

TRANSITIONAL PASTOR COVENANT/CONTRACT

This Covenant/Contract between the session of _____ Church of _____, IN, the Reverend _____ and the Presbytery of Wabash Valley is for the purpose of providing transitional pastoral leadership to the _____ Church for a period of _____, 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.

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 support the Session and PNC as they prepare the Congregational 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.

—Please list and detail any additional job expectations of the Transitional Pastor. —

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 review, feedback and support the Transitional Pastor's work through any appropriate committee at least every three (3) months.

To negotiate time away from Church by the Transitional Pastor to fulfill responsibilities in the larger church, attend continuing education events and maintain personal care.

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

To work with the Transitional Pastor to achieve the transitional ministry goals and agreed upon priorities.

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.

FINANCIAL AND TIME PROVISIONS

—Please attach the “ANNUAL SALARY REPORT/CHANGE OF CALL” for the current year. —

TERMINATION PROVISIONS

This agreement may be terminated by the Session and/or Presbytery with sixty (60) days notice. The church shall pay full salary, housing and pension to the Transitional Pastor for a maximum of three (3) months from notice of termination of this contract, until succeeding full-time church employment is secured by the temporary pastor, or adjusted if part-time work is secured. Failure to negotiate a new contract prior to sixty (60) days from its expiration or notice of non-negotiation or refusal to approve a new contract shall be considered notice of termination.

This agreement may be terminated by the Transitional Pastor with thirty (30) days notice, in which case payment beyond the thirty (30) day period will be forfeited.

Vacation and study leave compensation, if accrued, is to be paid in full at time of termination.

SIGNATURES

The session, being satisfied with the Reverend _____ qualifications 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 _____

COM Member _____ Date _____