



## Intentional Interim Training Offered

So that the time of transition happens with intentionality and care, interim pastors in the Rocky Mountain Synod must receive special training.

While this training is framed around the context of interim ministry, it is also helpful for pastors in any context. In fact, many pastors say, "I wish I knew this before now, as it applies to every congregation."

We are pleased to offer two phases of the training series in Denver at Bethany Lutheran Church, June 1-5, 2015, and January 18-22, 2016. (An additional phase is independently completed.) The cost of the training is \$1200. Payment may be submitted partially in 2015 and partially in 2016 if that is helpful for budgeting.

Download the flyer with more information at [rmselca.org](http://rmselca.org). Register online by April 30. Space is limited, so register early to reserve a space. Cost does not include travel or lodging. It does include many of the meals. Questions? Contact Kent Mueller at [kmueller@rmselca.org](mailto:kmueller@rmselca.org).

This is a training provided by the National Association of Lutheran Interim Pastors (NALIP).

## Who works with transitions and calls?

Accompanying congregations in the transition and call process when there is a pastoral vacancy is a priority of the RMS Office of the Bishop. Currently 45 congregations of our 164 are somewhere in the transition process. Four staff persons are involved in accompanying congregations in this process:

**Bishop Jim Gonia** reads Rostered Leader Profiles, interviews all prospective candidates from outside the RMS, and helps match up candidates with congregations.

**The Rev. Sarah Moening** interviews candidates, meets with Congregation Councils and Call Committees, matches up candidates with congregations, and orchestrates the process.

**Janice Ladd-Horkey** administrates the process and takes care of the paperwork and details.

**The Rev. Kent Mueller** fields calls from candidates and congregations and supports tracking the process in each congregation. Contact him at [kmueller@rmselca.org](mailto:kmueller@rmselca.org) or 303-777-6700.

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## My pastor is leaving. What's next?

*An intentional time of discernment starts the transition process*

The transition time in a congregation after a pastor has taken a new call or retires is a unique time of grief and expectation. It can happen well, or it can be a time of unrest.

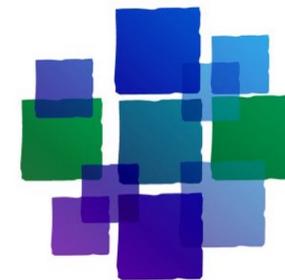
In consultation with the Office of the Bishop, a process unfolds that begins with the placement of an intentional interim pastor and the forming of a Transition Team. The interim pastor and Transition Team shepherds the congregation through a time of discovery on these key themes:

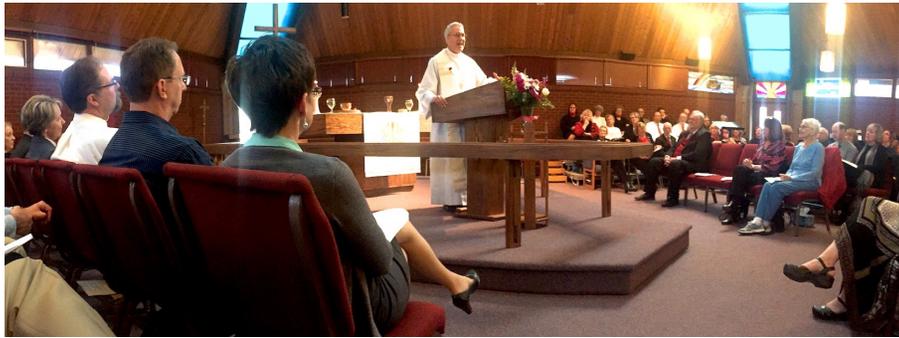
- Coming to terms with the congregation's history
- Discovering a new identity
- Managing shifts in leadership
- Strengthening the congregation's sense of being the Church together
- Committing to our new future and a new leadership

After the Transition Team submits a report to the congregation council, a Call Committee is formed which prepares the *Mission Site Profile* (MSP). This is a standard form used throughout the ELCA to present the congregation's mission, vision, and needs. When the MSP is complete the Office of the Bishop provides names of candidates who are thought to be a "good match" based upon their *Rostered Leader Profile* (RLP). The Office of the Bishop has vetted all candidates available for call in the Rocky Mountain Synod.

The Call Committee interviews the initial candidates, usually by Skype video calls, and narrows down the list to interview final candidates in person. Once the Call Committee makes a selection, the candidate is recommended to Council. The congregation then votes on the candidate.

If the congregation votes "no" then the Office of the Bishop presents a new slate of candidates. If "yes," a call is extended and the candidate has the opportunity to accept the call or to discern that this is not the right call for him or her. If accepted, the new pastor is installed.





## Holy Closure

*Lutheran Church of the Resurrection in Lakewood, CO, ended its ministry in February*

Through tears and laughter, the people of Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Lakewood, CO, gathered together with rostered leaders and friends on February 15 to give thanks for their ministry in a liturgy of Holy Closure, ending the congregation's ministry. Bishop Gonja, however, proclaimed it a service of "Holy Continuity" in the cycle of life and death and life again.

As followers of Jesus Christ, death is nothing for us to fear. We know that just as a seed must die in order to bear much fruit, so death and change can lead to abundant life. This can be just as true for the life of a congregation as it is for individuals.

That is not to minimize, however, the sadness and grief that we as the Rocky Mountain Synod experience as we, together, have accompanied the faithful members of Resurrection.

Interim Pastor Lyn Crase, along with Council President Ted Michelsen and Treasurer Suzanne Rousso gave leadership and direction to the closing process, which was difficult and complex on many levels.

After the Holy Closure the font, altar table, pulpit, and organ have been moved to the Rocky Mountain Synod Lutheran Center and found a new home. They fit in the space perfectly, and they are a beautiful legacy to the congregation's 57 years of ministry. Other major items were donated to a dozen congregations or organizations.

Holy Closure defines the process by which the congregation discerned they were no longer viable, even while the members continued with vitality and energy. With the selling of their building, the congregation closed with generous assets that were shared with the ELCA, the Rocky Mountain Synod, other synod ministries, and other community ministries, to bring "Resurrection" life to others. Gifts were given to:

ELCA Churchwide Ministries	\$57,240
Campaign for the ELCA	\$28,620
Mission Congregations in the RMS	\$286,195
13 RMS and Community Ministries	\$217,530

## Roster Changes

### JANUARY 2015

**The Rev. Eugene Zeller** from On Leave From Call to Interim Pastor Ascension Lutheran Church, Ogden, UT 1/1/2015

**The Rev. Gordon Sandquist** from Central States Synod to Pastor Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit, Centennial, CO 1/1/2015

**The Rev. Daniel Barwinski** from Pastor Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, LaSalle, CO to Retired 1/1/2015

**The Rev. Walter Schultheiss** deceased 1/5/2015

**The Rev. Tom Shelly** from Pastor Christ Lutheran Church, Highlands Ranch, CO to Pastor disability 1/18/2015

**The Rev. Dalene Rogers** from Peace Lutheran Church, Las Cruces, NM to Pastor (UCC) Interim Peace Lutheran Church, El Paso, TX 1/18/2015

**The Rev. Arthur Becker** deceased 1/23/2015

**The Rev. Shauna Hannan** from Florida-Bahamas Synod to Professor of Biblical Preaching, PLTS 1/30/2015

**Erin Power** from Candidacy to Diaconal Minister Rocky Mountain Synod 1/31/2015

### FEBRUARY 2015

**The Rev. Don Marxhausen** from Pastor Zion Lutheran Church, Idaho Springs, CO to Retired 2/1/2015

**The Rev. Judith Wascher** Pastor Interim Zion Lutheran Church, Limon, CO 2/1/2015

**The Rev. Dave Barber** Pastor Interim Bethel Lutheran Church, Windsor, CO 2/1/2015

**The Rev. Marvin Huth** Pastor retired from Southwestern Texas Synod to Rocky Mountain Synod 2/12/2015

**Lutheran Church of the Resurrection** last Sunday. Holy Closure 2/15/2015

**The Rev. Phil Wangberg** from Pastor All Saints Lutheran Church, Albuquerque, NM to disability 2/15/2015

## Financial Report

Our fiscal year ended on January 31, 2015. The closing figures show total income of \$2,740,382 and expenses of \$2,756,086. Thus, for the year we showed a deficit of \$15,704. We are grateful for the generous partnership with our congregations, which provided 99% of expenses! Thank you!



## Assembly is May 1-3

The registration deadline is March 27, but late registrations are accepted, although hotel space cannot be guaranteed after the deadline. Note that assembly registration and hotel reservations are separate steps. The assembly is in Salt Lake City, May 1-3.

A video contest for the Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly under the theme, "Our Life Together," invites creative entries!

The videos are to use an exact script online at [rmselca.org](http://rmselca.org). The script emphasizes how we are "better together" when we are connected with one another. The challenge is to make the script come alive! Video entries are to be uploaded to YouTube, and a link provided to Kent Mueller by April 15. Send your link to [kmueller@rmselca.org](mailto:kmueller@rmselca.org).

Assembly info is online at [rmselca.org](http://rmselca.org).



The Office of the Bishop of the Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA, is located on the campus of the new RMS Lutheran Center, 7375 Samuel Drive, Denver, CO 80221. General email is [rmsynod@rmselca.org](mailto:rmsynod@rmselca.org). Website is [rmselca.org](http://rmselca.org). Facebook is [facebook.com/rmselca](https://www.facebook.com/rmselca). An electronic .pdf of this LANDSCAPE newsletter is posted at [rmselca.org/synod/newsletters](http://rmselca.org/synod/newsletters).