

PRESBYTERY OF MILWAUKEE GUIDE FOR TRANSITIONS

Transition Process

When the dissolution of a pastoral relationship has begun, a Commission on Transitional Ministries (CTM) liaison will meet with the Session to provide information on the pastoral transition process. The liaison will provide needed guidance, forms, and periodic trainings to make the transition as smooth as possible.

There are three basic models for pastoral transition in the Presbytery of Milwaukee: Bridge, Designated, or Interim Pastor. Each model speaks to the temporary relationship needed to supply pastoral care and support during the time of transition. CTM will work with the session to help determine which model is most appropriate. Except for the Designated Pastor model, transitional pastors are not ordinarily eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor.

Our Book of Order provides: *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 minister of the Word and Sacrament, 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 minister of the Word and Sacrament employed in a temporary pastoral relationship is ordinarily not eligible to serve as the next installed pastor, co-pastor, or associate pastor.

Bridge Pastor: This model helps to provide stability through consistent week-to-week pastoral leadership. This model can either be used as the session and congregation go through the process to call and install their next pastor or an interim. The Position Description can be posted and advertised for a full-time or part-time position. Candidates for the Bridge Pastor may be referred by the Presbytery but are interviewed and chosen by a committee elected by the Session. The Pastor is hired by the session not the congregation for a specified term not to exceed twelve months but which is renewable.

Interim Pastor: This model, in addition to providing stability, is one for which some pastors have received additional training in areas of conflict management, working through grief, looking at past patterns and evaluating their impact, listening for concerns/issues and guiding in mutual problem solving, and other areas needing additional time and energy beyond basic week-to-week pastoral leadership. CTM has specific training requirements and expectations for the pastor and congregation during the interim's term, which will be provided. The Position Description can be posted and advertised and can be full-time or part-time. Candidates may apply and may be referred by the Presbytery. They are interviewed and chosen by a committee elected by the Session (usually an Interim Pastor Nominating Committee). The Interim Pastor is

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hired by the session not the congregation usually for a 1-year term of contract that is renewable annually. An interim pastor often serves up to 3 years.

Designated Pastor: A designated pastor is a called and installed pastorate with a designated term of service (2-4 years) as determined by the presbytery, in consultation with the congregation. Carefully selected pastors and churches are matched (prescreened) by the CTM, potentially greatly reducing the effort required of the congregation to call a pastor. Candidates are then interviewed and chosen by a PNC through a formalized search process. The position description can be posted and advertised for full-time or part-time. The pastor is elected by the congregation for a term of two to four years with the option to make it permanent at the end of the designated term. The terms of call are approved by the CTM.

Pastoral Transition Process

Pastoral relationship dissolved



Immediate Needs

Pulpit supply
Pastoral care
Moderator for session & congregational meetings (*)



Bridge Pastor

Job description for Bridge/Temporary Pastor, if desired for stability/maintenance (*)
Bridge/Temporary Pastor contract (*)



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Pastoral Search

Position description;
Mission/vision statement & request to form PNC;
Search process;
Pastor contract or terms of call;
Fit interview (*all)

Stated Supply (approved by Session)	Interim Pastor (approved by Session)	Designated Pastor (approved by congregation)	Installed Pastor (approved by congregation)
Term contract, renewable; flexibility & convenience to terminate if conditions change; no immediate intention/ability to call Installed Pastor	Term contract, renewable; esp. important when (1) last pastor left in conflict, (2) church has had a series of short calls; or (3) long pastorate ended & church should explore vision. Typically cannot become the Installed Pastor	Installed for initial term of 2-4 years; selected from candidate identified by the Presbytery; may become the Installed Pastor; next step might be Installed Pastor, Interim or Stated Supply	Installed under terms of call without a term limit; candidate selected by Pastor Nominating Committee and elected by congregation

*Requires CTM approval to proceed