

## Disciples Interims “Interim Ministry Basics” Class Syllabus



**Dates:** Mondays, April 25 through June 15, 2022 (will not meet on May 30, Memorial Day), via Zoom – 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM Central Standard Time. Cost for the course is \$450.

**Application Deadline:** Monday, March 28, 2022

**Contact:** For application and other questions - Rev. Becky Kirby, Disciples Interims Administrator – [disciplesinterims@gmail.com](mailto:disciplesinterims@gmail.com)

### **Disciples Interims (formerly ADIIM) - Statement of Purpose:**

- (a) provide training for interim ministers and share other sources of training,
- (b) offer ongoing collegial and financial support to interims, and
- (c) make connections with individuals, congregations, Regions, and other parts of the church to help in transitions and create expanding partnerships.

### ***TRAINING – SUPPORT – CONNECTIONS***

**Description** – This training is an introductory training for Disciples Interims ministers. It will be engaging and interactive. There will be weekly reading assignments and some topics/questions to ponder. There will be opportunities to reflect on one’s giftedness for interim ministry and capacity to serve. Growing edges will also be addressed.

**Training Goals** – We will introduce the basics of Interim Ministry to determine if this is an area of ministry to pursue. This training will help a minister get started in this specialized field of service. There will be concepts, theories, and perspectives on Interim Ministry as well as practical guides for getting started, gathering partners, setting goals, and doing the work of the interim time.

**Outcomes** – The minister will have a sense of the essential work that can be done in the interim time: getting acquainted, forming a Transition Team, setting goals, addressing the Five Focus Points, and helping the congregation prepare for ministry with the next settled pastor.

**Core Text** – *Interim Ministry in Action: A Handbook for Churches in Transition* by Norman B. Bendroth, 2018. Students will purchase this before the training starts. It is available through Amazon at: <https://amzn.to/2VxmWxD>

**Curriculum Team and Lead Staff** for the training course – Will Jewsbury, Becky Kirby, and Scott Woolridge.

**Training Dynamics** – We will offer our training online via Zoom. There will be short reading assignments each week. There will be breakout groups with engaging questions. The course is interactive, thoughtful, and challenging. We have developed an assessment tool to help the student discern their strengths and growing edges. This tool can be used in communication with Regional church staff and with search committees in the local congregation.

**Schedule** – Mondays, April 25 through June 13, 2022 (we will not meet on May 30, Memorial Day) -- We will meet weekly in two-hour Zoom sessions, 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM Central Standard Time. One Unit of study per week will be addressed:

**Unit 1 (April 25) -- What is the purpose of interim ministry?** What does it look like today? What is our context in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The world is changing, the church is changing. Churches need specialized leadership in these transition times: interim ministers.

**Unit 2 (May 2) -- Interim ministry basics** – a roadmap: getting acquainted, forming a transition team, setting goals, doing the work on the interim time tailored to the congregation, and sharing information with the search committee.

**Unit 3 (May 9) – “Five Focus Points”** to guide the congregation during the interim time: heritage, leadership, mission, connections, future.

**Unit 4 (May 16) – Visioning** -- Helping the congregation understand its context and calling: in light of who we are and who is our neighbor, what is God calling us to do?

**Unit 5 (May 23) – Navigating the System of the Local Congregation** through the lens of family systems theory, understanding the dynamics of church life, and patterns of behavior--including relationships, decision-making, and past trauma.

**Unit 6 (June 6) – Change Theory, Conflict Transformation and My Role** as an Interim Minister – homeostasis, resistance, valuing change, adaptive change; learning how to assess conflict and to process it in the congregation.

**Unit 7 (June 13) – Constant Retooling** – Learning tools and techniques in interim ministry - finding the resources that help in your local context: where to find them, when to use them. Assessing our growing edges as interim ministers and committing to being life-long learners in our field of ministry.

## Homework Assignments

**Before Unit 1 (April 25)** – Read Introduction and Chapter One (pp. 1-33) of Interim Ministry in Action: A Handbook for Churches in Transition by Norman Bendroth.

For our discussion:

1. The world is changing. The church is changing. What do you see?
2. How is interim ministry different from settled ministry?

**Before Unit 2 (May 2)** -- Complete the Interim Minister Assessment Tool and be ready to talk in small groups about your results. Read Chapter Two (pp. 35-50) in Interim Ministry in Action by Bendroth.

**Before Unit 3 (May 9)** – Read Chapter Five (pp. 81-99) in Interim Ministry in Action by Bendroth. Also, write thoughts in response to questions on Unit 3 Handouts #2-6.

**Before Unit 4 (May 16)** – Read Chapter Three (pp. 51-65) Interim Ministry in Action by Bendroth.

**Before Unit 5 (May 23)** – Read Unit 5 and Review Handout 1: Family Systems Theory Introduction. Something to ponder: how did you/will you get acquainted with the congregation you serve? What is important to know?

**Before Unit 6 (June 6)** – Change: Read Chapter Six (pp.101-108) and Chapter Eight (pp. 121-133) of Interim Ministry in Action by Bendroth. Conflict: Review Handout: “Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love” from Lombard Mennonite Peace Center.

**Before Unit 7 (June 13)** – Read Chapter 7 (pp. 109-120) of Interim Ministry in Action by Bendroth. Read through the Handouts for Unit 7 and note your questions and comments. Revisit your Assessment Tool results and be prepared to comment on your insights.



### Our Covenantal Relationship Disciples Interims and Interim Ministry Training Student

**Disciples Interims** is an organization designed for, and by, Interim Ministers. Our purpose is to:  
(a) provide training for interim ministers and share other sources of training, (b) offer ongoing

collegial and financial support to interims, and (c) make connections with individuals, congregations, regions, and other parts of the church to help in transitions and create expanding partnerships.

### **TRAINING – SUPPORT – CONNECTIONS**

Through **Interim Ministry Training**, our desire is to give you the basics to determine if Interim Ministry is an area in which you may be interested, or if you have already decided it is, to help you get started in this specialized field. We enter into a covenantal relationship with our students which encompasses our guiding purpose.

#### **Expectations**

1. **Training** – Teachers and students are expected to follow the *Guidelines for Respectful Communications* (Eric Law, Kaleidoscope Institute, [www.kscopeinstitute.org](http://www.kscopeinstitute.org)):

**R** = take RESPONSIBILITY for what you say and feel without blaming others.

**E** = use EMPATHETIC listening.

**S** = be SENSITIVE to differences in communication styles.

**P** = PONDER what you hear and feel before you speak.

**E** = EXAMINE your own assumptions and perceptions.

**C** = keep CONFIDENTIALITY.

**T** = TRUST ambiguity because we are *not* here to debate who is right or wrong.

**The student is expected** to complete the prescribed program of study: attend all online classes from a suitable setting, complete assignments in the time frame requested, and prepare for the next class. Classroom attendance requires full attention and active participation in discussions and break-out groups.

**The teacher is expected** to be well-prepared, bringing the gifts of experience and knowledge and insight, and to be a good listener and responsive to students. The teacher is expected to be available between training sessions.

2. **Support** – Disciples Interims will foster ongoing connections with Interim Ministers in a variety of ways including collegial small groups.
3. **Connections** – Disciples Interims, through Disciples Home Missions, will foster connections via networks of Interim Ministers, potential Interim Ministers, and Regional church Staff.