

APPROPRIATE OBJECTIVES FOR INTERIM PERIOD

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1) To Maintain the Viability of the Church.

The ongoing vital program that is expected of a live congregation consists of pastoral duties plus the Christian activities of the laity.

Continuing the needed programs already under way and efforts to help make them more meaningful are the responsibility of an interim leader.

2) To Resolve Feelings of Grief.

Pastoral visitation involves personal, direct contact with individuals.

Intentional expression of interest in their feelings, more often than not, will provide healing catharsis.

3) To Reinforce the Ministry of the Laity.

Encouragement of participation and leadership by lay persons is vital.

The interim period is a particularly apt 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 person rather than by a pastor.

4) 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 teaching.

5) 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.

6) To Emphasize Fellowship and Reconciliation.

Opportunities for encouraging Christian fellowship are many.

For example, arranging for a coffee hour before or after worship services is helpful.

The incorporation of "congregational concerns" during a worship service can become a time of real sharing.

7) 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 program.

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8) 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/she communicates with the new pastor any information that might be helpful.

9) Develop an Interim Ministry Covenant or Contract.

It is important that the congregation as well the Interim leader put in writing the Terms of Service: Hours per week, pastoral services provided by interim, relationship (to whom the interim leader is responsible), congregational responsibilities during the interim period, clergy compensation, etc.

10) Embrace your Unique Role as a Temporary Shepherd.

It is not just a short call, it is a period of transition.

It is only because you are temporary that you can do the hard things.