



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

**LETTER OF AGREEMENT FOR LAY INTERIM MINISTRY**

In keeping with the policies and practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Southwestern Minnesota Synod, and in order to set forth clearly the agreement for interim service between the congregation and rostered minister,

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Congregation)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Location)**

agrees that

\_\_\_\_\_  
**(Interim Lay Minister)**

will serve

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

**Together the congregation and interim lay minister 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. Sharpen the 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 Southwestern Minnesota Synod, and update the congregation's constitution as needed.
- G. During this transition period, agree to address the following specific concerns:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

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

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**UPON AUTHORIZATION BY THE BISHOP, THE INTERIM LAY MINISTER WILL:**

- A. Preach and teach the Word of God.
- B. Preside at worship and administer the sacraments according to the practice of the ELCA.
- C. Provide 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 leadership for the meetings, activities, and organizations of the congregation.
- E. Encourage support of the total ministry of the ELCA.
- 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 ELCA.
- G. Agree not to be involved in the congregation's call process except when the synod bishop requests such participation.
- H. Participate with key leadership of the congregation and the appointed synod staff person in evaluation of the interim ministry on a quarterly basis and at the conclusion of the transition period.
- I. *Agree under no circumstances to be available for regular call to this congregation.* (opt out: \_\_\_\_\_ initials)
- J. Agree not to become a member of this congregation after this agreement terminates.
- K. During this transition, give special attention to:

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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 lay minister, uphold him/her in prayer, and accord him/her love, respect, and good will.
- D. Expect the interim lay minister to preside at baptisms, celebrations of Holy Communion, and other rites of the church.
- E. Agree that the interim lay minister will not be considered for regular call to this congregation. *yes/no*
- F. Provide for a review and evaluation of the interim lay minister on a quarterly basis and at the conclusion of the transition period by key leadership of the congregation with the interim lay minister and the appointed synod staff person.
- G. Compensate the interim lay minister in the following ways:



1. Pay an annual salary of \$\_\_\_\_\_. The payments to be made in \_\_\_\_\_ equal installments on the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ of the month.
  2. Housing options: Provide use of parsonage or assist in finding suitable housing options.
  3. ELCA Pension and Other Benefits Plan
    - a. Provide retirement, medical, dental, disability, and/or death benefits (circle any that apply) as follows:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  4. Grant one (1) week of vacation for every \_\_\_\_\_ week(s) of service, not to exceed \_\_\_\_\_ week(s) per year.
  5. Grant continuing education leave at the rate of \_\_\_\_\_ weeks per year (day[s] per month) and \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per year (per day) toward study expenses.
  6. Grant \_\_\_\_\_ day(s) off per week.
  7. Other \_\_\_\_\_
- H. Reimburse travel expenses related to our common ministry as follows (home visits, nursing homes, hospitals):
- a. Pay a travel allowance in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ per year, **OR**
  - b. Mileage at the most current IRS rate upon substantiation of business miles traveled. \_\_\_\_\_ (*initials*).  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Pay expenses, not otherwise provided for, incurred in attending events such as Synod Assembly, Fall Theological Conference (if interim is in progression to be ordained), and other official meetings at which attendance is required. \_\_\_\_\_ (*initials*).

#### Additional Agreements:

This agreement terminates on the date specified on page one of this agreement or thirty (30) 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 lay minister, or the bishop of the synod. All financial obligations between the interim lay minister 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 noting any changes to this text.



Southwestern Minnesota Synod  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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

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Council President or Secretary

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Date

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Interim Lay Minister

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Date

**Attested by:**

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Bishop, Southwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA

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Date

Upon completion, please send signed originals to:

Southwestern Minnesota Synod  
Tammy Schacher  
PO Box 499  
Redwood Falls, MN 56283