

Interim Rector Letter of Agreement

Effective: _____

between
The Wardens and Vestry of
_____ (Church)
and
The Reverend _____,

who has been appointed Interim Rector with the understanding that this tenure is to continue for (one year with the option to renew) or until dissolved by mutual consent or upon 30 days written notice of either party.

Developmental Tasks of the Interim Period

The present interim period is seen as prime time for renewal, reenergizing the parish in its life and mission. Beyond maintaining effective ministry during this period, the Vestry and Interim Rector shall work together to prepare for healthy transition to the next rectorship. Specific tasks to be addressed include:

- Coming to terms with the history of this congregation and its relationships with previous clergy.
- Discovering the congregation's special identity, what it dreams of being and doing apart from previous clergy leadership.
- Dealing with shifts in leadership roles that naturally evolve in times of transition, allowing new leaders to come to the fore constructively.
- Renewing and reworking relationships with the Diocese, so that each may be a more effective resource and support to the other.
- Building commitment to the leadership of the new rector in order to be prepared to move into the future with openness to new possibilities.

Vestry Responsibilities

All ministries other than those reserved to ordained leadership (such as administering the sacraments) are understood as mutual ministries of the laity of the parish and the Interim Rector. The Vestry shall lead the laity to support and cooperate with the Interim Rector in pursuit of parish goals and in the performance of the developmental tasks of the interim period.

The Vestry is legal agent for the parish in all matters concerning its corporate property and in its relationship with the Interim Rector. The Vestry will see that the Interim Rector is properly supported, personally and organizationally as well as in the Vestry's financial obligations to the Interim Rector.

Interim Rector Responsibilities

The Interim Rector represents and extends the ministry which is the Bishop's rectoral and canonical responsibility for congregations in leadership transition. The Interim Rector shall lead the congregation as rector, priest, and teacher, sharing in the councils of this congregation and of the whole church, in communion with our Bishop.

The Interim Rector shall . . .

- Work with the Vestry and other lay leaders to maintain the regular schedule of worship services and preaching, education, rectoral care and rectoral offices (weddings, funerals, baptisms), calling upon the sick and shut-in, visiting newcomers, and ongoing administration of the parish.
- Supervise all parish staff in the exercise of their responsibilities and ministries, for which they shall be accountable to the Interim Rector.
- Function as Chair of the Vestry and support the Vestry in its responsibilities.

The major goal of the Interim Rector's ministry is to prepare the congregation for the coming of the next rector. To this end, the Interim Rector shall . . .

- Help the congregation deal with its grief and any other unresolved issues arising from the rector's departure.
- Deal with internal conflicts and help heal any divisions within the congregation.
- Help the Vestry, lay leaders and staff make such changes as may be needed to align parish life and administration with generally accepted standards in the Diocese.

The Interim Rector may communicate regularly with the Transition Missioner, but shall not participate in developing the parish profile or the solicitation and screening of candidates. The Interim Rector shall not be eligible to be a candidate for Rector.

Use of Building: It is understood the general pattern of building use followed during the last rectorship shall be maintained unless there is specific action of the Vestry to the contrary. The Interim Rector shall have the right to grant use of the buildings to individuals or groups from outside the parish, only under guidelines approved by the Vestry.

Interim Rector's Employment status, Compensation, Benefits, and Financial

Employment Status: This position is (full-time/part-time) and exempt. This position is considered professional under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and is therefore exempt (not covered) under FLSA. The Interim Rector is a W-2 employee and shall be compensated in compliance with the diocese's annually approved Minimum Compensation Schedule.

Withholding: Since the IRS considers clergy to be "self-employed," the congregation is not required to withhold or remit the Federal Insurance Contributions Act portion (i.e. "FICA" or "employer's share") of withholding. If requested by the Interim Rector, the parish may withhold and remit federal, state, and local income tax and SECA on the Interim Rector's behalf.

Stipend: The Interim Rector's initial annual stipend shall be \$ _____; such stipend to be reviewed annually.

Housing Allowance: Per IRS regulations, the Interim Rector may designate a portion of the stipend as a Housing Allowance. This allowance is then exempt from federal income tax withholding and subject only to the Self-Employment Contributions Act (SECA) portion of withholding. The vestry, prior to the first payroll date, will adopt the appropriate housing allowance resolution. The value of any housing allowance will be made part of the vestry minutes.

Tax Deferred Retirement Plan: The Interim Rector shall have the opportunity to invest in a tax deferred retirement plan through payroll deduction. The church treasurer will send the Interim Rector's pre-tax contributions directly to the plan sponsor. The amount is the sole discretion of the interim rector, pursuant to applicable tax laws.

Benefits: The parish shall provide the following customary and required benefits:

- **Insurance:** The full-time Interim Rector shall have the option to receive medical insurance coverage through the Medical Trust of the Church Insurance Corporation (a division of the Church Pension Group). Medical coverage expense will follow the Diocese approved plan established annually. The current annual benefit is \$_____. An additional \$1000 annually to be deposited into the Interim Rector's Health Savings account if enrolled in a CDHP plan. Any additional costs for insurance, should the Interim Rector choose a more expensive insurance coverage plan, shall be borne by the Interim Rector. Dental coverage will be available for employee purchase. Workers' Compensation will be provided as required by the State of Missouri.
- **Pension:** The annual pension assessment of 18% of the cleric's compensation (compensation as defined by Church Pension Fund rules) will be remitted by the congregation on the required schedule of remittance. This will be \$_____ for the first year and will change as the Interim Rector's compensation changes in subsequent years. *(There is no pension requirement for Clergy currently receiving Retiree Pension Benefits from the Church Pension Fund.)*

Expense Reimbursements: The Vestry shall reimburse the following expenses incurred by the Interim Rector in fulfilling the duties of the office:

- Expenses incurred while using a privately owned vehicle for ministry on behalf of the Church will be reimbursed at the then-applicable IRS rate. Such reimbursement is not to exceed \$_____ annually.
- Pre-approved non-travel related expenses incurred in the course of professional activities on behalf of the Church.
- The actual cost of the Interim Rector's relocation if necessary, not to exceed \$_____.

Continuing Education Allowance: The Interim Rector will be allowed \$_____ annually to pursue canonically required Continuing Education. Such may be augmented by Continuing Education resources made available by the diocese.

Office, Office Equipment, Supplies, etc.: The parish will provide the Interim Rector use of the parish office, necessary office equipment, and telephone service, postage, internet connectivity, email accounts, supplies, etc. for the ministry of administration.

Supplementary Compensation: The Interim Rector shall not charge fees for performing any rites of the Church (i.e. baptisms, marriages, funerals, etc.) for members of the parish. The Interim Rector may, however, receive unsolicited honoraria from members of the parish. The Interim Rector may also receive additional income for sacramental services on behalf of persons not related to the parish and may also receive fees and honoraria for professional services performed on personal time for groups or individuals unrelated to the parish, or for sermons, books, or articles published outside the parish.

Discretionary Fund: In accordance with the canons of the General Convention, the

Alms/Discretionary Fund, in the absence of a Rector, is under the control of the Parish Almoner. The Senior Warden shall be appointed Parish Almoner, and, together with the Interim Rector and Junior Warden, shall have access to this fund for the aid of the poor and those in need, and for any other reasonable expense normally attributed to such a canonical Alms/Discretionary Fund.

<u>Synopsis of Initial, Annual Financial Considerations</u>	
Stipend & Housing	\$ _____
Pension contributions	\$ _____
Health Insurance	\$ _____
HSA annual contribution	\$ _____
Travel reimbursement	\$ _____
Continuing Education allowance	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

Times of Work, Leave, and Vacation

General Work Expectations: The Interim Rector’s work includes not only activities directed to the parish and its well-being, but also labors on behalf of the diocese and community. As a priest of the Church, the Interim Rector is expected to take his/her place in the Councils of the Church and in the life and ministry of the Diocese.

Expected Workweek: The Interim Rector’s scheduled workweek will be five (5) days if full-time and _____ hours per week if part-time, including Sundays, The Interim Rector is expected to preserve at least one continuous twenty-four (24) hour period each week solely for personal and family pursuits.

Vacation: The Interim Rector shall have 4 weeks of vacation annually, which includes 4 Sundays. During vacation periods, the Interim Rector shall continue to receive full compensation and benefits.

Leave: The Interim Rector will have the following periods of leave at full compensation:

- **National Holidays** to be taken so as not to interfere with worship for major occasions or Sundays.
- **Continuing Education Leave** will constitute a minimum of seven (7) days each year, not to exceed (14) days each year.

Notification of Absence from the Parish: Before being absent and away from the parish at a distance that would prohibit being available for pastoral emergencies, the Interim Rector shall advise the Senior Warden how the Interim Rector may be contacted, shall arrange for on-call pastoral care from another member of the clergy, and shall inform the Wardens of such arrangements.

OTHER AGREEMENTS

Mutual Ministry Review: Within three months of the new Interim Rector’s arrival, the Interim Rector and the Vestry shall engage in an initial goal setting and mutual expectations process. The Interim Rector, Wardens, and Vestry agree to an annual discussion and mutual review of the total ministry to:

- Provide the Interim Rector, Wardens and Vestry opportunity to assess how well they are fulfilling their responsibilities to each other and to the ministry they share.

- Establish goals for the work for the coming year.
- Isolate areas of conflict or disappointment that have not received adequate attention and may be adversely affecting ministry.
- Clarify expectations of all parties to help put any future conflicts in manageable form.

Disputes: If the Interim Rector and the Vestry disagree concerning interpretation of this Letter of Agreement, either party may appeal for mediation to the bishop, whose decision shall be binding.

Revisions: This Letter of Agreement will be revisited at each annual Mutual Ministry Review but may be revised by mutual agreement at any time. Revisions of compensation, benefits, and reimbursements may be agreed upon in a separate budgeting process, and when enacted, such revision shall be understood to be a revision of this Letter of Agreement.

This letter of agreement shall be made a part of the minutes of the next vestry meeting following the signing, and copies shall be given to each new vestry member each year.

APPROVALS

This Letter of Agreement is approved by the three parties signing below and is not valid until all three parties have signed.

Interim Rector	Date
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Senior Warden	Date
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Bishop	Date
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