experience, changes in the church's financial status, and other factors may have to be considered. However, the salary should not be set at less than 80% of the previous installed pastor's salary. Sessions can request a waiver of this requirement from the Congregational Transitions Commission. The request for a waiver must specify the compelling reason(s) for an exception to the policy. In all respects, compensation will be consistent with NCP compensation guidelines for pastors. An Interim Pastor shall not receive less than the current Presbytery compensation requires (pro-rated for part-time) and, in addition, the church will be strongly urged to provide the optional benefits of social security tax, book allowance, sick leave, designated holidays, etc. The contract shall specify when the interim is to be paid (bi-weekly, twice a month, etc.).

2. Leave. Sick leave, study leave, and vacation shall be in line with current Presbytery policy.

3. Moving Expenses. The church will be required to pay moving expenses, if necessary.

F. Duration of the Contract

Ordinarily an interim contract shall be for one year. The contract shall include a clause “to amend or renew with the consent of all parties” (including the COM CTC). The interim contract may be renewed for six months at a time.

G. Termination Provisions

1. By the Interim Pastor

The agreement may be terminated by the Interim Pastor with 30 days notice, in which case payment beyond the 30-day period will be forfeited.

2. By the Session

The agreement may be terminated by the Session upon 90 days notice, following consultation with the COM CTC. The Interim Pastor may be expected to continue to serve the church during this period as determined by the Session. The Session will allow liberal leave for the Interim Pastor’s search for his//her next opportunity for service during this time. During the 90-day period, the church will continue to pay all compensation (effective salary, FICA, major medical, death, disability and pension) due to the Interim Pastor, unless the Interim Pastor obtains full-time employment, at which time any obligation owed by the church will cease.

3. It will be understood, however, that if the relationship is satisfactory, normally the Interim will be committing him/herself to serve the church until such time as a new pastor is chosen.

H. Statement of Non-Candidacy

Each contract shall state that the Interim Pastor will NOT be eligible for consideration as the next installed pastor. (Book of Order G-2.0504b)

I. Signatures

The contract is to be signed by the Interim Pastor, Clerk of Session, and a representative of COM.

X. Interim Timeline (from the Interim Pastor’s perspective)

A. Notice of Vacancy

- Find out everything possible about the congregation from the judicatory staff, neighboring pastors, etc.

B. Apply

- Submit PIF, interview, negotiate contract.

C. Day 1

- Clearly announce/state interim status from the pulpit on the first Sunday, in the first newsletter after arrival (or a special mailing, if no newsletter), at the first Session meeting, and at every occasion throughout the interim period when someone raises the question about the interim's being called to the permanent position.

D. First Month

- Get to "know" the congregation, especially the boards, as much as possible (history, power structure, sociogram, etc.).

E. Second Month and as Long as it Takes

- Perform maintenance functions, issues that must be resolved during the interim, issues that should not wait for the new pastor.
- Establish working relationships with boards, church secretary, sexton, other key leaders or power figures.
- Establish appropriate relationship with the PNC.
- Provide general pastoral care.
- Participate in as much fellowship and storytelling as possible.
- Provide regular reports to Session, congregation, and COM's Congregational Transitions Commission.
- Keep the congregation informed as to the PNC's progress through the process of reminding the congregation to pray for them.
- Gather information and keep records to be passed on to the new pastor.
- Consciously prepare the congregation for the interim's leaving and the new Pastor's coming.

F. PNC Finds Candidate

- Pastor is elected.
- Final report is sent to COM CTC.
- Interim leaves and new pastor arrives.
- Consultation with the new pastor is appropriate.

XI. Ways of Celebrating an Interim Pastorate

The beginning and ending of an Interim Pastorate should be recognized in appropriate liturgical way, as with any other pastorate. Various resources are available at the Presbytery office for use in these services.

- A. The service of worship for the first Sunday of interim time** might include a covenant between the pastor and people to be faithful to one another and to God in the journey and tasks of the interim period. A representative of COM or a Presbytery staff person may be asked to participate in such a service. It is a prime opportunity to call the church to a new time with a sense of celebration, renewal and hope.

B. At the closure of interim time, several possibilities exist for liturgical celebration:

- A service of closure to acknowledge the end of the interim journey is important to helping the congregation let go of the Interim Pastor. The new pastor may begin the following Sunday, or the circumstances may be such that there will be one or two more weeks between and departure of the interim and the arrival of the new pastor, during which time supply preaching may be needed.
- Another possibility is that, following a service of closure for the Interim, the leadership of a following Sunday morning would be shared by the Interim Pastor and the new pastor, an appropriate way of transferring the pastoral office from one to the other. Experience has shown that such a service can be quite powerful, enabling the Interim Pastor to come to a sense of completion in his or her work, and helping the congregation acknowledge the end of one relationship and celebrate the beginning of another.

XII. The Interim Pastor's Relationship with the Pastor Nominating Committee

During the term of an Interim Pastor, there will be times when he/she will be asked to help the Pastor Nominating Committee with the search for a new minister. The Interim Pastor must be careful of the type of assistance given to the Pastor Nominating Committee.

Some guidelines for the Interim Pastor to follow:

- Do not attempt to advise the PNC on any candidate for the position of pastor.
- Do not attend any of the meetings of the PNC unless specifically invited by the chairperson of the PNC.
- Do not release any information on the activities of the PNC.
- Be knowledgeable and available to the PNC on items included in the Ministry Information Form, such as the mission statement of the church and the position description for the new minister.
- Encourage the congregation to pray for the PNC, to be patient while the conduct their search, and to support the committee in every way.
- Remind the congregation of the confidentiality of the task of the PNC.

XIII. The Pastor Nominating Committee's Relationship with the Interim Pastor

The Pastor Nominating Committee has the task of finding the new pastor that God has chosen for their church. The committee may ask the Interim Pastor for advice on items that will be included in the Ministry Information Form. The Pastor Nominating Committee may also ask the Interim Pastor to act as a candidate in a test interview and ask the Interim to

remind the congregation to pray for the PNC, to be patient while they search for a candidate, and to urge support in every way.

IX. Relationship Between the Interim Pastor and the Committee on Ministry

Throughout the contracted relationship of the Interim Pastor and a congregation, the Interim Pastor and the Committee on Ministry (COM), through the Congregational Transitions Commission (CTC), shall maintain on-going communication.

The following steps provide mechanisms for the COM to provide appropriate support, advice, and feedback, and for the Interim Pastor to inform COM of the accomplishments and problems being experienced during this interim period:

A. The pastor shall participate regularly (at least 6 times a year) in the NCP interim support group. This group provides an opportunity (a) for sharing with peers one's past and current experiences as an Interim Pastor, (b) for offering support and advice to peers who are serving as interims, (c) for keeping the COM Congregational Transitions Commission informed on a regular basis of how the current interim period is progressing, and (d) for highlighting problems or concerns relating generally to interim ministry that need to be addressed by Presbytery.

B. A member of the COM Congregational Transitions Commission will participate regularly in the NCP interim support group and will share with the Congregational Transitions Commission and/or the General Presbyter, as appropriate, specific concerns raised in these meetings.

C. The Interim Pastor will submit semi-annual reports to COM Congregational Transitions Commission. The first report is due 90 days after the start of the contract, with subsequent reports due at 6-month intervals. A final report at the end of the contract shall be submitted regardless of when the next semi-annual report is due.

1. The reports shall (1) address progress on the *5 Developmental Tasks of the Interim Congregation* found in the *Intentional Interim Ministry Manual*, (2) describe any significant challenges facing the congregation and how they are being addressed, and (3) request any specific assistance from COM or Presbytery staff.
2. The PNC liaison shall notify final candidates for the called/installed position that the reports are available for reading in the Presbytery office.
3. The Interim Pastor should periodically keep the COM liaison informed of how the interim period is progressing. He/she may elect to share with the liaison the semi-annual written reports to COM.

D. The COM Congregational Transitions Commission Co-Chairs will ensure that the reports are read and acknowledged:

1. A member of the Congregational Transitions Commission shall read the report,

respond to the Interim Pastor, and summarize the report at the next meeting of the CTC.

Commission.

2. The reports shall be sent to the Stated Clerk. A copy shall be placed in the pastor's folder and in the church's folder in the Presbytery office.
3. The reports shall be made available to future Interim Pastors and final candidates for the installed/called pastoral position. The PNC should encourage final candidates to ask for and read these reports.

E. The COM Congregational Transitions Commission will assign a COM liaison to the church soon after the pastor announces his/her intention to leave. This will enable on-going conversations between the departing pastor, the Session, the Interim Pastor and COM even before a PNC is in place. The informal communications between the Interim Pastor and the liaison will supplement semi-annual written reports. The pastor and liaison will determine the frequency and types of communication: face-to-face meetings, telephone conversations, e-mails.

F. The Interim Pastor will respect the boundaries described elsewhere in this document regarding his/her relationship with the Pastor Nominating Committee.

1. The Interim Pastor may be asked to have a role in helping train and resource PNCs.
2. If invited by the PNC, the Interim Pastor may provide guidance to the search process, as appropriate.
3. Final candidates for the called/installed position shall be encouraged to contact the Interim Pastor as a part of the discernment process.

Failure of the Interim Pastor to comply with the policies in this Manual may compromise his/her future interim ministry opportunities in this Presbytery.

Note: Some policies of the NCP Committee on Ministry are more restrictive than the current Book of Order. This presbytery-option with regard to COM policies is allowed by the Book of Order.

***Revised by COM's Transitions Team in 2000, 2007, 2009,
and by COM's Congregational Transitions Commission
and the COM Coordinating Commission in 2015***