



**Northwestern Minnesota Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
 God's work. Our hands.

LETTER OF AGREEMENT FOR INTERIM PASTORAL MINISTRY

An Interim Call - This form should be used when the goal of the congregation is to find a new leader, will put together a call committee, etc.

In keeping with the policies and practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, and in order to set forth clearly the agreement for interim service between the congregation and pastor,

\_\_\_\_\_

*(Congregation and Location)*

agrees that

\_\_\_\_\_

*(Pastor's Name)*

Who is on the \_\_\_ active roster \_\_\_ retired roster \_\_\_ other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

will serve as Interim Pastor

on a \_\_\_ part-time \_\_\_ full-time basis from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ in accord with the following mutual promises:

**Together the congregation and Interim Pastor will:**

- A. Examine the history of the congregation and work through the transition dynamics that usually follow the departure of a pastor.
- B. Seek to confirm and identify current issues facing the congregation and develop ways of dealing with them.
- C. Develop a vision for the congregation's mission.
- D. Examine the congregation's linkage with synod, churchwide units, and the resources that may be available for ministry.
- E. Prepare for the arrival of the new pastor.
- F. Align the congregation in accordance with the constitutions and bylaws of the ELCA, the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, and update the congregation's constitution as needed. Including consult with the Synod's Constitution Committee [constitutions@nwmnsynod.org](mailto:constitutions@nwmnsynod.org).
- G. During this transition period, agree to address the following specific concerns:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

H. In the case of part-time ministry, agree to the following schedule of service:

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**The Interim Pastor will:**

- A. Preach and teach the Word of God.
- B. Preside at worship and administer the sacraments according to the practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- C. Provide pastoral care to all members of the parish according to their needs, visit as necessary, officiate at weddings, baptisms, confirmation, funerals, and uphold the members in prayer.
- D. Give pastoral leadership for the meetings, activities, and organizations of the congregation.
- E. Encourage support of the total ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- F. Be responsible for the recording of baptisms, confirmations, marriages, funerals, attendance at Holy Communion, and the maintenance of the membership rosters; and report the statistics of the parish promptly and fully, as requested by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- G. Agree under no circumstances to be available for regular call to this congregation.
- H. Agree not to be involved in the congregation's call process except when the synod bishop requests such participation.
- I. Agree not to become a member of this congregation after this agreement terminates.
- J. Participate in the interim affinity group and share quarterly reports with synod staff on mission and ministry goals via an online survey.
- K. During this transition, give special attention to (include here revisions of A-J):

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**The congregation will:**

- A. Commit to the Gospel by faithful participation in worship, learning, and fellowship activities.
- B. Support the ministry of the congregation through service and gifts.
- C. Accept the interim pastor, uphold him/her in prayer, and accord him/her love, respect, and good will.
- D. Expect the interim pastor to preside at baptisms, celebrations of Holy Communion, and other rites of the church.
- E. Agree that the interim pastor will not be considered for regular call to this congregation.
- F. Provide for a review and evaluation of the interim ministry on a quarterly basis and at the conclusion of the transition period by key leadership of the congregation with the interim pastor and the appointed synodical staff person.
- G. Compensate the interim pastor in the following ways:

*(As a general rule, compensation is based on the compensation of the previous pastor or the minimum standard for years of service experience of the interim pastor based on synod guidelines. Part-time service is prorated: 1/2 time would receive 1/2 total compensation levels, etc.)*

- 1. Pay an annual salary of \$\_\_\_\_\_, the payments to be made in \_\_\_\_\_ equal installments on the \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_ of the month.
- 2. \_\_\_\_ a.) Pay a housing allowance in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ per year, the payments to be made in \_\_\_\_\_ equal installments on the \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_ of the month.

*OR* \_\_\_\_ b.) Provide the use of a parsonage in lieu of a housing allowance.

*OR* \_\_\_\_ c.) Provide a housing allowance resolution excluding a portion of the salary set forth above.

- 3. Provide a Social Security allowance of \$\_\_\_\_\_ per year. *(Optional.)*

- 4. \_\_\_\_ a.) Contribute to the ELCA Pension and Benefits Plan \_\_\_\_\_ % of salary and housing allowance (plus Social Security allowance).

*OR* \_\_\_\_ b.) Does not apply.

*OR* \_\_\_\_ c.) Provide Pension, Medical, Dental, Disability, and/or Death benefits, and others as follows:

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5. Grant one (1) week of vacation for every \_\_\_ weeks of service, not to exceed \_\_\_ weeks per year.
6. Grant continuing education leave at the rate of \_\_\_ days per month and \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per month toward study expenses.
7. Grant \_\_\_\_\_ day(s) off per week.
8. Other \_\_\_\_\_

H. Reimburse expenses related to our common ministry as follows:

1. \_\_\_ a.) Pay a travel allowance in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per year  
*OR* \_\_\_ b.) Reimburse automobile travel at the rate of \_\_\_\_\_ ¢ per mile upon substantiation of business miles traveled.
2. Pay expenses, not otherwise provided for, incurred in attending synod assemblies and other official meetings at which attendance is required as described in the Northwestern Minnesota Synod Compensation Guidelines.

3. Pay moving expenses as follows:

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I. Provide one month of full salary and benefits at the conclusion of the contracted period of service.

J. Other provisions:

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**Additional Agreements:**

This agreement terminates on the date specified on page one of this agreement or thirty days after a new pastor has declared acceptance of the call to this congregation, whichever comes first; or upon thirty (30) days written notice from the congregation, the interim pastor, or the bishop of the synod. All financial obligations between the interim pastor and the congregation will be fulfilled by or on the date of termination.

This agreement may be amended or extended upon the mutual agreement of the congregation council and the interim pastor, after consultation with the bishop of the synod, by written addendum attached hereto.

We, the undersigned, accept the terms of this agreement:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date  
Congregation (*Council President*)

\_\_\_\_\_ Date  
Interim Pastor

Reviewed by

\_\_\_\_\_ Date  
Bishop

Upon signature, copies will be distributed as follows:

- 1. Original to the Interim Pastor
- 2. Copy to the Congregation Council President
- 3. Copy to the Bishop's Office

(This model interim ministry contract may be altered or revised to fit the particular practices of the congregation or the circumstances of the pastor. The synod office should always be contacted for advice and counsel.)

