

Resource H
South Carolina – ELCA
Covenant for Interim
Ministry

Council President or another member of Council should complete and return this Covenant to the Bishop before the start of the Interim Pastor’s ministry.

Congregation _____

Address _____

and the South Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America covenant with

Pastor _____

To serve as Interim Pastor (Start Date) _____

This service of ministry leadership will be [] full time., or
[] part time. If Part time, Please indicate the percentage or hours per week _____

This Covenant will be reviewed every six months by the Congregational Council and Interim Pastor.

This covenant will be terminated when a new pastor has accepted the call to be pastor of this congregation. The specific date will be negotiated by the council president and the interim pastor. This covenant may also be terminated by the interim pastor or the congregational council in consultation with the Office of the Bishop, or by the synod bishop with a thirty-day written notice and forfeiture of any payment beyond that period.

The mutual agreements of this covenant are set as follows:

The Congregation and Interim Pastor together will:

- A. Examine the history and traditions of the congregation.
- B. Work through the emotions of transition that usually follow the departure of a pastor.
- C. Explore the congregation’s connections with Conference, Synod and ELCA and consider resources which strengthen these connections.
- D. Subscribe to the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to the constitution and bylaws of this congregation.
- E. Collaborate on the Interim Ministry Tasks and complete the items on the Administrative Benchmark Checklist. (Both included in the SC Synod Transition Packet)
- F. Develop a vision for this time of interim and prepare for the future of the congregation.
- G. Seek to confirm and identify current issues facing the congregation and develop ways of dealing with them.

The Congregation will:

- A. Commit to faithful participation in worship, learning and fellowship activities.
- B. Look to the Interim pastor to preside at baptisms, marriages, funerals and the celebration of Holy Communion.
- C. Uphold and support the ministry of the Interim Pastor with prayer, respect and good will.
- D. Provide appropriate compensation.
 - a. Compensation is based on the experience level of the interim pastor.
 - b. Use the Synod Compensation Guidelines and your previous pastor's compensation as your starting place for calculating compensation.
<https://scsynod.com/wpcontent/uploads/documents/compensation/scsynod-compensation-guidelines.pdf> Appendix A will help you find the base salary and defined compensation numbers for years of experience.
 - c. Part time service is prorated by percentage of time agreed upon. ½ time is considered 50% and averages 20 hours per week. Use the percentage to prorate the base salary amount from the compensation guidelines. The formulas in the excel worksheet will then assist you in prorating the remainder of the compensation numbers.
 - d. Use the Synod Excel Worksheet to help you with these calculations. A copy of the final excel worksheet form that is agreed upon by the council and Interim Pastor should be sent to the Office of the Bishop with this signed agreement.
<https://scsynod.com/wp-content/uploads/documents/compensation/2021-minister-of-word-and-sacrament-compensation-worksheet-housing-allowance.xls>
 - e. Travel expenses, Official Meetings such as Synod Assembly and Convocation should also be included.
 - f. Continuing education should be included at a rate of one day per month and a financial allowance of up to \$1000 per year.
 - g. Vacation days are calculated at one week for every 13 weeks of service, and includes Sundays.

The Interim Pastor will:

- A. Lead Worship, Preach and Teach the Word of God on Sundays and special days of the Church year.
- B. Administer the Sacraments
- C. Provide for special services (such as marriages and funerals)
- D. Provide Pastoral Care to members of the parish according to their needs. Visit the ill and homebound that may be in the hospital, nursing homes or at home.
- E. Pray for all disciples that are part of this congregation.
- F. Serves as a resource and provides pastoral leadership to the council, committees and ministries of this congregation.
- G. Assure that accurate parish records are kept during this time of interim ministry.
- H. Lead the Council and Congregation through the Interim Ministry Tasks and Administrative Benchmark Checklist (Included in the Transition Packet)
- I. Limit involvement in the Call Process to clarifying messages and instructions from the Bishop's Office for the council and helping Council find the resources for information needed.
- J. Participate regularly in the SC Synod Interim Ministers Gatherings and communicate regularly with the Bishop's Office the updates on this interim process.
- K. Respect the boundaries set forth for any departing pastor.

The following two questions should be completed within the first 3 months of the interim, and may be revisited and updated.

During interim, the congregation and the Interim Pastor will address the following concerns:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Other areas which need special attention during this interim include:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. **Feel free to add others as needed on a separate page.**
5. _____

+ + +

Council President _____ Date _____

Council Secretary _____ Date _____

Interim Pastor _____ Date _____

This original completed Covenant for Interim Ministry should be sent to:

**South Carolina Synod, ELCA
1003 Richland Street
Columbia, SC 29201**

It is recommended that all parts of the Transition Packet are reviewed carefully. At the beginning of the Interim the following items from Section 2 are very important, and attention to them should be given by the Council and the Interim Pastor:

1. **An Overview of Interim Ministry Tasks**
2. **Interim Ministry Benchmark Checklist**
3. **Compensation – it is more than “What will I get paid”**
4. **Order for Welcome for the Interim Pastor**
5. **Early Assessment of Interim Ministry**
6. **Congregational Sustainability Assessment**
7. **Christian Education Network - ELCA Safety Template for Churches**
8. **Interim Pastor Report Form**

And from Section 1, please give special attention to:

9. **Ethics of Pastoral Transition**
10. **Certificate of Congregational Records Form**

The Bishop will review and sign this Covenant. The Synod office will distribute completed, signed copies to the Interim Pastor, the Council President and the Synod files.

SC Synod Bishop _____ Date: _____