

ECO is equipping pastoral leaders to help churches navigate change through a pastoral transition, so that a church is healthy and ready for its Flourishing Next Step.

Like many denominations, ECO is facing a shortage of qualified pastoral leaders, with some surveys indicating that up to 45% of ECO's pastoral membership will reach retirement in the next four years; we are in especially short supply of qualified transitional pastors who can successfully lead a church through pastoral transition. In order to address the transitional leadership issue and to support developing qualified transitional pastors, ECO has created a certification for transitional pastors to lead through change.

Let's embrace the transition season as an opportunity to prune, restore, and continue building flourishing churches.

A number of ECO churches operate through a transitional season as if they were still operating in Christendom. Churches are opting to "save money" by using untrained lay pastors, over worked associates, or by short circuiting the

transitional season, by promoting from within rather than embracing the transitional season as an opportunity to prune, restore, and continue building flourishing churches. Dr. Paul Borden, ECO Church Transformation Consultant, sees pastoral transition as an opportunity to help churches make the changes needed to become healthy flourishing churches. ECO's goal is to equip pastoral leaders to help churches navigate change through a pastoral transition, so that a church is healthy and ready for its Flourishing Next Step.

ECO has created a distinction between pastors who are serving in a transitional capacity from pastors who have been "Certified" to lead through pastoral transition. ECO's Synod Office shall only provide support to presbyteries and local churches for placement of Certified Transitional Pastors (CTPs). ECO churches who desire access to this network of pastors will agree to a number of criteria which are listed in a Church in Transition Agreement, including using ECO's Certified Transitional Pastor Contract. This signed agreement will give an ECO church exclusive access to ECO's Certified Transitional Pastor Network Website.

These churches are known as Churches in a Transitional Agreement (CITA). While there is no mandatory financial cost to access ECO's Certified Transitional Pastor Network Website, by signing the agreement, the church agrees to consider ECO Synod resources to help the church flourish during its transition.

CERTIFIED TRANSITIONAL PASTORS (CTP)

These pastors will be certified through ECO to lead a congregation through its transition between one lead pastor and another. CTPs work a minimum of 12 months and a maximum of 36 months with a CITA.

CERTIFICATIONS

Visit ecotransitionalpastors.org to view upcoming trainings.

Email ctpinfo@eco-pres.org if you have any questions.

FOUNDATIONS

ECO and the EPC make these classes available regularly throughout the year. The class provides the “basics” of Transitional Ministry and includes Spiritual Formation and Transitional Leadership.

Duration: Three days | Cost: \$300.

TRANSITIONAL LEADERSHIP

This class prepares the CTP to help the church make the structural and leadership changes it needs in order to become a flourishing church that makes disciples of Jesus Christ. This class is currently offered in conjunction the Foundations class.

Duration: One day | Cost: \$100 (if taken independently)

STRUCTURAL HEALTH

This training builds from the Foundations and Transitional Leadership classes. The class prepares the CTP with tools to guide a church through structural continuity factors needed to successfully navigate transition. This material is copywritten by @willheath and is for ECO pastors exclusively.

Duration: One day | Cost: \$200 (includes materials)

FLOURISHING RESOURCES

ECO seeks to equip our pastors and congregations in a variety of ways. It is our desire for our churches and its leadership to know and understand their unique identity and calling as they live their mission and vision. This training helps you become an expert in ECO’s ministry and church resources as well teaches you how to access these resources online. This seminar will also provide you with a better understanding of resources related to church governance and training, leadership development, and leading through change.

Duration: Two hours | Cost: Free

OUTREACH AND EQUIPPING

This class will equip the CTP to help a church recommit itself to Reformed Christian Faith and equip the CTP with evangelistic and discipleship skills to develop powerful preaching, bible study resources, strategies and best practices. Learning how to lead from the “pew” in evangelistic efforts and how to execute evangelistic strategies.”

Duration: Three days | Cost: \$300

Pick (one) final course to complete your certification:

FLOURISHING PEACEMAKING & CONFLICT RESOLUTION

This class walks the CTP through the process of working through conflict from a Biblical perspective and how to resolve conflict in a Christ-centered approach.

For more information or to sign up, please email ctpinfo@eco-pres.org or click [here](#).

Duration: First level required is approximately five days | Virtual courses being offered in 2023.

COACH TRAINING

Coach Training teaches the CTP how to resource staff, officers, and covenant partners by helping them discover the answers to their ministry, personal, and vocational challenges. This may also provide additional opportunities for CTPs to coach in other capacities within ECO. For more information or to sign up, email info@flourishmovement.org or click [here](#).

Duration: Two days, plus ongoing training for the following six months | Cost: \$1,750

COMPLETING THE PROCESS

Finally, all CTPs upon completing their class work, will be provisionally accepted as a CTP. These leaders will continue in their provisional status until their first transitional call is completed. During this time, there will be assessments completed by an ECO Coach, assessments completed by faculty and ECO Staff, and evaluations from staff, church officers, and covenant partners from their first church. If the Provisional Certified Transitional Pastor (PCTP) is fully recommended, then the "provisional" is dropped from their title and they become fully certified. If the PCTP needs improvement, the "provisional" is kept for their next assignment and the CTP works through the areas of improvement with the ECO Coach. If the PCTP receives a "fail" in assessments or evaluations, then the PCTP will be removed from CTP service. The CITA taking on this PCTP agrees to pay for monthly coaching calls.

COST & QUALIFICATIONS

The cost of the training is at the expense of the CTP. By becoming a CTP, you will receive priority placement and have exclusive access to the ECO's Certified Transitional Pastor Network Website. CTPs will also have more stability in transitions from one church to another. Any pastor in ECO, and if available, other denominations, may join the CTP team, if they meet the requirements for ECO Pastors. Commissioned Lay Pastors may also join this team, provided that they complete ECO's CLP2 Training. For more information, contact registrar@flourishmovement.org.

CTP CONTRACT DISTINCTIVE:

VACATION AND STUDY LEAVE

All CTPs work a full-time pastor's schedule and shall receive four weeks off per year of paid vacation (includes 4 Sundays) and two weeks (study leave). Unused vacation time will be paid out to the CTP upon their last day.

MOVING EXPENSES

Churches are to provide CTPs with relocation expenses. CTPs reallocating our commuting less than 300 miles away shall be given \$2500 and those relocating over 300 miles shall be given \$5000. This is a taxable benefit with the new federal tax plan that was passed by Congress. No additional funds shall be requested by CTP, however, a church may increase relocation expenses, should they deem it needed or necessary.

EXTENSION OF THE CONTRACT

The church shall contract the CTP for 12 months and may extend the contract, with the CTPs permission, in six-month increments. The CITA is responsible for the full cost of the contract, even if they do not use the CTP for the full-time contracted for.

DISCIPLINE

CTPs who are disciplined by a Permanent Judicial Committee (PJC), according to the ECO Rules of Discipline, shall not be eligible for continued CTP service.

SEVERANCE

This contract may be terminated by either party with 30 day notice being given. If terminated by the church, it agrees to pay the CTP the entirety of the remainder of the twelve-month contract. At or after 10 months, the church agrees to up to 2 months of additional compensation at the conclusion of the Transitional Ministry assignment unless or until the CTP receives another assignment, whichever occurs first. If the CTP terminates the contract, none of these provisions apply. If the CTP is excused for a discipline case, the CTP shall be compensated for the work already completed. The remainder of the contract that may be owed to the CTP, as stipulated in this contract, will be held in an escrow account until the case is resolved. If the CTP renounces jurisdiction or is found guilty of any wrongful action regardless of the consequences given to the CTP by the Permanent Judicial Commission, the church shall not be required to pay any amount of the contract left to the CTP. If the CTP is found not guilty of any wrongful action, the church shall pay the CTP the full amount of the escrow account within five business days of the verdict.

MEDICAL AND PENSION

Churches shall pay for the benefits that they have contracted with ECO for its entire staff. If the church only has one full-time staff member (the Certified Transitional Pastor), it is required to pay 100% medical coverage for the pastor, the pastor's spouse, and eligible children. All churches are required to pay the mandatory ECO benefits, including pension. CTPs that are already retired may have unique needs that are usually beneficial to the local church. These should be addressed and included in the contract.

SALARY

The total effective salary shall be a minimum of \$50,000 and may be appropriately prorated if a part-time position is approved.

COACHING

All CTPs maintain a coaching relationship throughout their service to the church. CTPs shall have a monthly coach for their first 24 months of CTP service in ECO. This monthly expense is 100% paid by the CITA for the first 12 months and then shared fifty-fifty with the CITA unless the CTP and the church come to a different arrangement for the second year. Once CTPs have served over 24 months in ECO as CTPs, they are only required to meet with a coach every other month. CITAs may also contract with these coaches to help them meet their transitional goals.