

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT SPECIALIZED INTERIM MINISTRY

1. What is the process for assigning a Specialized Transitional Minister?

STMs are not normally assigned. Options for placement of an STM include:

- √ Occasionally, but very rarely, a church will ask the staff of Pastor Church Resources (PCR) to provide an STM. If the STM agrees then the church and the STM work out the details.
- √ Sometimes an STM becomes aware of the need for an STM and contacts the church directly.
- √ Normally PCR is asked by the church (council president, search committee chairman, etc.) for assistance in finding an STM. PCR staff then looks at availability and compatibility, and gives the church the names and contact information of possible STMs. The church takes it from this point as it wishes.

The process for finding an STM resembles the process for calling a pastor. This often includes vetting, reference checking, interviews and negotiation of the contract before the STM is hired.

2. What support does the Pastor Church Resources office provide?

- √ To the STM:
 - Making churches aware of availability
 - Providing information (such as sample contracts), encouragement and a place to talk about their unique situation
 - Offering bridging funds between assignments based on need
 - Hosting an annual gathering of endorsed STMs, underwritten by PCR
- √ To the churches:
 - Assisting them in discerning what kind of interim pastor is needed
 - Providing the names and contact information of STMs
 - Providing information (such as sample contracts, interview questions) and answering questions
 - Granting mini-grant support, if needed, when hiring an endorsed STM

3. Are STM assignments generally full-time or part-time?

Most often STMs are full-time, but part-time is possible. The specifics of how this plays out vary greatly. The church and STM contract for these specifics.

4. How is a salary determined?

PCR advises churches to use, as a starting point, the greater of the salary of the pastor that just left or the average for the region as defined by the pastor compensation survey. The salary is agreed upon by the church and the STM. Some STMs also include an extra month as a transitional month – to provide some bridging time between assignments.

5. What responsibilities does a church have for housing and insurance?

- √ Housing: this is part of the negotiation process. Suitable housing for the STM (and spouse) is the responsibility of the church. Some STMs commute and housing is not needed.
- √ Insurance: the church is responsible for insurances, pension and social security, as needed by the STM, and agreed upon by the church and the STM. The needs of an STM who is retired are different than those of one who is not.

6. What have current STMs done to maintain some home base?

Most continue to maintain a home base which they own. Sometimes the spouse remains living there. The role of the spouse's "involvement" with the church varies from very little to very much. This should be talked about during the interview process with an understanding from the beginning. We do have an example of an STM who divested himself of most of his possessions and "hit the road" for several assignments as a way of expanding their experiences.

7. Do STMs usually take some break between assignments or go from one to the next?

PCR encourages a short break (a minimum of 2 weeks), but this is the decision of the STM. Most STMs take a break. See comment on compensation.

8. What generally is the time frame between an assignment and arriving at the church?

This is totally dependent on the needs of the church and the availability of the STM. Sometimes the STM arrives in a week or two, sometimes in a month or two. The arrival time is negotiated and determined by the church and STM.