

INTERIM PASTOR ROLE

The role of interim pastor is a unique and necessary role. The interim pastor is a position to which God leads us. It is not the senior pastor position and the interim will not function in the way a senior pastor would function. The main purpose of the interim pastor is either to prepare the congregation for the person God has called to that church or to act in a temporary role of senior pastor in case of the inability of the present senior pastor to serve.

Therefore, it is a good thing to remember several points regarding the role of the interim pastor:

1. The interim pastor comes to shepherd and minister to the congregation during this transitional phase.
2. The interim pastor helps the congregation recognize its strengths and challenges as it searches for the person God is preparing to lead the people into the next season of their ministry.
3. The interim pastor covers the pulpit during the transitional phase.
4. The interim pastor helps the congregation recognize her own ministry capabilities.
5. The interim pastor aids the congregation as it grieves the loss or temporary absence of the former pastor.
6. The interim pastor is not a person who already serves as an associate pastor at the church.
7. The interim pastor is NOT the visionary. He/she does not seek to move the congregation into a building phase or into the vision that God has for them.
8. The interim pastor does not work to change the governance of the congregation, nor to change worship practices, functioning of committees, etc., however might point out some problematic areas the leadership should be willing to consider changing if the (incoming) Senior Pastor suggests
9. The interim pastor does not function as the Counseling Pastor to a pulpit committee. There are clear boundaries between the functions of the two persons.
10. The interim pastor does not sit on a pulpit committee, nor does he/she give any recommendations for the pastoral resumes that are submitted.
11. The interim pastor does not seek the senior pastor position.
12. The interim pastor ensures a smooth, peaceful transition from the former senior pastor to the future senior pastor.

It is critical that the interim pastor insists on a clear contract and sets boundaries before assuming the position to protect self, family, and congregation.