

## FAQ

### **The Interim Ministry Network (IMN) & Effective Transitional Leadership (ETL) Training**

#### **What is the Interim Ministry Network (IMN)?**

Organized in 1980 as non-profit educational organization, the Interim Ministry Network (IMN) was an outgrowth of the work of Loren Mead and Roy Oswald of The Alban Institute. Today it is an international professional association of over 850 members, including interim ministers, settled clergy, consultants, denominational staff, and lay leaders serving congregations and faith-based organizations. Members come from a wide variety of Christian denominations as well as movements within Judaism. While the majority of members are U.S. residents, there is also a sizeable contingent from Canada, with others drawn from Europe, Australia, and Africa.

IMN pursues its mission to strengthen the spiritual and organizational health of faith communities by equipping and supporting those who lead during times of transition through:

- A core training program, the Fundamental of Transitional Ministry: The Work of the Leader and The Work of the Congregation, reaching 300 individuals annually
- An education-focused annual conference
- A variety of educational workshops, courses, and webinars
- Weekly communications and social media presence
- Networking and support groups
- Resources available through its website: <https://imnedu.org/>
- Denominational transitional leadership groups
- Additional training such as the Effective Transitional Leadership (ETL) seminar

#### **What is Transitional Leadership?**

Transitional leadership recognizes that 1) change happens whether we like it or not, 2) transition is the process by which a congregation will deal with change, and 3) on the other side of transition is the new shape – the transformation – that is the result of coming to grips with change. Fundamental to transitional leadership is the belief that there is constructive power in transitional moments when much can be accomplished and when there is a lot on the line.

For over 40 years, IMN has trained those who serve faith communities during times of change in how to manage and capitalize on these opportune times. The time between clergy leaders has been a particular focus because of the acknowledged peril faced by congregations arising from the uncertainty and disruption of this particular moment. Intentional interims are transitional leaders who serve during these times to help congregations discern their futures, choose new clergy leaders, and have the best start to their next chapter together. More than mere placeholders, they are equipped with the knowledge, understanding, and skills necessary to help guide the congregation through transition to faithful transformations.

Yet transitional moments beyond a change in clergy can be at least equally as disruptive and opportune as the time between clergy leaders. Membership and attendance changes, financial stresses and budgetary collapse, traumatic events, explosive conflict, consideration of merger or closure, to name a few. Today – in addition to intentional interims – consultants, coaches, settled clergy, lay persons and others are applying their transitional leadership training to these situations of change to help congregations become their best selves in the face of them.

### **Why participate in Effective Transitional Leadership (ETL) training?**

IMN's Effective Transitional Leadership course is an introduction to what IMN offers in its more extensive Fundamentals of Transitional Ministry (FTM) training. While change has always been a reality for faith communities, the pace and magnitude of change that they are facing today is unprecedented. More things are creating substantial disruption and discontinuity in the lives of congregations than ever before. And such change is pervasive. The need to manage these well is urgent and the opportunities to lead for health, resilience, and vitality are abundant. More than ever, leaders of faith communities need perspective, understanding, and skills to navigate these challenging days and help them rise to the occasion.

ETL is a virtual seminar designed to teach and apply the essential skills needed to be an effective transitional leader. This seminar covers the characteristics of this specialized work and strategies to support those engaged in it. At the conclusion of this course, you will:

- Understand **change theory** and how to apply it in transitional times
- Feel competent in the role of a transitional leader for the **work of your organization**
- Be equipped to manage both yourself and your organization in **conflict**
- Have practiced using tools designed to guide an organization through a **transition**
- Have had opportunities to apply your learnings using **case studies**

Whether you're serving as a clergy or lay leader of a faith community during a time of clergy transition, or during any moment when change needs to be managed well, this course is designed for you.

### **How can I get more information about IMN's ETL training?**

Visit <https://imnedu.org/imn-etl/> to learn about ETL and to register for IMN's scheduled trainings.

### **What about contracted IMN ETL trainings?**

IMN offers ETL training through a contract arrangement with judicatories and other organizations. Contracted ETL offers the possibility of a lower cost per participant and allows tailoring to meet specific needs, including an in-person option. To learn more about a contracted ETL contact Ellen Goudy, IMN Education and Membership Manager, at [ellen@imnedu.org](mailto:ellen@imnedu.org).