

[MODEL LETTER OF AGREEMENT – INTERIM]

LETTER OF AGREEMENT

Between The Wardens and Vestry of

.....

in ....., Florida

and

The Reverend .....

who has been appointed Interim Pastor with the understanding that this tenure is to continue for ..... months, unless earlier dissolved by mutual consent or upon the election of the Rector, or upon thirty (30) days notice of either party. At the conclusion of the ..... month period, this agreement may be extended only in writing by mutual agreement of the parties.

1. **PREAMBLE:** The interim period, a time between clergy leadership, is a prime time for renewal of parish life and mission. During the interim period, there is a need for leadership, for maintenance of a healthy congregational life, and for the development of short-range goals. In addition, a congregation must take the time to prepare itself for calling and working with a new Rector. To this end, an Interim Pastor will help the congregation deal with specific tasks that may need to be addressed in order for the congregation to be in a position to call a new Rector. These tasks are as follows:
  - a. Coming to terms with the congregation's history and its relationship with previous clergy.
  - b. Discovering the congregation's special identity, what it dreams of being and doing apart from the personality and priorities of previous clergy leadership.
  - c. Dealing with shifts in lay leadership that naturally evolve in times of transition.
  - d. Renewing and reworking relationships with the diocese, so that each may be a more effective resource and support to one another.
  - e. Building a commitment to the future and a relationship with the new Rector that will lead the congregation and the Rector to a genuine sense of call to mission and to cooperative work to fulfill that mission.
  
2. **ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF INTERIM PASTOR:** The Interim Pastor shall lead ..... as pastor, priest and teacher, sharing in the councils of this congregation and of the whole church, in communion with our Bishop. The Interim Pastor represents and extends the ministry, which is the Bishop's pastoral and canonical responsibility for congregations in leadership transition. The Interim Pastor shall:
  - a. Work with the Vestry and other lay leaders to maintain the regular schedule of worship services and preaching, pastoral calling on the sick and shut-ins, pastoral offices (weddings, funerals, baptisms) and visiting newcomers.
  - b. Assist with the ongoing administration duties, including the supervision of all parish staff.

- c. Support the Vestry in its role and responsibilities.
  - d. Work not only in this congregation, but also on behalf of the Diocese, the Church at large, and the community.
  - e. Working closely with the Wardens, Vestry and other parish leaders, with the Bishop and his staff, the major goal of the Interim Pastor's ministry is to prepare the congregation for the coming of the new Rector. To this end, the Interim Pastor shall:
  - f. Help the congregation deal with its grief and any other unresolved issues arising from the Rector's departure.
  - g. Deal with internal conflicts and help heal any divisions within the congregation, working with a Diocesan consultant as appropriate.
  - h. Help Vestry and lay leaders bring about such change as may be needed to align parish life and administration with generally accepted standards in the diocese.
  - i. The Interim Pastor shall communicate regularly with the Deployment Officer and the Interim Consultant, but will not work with the Search Committee as they develop the parish profile, position description, solicit and screen candidates. The Interim Pastor is not and will not be a candidate for Rector.
3. **ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF VESTRY:** The Vestry has the responsibility for the church in the absence of a Rector during the interim period. Specific responsibilities include the following:
- a. Encourage the laity to support and cooperate with the Vestry and the Interim Pastor in pursuit of the tasks and goals of the interim period.
  - b. Responsible for hiring and firing of parish staff during the interim period. While the Vestry should be in consultation with the Interim Pastor regarding any and all personnel matters, the Vestry is ultimately responsible for all staff decisions.
  - c. The Vestry is the legal agent for the congregation in all matters concerning its corporate property and in its relationship with the Interim Pastor.
4. **INTERIM PASTOR TIMES OF WORK AND LEAVE:** The Interim Pastor's scheduled workweek is five (5) days, usually measured as ten to twelve units of mornings, afternoons, or evenings in various combinations reflecting the demands of this ministry. In general, no more than three evenings per week are expected. The Interim Pastor is expected to preserve at least one continuous twenty-four hour period each week solely for personal and family use. The Interim Pastor will have the following periods of leave at full compensation:
- a. National holidays, to be taken so as not to interfere with worship for major occasions.
  - b. One month Annual Vacation which shall include five (5) Sundays.
  - c. A minimum of ten (10) days for Continuing Education.
5. **COMPENSATION:**
- a. The Interim Pastor's cash salary will be \$....., monthly, paid on or before the ..... day of the month. It is understood that, upon the Interim Pastor's request, and with proper documentation, he Vestry will designate a

portion of the total amount as "Housing Allowance" under the Federal Internal Revenue Code.

- b. The Interim Pastor shall either have full use of the Rectory as personal residence, or may elect a housing allowance in accordance with diocesan compensation guidelines.
- c. (*When a rectory is involved*): Expenses connected with the Rectory shall be handled as follows:
  - i. Utilities shall be contracted for and paid by the parish.
  - ii. Care and maintenance of Rectory grounds are at the parish's expense.

**6. BENEFITS:**

- a. Church Pension Fund Assessment on the Interim Pastor's total annual cash salary (including Housing Allowance or the value of the church provided housing). Note: The Interim Pastor must present proof to the vestry that he/she is enrolled in The Church Pension Fund.
- b. 100% of the premium costs for adequate medical and dental coverage for the Interim Pastor and his or her dependents. The Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO's) offered through the Church Insurance Medical Trust are considered adequate medical coverage. Note: The congregation is not required to contribute more than the highest HMO rate for medical insurance.
- c. A minimum of \$600 for Continuing Education costs.
- d. Moving expenses that is not to exceed a mutually agreed upon amount.
- e. During the first six months of medically certified disability, the congregation shall continue full compensation. Congregations are therefore urged to purchase disability insurance that will assist in funding an extended time of disability.

**7. PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES:** The Vestry shall pay the following expenses incurred by the Interim Pastor in fulfilling the duties of the office:

- a. Travel expenses, at the prevailing IRS rate, or provide the Interim Pastor with an automobile, through lease or purchase, and pay the expenses of the same, with documentation to be submitted to the Vestry. In addition, out-of-pocket transportation costs for church business, including parking fees, tolls, bus fares, etc. shall be reimbursed upon receipt of a detailed expense report.
- b. The normal expenses of the Church's office operation, such as telephone, postage, office equipment, supplies, secretarial services, etc., not to exceed the budgeted amount.
- c. Expenses incurred in the course of professional activities on behalf of the parish shall be reimbursed upon receipt of a detailed expense report (subject to guidelines set by the vestry).

**8. DISCRETIONARY FUND:** The parish will provide a Discretionary Fund to be dispersed by the Interim Pastor. The Discretionary Fund is an account of the parish. It shall be kept in the name of the church (i.e. "Christ Church: Interim Pastor's Discretionary Fund"). To preserve confidentiality, the priest can be the sole authorizer of funds. The Discretionary Fund shall be included in the annual Audit.

9. **SUPPLEMENTARY COMPENSATION:** The Interim Pastor shall not charge fees for performing any rites of the Church (for example, baptisms, marriages, and funerals) for members of this parish. The Interim Pastor may, however, receive income from other sources, such as:
  - a. Sacramental services on behalf of persons not in any way related to this parish.
  - b. Fees and honoraria for professional services performed on personal time for groups unrelated to this parish, or for sermons, books or articles published outside the parish.
10. **USE OF BUILDING:** The Interim Pastor 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.
11. **MUTUAL STUDY OF MINISTRY:** There shall be a discussion and mutual study of the total ministry of the parish after 4-6 months, in order to:
  - a. Provide the Interim Pastor, Wardens and Vestry opportunity to assess how well they are fulfilling their responsibilities to each other and to the ministry they share
  - b. Establish and adjust goals for the work of the parish during the interim.
  - c. Plan healthy closure for the interim ministry and prepare for the coming of the next Rector.
  - d. Isolate areas of conflict or disappointment, which have not received adequate attention and may be adversely affecting mutual ministry.
  - e. Clarify expectations of all parties to help put any future conflicts in manageable form.
  - f. The Interim Consultant will facilitate the Mutual Study of Ministry.
12. All pay and benefits shall become effective on .....
13. This Letter of Agreement shall be made part of the minutes of the next Vestry meeting following its signing, and copies shall be given to each new Vestry member thereafter.
14. If the Interim Pastor and Vestry are in disagreement concerning interpretation of this Letter of Agreement, either party may appeal for mediation to a mutually agreed-upon third party, the Bishop remaining the final arbiter.

..... Interim Pastor	..... Date
..... Bishop	..... Date
..... Senior Warden	..... Date