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**CANADIAN BAPTISTS**  
of Ontario and Quebec

# A Guide to Interim Ministry

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# CONSIDERATIONS FOR ENGAGING AN INTERIM MINISTER

Though CBOQ recognizes that the selection of pastors is a task incumbent on the individual church, and that this extends to hiring of an Interim Minister, our office can be involved in the process, often from the very start.

This document is intended to help a congregation identify for all concerned some guidelines which have been found to be helpful.

## DEFINITION:

Interim Ministry

- is an arrangement between a congregation and an individual pastor
- whereby the pastor agrees to provide pastoral services
- for a short term (usually measured in months rather than years)
- allowing the church to adequately prepare for the call and coming of the next full time pastor

## SUGGESTIONS:

The Director of Leadership Development can often make suggestions of names of qualified ministers who are known to be willing, able and available to engage in interim ministry for a limited length of time.

A written agreement should be drawn up which sets out:

1. The **duration** of the arrangement - CBOQ recommends short blocks of time such as three months renewable. In certain circumstances, such as intentional interims, this might be extended to twelve months.
2. The specific **ministry expectations**
  - Number of days or hours per week
  - Types of services to be provided and ministries to be involved in
  - Preaching and Bible Study expectations
  - Visitation expectations
  - Other expectations
3. The **accommodation arrangements** - Hotel, Apartment, Room & Board, other
4. The compensation arrangements
  - CBOQ recommends **\$200.00** per day for interim positions
  - Ensure employment status clarification (i.e. employee/employer or contract worker)
  - Expenses – travel and other related expenses
  - Vacation – if agreement is for twelve months or more

# ETHICAL STANDARDS INVOLVING INTERIM MINISTRY

The call to ministry is different from other hiring practices since both the congregation and the candidate are seeking to discern God's leading. It is appropriate, therefore, that those invited to interim service not exert undue influence in the process even though they are temporarily part of the congregation. It should be clearly understood and agreed upon that the Interim Pastor will:

- resist the temptation (or pressure) to apply for the permanent position while in the interim relationship
- refrain from any activity (overt or covert) to influence the work of the Search Committee, unless specifically invited by the congregation to participate in the process
- refrain from initiating significant changes to the policies and practises of the Church, unless the congregation has clearly invited such involvement in the initial invitation, or in subsequent negotiations
- refrain from any activity (overt or covert) that could have the effect of weakening the church's ties with the CBOQ

The policy of the CBOQ regarding a pastor in an interim position is:

Interim Ministers should at all times refrain from seeking permanent ministry in the church they are serving.

Interim Ministers should do all they can to prevent having their names considered by the Pastoral Search Committee.

If, however, the Pastoral Search Committee chooses to consider the name of their Interim Minister, and if the Interim Minister truly senses a powerful, spiritual "call", then the following procedures should be followed.

## *Where an Interim Minister is the only candidate being considered*

At the beginning of a church's pastoral search process, if no other prospect is being considered for the permanent position of the church, the congregation through its Pastoral Search Committee shall be free to approach and engage the Interim Minister in discussions with a view to possibly extending a call to the Interim Minister to serve them in a permanent capacity.

In such a situation, if he or she wishes, the Interim Minister will be free to engage in discussions with the Pastoral Search Committee with a view to being called to permanent ministry in the church.

Should discussions and/or negotiations relating to the possibility of the Interim Minister becoming the permanent pastor of the church fail and either the Interim Minister or the Pastoral Search Committee decide to stop the proceedings, the Interim Minister from that point on will be regarded as ineligible for any further consideration in the search.

## *When Other Candidates are Considered*

If and when one or more prospects are being considered, along with the Interim Minister, the following procedure should be followed by the Interim Minister and the congregation.

- a) The interim pastor shall immediately declare a conflict of interest to the church.
- b) The interim pastor shall withdraw immediately from all aspects of ministry at that church.
- c) There shall be no negotiations between that pastor and the church until four (4) full weeks have passed.

This will give both parties the time needed to privately and prayerfully examine their feelings and thoughts as they seek God's will in the matter. It is also hoped that by taking these steps, all candidates being considered will be placed on a somewhat level playing field.

**It is expected that all participants will conscientiously follow this Interim Ministry Policy as part of the appropriate ethical practice in this matter.**

# HOUSING FOR INTERIM PASTORS

## GENERAL

The options for housing (when the interim does not live within reasonable commuting distance) are as follows:

1. Provide the unoccupied church parsonage – arrangements will need to be made to supply furniture and household items, such that the interim pastor (and spouse) can live comfortably, recognizing the temporary nature of this arrangement.
2. Provide accommodation in a local hotel/motel at the church's expense.
3. Provide room and board in a parishioner's home.
4. Provide furnished accommodation in an unoccupied home owned by one of the parishioners.
5. Provide a rented furnished home or apartment at the church's expense.

In some cases an Interim Pastor goes to live temporarily in the church community. It is important that while the stay may be only for a few months, the interim pastor (and spouse) be made as comfortable as possible.

## HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS

It is assumed that the accommodation will be well heated, clean and comfortable. Appliances or household equipment left by a previous resident should be checked to ensure that they are all in working order. If the accommodation provided requires ongoing outside maintenance (i.e. lawn care, snow shoveling, etc.), an agreement should be reached as to who will be responsible for this. If furniture or household items have been borrowed or donated, a detailed list of items and who provided them would greatly assist in making it easier to return items when the Interim Pastor leaves.

If possible, it is helpful to the Interim Pastor if the church continues the same telephone number of the previous pastor so that people may contact him/her using a familiar number.

## ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

Appoint two people (may be a couple) - to have prime responsibility to see that the housing arrangements and items are provided  
- to be the main contact person for the church in relation to the Interim Pastor in all housing needs  
- to serve as co-coordinators and contact persons with the Interim Pastor, both before they arrive and while they are serving at the church.

Special helps - a directory of members and addresses and phone numbers would be especially helpful to an Interim Pastor

- a city map where needed
- phone numbers of essential services
- a list of hospitals, funeral homes, doctors, dentists, etc.
- an introduction of the Interim Pastor to various services in the community, particularly those geared for senior citizens
- Church Constitution
- Church membership record
- Directory of church officers
- List of shut-ins and the sick

# A Sample Agreement

This agreement is provided as a sample only to show the types of information which should be covered in an employment contract. Information will vary depending on the individual church situation and the specific agreement entered into with the Interim Pastor. Sample clauses have been included for both an employee/employer relationship and an independent contract worker relationship. Churches are advised to seek independent legal advice if necessary. The same information could be provided in letter format.

## Interim Ministry Agreement

This Agreement is made as of the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_ between:

**ABC Baptist Church**  
123 Any Street  
Anytown, ON Z9Z 9Z9  
(referred to in the Contract as the "Church")

and,

***Name of person***  
123 Address Road Anytown,  
ON Z9Z 9Z9  
(referred to in the Contract as the "Pastor")

The Church and Pastor agree as follows:

**1. Engagement**

1.1 Subject to the terms and conditions of this Agreement, the Church retains the services of the Pastor to perform the duties as outlined in Appendix "A" entitled "Position Description" (*create your own*) and which forms part of this Agreement.

1.2 The Pastor will be available \_\_\_\_\_ days per week (including Sundays) and will perform the duties as described in the Position Description under the direction of \_\_\_\_\_ (*insert the appropriate Board/Committee*).

**2. Term**

2.1 The term of this Agreement shall be for \_\_\_\_\_ months, beginning on \_\_\_\_\_ and ending on \_\_\_\_\_.

2.2 Subject to satisfactory review and agreement by both parties, this agreement can be extended for further periods of time.

3. Remuneration

3.1 The Pastor shall receive a fee for service of *\$200.00 per day*.

3.2 The Pastor shall invoice the Church for services rendered on a monthly basis and will be paid within \_\_\_\_\_ days of submitting an invoice.

3.3 The relationship between the Church and the Pastor shall be that of principal and independent contractor. Nothing in this Agreement shall constitute the Pastor to be considered an employee of the Church. As a contract worker, the Pastor shall be responsible for all taxes owing as a result of remuneration received from the Church.

4. Accommodation (if provided)

4.1 Accommodation will be provided as outlined below at the church's expense.

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5. Expenses and Allowances

5.1 A travel allowance of \$\_\_\_\_\_ will be provided monthly to cover the cost of transportation to and from the Pastor's permanent residence. This amount should be included in the monthly invoice.

5.2 Travel related to providing services as outlined in the Position Description will be reimbursed at the rate of \_\_\_\_\_ per km. It is the responsibility of the Pastor to maintain a travel log in accordance with the Income Tax Act.

5.3 Approval and reimbursement of travel and other out-of-pocket expenses related to this agreement will be made in accordance with guidelines and procedures established by the church.

6. Expectations

- 6.1 It is understood and agreed that during the term of this Agreement, the Pastor will:
- (a) resist the temptation (or pressure) to apply for the permanent position while in the interim relationship;
  - (b) refrain from any activity (overt or covert) to influence the work of the search committee, unless officially invited to do so by the congregation;
  - (c) refrain from initiating significant changes to the policies and practises of the Church, unless the congregation has clearly invited such involvement in the initial invitation or by subsequent agreement;
  - (d) refrain from any activity (overt or covert) that could have the effect of weakening the church's relationship with Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec.

7. Termination

7.1 The Church may terminate this Agreement by giving the Pastor notice, in writing, to this effect under one of the following circumstances:

7.1.1. When there is an extreme change in circumstances, such as the withdrawal of funding.

7.1.2. In the event that the Pastor is not available for a period in excess of \_\_\_\_\_ consecutive days.

7.1.3. Incompetence or Other Cause. A case of incompetence or cause directed against the Pastor shall be determined by a panel consisting of \_\_\_\_\_ *Name at least three positions (i.e. Chair of Deacons, Chair of Management Board, etc.).*

7.1.4. Ethical or moral failure: A case of ethical or moral failure will be reported immediately to the Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec for disposition.

7.1.5. Notwithstanding the above, this Agreement can be terminated by either party on \_\_\_\_\_ weeks written notification, delivered to the other party.

7.2 In the event of such termination, the Pastor will be paid for services satisfactorily performed to the termination date.

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ *(name of city/ town).*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(name & position of person authorized to sign contracts)*  
*ABC Baptist Church*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Name of contractor)*

# INFORMATION HELPFUL TO INTERIM PASTORS

OFFICE HOURS of the Predecessor (days and hours scheduled to be in the church office)

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## DEADLINES

Item	Date Due	Contact Person	Pastors Responsibility
Bulletins			
New Media Ads			
Newsletter			
Other			

## MEETING SCHEDULES

### *Boards and Committees Expectation of Interim Pastor*

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
<b>Church Business Meetings</b>	
_____	_____
<b>Church Groups</b>	
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

*LOCAL MINISTERIALS*

Name	Dates	Contact
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

*DENOMINATIONAL AND/OR ASSOCIATION EVENTS*

Name	Dates	Contact
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

*HELPFUL PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH AND COMMUNITY*

Name	Function	Phone #
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

*ASSISTANCE CONTACT PERSON*

Name	Contact
_____	_____
_____	_____

Make 2 copies of this Evaluation Form  
Have the Interim Pastor and a Church Representative each complete a copy of this Form

## EVALUATION AND REPORT OF THE INTERIM PASTOR

Church Served \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Province \_\_\_\_\_

Date Began \_\_\_\_\_ Date Ended \_\_\_\_\_

Weekly Duties Performed

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

Special Unplanned Ministries which arose

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

Blessings experienced though this ministry

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

Concerns or problems observed

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

Score the Following      1 = Unsatisfactory      10 = Excellent

## General Arrangements

Unsatisfactory								Excellent	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Comments									
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## Housing Arrangements

Unsatisfactory								Excellent	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Comments									
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## The General Ministry Experience

Unsatisfactory								Excellent	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Comments									
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## Other Comments

**Name of Interim Pastor** \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # \_\_\_\_\_

When completed, photocopy this Form – one copy for the pastor and one for the Church.

