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**Interim Ministry Resources**

Letter of Agreement Form A  
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 Litany of Welcome  
 Developmental Tasks for the Interim Period  
 Interim Pastor’s Report  
 Litany of Farewell  
 Interim Pastor’s Exit Report

Evaluation of Completed Term of Interim Ministry**LETTER OF AGREEMENT   
FOR INTERIM PASTORAL MINISTRY   
FORM A**

The Rocky Mountain Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in American recognizes occasions when congregations will need to be served by interim pastors while they seek permanent pastoral leadership. During such service to a congregation, an interim pastor shall have the rights and of a regularly called pastor. Upon completion of service, the interim pastor shall certify to the bishop of this synod that the parochial records for the period for which the interim was responsible are in order. Keeping in mind the apostolic advice that all things be done decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40), the church provides for the service of interim pastors.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ covenants with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

NAME/CITY OF CONGREGATION NAME OF INTERIM PASTOR

to serve as Interim Pastor with the following conditions and mutual covenants:

Time period beginning \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and ending \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Extensions of time of service shall be with consultation and approval of Bishop.

Although interim appointments normally are concluded with the acceptance of a call by a pastoral candidate, circumstances of need within the Synod may result in the re-assignment of the interim pastor prior to the arrival of the new pastor in residence. Should such a re-assignment be necessary, concurrence will be sought from the congregation’s leadership in such a manner as to provide continuing pastoral care to the congregation until the call process is complete.

This agreement may be terminated with thirty days’ written notice, by either party if necessary.

**We together will:**

· Prepare for the arrival of the new pastor.

· Seek to confirm and identify current issues facing the congregation and develop ways of dealing with them

· Strengthen the congregation’s linkage with the conference, synod, churchwide units and the resources that may be available for our ministry.

· Subscribe to the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution and bylaws of this congregation.

**You as Interim Pastor will:**

· Preach and teach the Word of God.

· Preside at worship and administer the sacraments according to the practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

· Provide pastoral care to all members of the congregation according to our needs and uphold us in prayer.

· Give pastoral leadership for the meetings, activities and organizations of the congregation as time allows.

· Encourage us to support the total ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

· Be responsible for the recording of baptisms, confirmations, marriages, funerals, attendance at Holy Communion, and the maintenance of the membership rosters; and report the statistics of the congregation promptly and fully as requested by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

· Represent the Office of the Bishop by assisting the Call Committee in the call process. The Interim Pastor shall refrain, however, from exerting influence in the calling of a new pastor.

· During this interim, will give special attention to the following:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**We, the congregation, will:**

· Commit ourselves to the Gospel by faithful participation in worship, learning and fellowship activities.

· Receive you as our Interim Pastor, uphold you in prayer, and accord you our love, respect and good will.

· Look to you to preside at baptisms, celebrations of Holy Communion, and the rites of the Church.

· In exchange for approximately \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ time pastoral support, compensate you in the following ways:

1. Pay you a weekly salary and housing allowance of $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

2. Pay you a weekly expense allowance of $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, for which you will provide a bimonthly accounting to the congregation’s treasurer.

3. Provide continuing education time at a rate of one week of study time per six months of interim service.

4. Grant one week of paid vacation per each three months of interim service, not to exceed four weeks per year.

5. Any coverage for this Interim Pastor under the Pension and Benefits program of the ELCA will be arranged for and agreed to by the congregation and interim pastor.

**We, the Rocky Mountain Synod, will**:

· Provide mutual support for the Interim Pastor.

· Provide mutual support for the congregation through periodic consultation and assistance during the call process.

· Respond to the reports of the Interim Pastor and the congregation.

· Provide interim ministry training opportunities for interim pastors and congregations.

Exceptions to any part of this agreement must be in consultation with the bishop of this synod.

AGREEMENT ISSUED BY:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Congregation President Date

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Congregation Secretary Date

ACCEPTED BY:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Interim Pastor Date

ATTESTED BY:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Bishop, Rocky Mountain Synod Date

Please send the completed form to the synod office for the Bishop’s signature. The original will then be sent to the Interim Pastor, and a copy to the congregation.

## Bishop Meghan Johnston Aelabouni

Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA

7375 Samuel Drive  
Denver CO 80221

**Letter of Agreement  
for Interim Pastoral Ministry: Form B**

*\*C9.06*

*At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.*

*Model Constitution for Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.*

I, Pastor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, with the consent and affirmation of the Congregation Council, accept the appointment of the Bishop of the Rocky Mountain Synod to serve as Interim Pastor of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Lutheran Church, beginning \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and ending \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

I understand that it is the policy of this synod that for the good of the congregation and the integrity of the call process, it is inappropriate for me to be a candidate for the regular call to serve as pastor of this congregation. I agree that I will not accept such a call.

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Interim Pastor

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Congregation President

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, Bishop, Rocky Mountain Synod

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date

**A LITANY OF WELCOME**

A church family is constantly changing. Loved ones come to the end of their lives; individuals come and go in our church life. It is important and right that we recognized these times of passage, these endings and beginnings.

Today we welcome \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, whose time as our Pastor for the interim begins.

Leader: Pastor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, in the presence of this congregation will you commit yourself to this new trust and responsibility, and promise to discharge your duties in harmony with the constitutions of the church?

Pastor: I will and I ask God to help me.

Leader: Will you love, serve and pray for this people of God, nourishing them with the Word and Holy Sacraments, and lead them forward during this important time of change?

Pastor: I will and I ask God to help me.

Leader: Will you lead this people of God in giving faithful witness to the Word and in making known the love of God through loving service among themselves and in this community?

Pastor: I will and I ask God to help me

Leader: Almighty God, who has given you the will to do these things, give you the power of the Holy Spirit so that you may perform them with strength and compassion.

Congregation: AMEN.

(Congregation please rise)

Leader: I ask all of you now, the people of this congregation, will you receive this messenger of Christ, Pastor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, who continues the work of bringing the Gospel of hope and salvation? Will you regard her/him as a fellow servant of Christ and work with her/him in the ministry and mission of this congregation?

Congregation: WE WILL.

Leader: Will you pray for Pastor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and honor her/him for her/his work’s sake, and in all things strive to live together in the peace and unity of Christ?

Congregation: WE WILL.

Leader: By your statements of commitment and the affirmation of this congregation, we welcome you as the Interim Pastor of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: AMEN.

**DEVELOPMENTAL TASKS FOR THE INTERIM PERIOD**

1. Come to terms with history:

· Recognize that the former pastor has departed, so that relationship can no longer be the same;

· See that this is a good time to come to terms with elements of history thus far avoided or denied;

· Grieve and celebrate the past in preparation for a richer, freer future.

2. Clarify the identity of the congregation:

· Claim a new awareness of self that is independent of previous pastoral leadership;

· Update the congregation’s sense of who they are as a changing, growing people of God in a changing world.

3. Respond positively to changes in leadership/power dynamics:

· Allow alternative leadership to come to the fore constructively;

· Support and nurture growth in old and new leadership.

4. Affirm denominational relationships:

· Look to the denomination for helpful resources, especially with respect to the pastoral call process;

· Make use of the denomination as a spiritual and practical community of support.

5. Build commitment for new pastoral leadership and a renewed vision for the future.

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN SYNOD**

**INTERIM PASTOR’S REPORT FOR \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_**

MONTH YEAR

Pastor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Congregation \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

NAME CITY/STATE

1. What are the major issues confronting the congregation? How is the congregation dealing with these issues? Consider worship life, attendance, finances, commitment, participation, etc.

2. What new issues have surfaced in the past month?

3. What is the most important thing that happened this month in the congregation?

4. What change has occurred in the congregation since your last report?

5. Where is the congregation in the call process?

6. Is there any particular support or anything with which synod staff can assist you at the present time?

7. When do you anticipate being available to begin another interim?

Please email to: [swirth@rmselca.org](mailto:swirth@rmselca.org)

Or mail to:

Rev. Sara Wirth

Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA

7375 Samuel Drive  
Denver CO 80221

**A LITANY OF FAREWELL**

**TO THE PASTOR FOR THE INTERIM**

Leader: A church community is constantly changing. Loved ones come to the end of their lives; new lives are born and baptized into the faith community. Individuals and families come and go throughout our life together. It is important for us to recognize and mark well these times of passage, these endings and beginnings. Today we bid farewell and godspeed to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who has served us as Pastor for the Interim for the past \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ months, whose time with us has now drawn to a close.

Pastor: I thank you, the people of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Church, both members and friends, for the love, kindness, and support you have shown me these past months. I thank you for accepting my leadership and receiving me as pastor in your midst for this time of transition. I recall with joy the many things we have been able to accomplish together, and with sadness the things we were not able to do. I ask your understanding and your forgiveness for the mistakes I have made and for the times I may have let you down.

Congregation: We receive with thankfulness the ministry you have offered us in the time we have shared. We accept that you now leave us to minister elsewhere, trusting that God goes with you on that journey. Your presence among us will not be forgotten. We are grateful for the time you have been with us and ask your forgiveness for our own shortcomings and our sometimes flagging faith.

Pastor: I forgive you your failures, as Christ has forgiven me, and graciously accept your gratitude, trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to the Christ we are called to serve.

Leader: Do you, the members and friends of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Church, now release Pastor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from the duties of Pastor for the Interim?

Congregation: We do, with the help of God.

Leader: Do you, Pastor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, release \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Church from turning to you and relying on you to serve them as Pastor?

Pastor: I do, with the help of God.

Leader: Do you, Pastor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, offer your encouragement for the continued ministry here at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Church?

Pastor: I do, with the help of God.

Leader: Let us pray.

Congregation: O God of all creation, whose love for all is trustworthy and true, help each of us to trust the future which rests in your care. During our time together we have experienced laughter and tears, hopes and disappointments. Guide us as we carry these cherished memories with us in new directions until that time when we are completely one with you and with one another. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

Leader: Go now, Pastor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, with our blessing, surrounded by our love and led by the promises of God, the presence of Christ Jesus, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen!

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN SYNOD**

**INTERIM PASTOR’S EXIT REPORT**

Interim Pastor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Congregation/Agency served \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Interim \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Duration of Interim: from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Summary of situation when you arrived:

Summary of present status of congregation/agency:

Summary of interim experience:

What difficulties were dealt with during the interim?

How might the synod staff have provided additional support during the interim?

Additional comments:

Are you willing to serve in the capacity of an interim pastor again?

If so, when? If not, please explain.

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please complete and email to [swirth@rmselca.org](mailto:swirth@rmselca.org) or mail to:

Rev. Sara Wirth

Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA

7375 Samuel Drive  
Denver CO 80221

**EVALUATION OF COMPLETED TERM OF INTERIM MINISTRY**

Name and address of congregation:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Dates of interim period: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of person completing form: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Role in congregation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name or pastor serving as interim: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Were goals clearly identified at the beginning of the interim ministry?

If so, what were they? If not, why not?

Which goals were achieved? Which were set aside or changed? Which were not achieved?

Describe the nature of the partnership between the interim pastor and the congregation leadership? Were expectations met in this area? Explain.

Please comment on the degree of satisfaction the congregation experienced with the leadership of the interim pastor.

Would you welcome this pastor to serve you again in a future interim?

Is there anything else the Synod office should know about your interim experience? Please be specific.

Thank you for completing this form. Please email to [swirth@rmselca.org](mailto:swirth@rmselca.org) or return to:

Rev. Sara Wirth

Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA

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