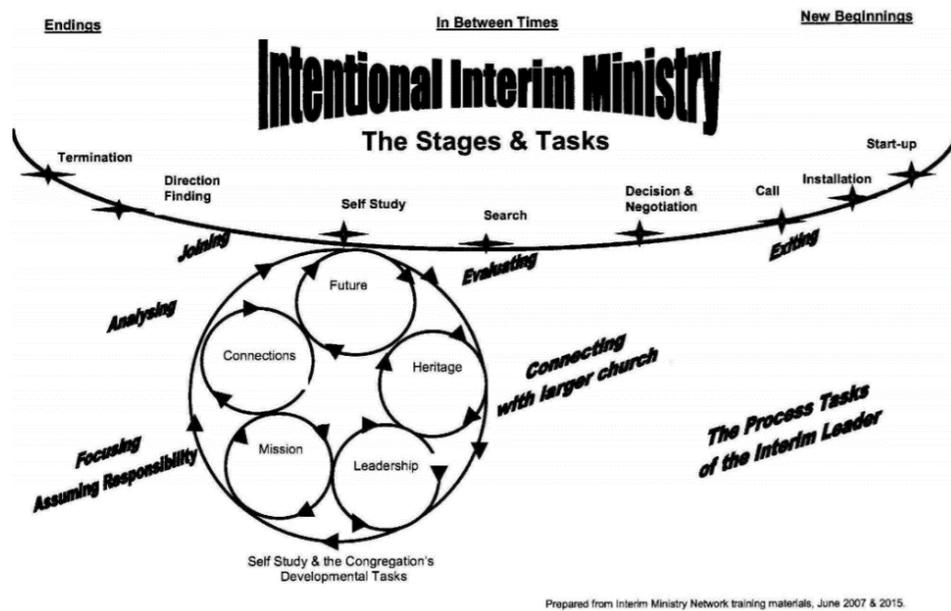


Transition Team

A transition team is a group of four to six people from the community of faith and one or two representatives from the regional council who work with the intentional interim minister or consultant to help guide the community of faith through the period of interim ministry. The transition team is appointed jointly by the governing body and the regional council, and is separate from the Ministry and Personnel (M&P) Committee.



A Prayer for Transition

The Rev. Canon Kristi Philip

Ever-present God, You call us on a journey to a place we do not know.
We are not where we started.
We have not reached our destination.
We are not sure where we are or who we are.
This is not a comfortable place.
Be among us, we pray. Calm our fears, save us from discouragement,
And help us stay on course.
Open our hearts to your guidance so that our journey to this
Unknown place continues as a journey of trust. **Amen**

Intentional interim ministry

(often referred to simply as interim ministry) is an opportunity for a community of faith to take an intentional time out to seek spiritual and organizational renewal, to rediscover its identity, and to revitalize its mission. It is engagement in a process of change by congregation and the interim minister /consultant but one which requires the commitment of the congregation to engage in the work of transition and change. It is not the job of the interim minister to fix the congregation. The role of the interim minister is to hold the congregation accountable to the call to be faithful in its place and time by knowing who they are, by understanding their context, by assessing their church systems and governance, by articulating their mission and purpose.



When Is Interim Ministry Necessary?

Interim ministry assists with transitions of all kinds.

Some of the primary ones are :

- disagreements and tension that are blocking a community of faith's life and effectiveness
- serious trauma, such as sexual or financial misconduct
- the departure of a long-tenured (10+ years) minister or the death of a minister
- inadequate finances for the community of faith's life and mission
- major changes in the demographics of the community of faith or its surrounding community
- the desire of a community of faith to rediscover its identity and mission or to move in a new direction in its ministry.

Trained ministry personnel will lead the community of faith through its feelings of anxiety, struggle, pain, and grief to a place of healing and readiness for the next stages. Interim ministry is also of benefit to any community of faith that wishes to manage change intentionally for a stronger, healthier ministry and future.

What Is the Intent of Interim Ministry?

A period of interim ministry may lead a community of faith to :

- a clearer understanding of who the community is and how its past has shaped its identity
- discernment of God's call and renewed strength and leadership to respond
- energy and wisdom to make decisions about its future
- deeper connection to the surrounding community and to the United Church

Intentional interim ministers are trained to help communities of faith take risks to transform themselves. These ministers know about change and transition processes. They know the ways a community of faith can get stuck, and bring tools to assist the community with self-study. They also understand how individuals may react to the prospect of change, and they can help people cope by offering spiritual guidance and pastoral care. Intentional interim ministers anchor the transition process in the great biblical stories, so the community of faith knows that it is not alone in the disorientation that comes with change.

Intentional interim ministers are experienced ordained, diaconal, or designated lay ministers who are designated by the Office of Vocation. Intentional interim ministers are specially trained in facilitating and enabling change, resolving conflicts and healing old problems, being a listener, a consultant, and a teacher. The intentional interim minister works in partnership with the community of faith, the transition team, and the regional council to achieve agreed-upon goals during the interim ministry. The intentional interim minister's appointment is for a predetermined length of time, and *they may not be called or appointed afterwards to a ministry position in that community of faith*. Interim ministry is different from supply ministry. An intentional interim minister has the specific focus of helping a community of faith move through a period of change. A supply minister provides continuity in the absence of a called or appointed minister, and normally avoids making changes.

What if an Intentional Interim Minister Is not Available?

There are times when there are not enough intentional interim ministers for the number of communities of faith that are in need. Someone may also not be available to the location of the community of faith. In these circumstances, requests are triaged. If the community of faith, the

governing body, and the regional council are able to manage change intentionally, a transition team, including representatives from the regional council, would still be appointed to guide the process. Working with the transition team, there are two possible options:

Appointment of a Supply Minister and a Consultant This option is used most often when an intentional interim minister is geographically distant. They are perhaps retired or acting as a consultant with several communities of faith. They would meet with the transition team and the community of faith face to face every quarter or semi-annually and otherwise electronically. The role and involvement of the supply minister and the relationship between the supply minister and the consultant must be spelled out clearly and explicitly. In some agreements, the work is divided between an experienced supply minister who does the regular tasks of ministry (worship and preaching, education, and pastoral care) and the consultant who works with the transition team to manage the change process. In other agreements, the consultant acts as a coach to the supply minister, who then has a more hands-on role in the transition work.

How Long Is an Interim Ministry?

Intentional interim ministers are appointed for a specific, limited time. In the United Church, the norm is two years. An appointment can be longer or shorter depending on the goals set for the interim ministry period and the community of faith's readiness or resistance.

What Is an Intentional Interim Minister's Compensation Package?

Intentional interim ministers have specialized skills and training, so the minimum salary is 10 percent above the minimum for the applicable category. If they are not relocating for the appointment, additional compensation for commuting is normally paid (as a taxable benefit). The community of faith is required to make an annual payment to the United Church's Interim Ministry Sabbatical Fund. The community of faith that is party to this appointment agrees to contribute to the Interim Ministry Sabbatical Leave Fund of The United Church of Canada in an amount equivalent to two weeks' comprehensive salary. The rest of the compensation package is as it would be for an appointed minister.

Interim Consultant – this is a contractual agreement that is negotiated between the consultant/coach and the pastoral charge is dependent on the services that are provided.