

# Guide to Creating Your Interim Pastor Job Description

A Resource for Interim Pastors and Transition Teams

## Purpose of This Guide

This guide helps interim pastors and transition teams work together to create a job description that works for both the church and the interim. Whether you're an interim pastor considering a potential church or a transition team trying to understand what to offer, this resource provides the framework for productive negotiations and clear expectations.

### For Interim Pastors:

- Understand what churches need and expect
- Know what to ask for and what's reasonable
- See how your situation (retired vs. bi-vocational) affects the arrangement
- Get language to propose or negotiate terms
- Clarify boundaries that protect both you and the church

### For Transition Teams:

- Understand what interim pastors actually do
- Learn realistic expectations for part-time interim service
- See how to structure compensation fairly
- Know what to expect from different interim situations
- Get template language to create your job description

### How to Use This Guide:

**If you're negotiating together:** Read through the guide jointly, discuss which model fits, and customize the template sections together. This collaborative approach builds trust from the start.

### If you're preparing separately:

- Interim pastors: Use this to understand what churches need and prepare your proposal
- Transition teams: Use this to understand what to offer and create your initial draft
- Then come together to finalize the arrangement

The goal is a clear, mutually beneficial covenant that sets both parties up for success during the transition period.

# **Understanding Interim Ministry in the Texas Baptist Model**

## **What Makes Texas Baptist Interim Ministry Different**

The interim pastor model taught by Texas Baptists differs significantly from traditional pulpit supply arrangements. Understanding these differences helps you create realistic expectations.

### **What Interim Ministry Is NOT:**

- Just filling the pulpit on Sundays
- A retired pastor marking time until you find someone
- Someone who simply maintains the status quo
- A caretaker with no real authority or responsibility

### **What Interim Ministry IS:**

- Intentional spiritual leadership during transition
- Active guidance through a 12-step pastoral search process
- Shepherding the church through grief, assessment, and preparation
- Helping the congregation become ready for new permanent leadership
- Providing stability while facilitating necessary change

## **The Combined Approach**

Texas Baptists have moved away from the old two-tier system (standard vs. intentional interim) and now use a combined approach. Every interim pastor provides:

- Consistent biblical preaching and worship leadership
- Guidance through congregational assessment and self-discovery
- Support for the transition team throughout the search process
- Help addressing issues that need attention before calling a new pastor
- Preparation of the church for healthy reception of new leadership

The intensity and depth of this work varies based on your church's health and needs, but every interim serves this comprehensive role.

# Two Common Interim Pastor Models

**For Transition Teams:** Identify which model describes your situation or the interim pastor you're considering.

**For Interim Pastors:** Identify which model describes your situation and use the corresponding guidance when discussing expectations with churches.

About 95% of interim situations fall into one of these two categories. Understanding which model applies helps both parties negotiate realistic expectations.

**Critical Understanding:** In the Texas Baptist model, ALL interim pastors are part-time (approximately 20-24 hours per week). We intentionally avoid full-time interim arrangements because they can create unhealthy comfort levels that delay the search for a permanent pastor. Part-time interim service maintains healthy urgency while providing needed stability and guidance.

## Model 1: Standard Part-Time Interim Pastor (Most Common)

### For Churches - Best for:

- Churches in relatively good health
- Situations where the previous pastor left on good terms
- Churches with stable finances and active lay leadership
- Congregations ready to move forward without extensive healing work

### For Interim Pastors - This describes you if:

- You're retired or don't maintain other full-time employment
- You have flexibility in your weekday schedule
- You can be more available for weekday meetings and pastoral care
- You have time to invest in building relationships with the congregation

### Characteristics:

- The interim does not maintain other full-time employment
- More flexibility in scheduling weekday meetings and activities
- May have more availability for hospital visits or additional pastoral care
- Typically a retired pastor with time to invest in your church

**Time Commitment:** 20-24 hours per week

### Availability Pattern:

- Sundays on campus (12-hour day including travel)
- Flexible weekday scheduling for meetings and pastoral care

- Remote work for sermon prep and administrative tasks
- More responsive to weekday needs and requests

## **Model 2: Bi-Vocational Interim Pastor (About 1/3 of Cases)**

### **For Churches - Best for:**

- Churches that cannot afford standard interim compensation
- Situations where an experienced bi-vocational pastor is available
- Churches comfortable with more structured scheduling
- Any church needing interim services (health status doesn't determine this)

### **For Interim Pastors - This describes you if:**

- You maintain full-time employment elsewhere (teaching, chaplaincy, Texas Baptists staff, seminary faculty, another church, etc.)
- You need to schedule church work around your other job commitments
- You can commit to Sundays and flexible evening/weekend time
- You have strong time management skills to balance multiple commitments

### **Characteristics:**

- The interim maintains full-time employment elsewhere (teaching, chaplaincy, Texas Baptists staff position, seminary faculty, another ministry role, etc.)
- Weekday availability requires advance scheduling and coordination
- Email/phone responses may take 24-48 hours during work hours
- Evening or weekend meetings work best for transition team gatherings

**Time Commitment:** 20-24 hours per week (same as Model 1)

**Critical Understanding:** The time commitment remains the same. Sunday is still a 12-hour day. Travel time counts toward hours. The difference is NOT fewer hours but more constraints on WHEN those hours can be scheduled.

### **Availability Pattern:**

- Sundays on campus (12-hour day including travel)
- Weekday meetings by appointment, often evenings
- Remote work completed on interim's schedule around other job
- Emergency pastoral care still available 24/7
- Administrative tasks handled in evening/weekend blocks

### **What This Means for Your Church:**

- Plan transition team meetings for Sunday afternoons or evenings
- Don't expect immediate responses during standard work hours (9-5)

- Schedule hospital visits or counseling appointments in advance when possible
- The interim will be less visible on campus during the week
- Your church office and lay leaders handle more routine matters

## **What About Churches in Crisis?**

### **If your church is experiencing significant conflict, trauma, or considering replant:**

You still use a part-time interim pastor (Model 1 or 2), but the work may take longer (18-24 months instead of 12 months) to allow time for healing and deeper preparation. The scope of work expands, but the time commitment remains part-time (20-24 hours per week).

### **Why Part-Time Even in Crisis?**

- Maintains healthy urgency to find permanent pastoral leadership
- Prevents dependency on interim pastor
- Forces the church to develop lay leadership capacity
- Keeps the focus on preparation for the next permanent pastor
- More cost-effective for churches in financial difficulty

### **For Crisis Situations, Contact:**

- Dr. Aaron Summers at Texas Baptists (aaron.summers@txb.org, 214-828-5297)
- Your Director of Missions for specialized interim placement
- Texas Baptists may have additional funding support available for churches in crisis

## **Universal Principles Across All Models**

Regardless of which model fits your situation, these principles apply to every interim pastor arrangement:

### **The Candidacy Rule**

**Critical Boundary:** The interim pastor will NOT be considered as a candidate for the permanent pastor position while serving as interim.

**Exception:** If the interim pastor wishes to be considered for the permanent position, they must first resign from the interim role before being evaluated as a candidate.

**Why This Matters:** This boundary protects both the church and the interim pastor from conflicts of interest. It allows the interim to provide objective guidance throughout the transition process without personal investment in the outcome.

## Why Texas Baptists Uses Part-Time Interims Only

### Theological and Practical Reasons:

- **Prevents Dependency:** Full-time interim arrangements can create an unhealthy comfort level where the church delays seeking a permanent pastor
- **Maintains Urgency:** Part-time service keeps appropriate tension that motivates the search process
- **Develops Lay Leadership:** Forces the church to activate deacons and lay leaders rather than relying on one person
- **Cost-Effective:** More sustainable for most church budgets, especially churches already in financial stress
- **Protects the Interim:** Prevents the interim from becoming too embedded in church systems and relationships
- **Biblical Model:** Reflects the priesthood of all believers, not one-person dependency

### Even for Churches in Crisis:

Churches experiencing conflict, trauma, or considering replant still use part-time interim pastors. The work may take longer (18-24 months instead of 12), but the part-time structure remains. This forces the church to do the hard work of developing healthy systems rather than depending on one person to fix everything.

### Compensation Structure

**Formula:** The interim pastor's compensation is calculated as a percentage of the previous pastor's combined base salary and housing allowance.

### Standard Calculation for ALL Interims:

- 20-24 hours per week = 50% of previous pastor's (base salary + housing allowance)

**Why This Works:** This formula ensures fair compensation relative to your church's size and budget while providing consistency. The part-time structure (50% compensation for 50% time) maintains healthy boundaries and prevents dependency on the interim pastor.

### Travel Time Counts

**Important:** Travel time to and from your church counts toward the interim's working hours and is factored into compensation.

**Reality Check:** For most interims, Sunday is a 12-hour day when you include:

- Travel to church (often 1-2 hours)
- Preparation and setup
- Sunday School or Bible study

- Worship service and preaching
- Meetings with leaders or transition team
- Fellowship time with members
- Travel home (1-2 hours)

## **Sunday is the Anchor Day**

**Primary On-Campus Time:** Regardless of model, Sunday is when the interim pastor is present at your church.

### **Sunday typically includes:**

- Worship service preaching (3-4 hours with setup and fellowship)
- Sunday School or Bible study teaching (if applicable)
- Transition team meetings (2-3 hours, often scheduled Sunday afternoon)
- Brief meetings with staff or key leaders
- Connection time with congregation members

**Why Sundays Work Well:** Scheduling key meetings on Sundays eliminates conflicts with the interim's weekday commitments (whether that's another job, personal schedule, or other churches they may serve).

## **Flexible Schedule, Not Office Hours**

**Critical Understanding:** Churches should never expect 9-5 office availability from an interim pastor, regardless of model.

### **The Texas Baptist interim model is based on:**

- Deliverables (quality preaching, effective transition guidance, pastoral care coordination)
- NOT on office presence or set hours
- Flexible scheduling that respects both the interim's life and the church's needs
- Coordination rather than assumption of availability

## **Remote Work is Normal**

### **Expect the interim to complete these tasks remotely:**

- Sermon preparation and study (8-10 hours per week)
- Administrative tasks and email communication (3-4 hours per week)
- Reading and reviewing candidate materials (if involved in search)
- Preparation for transition team meetings
- Follow-up communications after Sunday

# For Transition Teams: Using This Guide to Find and Negotiate with an Interim

If you're a transition team trying to secure an interim pastor, here's how to use this guide effectively:

## Before Contacting Potential Interims:

1. **Identify which model you need:** Do you need someone with full flexibility (Model 1) or are you open to working with a bi-vocational interim (Model 2)?
2. **Calculate what you can offer:** Use the 50% formula to determine fair compensation based on your previous pastor's package
3. **Be realistic about expectations:** Review the responsibilities section and make sure you're not expecting full-time work for part-time pay
4. **Prepare your draft:** Use the template sections to create a draft job description before initial conversations

## During Initial Conversations:

1. **Be upfront about your situation:** Share your church's health status, any challenges, and what you need from an interim
2. **Ask about their model:** Are they retired (Model 1) or maintaining other employment (Model 2)? This affects scheduling expectations
3. **Discuss the 50% formula:** Show them your calculation and confirm it works for both parties
4. **Clarify the candidacy rule:** Make sure they understand they won't be considered for permanent position while serving as interim
5. **Walk through expectations:** Use the responsibilities section to ensure you're aligned

## What Makes a Good Match:

- The interim's availability aligns with your needs (especially important for Model 2)
- Their experience level fits your church's situation
- They understand and embrace the Texas Baptist interim model
- Both parties are comfortable with the 50% compensation structure
- Clear agreement on boundaries and expectations
- Willingness to put terms in writing

## Red Flags to Watch For:

- Interim wants to be considered for permanent position without resigning
- Unwilling to provide guidance to transition team
- Asking for significantly more than 50% compensation without justification
- Not willing to commit to the 20-24 hour per week standard
- Reluctant to put terms in writing



- Avoids discussing their other commitments (if bi-vocational)

### **When to Keep Looking:**

- The interim's availability doesn't match your needs
- They want terms that don't align with Texas Baptist standards
- Your gut tells you it's not a good fit
- They're unwilling to work within your church's specific constraints
- Red flags about their ability to maintain appropriate boundaries

### **Getting Help:**

Contact your Director of Missions or Dr. Aaron Summers at Texas Baptists ([aaron.summers@txb.org](mailto:aaron.summers@txb.org), 214-828-5297) for:

- Recommendations of qualified interim pastors
- Guidance on whether proposed terms are fair and standard
- Help negotiating difficult situations
- Verification that an interim is a good match for your church

## **For Interim Pastors: Using This Guide to Negotiate**

If you're an interim pastor considering a church or currently negotiating terms, here's how to use this guide effectively:

### **Before Meeting with the Church:**

1. **Identify your model:** Are you Model 1 (retired/flexible schedule) or Model 2 (maintaining other employment)?
2. **Calculate fair compensation:** Use the 50% formula with the previous pastor's base + housing to know what's reasonable
3. **Know your boundaries:** Be clear about your availability, especially if you're bi-vocational
4. **Review the template language:** Familiarize yourself with standard expectations so you can speak confidently

### **During Negotiations:**

1. **Be honest about your situation:** If you're bi-vocational, explain your constraints upfront. Churches appreciate clarity.
2. **Use this guide as reference:** "According to Texas Baptist guidelines..." gives you credibility
3. **Clarify expectations:** Walk through the responsibilities section and confirm what they expect
4. **Discuss the candidacy rule:** Make sure both parties understand you won't be considered for the permanent position while serving as interim

5. **Get it in writing:** Use the template sections to create a written covenant before you start

### **Red Flags to Watch For:**

- Churches expecting 9-5 availability from a part-time position
- Unrealistic workload expectations (doing everything a full-time pastor does)
- Compensation significantly below the 50% formula
- Unclear boundaries about your role in the search process
- Resistance to putting terms in writing
- Churches wanting you to "just fill in" without proper covenant

### **When to Walk Away:**

- The church won't commit to the candidacy boundary
- They expect full-time work for part-time pay
- They're not willing to work with your bi-vocational constraints (if Model 2)
- Red flags about church health that they won't acknowledge
- They refuse to put terms in writing

### **Getting Help:**

Contact Dr. Aaron Summers at Texas Baptists ([aaron.summers@txb.org](mailto:aaron.summers@txb.org), 214-828-5297) if:

- You're unsure whether terms being offered are fair
- The church is asking for something unusual
- You need guidance on a difficult negotiation
- You want to verify this is a good fit

## **Creating Your Job Description: Template Sections**

The following sections provide template language that both interim pastors and transition teams can use.

### **How to Use These Templates:**

**For Transition Teams:** Copy and customize these sections to create your job description. Fill in the blanks with your church-specific information.

**For Interim Pastors:** Use these templates to:

- Understand what churches typically include in job descriptions
- Prepare your own proposal or counter-proposal
- Identify areas where you need clarification or negotiation
- Ensure nothing important is left out of your agreement

**For Both:** These templates represent best practices and fair standards. If you're negotiating terms significantly different from these, contact your Director of Missions or Texas Baptists for guidance.

Choose the sections that match your model (1 or 2) and situation.

## **Section 1: Position Title and Summary (All Models)**

**Copy and customize this language:**

**Position Title:** Interim Pastor

**Position Summary:**

The Interim Pastor provides spiritual leadership, biblical preaching, and transition guidance during the period between permanent pastors. This part-time position focuses on maintaining ministry stability while guiding the church through a healthy pastoral transition process. The interim pastor works with the transition team and church leadership to prepare the congregation for calling their next permanent pastor.

**Critical Understanding:** The interim pastor will NOT be considered as a candidate for the permanent pastor position while serving as interim. If the interim pastor wishes to be considered for the permanent position, they must first resign from the interim role before being evaluated as a candidate. This boundary protects both the church and the interim pastor from conflicts of interest and allows the interim to provide objective guidance throughout the transition process.

## **Section 2: Position Type and Time Commitment**

**Choose the language for your model:**

**For Model 1 (Standard Part-Time)**

**Employment Status:** Part-time, temporary position

**Expected Duration:** 12 months (typical pastoral search timeline)

**Time Commitment:** Approximately 20-24 hours per week, structured as follows:

**On-Campus Time (Sundays):**

- Sunday morning worship service and preaching (3-4 hours)
- Sunday School or Bible study teaching (as needed)
- Transition team meetings and guidance (2-3 hours)
- Brief meetings with staff or key leaders after services
- Fellowship and connection with members

**Remote Work:**

- Sermon preparation and study (8-10 hours per week)
- Administrative tasks and communication (3-4 hours per week)
- Staff coordination and leadership meetings (2-3 hours per week)
- Pastoral care coordination and crisis response (as needed)

**Flexibility:** The role requires flexibility for weekday meetings (scheduled by appointment), emergency pastoral care, funerals, and special church events.

**For Model 2 (Bi-Vocational)**

**Employment Status:** Part-time, temporary position

**Expected Duration:** 12 months (typical pastoral search timeline)

**Time Commitment:** Approximately 20-24 hours per week

**Important Note:** The interim pastor maintains full-time employment elsewhere [specify if known: teaching, chaplaincy, etc.]. This affects scheduling but not the quality or scope of ministry. The time commitment remains the same as a standard interim pastor, but weekday availability requires advance coordination.

**On-Campus Time (Sundays):**

- Sunday morning worship service and preaching (3-4 hours)
- Sunday School or Bible study teaching (as needed)
- Transition team meetings and guidance (2-3 hours, scheduled Sunday afternoons)
- Brief meetings with staff or key leaders after services
- Fellowship and connection with members

**Remote Work (Completed on Interim's Schedule):**

- Sermon preparation and study (8-10 hours per week)
- Administrative tasks and communication (3-4 hours per week)
- Staff coordination and leadership meetings (2-3 hours per week, often evenings)
- Pastoral care coordination and crisis response (as needed)

**Scheduling Considerations:**

- Weekday meetings scheduled by appointment around the interim's full-time work schedule
- Transition team meetings planned for Sunday afternoons or weekday evenings
- Email responses typically within 24-48 hours (may be delayed during interim's work hours)
- Emergency pastoral care remains available 24/7

- Hospital visits and counseling appointments scheduled in advance when possible

### **What This Means for [Church Name]:**

- Plan key meetings for Sundays or weekday evenings
- Church office and lay leaders handle routine weekday matters
- Less weekday campus visibility (this is normal and expected)
- Administrative tasks completed on interim's flexible schedule

## **Section 3: Primary Responsibilities**

**All models share these core responsibilities (adjust percentages based on your model):**

### **1. Worship and Preaching (40% of time for Both Models, 30% for intensive crisis situations)**

- Prepare and deliver biblical, Christ-centered messages each Sunday
- Plan worship services in coordination with worship leader or music minister
- Maintain theological consistency with the church's statement of faith
- Provide preaching that encourages, teaches, and prepares the congregation for transition
- Handle special services (Christmas, Easter, etc.) during the interim period

### **2. Transition Leadership and Guidance (25% of time for Both Models, 35% for intensive crisis situations)**

- Guide the transition team through the 12-step pastoral transition process
- Provide objective counsel on realistic pastoral expectations
- Help the church assess identity, mission, and future direction
- Assist in developing church profile and pastor profile documents
- Offer insights on candidate evaluation from a pastoral perspective
- Prepare the congregation emotionally and spiritually for new leadership

### **3. Administrative Leadership (15% of time for Both Models, 20% for intensive crisis situations)**

- Attend and provide guidance at key leadership meetings (deacons, church council, staff)
- Coordinate with church staff on operational matters
- Provide oversight and support to ministry staff
- Make routine decisions necessary for church operations
- Communicate regularly with church leadership about transition progress

### **4. Pastoral Care Coordination (15% of time for Both Models, 10% for intensive crisis situations)**

- Respond to emergency pastoral care needs (hospitalizations, deaths, crises)
- Coordinate ongoing pastoral care through deacons, staff, and lay caregivers

- Conduct funerals and memorial services as needed
- Provide crisis counseling and spiritual guidance in urgent situations
- Ensure the congregation's spiritual and emotional needs are met during transition

**Note:** The interim pastor coordinates care systems but does not personally handle all pastoral care. Deacons, staff, and lay leaders share this responsibility.

## **5. Communication and Congregation Care (5% of time)**

- Provide regular updates to the congregation about the transition process
- Maintain appropriate pastoral presence and visibility
- Build trust and relationships with members
- Address concerns or anxieties about the transition
- Model confidence in God's provision and timing

## **Section 4: Required Qualifications**

**Use this language for all models:**

### **Character and Calling:**

- Meets biblical qualifications for pastoral ministry (1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9)
- Demonstrates spiritual maturity and personal integrity
- Shows evidence of God's calling to interim ministry
- Maintains appropriate boundaries and objectivity

### **Education and Experience:**

- Ordained or licensed for ministry (or equivalent denominational credential)
- Seminary degree or equivalent theological training preferred
- Minimum 10 years of pastoral ministry experience
- Experience with church transitions, interim ministry, or church consulting preferred
- Understanding of Baptist polity and church governance

### **Skills and Abilities:**

- Strong biblical preaching and teaching
- Leadership and organizational skills
- Ability to navigate change and conflict with wisdom
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Emotional intelligence and sensitivity to congregational dynamics
- Ability to provide objective counsel without personal agenda
- Basic technology proficiency (email, video calls, church management software)

[For Model 2, add:]

- Excellent time management and organizational skills
- Ability to maintain multiple professional commitments effectively
- Clear communication about availability and scheduling

## **Section 5: Compensation Package**

### **Step 1: Calculate Your Church's Base Amount**

Previous Pastor's Base Salary: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Previous Pastor's Housing Allowance: \$\_\_\_\_\_

**Total Compensation Base:** \$\_\_\_\_\_

### **Step 2: Apply the Formula for Your Model**

#### **For Both Models (Part-Time, 20-24 hours/week):**

Interim Pastor Annual Compensation = 50% of Total Compensation Base

Annual Amount: \$\_\_\_\_\_ (Total Base  $\times$  0.50)

Monthly Amount: \$\_\_\_\_\_ (Annual  $\div$  12)

### **Step 3: Additional Compensation Components**

**Mileage Reimbursement:** IRS standard rate for all church-related travel beyond normal commute

**Expense Reimbursement:** Reasonable ministry expenses (books, resources, meals with leaders, etc.)

#### **Benefits (Negotiate Based on Church Capacity):**

- Health insurance contribution (if interim is not covered elsewhere)
- Retirement plan contribution (if interim participates in denominational plan)
- Vacation time: 2-3 weeks during 12-month service period
- Study leave: 1 week for sermon preparation and renewal

#### **Compensation Notes:**

- Payment schedule: Monthly (recommended for consistency)
- If service extends beyond 12 months, compensation continues at the same monthly rate
- Final payment includes prorated amounts for unused vacation time
- Housing allowance can be designated for tax purposes if interim pastor qualifies

## **Section 6: Work Schedule and Boundaries**

**Important Note for All Models:** The interim pastor works on a flexible schedule, not traditional office hours. Churches should not expect daily office presence or 9-5 availability. The interim model is based on deliverables and outcomes, not office hours.

**Choose language based on your model:**

### **For Model 1 (Standard Part-Time)**

**Expected Availability:**

**Sunday Commitment:**

- Present for all Sunday morning services unless on approved vacation or study leave
- Available for meetings and member connections after services

**Weekday Availability:**

- Available by email within 24-48 hours for non-emergency matters
- Available by phone for genuine emergencies
- Weekday meetings scheduled by appointment around the interim's availability
- Administrative and preparation work completed on the interim's flexible schedule

**Off Days:**

- One full day off per week [specify day if important to your church]
- Protected family time and personal boundaries
- Vacation and study leave honored without interruption

**Emergency Response:**

**Emergency Defined:** Death, hospitalization, or crisis requiring immediate pastoral attention

**Emergency Availability:** Interim pastor responds to genuine emergencies 24/7

**Non-Emergency Matters:** Handled through church office during business hours or scheduled appointments

### **For Model 2 (Bi-Vocational)**

**Expected Availability:**

**Sunday Commitment:**

- Present for all Sunday morning services unless on approved vacation or study leave



- Available for meetings after services (transition team meetings scheduled Sunday afternoons)

### **Weekday Availability:**

- Available by email within 24-48 hours for non-emergency matters (responses may be delayed during interim's work hours, typically 8am-5pm weekdays)
- Available by phone for genuine emergencies at any time
- Weekday meetings scheduled by appointment, typically evenings or flexible days
- Administrative and preparation work completed evenings/weekends on interim's schedule

### **What to Expect:**

- Less immediate response to routine emails during standard work hours
- Meetings planned with advance notice to coordinate schedules
- Sunday afternoon or weekday evening gatherings work best
- Hospital visits and counseling by appointment when possible
- Church office and lay leaders handle routine weekday needs

### **Off Days:**

- One full day off per week [specify if important]
- Protected family time and personal boundaries
- Vacation and study leave honored without interruption

### **Emergency Response:**

**Emergency Defined:** Death, hospitalization, or crisis requiring immediate pastoral attention

**Emergency Availability:** Interim pastor responds to genuine emergencies 24/7, regardless of work schedule

**Non-Emergency Matters:** Handled through church office or scheduled appointments. The interim will respond within 24-48 hours.

**Important Reminder:** The interim's other employment does not diminish their commitment to your church. The 20-24 hours per week remains the same. Scheduling simply requires more coordination.

## **Five Step Process for Developing the Interim Covenant**

### **Step 1: Share the Church Story**

Begin by naming the realities on the ground. The transition team should give the interim an honest picture of the church's health, recent history, conflict level, and current emotions. The interim should share which model describes his situation and availability. This step puts all expectations and fears on the table before terms are discussed.

### **Step 2: Clarify Expectations and Boundaries**

Walk through the core areas of the interim role: preaching, transition leadership, administrative guidance, pastoral care coordination, communication rhythms, and weekly availability. Confirm which responsibilities are fixed and which ones need negotiation. Ensure that everyone understands the candidacy rule and the limits of a part time role.

### **Step 3: Match Needs with the Two Models**

Confirm whether the church needs a standard interim or a bi vocational interim. Align the church's scheduling needs with the interim's availability pattern. This step prevents false assumptions about weekday presence, response times, and meeting schedules.

### **Step 4: Review the Compensation Formula and Logistics**

Use the fifty percent compensation formula to calculate the interim's monthly amount. Confirm travel reimbursement, vacation time, study leave, and expectations around special services. Review how sermon preparation, remote work, and pastoral care coordination fit within the twenty to twenty four hour weekly structure.

### **Step 5: Finalize the Written Covenant**

Place all agreed upon terms in writing. Include position summary, responsibilities, time commitment, boundaries, compensation, communication expectations, evaluation plans, and the candidacy rule. Both the interim and the transition team should review the covenant carefully before approval by the appropriate church body. Once accepted, the covenant becomes the guiding document for the entire transition.