

# **The Interim Minister**

## **Guidelines and Resources for Ohio Conference United Church of Christ Ohio Region Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**

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**Revised / Approved May 18, 2007**

# **The Interim Minister**

## **Ohio Conference United Church of Christ and Ohio Region Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This document presents the current practices of the Ohio Conference (UCC) and its Associations and the Ohio Region Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) regarding the Interim Minister, a category of ministry in the Conference and Region. It is our hope that these policy guidelines will be helpful to the following:

- The Commission on Ministry of the Ohio Region
- The Church and Ministry Departments of the Associations
- Association, Conference, and Regional Staff members
- Candidates for Interim Ministry
- Interim Ministers
- Other persons interested in understanding Interim Ministry
- Local churches of the Ohio Conference and the Ohio Region

For those interested in more general issues about interim ministry, including options available to local churches at the time of pastoral leadership transition, a document entitled “Our Pastor Is Leaving” is available. Reading this document will be helpful before continuing with these guidelines which focus on intentional Interim Ministry. This document is available from the Regional office or any of the five Association offices.

We hope these guidelines, which focus upon intentional Interim Ministry, will help clarify the interim process as it currently functions in the Ohio Region and Ohio Conference. We realize, however, that new experiences and learnings may lead to future revisions. If you have a question or suggestion regarding these guidelines, please contact the Interim Ministry Working Group through the Ohio Conference or Ohio Regional offices.

The Members of the Interim Ministry Working Group  
Ohio Region/Ohio Conference  
May 18, 2007

# **Guideline Recommendations Regarding Interim Ministers in the Ohio Conference (UCC) and Ohio Region Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**

## **I. CHARACTERISTICS AND SKILLS OF INTERIM MINISTERS: Interim Ministers are expected to adhere to the standards for all authorized ministry.**

### A. Characteristics and attributes of Interim Ministry may include:

1. A clear sense of calling to Interim Ministry.
2. Awareness and practice of ethical standards in Interim Ministry.
3. A positive faith stance – Christian hope.
4. Advocacy for generally improving and upgrading the images and standards of pastoral ministry, installed and interim.
5. Commitment to and support for the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
6. Commitment to and support of the denomination (other than UCC or DOC) being served as an interim.

### B. Other suggested attributes include:

1. The ability to care for oneself, to sustain oneself in all kinds of situations
2. Security, emotional stability and maturity with good ego strength.
3. Action and goal oriented.
4. Flexibility and adaptability.
5. Patience, empathy, and understanding.
6. Physical vitality.
7. A good sense of humor.

### C. Additional Skills that pertain to Interim Ministry include such things as:

1. An understanding of the normal developmental tasks to be undertaken in the interim period and the unique dynamics of a congregational in an interim time.
2. An understanding of systems theory.
3. The ability to enable a congregation to sort out a variety of feelings about itself, the previous minister, the Interim Minister, the Association, Conference, and Regional Ministers, and the minister who is yet to be identified and called.
4. Experience with and insight into crisis intervention.
5. Ability to guide and manage issues of difference toward healing, reconciliation, and problem solving.
6. Nurturing a sense of shared focus within a congregation.

7. Knowledge of the process by which the congregation will search for and call a new pastor and clarity about the Interim Minister's role in the process.
8. Organizational development, including the skills to assess needs, analyze situations, develop long-range goals, and identify potential resources for reaching desired goals.
9. Strategies for coping with one's own stress as well as helping others deal with stress.
10. The discipline necessary to participate in a continuing program of growth, evaluation, and personal development with peers and colleagues in Interim Ministry. Opportunities may be available through Association, Conference, and/or Regional settings.

## II. TASKS AND AGREEMENTS OF INTERIM MINISTRY

### A. *The Developmental Tasks of a Congregation during the Interim Time*

The Interim Minister will assist the congregation in addressing the "developmental tasks" recognized by the Interim Ministry Network, and outlined by Loren B. Mead in a pamphlet entitled: "The Developmental Tasks of the Congregation In Search of a Pastor." These tasks are as follows:

1. Coming to terms with the history of the congregation.  
Emotional attachments or antagonisms to persons or events of the past create dynamics for the future, which may or may not be helpful for the future life of the congregation. The Interim Minister works with the congregation to become aware of and deal with these forces so they do not inappropriately influence the future.
2. Discovering or affirming an identity for the church.  
Each congregation is unique in its setting, its opportunities, its understanding and commitment to God's call. The Interim Minister works with the congregation to understand its special mission and priorities.
3. Facilitating leadership changes.  
Every leadership change creates a unique opportunity to examine leadership styles and personal needs and to make appropriate adjustments. The Interim Minister assists the congregation in taking maximum advantage of this opportunity to match needs and skills and processes.
4. Renewing denominational linkages.  
The denomination has resources helpful to congregations and provides opportunities for mission beyond the ability and scope of one church. The Interim Minister assists the congregation to identify and strengthen such linkages. The Regional, Association, Conference, and denominational staff help personalize such linkages.
5. Committing to a new future and a new minister.  
The goal of the interim time is to facilitate an understanding and commitment to a future that will be shared by the newly installed minister and the congregation. The Interim Minister assists the congregation to reach such a commitment.

*B. Congregational Commitments.*

1. The congregation and the Interim Minister will enter into a covenantal agreement for the interim period.
2. The congregation is encouraged to select an Interim Ministry Committee or its equivalent.
  - a. The Committee will develop, identify and review the expectations regarding the Interim Ministry.
  - b. The Committee will assist the Interim Minister in performing the tasks as set forth in the covenant.

*C. The Interim Minister's Commitments.*

1. The Interim Minister will enter into a covenantal agreement for the interim period to include pastoral and administrative leadership as well as the additional tasks specific to Interim Ministry.
2. The Interim Minister will work with the Interim Ministry Committee as described in B2.
3. The Interim Minister will not be considered as a candidate for any position in that congregation.
4. The Interim Minister will normally serve in the interim position until the congregation has secured the services of an installed pastor.
5. The Interim Minister will not return to serve the congregation in any ministerial capacity after leaving that interim position, except as initiated by the current pastor.
6. The Interim Minister will provide education and leadership in understanding conflict and its resolution, power analysis, grief and crisis resolution, and other areas helpful to the developmental tasks.
7. The Interim Minister will participate on a regular basis in training/support meetings.
8. The Interim Minister will agree to do all that is possible to adhere to these standards, to assist others to understand them and to support other Interim Ministers in maintaining these standards.
9. The Interim Minister may return to serve a previous congregation as an Interim Minister after consulting with the Association or Regional staff.

*D. The Search Process and the Interim Minister.*

1. The Interim Minister is committed to the integrity of the search process as the congregation seeks its settled minister. Any involvement she or he has in the work of the search committee will be negotiated with the Association/Regional Minister.

2. The Interim Minister will not offer or seek opinions or information about any of the candidates.
3. When the Interim Minister has concerns about the work of the Search Committee, she or he will contact the Association/Regional Minister.

### **III. THE INTERIM MINISTRY WORKING GROUP**

#### **A. Purpose:**

To lift up a vision of Interim Ministry and its value for vital congregational life and to support Interim Ministry and Interim Ministers in the Ohio Conference of the United Church of Christ and the Ohio Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

#### **B. Membership:**

1. Each UCC Association will appoint at least two (2) members: at least one (1) from the Department for Church and Ministry and one (1) Interim Minister.
2. The Christian Church in Ohio (Disciples of Christ) will appoint six (6) members, at least one (1) from the Commission on Ministry and at least three (3) Interim Ministers.
3. Two (2) year terms will be staggered for continuity. After six consecutive years, there must be a one-year absence. [July 1 – June 30]
4. The Working Group will choose its chairperson annually, to serve for a maximum of four (4) years.
5. Association, Conference, and Regional staffs will determine staff support.

#### **C. Responsibilities:**

1. Process applications for the Rezash Interim Ministry Fund.
2. Provide and coordinate ongoing education and training opportunities.
3. Promote Interim Ministry among Ohio Conference/Region churches.
4. Hold regular meetings that are adequate in number (at least four) to carry out the policies and responsibilities of the Interim Ministry Working Group.
5. Report annually to the Ohio Conference Minister and the Commission on Ministry of the Ohio Region (DOC)
6. Be aware of policies, changes, opportunities, resources, and other enterprises related to Interim Ministry.

### **IV. REZASH INTERIM MINISTRY FUND**

The financial uncertainty of Interim Ministry is a concern for all Interim Ministers and for the churches and Associations who rely on interim ministers. The Ohio Conference has created a special support fund for Interim Ministers serving Ohio Conference churches, called "The Rezash Interim Ministry Fund" which will be administered by the Conference. The Christian Church in Ohio became a participant in 2005.

A. The purpose of the Rezash Fund is:

1. To provide emergency financial support for Interim Ministers between periods of employment as an Interim Minister.
2. To provide for training and continuing education for Interim Ministers.
3. To support the Ohio Conference/Region Interim Ministry Working Group.

B. Means of Financing the Support Fund.

1. To be eligible, UCC and Disciples of Christ Interim Ministers and other Interim Ministers serving Ohio UCC and Disciples of Christ churches shall contribute 2% of their salary and housing allowance to the Rezash Interim Ministry Fund. Also, each congregation served by an Interim Minister shall contribute an amount equal to 2% of the Interim Minister's salary and housing allowance to the Rezash Interim Ministry Fund. UCC/Disciples Interim Ministers serving non-UCC congregations may also participate following the same contribution guidelines. (This agreement shall be part of the Interim Ministry Covenant Agreement signed by both parties.)
2. Investment earnings from the Rezash Interim Ministry Fund accrues to itself.
3. The Interim Minister must be authorized by a Department for Church and Ministry/staff in their association or region to participate in the Rezash Fund.

C. Allocations from the Rezash Interim Ministry Fund.

The Interim Ministry Working Group administers the Interim Ministry Fund of the Ohio Conference/Region.

1. Of the budgeted funds, eighty percent of the Rezash Interim Ministry Fund is available to be used for the subsidy of eligible Interim Ministers when they are between interim positions and for sabbatical leave.
2. Ten percent of the Rezash Interim Ministry Fund may be used annually to underwrite the expenses of the regular meetings of the Interim Ministry Working Group.
3. Ten percent of the Rezash Interim Ministry Fund may be used annually to provide:
  - a. support for training programs,
  - b. individual attendance at training programs for Interim Ministers.
4. Emergency Funds: An average of the past 5 years of contributed funds.

D. Means by which Fund Allocations are made.

1. Written application for subsidy is made to the Interim Ministry Working Group through the Association/Regional office. Consideration will be given, based on availability of funds, the applicant's needs and fulfillment of the eligibility requirements. The chair shall promptly respond to the applicant.
  - a. Subsidy for periods of unemployment between interim positions.  
Support benefits may be as much as 75% of base salary and housing in the most recent interim position but may not exceed \$3500 per month plus insurance costs for a period up to three months. The health insurance subsidy may be extended for an additional three months under special circumstances. During this period of time, the Interim Minister will be available to serve as a consultant at the direction of the Association or Regional Minister.
  - b. Subsidy for a Sabbatical.  
After five years of continuous Interim Ministry, an Interim Minister will be eligible to request a sabbatical. Support for the sabbatical period will consist of not more than \$2000.00 per month plus insurance for not more than two months. Five years of continuous service is to be understood as five years of contributions from the minister and congregations served. The applicant shall present a written proposal to the Conference/Regional Interim Ministry Working Group detailing how the sabbatical plan will strengthen the ministry of the Interim Minister and the Conference/Region.
  - c. Requests for subsidy for training.  
A person may submit a request for subsidy for training through the Interim Ministry Network or an equivalent training program. The expectation is that the person will serve congregations as an Interim Minister in the Ohio Conference for at least one year following the training. If the minister accepts an installed position or does not serve as an interim, a repayment plan will be established.
2. Questions about the allocation of the Rezash Interim Ministry Fund are to be directed to the Ohio Conference/Region Interim Ministry Working Group.
3. An Interim Minister who leaves the Ohio Conference or Ohio Region or accepts an installed position relinquishes all claims to funds contributed to the Rezash Interim Ministry Fund.

**Revised / Approved May 18, 2007**  
04/26/04 cdk



# SAMPLE INTERIM MINISTRY COVENANT

This covenant between the Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ Church of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ is effective beginning \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.  
(city and state)

## Responsibilities and Duties

The Interim Pastor shall:

1. NOT be a candidate for the settled pastor position
2. Intentionally lead the congregation through the congregation's Developmental Tasks:
  - A. Coming to terms with the congregation's history
  - B. Discovering the congregation's new identity
  - C. Managing leadership shifts
  - D. Strengthen denominational links
  - E. Becoming committed to a new future
3. Fulfill the normal duties of a pastor including:
  - A. Lead and preach in the congregation's worship services
  - B. Administer church business and oversee the church staff
  - C. Work with the congregation's governing body and its program committees
  - D. Oversee the preparation of worship bulletin and newsletter
  - E. Visit members who are hospitalized, homebound, and nursing facility residents
  - F. Conduct funerals for members and friends of the congregation
  - G. Officiate at weddings for members and friends of the congregation
  - H. Provide counseling and make appropriate referrals
  - I. Teach confirmation/ new member class for youths and adults
  - J. Maintain a collegial relationship with the area clergy association
  - K. Provide counsel to the Pastoral Search Committee only when requested and focused only upon the process, not upon potential pastors

The congregation shall:

1. Commit to the process of self-study by working through the Developmental Tasks
2. Seriously consider implementing programs suggested by the Interim Pastor
3. Actively pursue the calling of a settled pastor
4. Function as the "Body of Christ," making visits to worship guests, members in hospitals nursing facilities, homebound, and inactive members
5. Maintain education, mission, music, and other ministries of the congregation
6. Continue to provide staff support
7. Support the involvement of the Interim Pastor in denominational activities, clergy associations, and Interim Ministers' Support Groups
8. Provide resources for professional consultation with specialists, when needed, in order to assist the Interim Pastor in accomplishing the goals of interim ministry

## Accountability

The Interim Pastor shall:

1. Be accountable to the \_\_\_\_\_ (governing body) through the \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e. Elders) and ultimately to the congregation for the successful completion of duties
2. Maintain ministerial standing in his/her denomination

The congregation shall:

1. Support the leadership of the Interim Pastor in the congregation and community
2. Inform the Interim Pastor regularly of the progress the Pastoral Search Committee is making in preparing to call a settled pastor

**Compensation**

	<u>Annually</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
	\$	\$
1. Salary (including Social Security offset)		
2. Housing Allowance (including utilities) and/or use of parsonage (including utilities)		
3. Medical (and dental) Insurance		
4. * Rezash Fund (2% of above items 1&2)		
5. Pension (14% of above items 1&2)		
6. Disability Insurance		
TOTAL	\$	\$

**Expenses** (reimbursement, not compensation)

7. Continuing Education		
8. Professional Expenses		
9. Mileage @ IRS allowable rate		
TOTAL	\$	\$

\* Rezash Fund is a special support fund for Interim Ministry in the UCC Ohio Conference and Disciples Ohio Region. See Interim Ministry Guidelines for further information. The Interim Minister matches the congregation's 2% payment to the Rezash Fund.

10. The congregation shall pay moving expenses as necessary and appropriate.
11. Paid vacation: one week for each 3 months of service, or 2½ days per month served.  
*NOTE: When an Interim Pastor is serving a great distance from his/her home, negotiation of "family time," in addition to vacation time, is encouraged.*
12. One week of Continuing Education time for each 6 months of service.
13. Due to the itinerant nature of interim ministry, if the Interim Pastor does not have a call at the completion of the interim, he/she may wish to negotiate a severance equal to one month's income (numbers 1-5 above).
14. If the church does not provide Disability Insurance, the Interim Minister may wish to add a disability and death clause. This is suggested as "up to 3 months salary, housing, Social Security, and medical (dental) insurance (1-4 above) until the disability or death benefit through the Pension Program begins to pay.
15. It may be advantageous for the Interim Pastor to negotiate a Tax Deferred Annuity.

**Renewal and Termination**

This covenant is initially in effect for six months and is renewable in three-month increments, as appropriate and agreeable to both parties, following evaluation.

Either party may terminate this agreement with a thirty-day (30) notice.

Changes in the above covenant may be negotiated between the Interim Pastor and the \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e. Elders) of the congregation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Interim Pastor*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Congregational Representative*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Association/ Regional Representative*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*date*



# Rezash Interim Ministry Remittance Form

## Ohio Conference, United Church of Christ

### Christian Church in Ohio (Disciples of Christ)

*(Please print)*

Interim minister name \_\_\_\_\_

Church name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number Minister (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Church (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Source: 2% from minister \_\_\_\_\_ 2% from church \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount \_\_\_\_\_

Above amount reflects payment for following month(s) in the year \_\_\_\_\_:

___ January	___ May	___ September
___ February	___ June	___ October
___ March	___ July	___ November
___ April	___ August	___ December

Make check payable to Ohio Conference, United Church of Christ.

Mail to: Rezash Fund  
Ohio Conference, UCC  
6161 Busch Blvd., Suite 95  
Columbus, OH 43229-2547

Copy to: Interim Minister

Rev. 7/22/04



**Rezash Interim Ministry Fund Application**  
**Ohio Conference, United Church of Christ**  
**Christian Church in Ohio (Disciples of Christ)**

*Complete and mail to your Association/Region office.  
(Please print)*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number Home (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Amount requested \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose and need for funding \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

History of participation in Rezash Interim Ministry Fund

Church served \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Individual contribution      Yes      No      Church contribution      Yes      No

Church served \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Individual contribution      Yes      No      Church contribution      Yes      No

Church served \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Individual contribution      Yes      No      Church contribution      Yes      No

Association/Regional Minister's signature \_\_\_\_\_

***For working group use only***

Interim Ministry Working Group Chair's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Amount granted \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date completed \_\_\_\_\_

## Interim Ministry Profile Update

(to be attached to current profile)

\_\_\_\_\_ UCC Conference/DOC Region

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ (O) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ (cell) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ fax number \_\_\_\_\_

Ordained by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Association or Region holding current ministerial standing \_\_\_\_\_

### SPECIAL TRAINING RELATED TO INTERIM MINISTRY ISSUES

Basic training \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No Provided by (i.e., IMN) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

Special certifications \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

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

What is your understanding of interim ministry within the context of ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)/United Church of Christ?

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

**PROFESSIONAL RECORD**

Most recent Interim and Settled Ministries (not appearing on ministerial/relocation profile)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**AVAILABILITY AND POSITION SOUGHT**

Date available \_\_\_\_\_ Expected maximum duration of interim \_\_\_\_\_

Willingness to relocate/geographic requirements \_\_\_\_\_

I would be interested in: (check as many as apply)

Church size: \_\_\_ Small \_\_\_ Medium \_\_\_ Large \_\_\_ Interim Pastor (solo)

\_\_\_ Sustaining/Maintenance Interim (state FT/PT) . \_\_\_ Interim Senior Pastor

\_\_\_ Transitional Interim (state FT/PT) \_\_\_ Interim Associate Pastor

\_\_\_ Pulpit Supply

What size (worship attendance) congregations have you served and in what capacity?

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

**REFERENCES**

Give three (3) telephone references from your recent pastorates:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR DENOMINATIONAL STAFF USE ONLY**

What criteria do you use for discerning an appropriate call for you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**GIFTS YOU BRING TO INTERIM MINISTRY**

(Please note the following with **S** = skill; **E** = experience; **T** = training

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| _____ Parish self-appraisal                        | _____ Church closing                             |
| _____ Fiscal management                            | _____ Dynamics of long-term pastorate            |
| _____ Small group process                          | _____ UCC Polity                                 |
| _____ Transition issues                            | _____ DOC Polity                                 |
| _____ Conflict management                          | _____ Church staff issues                        |
| _____ Strategic planning                           | _____ Following pastoral misconduct              |
| _____ Federated, union, yoked parishes             | _____ Experience with open-and-affirming process |
| _____ Experience with racial/ethnic churches       |  |
| _____ Transition from pastoral to program churches |  |
| _____ Stewardship development                      |  |
| _____ Church revitalization                        |  |
| _____ Other _____                                  |  |

**SALARY/BENEFITS EXPECTATIONS**

Base salary range \_\_\_\_\_

- |                       |                                 |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| ___ Housing allowance | ___ Social Security offset      |
| ___ Parsonage         | ___ Professional reimbursements |
| ___ Pension           | ___ Continuing education        |
| ___ Health insurance  | ___ Other _____                 |
| ___ Disability        | _____                           |
| ___ Dental insurance  |                                 |
| ___ Life insurance    |                                 |

In signing this form, I agree that under no circumstances will I allow my name to be considered as a possible candidate for the settled position at the church where I am serving as an Interim Minister. I understand that if I allow my name to be considered, the Association/Region may call my ministerial ethics into question.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Interim Minister's Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Regional/Conference/Association Representative's Signature Date