

**Guidelines for the Training and Credentialing  
of  
Intentional Interim Ministers  
in  
The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod**

**Preamble**

When a congregation experiences a vacancy in the pastoral office and determines that it has transitional issues which need to be addressed before calling its next long-term, resident pastor, one option which is available to the congregation is to request the services of an Intentional Interim Minister.

Intentional Interim Ministers are ordained pastors who have received specialized training and have demonstrated a willingness to serve congregations wishing to address such transitional issues.

A congregation that decides to pursue an Intentional Interim Ministry arrangement should contact the respective District President or his designee, who will discuss the congregation's desire and, if appropriate, facilitate the establishment of an Intentional Interim Ministry covenant between the congregation, the District, and the Intentional Interim Minister.

**I. Eligibility for Application**

- A. Ordained clergy of the LCMS – Applicants must be ordained ministers of the LCMS who meet the qualifications for pastoral ministry.
- B. Parish Experience – Applicants must have served congregations effectively for a minimum of 10 years.
- C. Qualifications – Applicants must demonstrate expertise in parish leadership and, as well as can be determined, have specific gifts for this special ministry.

**II. Recognized Training Programs**

- A. Basic Education sponsored by the Interim Ministry Network, Inc. (IMN)
- B. Basic Education sponsored by the National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors (NALIP)
- C. Basic Education sponsored by the LCMS Interim Ministry Conference. (IMC)
- D. Basic Education sponsored by an LCMS District or other agencies providing equivalent training and approved by the Interim Ministry Conference Board of Directors.

**III. Levels of Service**

The *Guidelines for the Training and Credentialing of Intentional Interim Ministers in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod* include the following categories:

- A. Intentional Interim Minister (NALIP, Interim Ministry Network or Equivalent Certified)
- B. Interim Ministry Specialist (such as conflict resolution, substance abuse, etc.)
- C. Interim Practitioner (District endorsed) Interim Practitioner status is granted to some pastors in some districts to accommodate those already serving in a previously designated Intentional Interim Ministry situation, but who do not have the training listed in item A above. It is granted with the understanding that they will, as soon as is practical, meet those standards.

#### **IV. Credentialing**

The Credentialing Committee, composed of an Interim Ministry Conference Board of Directors member, an appointed interim minister, and a District President appointed by the Council of Presidents, reviews and approves applications for Initial Credentialing, Ongoing Credentialing, and Interim Ministry Specialist.

##### **A. Initial Credentialing**

Initial Credentialing is valid for a period of three (3) years. Prior to being credentialed, an applicant must complete a recognized training program (see section II) and serve at least one congregation as an Intentional Interim Minister.

The Information and Application Form for Initial Credentialing can be obtained from **info@InterimMinistryLCMS.org**.

##### **B. Ongoing Credentialing**

Ongoing Credentialing is valid for a period of three (3) years. Prior to renewal the applicant must have met these basic requirements:

1. Be a member in good standing on the roster of Minister of Religion-Ordained.
2. The completion of two interim ministry assignments.
3. Triennially earning three (3) CEU's in areas related to intentional interim ministry.
4. Provide the Credentialing Committee with documentation of all CEU's earned.
5. Submit the application form.

The Information and Application Form for Ongoing Credentialing can be obtained from **info@InterimMinistryLCMS.org**.

##### **C. Interim Ministry Specialist**

Those requesting Interim Ministry Specialist (such as conflict resolution, substance abuse, etc.) must submit proof of having completed 30 hours of continuing education in their area(s) of specialty and having served a congregation that had a need for that specialty.

#### **V. Active Roster Status**

It is generally expected that an Intentional Interim Minister will be authorized to serve in his role as the minister of a congregation through the call of the congregation. A District may also call an Intentional Interim Pastor.

#### **VI. Supervision**

- A. Ecclesiastical supervision of the Intentional Interim Minister is to be provided by the District President of the District where the Intentional Interim Minister serves.
- B. An Intentional Interim Ministry covenant is to be monitored by the District President or his designee.

#### **VII. Installation**

The Intentional Interim Minister should be installed in a public worship service of the congregation that he is to serve. This rite affirms that the congregation has given the Intentional Interim Minister the authority to conduct a Word and Sacrament ministry and exercise the Office of the Keys within the congregation.

**VIII. Evaluation**

Each congregation participating in the Intentional Interim Ministry program is to participate in a periodic evaluation process that should include, but not be limited to, representatives of the congregation being served by the Intentional Interim Minister.

**IX. Exit Interview**

An exit interview should be conducted with representatives of the congregation.

**X. Inter-District Service**

Credentialed Intentional Interim Ministers may accept assignments in other Districts. Upon accepting such an assignment, the membership of the Intentional Interim Minister shall be transferred to the District in which he will serve using the established procedure for such transfers.

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