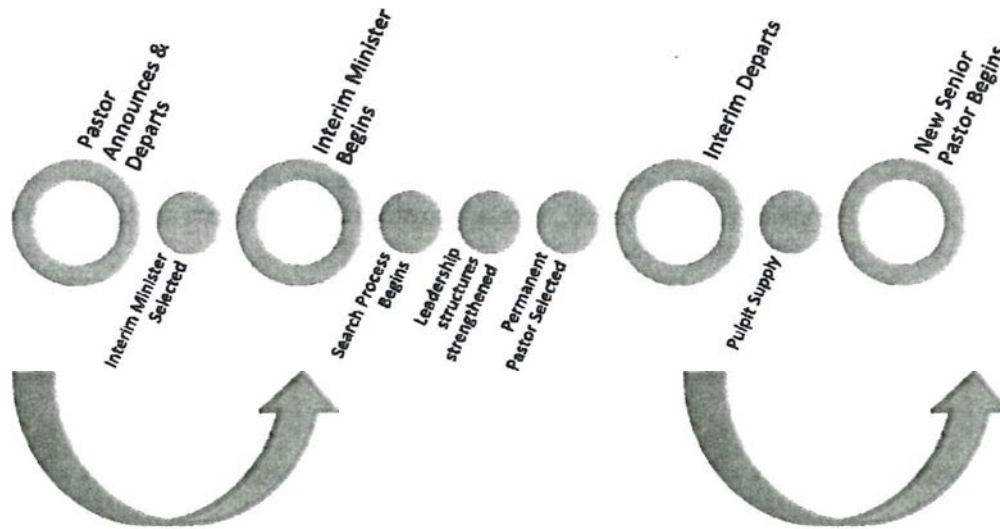


Traditional Interim Model



What the Interim Model Hopes to Accomplish:

- The creation of a clear interim time period, during which leadership systems are strengthened, strategic identity is strengthened, and all of the people ready themselves for new leadership.

What an Interim Transition Requires:

- Sustaining two significant leadership transitions.
- The availability of an interim leader, able and willing to engage truly adaptive work during the interim time period.
- A congregation that is open to doing adaptive work during the interim time period

Interim Model

The traditional interim ministry model is a two staged transition process. The congregation transfers leadership to an interim pastor, followed by a second leadership transition to a permanent senior pastor, some 12-24 months later.

What Conditions Call for an Interim?

- Dysfunctional conflict is openly at work in the congregation, within the staff team, or within the governing body.
- There is broken trust in the relationship between the congregation and its clergy (either the departing pastor or the remaining clergy staff team).
- The departing senior pastor is leaving due to termination or forced retirement.
- The departing pastor has not given the congregation enough notice (i.e. 18-24 months), to fully engage a search process and the co-pastorate leadership period, before her departure.
- The congregation does not have a well formed strategic identity.
- The congregation does not have a high-functioning staff team and/or governance structure.
- The departing pastor does not have the energy or ability to work on strengthening leadership structures during the transition time period.
- The departing pastor doesn't have much leadership capital in the congregation.
- The departing pastor has a hard time "letting go" of leadership decisions.

Adapted from Susan Beaumont Senior Minister Transitions in Large Membership Multi- Staff Churches
And Passing The Mantle The Interim Period in The Large Congregation

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Shared Ministry Model

In this model the congregation actively begins the developmental tasks of the interim period, while the existing pastor is still in place.

- A search committee works to identify a new senior pastor.
- The new senior pastor is brought on board for a brief period of time as co-pastor, alongside the departing pastor.
- The transfer of full leadership authority between the old and the new pastor happens gradually over a period of time (typically a few weeks to a few months).
- By the time the departing pastor actually takes his or her leave, the congregation has already completed a good portion of its adaptive work.

The benefits of a single transition in a large congregation should be self-evident.

- Single transition models provide the leadership stability critical to sustaining momentum and energy in the large church.
- The depth of leadership in the large church allows the congregation to genuinely engage the developmental tasks of the interim period, without the direct involvement of the senior minister.
- The staff team and governing board are protected from two periods of upheaval so that they can provide consistent and strong leadership, while the congregation is engaging its developmental tasks.
- The anxiety level of the congregation tends to remain low.
- The present senior minister is available to mentor the executive pastor and/or the incoming senior minister, and is able to help strengthen and transfer the mantle of leadership.

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What Conditions Call for a Shared Ministry?

Single transition models are not appropriate for every large congregation. There are indicators that suggest whether a single transition or the more traditional two-staged interim is most appropriate. A single stage model of transition is viable when:

- The departing pastor is a long-tenured retiring pastor who is well received and much loved by the congregation.
- The departing pastor has a wide network of relationships and resources that can be passed along to his or her successor.
- The departing pastor is in a position to actively signal the passing of his or her personal power and prestige to a successor.
- The departing pastor is emotionally open and aware of his or her leadership strengths and weaknesses.
- The departing pastor is capable of allowing the congregation to engage its future developmental work, without interfering with that work in inappropriate ways.
- The anxiety level in the congregation going into the transition is at fairly normal levels and will allow for good decision making.
- The existing staff team and governing board are functional decision making bodies, in healthy relationship with one another and the congregation.
- The congregation already has a developed sense of its mission identity and strategy.
- Normal tension and healthy equilibrium exist among subgroups or "voices" in the congregation.