

Transition Times

For Intentional Interim Pastors, LCMS

Volume One Issue 1

Lent, 2017

WELCOME,

Publication of this Interim Ministry Conference e-newsletter is dedicated to you, servants of Christ Jesus and his church, who serve the much needed transitional ministry for vacant congregations that are between pastors -- congregations that are often in deep grief over the loss of a dearly loved newly retired or deceased long term pastor, congregations experiencing conflict, congregations that are at a loss experiencing loss of trust over of the removal of their pastor because of inappropriate behavior; congregations that wish to take advantage of their vacancy to reset their priorities and goals before they call their new resident pastor.

It will offer a pot-puree of helpful suggestions for the exercise of your ministry, book reviews, and updates for intentional ministry conferences, educational opportunities and connections. All from contributors like you. To submit your contributions go to bobjoarein@wowway.com

Editors Note: The approaches to ministry offered in this newsletter are not necessarily the only or best for every situation but are offered here in the spirit of collegial support and suggestion.

Rev. Robert C. Reinhardt, Editor

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TRANSITION TIPS

Don't Know Where to Begin at a new assignment? I had completed about six interims before I came across Galen Drawbaugh's schedule for mapping out the monthly activities of intentional interim ministry for a congregation. "Saved my day!"

Following is a sample of an interim ministry schedule that might prove useful. (Galen's full document with devotions and each session's agenda is available. E-mail Galen: jg6309@centurylink.net)

Schedule of Events and Activities of the Interim Ministry

July 8

- Installation of Intentional Interim Pastor

July 9

- Board of Directors – Present Transition Calendar—“**Community, Cause, Corporation**” paradigm of the church from Willow Creek Church
- Development of the Transition Task Group (Everyone who has a role in the life of Faith Lutheran / or all membership which ever works best.)
- Pastor meets with all potential participants. Schedule cottage meetings in groups with the “get-to-know-you” game called “**LifeStories**”.

July 17

- Cottage Mtg. Transition Task Group (5 in all) #1. Distribution of “**Healthy Congregations**” (assign Preface '96 and '06 and Ch. 1) Hand out copies of the brochure “**From Pastorate to Pastorate**”

August 16

- **Transition Mtg. 1** – Discuss “Healthy Congregations” and “Pastorate to Pastorate”
- **Set goals for the Transition Group during the Interim process.**
- Secure Transition Secretary to take minutes and make reports
- 5 Developmental Tasks diagram
- “Communicate, communicate, communicate” keep the congregation informed.
- Assign “Healthy Congregations” chs. 2&3

September 4

- Bd. of Directors – Bell Curve of upward movement, stability of mission and ministry and the downward movement of doubt. Dale's book “To Dream Again” is a study of the “bell curve” cycles of institutional as well as personal life.

September 27

- **Transition Mtg. 2** – Discuss “Healthy Congregations” chs. 2&3
- Share and discuss “**Size of Congregations**” cf. Alice Mann’s book “The In-between Church” also Lyle Schaller
- Malfurs’ book “Values” – Congregations will support what they value.
- Assign “Healthy Congregations” chs 4&5

October 18

- **Transition Mtg. 3** Discuss “Healthy Congregations” chs 4&5
- **Ten Characteristics of a healthy congregation**
- Discuss memories of the past as preparation for Transition Mtg 4
- Cottage Meetings for returning “snow birds.”

November 15

- **Transition Mtg. 4 – History of Faith Church project.** (Timeline) Meaningful reflection of your personal and group experiences of the past ministries and life.
- Integrate “Snow birds” who continue to arrive
- Discuss “Target Audience?” churched/Christians; **un**-churched/Christians; churched/non-Christians; **un**-churched/**non**-Christians.
- Ministry to the grieving congregations...one being able to visit and revisit loss until it can be done without physical pain.

December 13

- **Transition Mtg. 5** – Visiting **District Executive responsible for outreach.** He will present Demographics of the region and share insights for our congregation’s mission in the community.
- Assign “Healthy Congregations” Assign 6&7
- Plan to review the church’s constitution

January 10

- **Transition Mtg. 6** Discuss “Healthy Congregations” chs 6&7
- “**Asset Mapping**” Robert Snow’s “The Power of Asset Mapping” designed for the Transition Group to discover new avenues of ministry and outreach.
- Time to be spent during the month to the development of a **strategic plan.** Community of Joy “Strategic Planning”
- Remember to integrate any new “Snowbirds”

February 3 -- Elders and Leaders fill out the (IN Dist.) “**Congregational Profile and Self Study**”

February 10

- **Transition Mtg. 7** – Discuss the **Strategic Plan.**
- **Update Vision/Mission statement**
- Schaller “Pastor & People” reviewing expectations of a new resident pastor.
- Complete Lay Leaders Questionnaire and Pastoral Expectations sections from the “Congregational Profile and Self Study” from the District Office.
- Assign “Healthy Congregations” chs 8&9

March 3

- **Dist. President** to preach and meet with the congregation

- **Start the call process.** Dist. Pres. will have received the reports of the progress of our Transition Meetings.
- Circuit visitor will preside and guide the congregation through the call process.

March 10

- **Transition Mtg. 8** – Discuss “Healthy Congregations chs. 8&9
- **Discuss the Call Document** section on duties of the pastor and the congregation.
- Discuss summary of Lay Leaders Questionnaire and Pastoral Expectations sections.
- **Plan Cottage meetings.** Each member of the Transition Group to report the activity and outcome of its work to non members of the Transition Group.

April 21

- **Transition Mtg. 9 – Report session on the outcome of the Cottage Mtgs.**

May – **Call Process continues.**

- Revisit the Call as Interim Pastor

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BOOK REIEW

Martin Schroeder is a member of the Interim Ministry Conference Board of Directors. In addition to serving his fifth interim pastorate, he is working on his Doctor of Divinity in the field of Intentional Interim Ministry at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. In so doing he is responsible for book reviews that relate to our calling and work. He has generously shared his reports with us for publication in the *Transition Times* E-newsletter. Following is the first book review.

“First Impressions -- What You Don’t Know About How Others See You”

Ann Demarais, Ph.D., & Valerie White, Ph.D.

The authors assert “the most crucial moment of any relationship [is]: the first.”

I. The Theory of First Impressions – Shifting the Focus

The authors describe a lasting sense of someone or something as “retained remembrance.”¹ First impressions is a unique topic in our current society given the rapid rate and ways in which we meet new people. Demarais and White suggest, “in general, regardless of the situation, people form a first impression of you more by your style, such as how you show interest in them, navigate topics, and self-disclose, than by the content of your discussion.”² Throughout the book the authors go against conventional wisdom underscoring what is central to making a good first impression is not how you feel but how others feel. Demarais and White assert, “But how you come across to others is less about what you say or how you feel and more about how you make people feel about themselves in your presence.”³

First impressions can leave an emotional impact on complete strangers. During first impressions Demarais and White illustrate how one might place focus on four different areas:

1. How you feel about yourself [L
SEP]
2. How you feel about the other person [L
SEP]
3. How the other person feels about you [L
SEP]
4. How the other person feels about himself or herself [L
SEP]

For Demarais and White, the secret to making a positive first impression is an orientation toward focus 4.⁴ Ironically they note, “Focus 4 is the most neglected of the four emotional focuses.”⁵ Typically, people place the first impression focus on themselves and how they are feeling about themselves and the other person. The natural evolutionary process of focus begins from our personal core and moves out to others. First our consideration is for how we feel about ourselves, next how we feel about others, next how others are feeling about us, and finally how others are feeling about themselves. Demarais and White claim the process of being other focused is “not

obvious because it's not an automatic emotional orientation."⁶ Therefore, they encourage an intentional "shifting" the focus from one's self to others feelings to improve first impressions. They describe first impressions as, "meeting others' needs."⁷ They say this illustrates to others the kind of person you may be, "demonstrate[ing] that you can be generous and selfless," or alternatively "it may demonstrate that you may be an emotional burden."⁸

¹ Ann Demarais and Valerie White, "First Impressions: What You Don't Know About How Others See You." (Bantam Books, 2005.), 2.² Ibid., 5.³ Ibid., 20.

⁴ Ibid., 23. ⁵ Ibid., 22. ⁶ Ibid., 23. ⁷ Ibid. ⁸ Ibid.

Demarais and White refer to the shift of attention and focus on others as being socially generous, they call it "The Balance Sheet" approach. They assert that people weigh the "social" benefits and costs of interactions with others. In this theory they assert, "We evaluate, and are evaluated by, the benefits we provide to others."⁹ They conclude, "the shortest route to getting what you want is to give to others first."¹⁰ They refer to this as "a form of social generosity."¹¹ It is putting others before yourself, or treating others the way you would want to be treated.

They give consideration to many questions: So what social gifts should one give? Do we consider what we are giving or denying others in a first impression? What is our strong suit of the four focus areas of social interactions? What benefits do I provide others in social interactions? Demarais and White advise, "Knowing what you want to give can help you understand if there are any gaps between what you would like to project and how others actually see you."¹² First impressions are made quickly and people tend to believe they know 100% of you based on that initial impression. Demarais and White caution, "They assume that your first behaviors represent how you act most of the time, even if it is not true."¹³ Again, Demarais and White assert the key to making a positive first impression is to focus on how others are feeling "and especially how they are feeling about themselves."¹⁴

II. Accessibility and Showing Interest

The authors dissect a first impression into seven basic parts: accessibility, showing interest, the subject matter of first conversations, self-disclosure, conversational dynamics, perspective, and sex appeal. For the purposes of providing insight into the IIM Joining Phase, reflection is provided on two basic parts: showing interest and self-disclosure. The authors believe each person is able to apart their own “first impression puzzle” and see how they come across in each area. They also believe by understanding how you come across you are able to “tweak” your first impression style.

The authors place significant capital on accessibility saying, “Your ‘accessibility style’ is important because it literally determines whether an interaction takes place at all.” This basic part of a first impression may set the tone for my ability to effectively minister to congregational members in transition. Already members may feel various levels of isolation and being cut off from congregational life and ministry during the departure a pastor. The authors describe two components of the accessibility style: how one makes contact (active or passive) and the content, that is, what you actually say.¹⁵

Having made one’s self-accessible; the authors regard the second fundamental of first impressions, *showing interest in others*, to be a hard and fast rule. They say, “You will come across more positively if you show genuine interest in people you meet for the first time.”¹⁶ They recognize that people seemed highly attuned to how others take interest in them but not necessarily how they are taking interest in others. This ability to consider what others are saying, feeling, and thinking shows “you are secure in yourself and open-minded enough to seek to understand what lies beneath

⁹ Ibid., 24. ¹⁰ Ibid., 25. ¹¹ Ibid., 23. ¹² Ibid., 30. ¹³ Ibid., 31. ¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid., 36. ¹⁶ Ibid., 58.

someone's surface appearance."¹⁷ Showing interest is a way we give gifts to people. The authors assert, "Most people want to be understood and will appreciate your attention and focus." Showing interest involves "directing your physical energy – looking, leaning, and nonverbally responding to them. It also consists of asking questions, listening closely, and responding appropriately."¹⁸

III. Application and Theological Review

Demarais and White reveal the secret to first impressions is how the other person feels about himself or herself. God makes himself accessible in Jesus Christ. He invites us to share with him the most insignificant matters. He is proactive in becoming accessible. The Bible says, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). He leans into our lives with interest. God cares about the details. The Apostle Peter affirms God's interest in us saying, "Cast your cares on him for he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

Being aware of the "first impression" dynamic and implications offers me insights on what to do and not do as I join new congregations in transition. So many believers seek to make good impressions themselves to the "new" pastor. What an opportunity for me to put them at ease and "love on them." Others simply are seeking to make connections and the joining phase offers an opportunity to make healthy connections beginning with first impressions. It will be important to focus less on how I feel about myself and others, and more on how others feel about themselves. The best way for me to affirm others' feelings about themselves is to treat them how God treats me: accessible to them and interested in them.

¹⁷ Ibid., 58. ¹⁸ Ibid., 80.

Events and Notes

IMC Membership

You recently received a reminder letter from the Interim Ministry Conference Board Financial Secretary, Rev. Martin Schroeder to renew or become a new member of the IMC-LCMS. He said:

“The Conference under the Council of Presidents, will recruit pastors for intentional interim pastoral care and establish and maintain the professional standards for pastor serve in this capacity.

“In working to fulfill the IMC purpose, the Board supports and promotes:

- **Credentialing** – Documented continuing IIM education and experience...on behalf of the Council of Presidents.
- **Ongoing Credentialing** – Triennial documentation of continual IIM education and experience...cf. info@interimministrylcms.org
- **The interim Ministry Website** – Where general information is available...log on to www.interimministrylcms.org
- **The interim Ministry Forum** – A confidential chat room where Interim Ministry Pastors can share joys and receive collegial support and guidance for IIM problems. Go to the Forum link on the website to join
- **NALIP** – See below:

- **Constant Contact** – A mass email website that allows us to contact all IIMs at once. And
- **Transition Times** – This newly published e-news for all LCMS interim pastors, of which this is the first issue.

See Martin Schroeder’s reminder and payment form to update your membership.

Send your check of \$70 payable to “Interim Ministry Conference – LCMS” to

Michigan District, LCMS

Attn.: Chad Woltemuth

3773 Geddes Rd.

Ann Arbor, MI 48105-3098

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Basic Education Events

NALIP offers a 60-hr classroom training, Basic Education of Intentional Interim Ministry. A description of the course is available on the NALIP website. The training focuses on theory and skills proven helpful for interim ministry. The training will benefit pastors in settled ministries as well.

Training events scheduled by NALIP are listed on the NALIP website (www.nalip.net). Annually we have classes at Luther Seminary and Concordia Seminary. We schedule additional classes at other venues as opportunities arise. We encourage

synods and districts of our denominations to host training events for the benefit of their pastors and congregations.

Our scheduled training for 2017 is as follows. Additional dates will be posted on our website as we schedule them.

Ken Ruppert, NALIP Administrator

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Phase I — May 1-5, 2017
Phase III— Nov. 13-17, 2017

Luther Seminary
Mt Olivet Retreat Center,
St. Paul, MN
Phase III — April 24-28, 2017
&
Phase I – October 16-20, 2017
Phase III – April 16-20, 2018

St. Francis Retreat House
TBA

Florida Georgia District (LCMS)
Phase I – August 14-18, 2017
Canterbury Retrt Ctr, Oveido, FL
Phase III – February 5-9,2018
FL/GA Dist. Office, Orlando, FL

Northeast Ohio Synod (ELCA)
St. Stephen Luth. Ch. Stow, OH
Phase I — May 8-12, 2017
Phase III — Nov. 6-10, 2017

Advance Training WrkShp

Pacifica Synod Office
Santa Ana, CA
June 1, 2017

terrirobertson@pacificasynod.org

2017 NALIP Conference

June 22-24, 2017

Maritime Institute

Baltimore, MD

Presenter for the 2017 NALIP Conference

is Mr. Ted Kober, Senior Ambassador for Ambassadors of Reconciliation, who will guide us through a six-part study on reconciling relationships and resolving conflict. The presentations will reflect Biblical teaching for reconciliation while reviewing the six chief parts of the Small Catechism of Martin Luther.

Participants will find this material immediately practical for interim ministry. Additionally, participants learn practical ways to apply their Christian faith in family, business, legal and church conflicts. This resource will prove helpful for themselves as well as for assisting others respond to conflict in a biblically faithful manner.

As a result of this conference pastors will be able to access materials and present this study to the congregations they serve.

REGISTRATION

Until March 31 the conference registration fee is \$285 for IMC members and \$360 for non-members. Fees increase after that date.

Continuing Ed. Credit

All registered participants who pay the additional fee of \$10 may apply for continuing education credit (CEU) available from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Application forms will be at the conference. Please include the \$10 processing fee with your registration fees.

For complete information about Basic Ed, the conference and NALIP

Cf. www.nalip.net

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CREDENTIALING

For
Interim Ministers – LCMS

Credentialing serves several purposes. It creates a highest trained, experienced, and successful list of Intentional Interim Pastors for our Synod's district presidents to access when there is a need. It demonstrates to our Synod's leadership that, with this process of Credentialing, we have an interest in and a mechanism through which to improve and elevate the level of competence of our LCMS intentional interim pastors.

Together with IIM's carried out well, Credentialing is helping to create an increased esteem for this specialized ministry. We encourage you to apply for credentialed status after you have completed your first interim. You can download the need

form from our IMC website at: www.interimministrylcms.org Click on the "Credentialing" tab. You will see the available downloads. If I can assist you, contact me at crgteg@hotmail.com.

In Him, Craig Patterson

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Share What's Working!

Transition Times wants your input. Share your Interim experience with your colleagues in this important transition ministry. Drop us a line, tell us what works and what does not.

- A Biblical application of study
- An experience whether it is successful or not.
- An approach or pastoral "ministry of presence"
- An itinerary of action.
- Whatever!

Give us a paragraph, a chart, an insight that is formulated in as complete a way as possible, yet maintaining confidentiality.

We appreciate your name and contact address, so others can explore ways to benefit from your ministry.

Cf. bobjoarein@wowway.com