



Ambassadors
Reconciliation™

Reconciliation Ministry Pastorate

Ambassadors of Reconciliation offers a unique ministry, **Reconciliation Ministry Pastorate (RMP)**, to assist a congregation that loses a church worker because of conflict.

The Need

A congregation that loses a professional church worker because of conflict, unresolved hurts, bitterness, anger, and other issues is likely to experience more conflicts in the future. Unless a congregation works through its conflicts biblically, unresolved issues from previous relationships will impact future relationships.

For years, the church has recognized the need to assist hurting congregations prior to calling a new professional church worker. One response to this need, the *Intentional Interim Ministry (IIM)*, trains pastors to serve such congregations for a contracted period of time. Another response includes an intensive consulting process, such as Group Reconciliation Assistance offered by Ambassadors of Reconciliation or Church Interventions offered by Peacemaker Ministries.

IIM prepares pastors to serve in several situations: a congregation experiencing the aftermath of a long-term pastorate, assisting a congregation through its grief at losing a beloved pastor, dealing with the consequences of a pastor being removed for moral misconduct, or resolving conflict that contributed to the former pastor leaving. Those trained for IIM receive 60 hours of training plus continued support and education. Because IIM serves a broad spectrum of situations, the training covers many areas.

Group Reconciliation Assistance (Ambassadors of Reconciliation) and Church Interventions (Peacemaker Ministries) provides team consultation assistance to address critical congregational conflict, but it is designed for a short, intense experience, usually three to five months. However, this option is limited for a congregation that needs more assistance over a longer period of time.

RMP focuses primarily on reconciling relationships through confession and forgiveness and developing a culture of biblical reconciliation in the congregation. The Reconciliation Pastor is trained and experienced in teaching biblical conflict reconciliation, coaching people to respond to conflict biblically, identifying key parties for reconciliation, and mediating disputes between parties. RMP may equip pastors not only for defined term pastorates, but also for permanent calls.

Congregations experiencing a vacancy caused or aggravated by deep-seated conflict often need longer-term assistance (1 to 2 years or even longer) to promote healing through gospel-centered ministry. To distinguish this need from other existing services, Ambassadors of Reconciliation calls this new service ***Reconciliation Ministry Pastorate***.

Cultivating Lifestyles of Reconciliation

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Vision and Mission of Reconciliation Ministry Pastorate

Vision: Conflicted congregations that have lost professional church workers will experience healing through biblically-based peacemaking and cultivate lifestyles of reconciliation. By the end of a defined limited term RMP, they will be prepared to call permanent professional church workers to serve a healthy congregation.

Mission: Assist conflicted congregations with a vacancy to heal from conflicts and equip them for proclaiming, living and cultivating lifestyles of reconciliation.

Description of Reconciliation Ministry Pastorate

Reconciliation Ministry Pastorate involves the following components:

Diagnosis

- Teach *Blessed Are the Peacemakers* Bible study to help members understand and participate in diagnostic process.
- Interview official groups (staff, faculty, council, elders, boards, auxiliaries, etc.) looking for patterns, specific sins and primary players.
- Interview families and individuals to gather data and to coach people to apply personal peacemaking to conflicts.
- Examine organizational documents, past minutes, and correspondence.
- Evaluate, report results of diagnosis and make recommendations to the congregation.

Treatment

- Liberally proclaim God's forgiveness in Christ through teaching, preaching, and coaching.
- More extensively coach primary conflicted parties.
- Mediate disputes between key conflicted parties.
- Provide opportunities for group confession and forgiveness.

After care

- Teach *Getting to the Heart of Conflict* Bible study to understand the underlying sin issues and the cure found in Christ.
- Promote a regular practice of individual confession and absolution.
- Continue proclaiming the Gospel in specific situations.

Prevention

- Continue teaching reconciliation-based Bible studies.
- Identify potential reconcilers in the congregation.
- Arrange for coaching training and mediation training of reconcilers.
- Assist the congregation in establishing an on-going Reconciliation Ministry.
- Prepare for calling a pastor to cultivate lifestyles of reconciliation.

During the RMP, the Reconciliation Pastor will:

- Be called/contracted for a defined term (usually 1 to 2 years) or as a long-term position (2 or more years).
- Teach *Blessed Are the Peacemakers* and *Getting to the Heart of Conflict* Bible studies.
- Gather and evaluate data and coach people for personal peacemaking.
- Make quarterly reports of his work and the congregation's progress.
- Identify key leaders for coaching and mediation, and conduct mediations.
- Equip lay leaders using the leadership guide *Cultivating Lifestyles of Reconciliation*.
- Help congregational leaders identify reconcilers in the congregation.
- Assist Ambassadors of Reconciliation (or Peacemaker Ministries or PeaceWise) in training reconcilers and other leaders in conflict coaching and mediation.

During the RMP, the congregation will:

- Participate in Bible studies and reconciliation opportunities throughout the RMP, and purchase needed resources for reconciliation work.
- Sponsor a *Coaching Practicum* and a *Mediation Practicum* for key church leaders, including Reconcilers (possibly inviting other congregations to attend).
- With the agreement of the Reconciliation Pastor, engage consultants for help in areas that the he may not be best equipped (e.g., mission planning, reorganization, etc.).
- Formally establish a Reconciliation ministry.

Advanced Training and Network

Reconciliation Ministry Pastorate Training Course is an advanced training reconciliation course. It requires that participants have basic peacemaking training in personal peacemaking, coaching people using Scripture, and mediating using the GOSPEL process. In addition, participants need to demonstrate experience in actual coaching and mediation cases using biblical reconciliation.

The *RMP Training Course* requires advanced preparation (reading; preparation of major case study) and will be held over 5 days, beginning at 1:00 on Monday and ending at noon on Friday.

Ambassadors of Reconciliation will manage a network of trained Reconciliation Pastors and refer those who have completed the training to denominational leaders. Congregations will call/contract with the reconciliation pastor through their ecclesiastical supervisors.