

TRANSITIONAL PASTOR COVENANT/CONTRACT

This Covenant/Contract between the session of _____ Presbyterian Church of _____, IN, teaching elder _____ and the Presbytery of Wabash Valley is for the purpose of providing transitional pastoral leadership to the _____ Presbyterian Church for a period of twelve months, beginning _____ and ending _____.

Transitional Pastors are temporary pastors as defined by the Book of Order.

G-2.0504b. Temporary Pastoral Relationships:

Temporary pastoral relationships 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.

The policy of the Presbytery of Wabash Valley is that contracts for Transitional Pastors are normally extended for a second year if the transitional work is progressing satisfactorily; beyond two years, any extension will be limited to six months, and no contract will extend beyond three years. It is also policy that no Transitional Pastors will become the next called or installed pastor, in order to free them for the depth of work required during the interim, transitional period in the life of a congregation.

KEY TRANSITIONAL MINISTRY GOALS

1. Coming to terms with the history of the church.
2. Discovering a new congregational identity.
3. Facilitating shifts in lay leadership and changes in congregational power structures.
4. Rethinking and renewing denominational links.
5. Preparing for new pastoral leadership and a new future.

ACCOUNTABILITY

The Transitional Pastor is accountable to the session of the church and to the Presbytery of Wabash Valley through its Commission on Ministry.

MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS

To provide prayer and spiritual support as members of the family of Christ.

It is understood the Transitional Pastor will not be considered as a candidate for the position being filled.

It is agreed that if the congregation, the session, or the Transitional Pastor experiences any suggestions, interference, or other difficulty with any former pastors of the church (installed or temporary), and/or officers or members of the church, the matter will be dealt with promptly, and will be referred to the Session and/or the Commission on Ministry. The session affirms the policy of the Presbytery of Wabash Valley with regard to pastoral ethics, and asks the Transitional Pastor to deny any requests by, or for, any former pastor to conduct any services of worship, including baptisms, weddings, and funerals for any member.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE TRANSITIONAL PASTOR

To be an active member of the Presbytery of Wabash Valley attending all Presbytery Assembly meetings and maintain a personal record of attending approved boundaries and ethics training every three years.

To serve as moderator of the session and the congregation (both without vote).

To serve as Head of Staff of the Church with all the authority implied, including the authority to supervise all members of the staff, in consultation with the Session or its appropriate committee.

To develop, in consultation with the Session and COM, the areas of Transitional Pastoral Ministry that will become the priorities for the work of the Transitional Pastor as well as the session.

To lead the congregation through its reflection process, after presenting that self-study plan for prior approval by COM.

To complete the congregation's self-study in light of the additional transitional issues that will arise with Head of Staff transition. Continue to be in conversation with the COM as that self-assessment changes and expands.

To support the Session and PNC as they prepare the Ministry Information Form.

To refrain from influence upon the work of the Pastor Nominating Committee as it considers candidates, except to ensure adequate and appropriate reports are made by the PNC to the session and the congregation.

To review and report in writing the progress of the transitional ministry to the COM every three (3) months.

To maintain a regular office schedule and regularly prepare reports to Personnel Committee on needs and issues as appropriate. Maintain contact with church office at all times, identifying person who will be on call in absences or times when not available.

To _____

EXPECTATIONS OF THE SESSION

To provide support and collegial consultation in working with the Transitional Pastor and the presbytery to establish goals for the transitional and future ministry of the church.

To work with the Transitional Pastor to achieve the transitional ministry goals and agreed upon priorities. Session will review, consult and support the Transitional Pastor’s work through any appropriate committee at least every three (3) months.

To negotiate time away from _____ Presbyterian Church by the Transitional Pastor to fulfill responsibilities in the larger church, attend continuing education events and maintain personal care including vacations, professional days, sick days, presbytery events, and study and preparation times.

To negotiate a new covenant/contract at least sixty (60) days prior to the end of this contract.

To _____

EXPECTATIONS OF THE PRESBYTERY

To provide support and consultative services to the Transitional Pastor through the Commission on Ministry.

To assist the session and the Transitional Pastor with emerging needs through the resources of the teams and committees of presbytery.

To _____

FINANCIAL AND TIME PROVISIONS

See attached "ANNUAL SALARY REPORT/CHANGE OF CALL FORM".

TERMINATION PROVISIONS

The Transitional Pastor may terminate this agreement prior to its expiration date upon giving sixty days written notice to the Session.

The Session, with the consent of the COM, may terminate this agreement prior to its expiration date upon sixty days written notice to the Transitional Pastor. The Session's failure to negotiate an extension of this agreement prior to sixty days from its expiration shall be considered notice of termination.

All vacation time and funds earned during the contracted period shall be paid in full as the work terminates.

If this agreement is terminated by the Session prior to its expiration, and the Transitional Pastor does not have a comparable paid-position at Session's termination of the contract, _____ Church will continue the salary, housing allowance, and pension/medical payments for the Transitional Pastor for a period not to exceed 60 days after written notice of termination or until such time as the Transitional Pastor secures a new position with comparable compensation, whichever comes first.

In witness, whereof the parties have executed this Agreement on the dates set forth opposite their signatures:

SIGNATURES

The session, being satisfied with the qualifications of _____ and trusting that ministry in the Gospel will be to our spiritual benefit, hereby commits our congregation to this Covenant/Contract and invites _____ to accept this temporary position.

Clerk of Session: _____ Date: _____

Transitional Pastor: _____ Date: _____

Stated Clerk on behalf of COM: _____ Date: _____