

Vision for Equipping Interim Pastors in South Carolina

Strengthening hope and mission during the interim season of a congregation

Why Do We Need to Train Interim Pastors?

1. The gospel impact of many of our SCBaptist congregations is rapidly diminishing -decreasing baptisms, declining missions giving, and fewer members serving on mission.
2. We are experiencing an increasing number of SCBaptist churches without pastors due to retirement, burn-out, disqualification, decreasing salary packages, unhealthy church cultures, and other factors.
3. We have a national pastoral shortage with fewer pastoral candidates available to serve, thus lengthening the tenure of interim pastors.

These culminating needs create a unique opportunity for leaders to prepare congregations for a hopeful future. By equipping interim pastors to shepherd the flock and prepare the church for a stronger mission, we trust God will bring renewal and increasing gospel impact to reach every life in South Carolina and beyond with the good news of Jesus Christ.

We believe the interim pastor is a strategic and pivotal leadership role for the future of our congregations. The South Carolina Baptist Convention is committed to offering two levels of training to our associational partners and pastors seeking to serve churches during pastoral transitions:

- **Interim Shepherd Training** (Entry-level) - One-day intensive for any current or future interim pastor. Key focus: Shepherding congregations as an interim pastor toward renewed faithfulness as they prepare for their next pastor.
 - Biblical foundation for shepherding
 - Clarifying the current reality of the congregation and community
 - Reestablishing the mission of the Church
 - Investing in church leaders and members
 - Resourcing needs specific to the interim period of ministry
- **Renewal Practitioner Lab** (Specialized) – Training to equip practitioners serving in cooperation with a local association to help strengthen the mission of the church. Those trained will help the church assess their current reality, make recommendations for a hopeful future, and guide them through their first steps of implementation.
 - Exploration – What are the options?
 - Examination – What is the reality?
 - Recommendation – What is God leading us to do next?
 - Presentation/Affirmation – What is our first step of faith?
 - Implementation/Multiplication – What steps will we take to renew our mission?

FAQs

Q: Who should we contact if our church needs an interim pastor?

A: Your first contact should be your local association leadership. Secondly, you can email your request and contact information to hopeforchurches@scbaptist.org. (Please provide the name of the church, location, and your best contact information.)

Q: What training should I take if I'm retiring as a pastor and would like to continue in ministry as an interim pastor?

A: We recommend anyone desiring to serve as an interim pastor in SC complete the Interim Shepherd training.

Q: What options do I have to become certified as a Transitional Pastor in SC?

A: The Transitional Pastor training has been beneficial to our churches for many years, but based on the current needs of our SCBaptist churches, we feel it is best to equip practitioners to help strengthen the mission and vitality of our churches through the Renewal Practitioner Lab in collaboration with a local association.

Q: How is Interim Shepherd training different than Transitional Pastor training?

A: Interim Shepherd training equips the interim pastor to shepherd a congregation in a few strategic areas of ministry without the weight of also having to guide a church through a consultation process. Should a congregation be in a declining season of mission and need a specialized consultation, the interim and congregation can partner with trained practitioners in their local association or state convention. Together, the interim shepherd and the renewal practitioner can guide a church toward a hopeful future implementing a renewed mission in their community.

Q: Can I complete both Interim Shepherd and Renewal Practitioner Lab?

A: Absolutely! The need is tremendous for interim pastors seeking to shepherd churches toward hopeful futures through specialized training. We do encourage all interim pastors to collaborate with their local associational leadership before leading a congregation through any intentional process.

Q: Who would be an ideal candidate for someone attending the Renewal Practitioner Lab?

A: This training is best suited for someone 1) desiring a better understanding of the process and resources available for declining churches; 2) seeking to serve on an associational revitalization team with the expectation of consulting with a congregation; 3) seeking to serve in a capacity similar to a Transitional Pastor (both pastor and consultant) as they serve a congregation.



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SCBaptist Shepherd Team, Church Strategies Group
Hopeforchurches.org