

INTERIM (SUPPLY) PASTORS AND SPECIALIZED TRANSITIONAL MINISTERS

There are two kinds of interim ministry that fit most situations of congregations in transition:

1. Interim pastors: These are seasoned (often retired) pastors who have experience and skills in ministry. Most of these pastors have not been trained for transitional ministry, and they tend to serve for shorter amounts of time than STMs (2-10 months). Thrive has a small list of such pastors, people who have asked us to provide their names to churches looking for temporary pastors to support them while they search for their next pastors.
2. Specialized Transitional Ministers (STMs)*: These pastors are endorsed by Thrive for specialized transitional ministry in the CRCNA. They provide strategic assistance when churches need help with both regular pastoral duties and the processing of key system dynamics in preparation for calling a new pastor. Endorsement includes, among other things, an interview process, a formal psychological assessment, and specialized training. Full time STMs tend to serve congregations from 9-24 months, while arrangements can be made for part time work and for STMs to serve as coaches to churches in transition. Thrive work with the STMs and congregations by making connections, supplying sample contracts, etc.

In each of these two cases, Thrive is not responsible for the search/interview/negotiation process, but is available to assist pastors and congregations find one another.

***Note:** The name “specialized transitional minister” has been introduced to identify those who are trained and endorsed for this work. The generic use of the term “interim minister” has contributed to a situation in which congregations are not always aware of the level of training or expertise that a minister does or does not bring to the transitional situation facing a congregation.