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Disciples Home Missions

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My Ministerial Code of Ethics



Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)

This document revised on 5/14/2008.
This version supercedes all previous versions.

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Ministerial Code Of Ethics

Believing that Jesus is the Christ, Son of the living God and proclaiming Christ as Savior of the World, I reaffirm my vows as an ordained or licensed minister. Through dedication and discipline I will lead and serve with integrity. Relying on the grace of God, I commit myself to the following:

Personal Conduct

- **witnessing to the ministry of Jesus Christ**
- **dedicating time, strength, vitality & energy for effective ministry**
- **growing in faith, knowledge and the practice of ministry through the spiritual disciplines, study, continuing education & service**
- **living a life that honors my commitments to my family, including the need for privacy & time together**
- **taking time for physical & spiritual renewal, recreation & vacation**
- **being a faithful steward of God's gifts to me by managing time, talents & financial resources responsibly & generously**
- **accepting responsibility for all debts, which I incur, & refraining from gossip**
- **keeping physically & emotionally fit, & refraining from substance abuse & other abusive behaviors**
- **using my position, power & authority in non-exploitive ways**
- **maintaining high moral standards in my sexual behavior**
- **regarding all persons with equal respect & concern, & undertaking to minister impartially**

Relationships To The Church I Serve

- **nurturing & offering my gifts for ministry to the church**
- **calling forth & nurturing the gifts of others in the Church, & joining their gifts with mine for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ & the health of the church.**
- **preaching & teaching the gospel without fear or favor, & speaking the truth in love**
- **administering the sacraments & services of the Church with integrity & not for financial gain**
- **working cooperatively & collegially with those whom I serve in the particular ministry to which I have been called**
- **administering the corporate finances of the Church with personal integrity**
- **refraining from accepting any gift which would compromise the Church's ministry**
- **protecting confidences, with the exception of reporting known or suspected cases of physical or sexual abuse & neglect**
- **encouraging & participating in the regular evaluation of my ministry & cooperating with the Region in the periodic review of my ministerial standing**
- **seeking the counsel of the Regional Minister should divisive tensions threaten my relationship with those I serve**

Relationships To Ministry Colleagues

- **engaging in covenantal relationships with colleagues, which involve nurture, discipline, family support, vigorous dialogue, mutual teaching/learning & spiritual formation**
- **supporting colleagues in ministry & their families while not exploiting their problems or crises**
- **performing pastoral services within another congregation or for a member of another congregation only at the invitation of the pastor of that congregation**
- **supporting & at no time speaking maliciously of the ministry of my predecessor or another minister in the congregation in which I hold membership**
- **encouraging the ministry of my successor upon my retirement or other departure from a ministry position, without interfering or intruding, & by making it clear to former parishioners that I am no longer their pastor**

Relationships To The Community & The Wider Church

- **participating responsibly in the life & work of my community, bearing prophetic witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, working toward a just & morally responsible society**
- **participating faithfully in the life & work of all manifestations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**
- **seeking to know, understand & respect the diversity of opinions & people within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**
- **being a responsible representative of the one Church of Jesus Christ & participating in activities that strengthen its unity, witness & mission**

Foreword

In 1944, a ministerial Code Of Ethics for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was published by the Division of Homeland Ministries. That Code was developed over a period of several years through the efforts of a widely diverse church-wide committee. It was reviewed and refined as dozens of ministers' associations and fellowships and hundreds of individuals responded to the committee's request for evaluation of the document.

A General church committee has periodically reviewed the Code Of Ethics. Occasionally, editorial changes have been made. The General Commission on Ministry and its predecessor, the General Board Task Force on Ministry, have worked over the past several years with Homeland Ministries, now Disciples Home Missions, to update the Code Of Ethics. Proposed changes have been reviewed by regional commissions on ministry as well as by many individuals.

The revised Code Of Ethics maintains much of the language of the original; the principles that guide ministry remain the same from generation to generation. This Ministerial Code Of Ethics has withstood the test of time and is commended to be read and followed by all ministers as a high code of professional conduct.

~General Commission on Ministry