

TRANSITION TIMES

A QUARTERLY OF THE INTERIM MINISTRY CONFERENCE

interimministrylms.org
Editor, Anne R. Lee

Volume 3, Issue 4—October, 2019

DEPARTING AND LAUNCHING By Scott Sommerfeld

This phase starts with getting ready to say farewell to the Intentional Interim Pastor who is currently serving and getting ready to welcome another Pastor. It could mean welcoming a new temporary shepherd (an IIP or a Vacancy Pastor) or the congregation's New Pastor. It generally includes an exit interview/annual pastor review as well as preparing hearts, groups and work spaces for the next Pastor. When getting ready for the congregation's New Pastor to arrive—extra attention is given to preparing Pastor and People to successfully launch into a healthy ministry together. The following activities will typically be part of this phase:

IIP Annual Review

IIP Farewell in Worship and Farewell Gathering
Call Readiness Report (if not done earlier): 5 Developmental Tasks Inventory
Getting Ready to Welcome Another Transition Pastor; or Welcome Your New Pastor

What can you share about this fourth phase?

Rev. Dr. Scott G. Sommerfeld uses the "Four Phases of the IIM Process" as a good guide for pastor and people journeying through the transition process. He continues to be a "learner" in his 3rd Michigan District IIM assignment.



PRACTITIONERS TOOLBOX

HEALTHY CHURCHES—FAITHFUL PASTORS:
COVENANT EXPECTATIONS FOR THRIVING TOGETHER
BY DAVID KECK

Book Report by Craig Schultz

The title accurately describes the gist of the book.

I quote from the forward:

“Recent studies of congregations have highlighted the **relationship** of pastors and their churches as crucial to the health of the congregation and the satisfaction of the pastor. Everyone has a horror story to share, but behind the anecdotes and advice circulating . . . one discovers two separate conversations sealed off from each other. One is told by pastors, the other by the members of their congregations. This book . . . will help join the two conversations and make them one.”

It has been my personal observation over many years and numerous parishes that this lack of pastor and people seeing “eye to eye” and working “hand in hand” and joining “heart to heart” is more a matter of “mouth to ears.” [Of course, the biggest issue for both parties is their failure to humble themselves together before Christ and his word.] I was excited to discover this book just as I was asked to participate in a time of transition for a local congregation. The opening was made necessary when the District requested both of the congregation's two pastors take calls. The apparent reason for their departure was their failure to see “eye to eye” and work “hand in hand,” etc. In other words, they had unexpressed and unresolved expectations of one another that harkened back to day one of their hoped-for “partnership in the Gospel.”

As I am learning, the lay people likewise weren't

Cont'd from page 1:

receiving from their pastors what they were expecting; nor did they (or do they) have a good understanding of what it was that their pastors actually expected and/or needed from them.

"The New Testament Greek word sozo encompasses both 'health' and 'salvation' - a healthy church can indeed be a place of salvation for everyone (p. 5)."

I quote from the author:

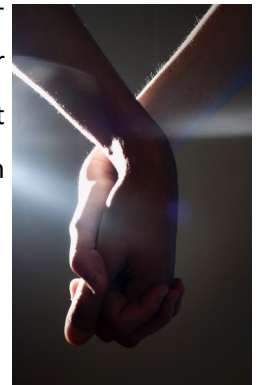
"This book strives to encourage *healthy* churches and *faithful* pastors. Of course, it is also essential for pastors to be healthy and churches to be faithful. But the chief problem facing pastors is often being faithful to their calling from God. Pastors let themselves get in the way all too easily—either their own emotional needs, their need to control things, or their inability to get beyond "their" ministry. For their part, the chief challenge facing churches is being a healthy community where a commitment to a greater good allows people to focus on what's truly important. Emotional needs and deep-seated fears, often unstated and therefore surprisingly powerful, are always going to be present, but do they dominate the congregation and make it unhealthy? The New Testament Greek word *sozo* encompasses both 'health' and 'salvation'—a healthy church can indeed be a place of salvation for everyone (p. 5)."

Dr. Keck divides his nearly 200 pages into three parts. Part 1 is on Shared Expectation and the power of expectations in life. Here he also presents ten very helpful principles for a vibrant church community. An interesting and helpful tool to facilitate discussion of his material is his use of 6 imaginary composite people guides that he has created from the host of interviews he has conducted. Each expresses their reaction to the points he makes. His goal is to generate discussion among real life church members who might hold similar positions.

Part 2 presents 23 expectations that healthy congregations have of faithful pastors. Part 3 presents 28 expectations that faithful pastors have of healthy congregations—plus five that are mutually shared. Each expectation is explained and presented for discussion between pastors and lay people. The expectations he offers are general in nature but establish a framework for local specificity.

My current transition team created a Position Description Document based on ministry expectations that supplements the official Call Document. We listed very clearly what we expect of the next Senior Pastor and what he can expect of us. We privately prioritized those expectations as they pertain to his ministry. We intend to use the document during the interview process in order to achieve clarity between the parties. Finally, the plan is for the leadership to use the document for the scheduled periodic reviews of the called pastor by asking questions like, "How are **we** doing meeting **our** agreed upon expectations?" and "Where do you/we need help in fulfilling our expectations?" So far so good. I recommend Dr. Keck's materials for reading as well as for presentation at a LuTMA conference. Peace be with you.

Rev. Craig Schultz has served as a settled pastor since 1975 and as an IIP since 2012. He is currently serving his fourth IIM assignment in Palmer, Alaska.



NEWS

IMC Updates

Executive Director for LuTMA

This fall there will be a search for an Executive Director to serve LuTMA.

Please see *Nalip.net* for Basic Education and Advanced Training opportunities and conference times and locations.