

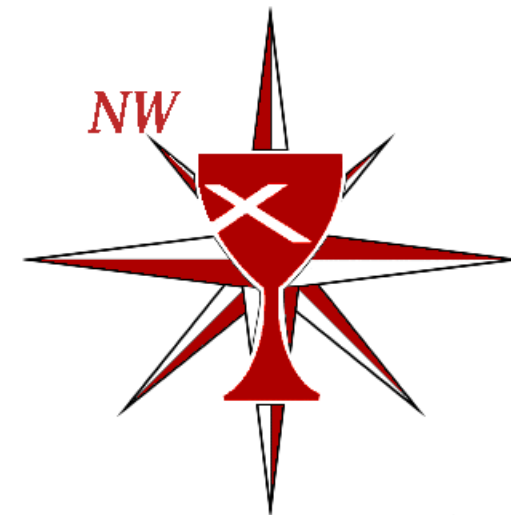
Policies And Criteria For The Order Of Ministry
for
The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
in the Northwest Region

- Incorporating -

The Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry
of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
(As approved by the General Board and General Assembly)

- and -

The Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry
in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
in the Northwest Region
(As approved by the Regional Board)



i.

Table Of Contents

I	Ministry in the Christian Church - General Church Policies	3
II	Candidacy for the Order of Ministry - General Church Policies	4
	Implementation Procedures for the Northwest Region	6
III	The Office of Ordained Minister - General Church Policies	7
	Northwest Regional Policies	
	i) Implementation	8
	ii) The Process for Ordination	9
	iii) Process for Ordination of Individuals Trained at	13
	Non-Disciple Seminaries	
IV	The Office of Licensed Minister - General Church Policies	17
	Northwest Regional Policies	19
V	Ministerial Standing - General Church Policies	20
	Northwest Regional Policies	
	i) Implementation	23
	ii) For those seeking reinstatement of Standing	25
VI	Ministerial Relocation - General Church Policies	27
VII	Vocational Development - General Church Policies	35
VIII	Continuing Education Scholarships: NW Region	36
IX	Pastor's Emergency Fund: NW Region	37
X	Ministerial Code of Ethics	38
XI	Sexual Ethics: NW Region	
	a) Policy Statement on Sexual Ethics	39
	b) Procedures for Implementation of the Sexual	40
	Ethics Policy	
	c) Process for Alleged Pastoral Misconduct	42
XII	Amendment Process	47
XIII	Ethical Guidelines for Congregational Conduct	47

Approved by the Commission on the Ministry: 4/88
Updated: 1/92; 10/93; 1/95; 9/97
Amended: 2003

d. Ever since the commencement of this kingdom, the governments of this world have either been directly opposed to it, or, at best, pretended friend, and therefore their influence has always be opposed to the true spirit and genius of the Christian institution. Christians have nothing to expect from them except liberty of conscience and protection from violence, while leading peaceable and quiet lives, in all godliness and honesty, till Jesus take to himself his great power, and hurl all these potentates from their thrones and make his cause triumphant, - a consummation devoutly to be wished, and which cannot now be regarded as far distant.

Christian System, pp. 170-171.

e. . . . Committees of ways and means are required. Executive councils, financiers, and general agents, are indispensable to success. These duties ought not to be assumed - no one church, any more than any one individual, could or should assume such responsibilities. Does Christianity leave all these interests to . . . mere chance, to individual wisdom, or to individual caprice! . . . Why should "children of this world be more prudent in conducting their affairs than the children of light?" If, in the affairs of this world, there are legislative, judiciary, and executive departments necessary; . . . why should it be thought . . . improper for Christians to have their deliberative bodies, their conventions, for the sake of the concentration of their energies in the accomplishment of their duties to themselves and to the world?

Millennial Harbinger, 1850, pp. 500-501

f. . . . I am inconsistent with my own principles when "any evangelical sect or congregation" shall have welcomed to their communion and I have refused it.

Christian Baptist, 1826, pp. 237-238

**VII.
OUR RELATIONSHIP AS MEMBERS
TO THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL**

- a. With the church universal we proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior of the world. In his name and by his grace we accept our mission and service to all people.
- b. We are bound to God and one another through covenant, and through baptism we are made one with the whole people of God.
- c. We are called to express the unity God bestows by ecumenical study, dialogue, co-operation and expression.
- d. Because all Christians in the church universal have the obligation to uphold the Christian life in the face of the evil forces of our day, we will co-operate with other church bodies in living the Christian witness.
- e. We will support acceptable agencies of Christian Co-operation in local, national and/or global manifestations of the Church's life.
- f. So as to establish no barriers that might prevent any of Jesus' followers from communing with us, we will remember that He invites his believers to the Lord's Table in the spirit of Christian love and unity.

FOR STUDY REFER TO:

Scripture
(General)

- Phil. 2:5-11
- b. Jer. 31:31-34; Matt. 26:26-28
I Cor. 11:23-25; Heb. 9:15a
I Cor. 12:13, 27
- c. Acts 17:26a; Eph. 4:3-7; John 17:20-21
- d. Eph. 6:12-17

Disciples Tradition

Unity is our Polar Star. The Church is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one.

- b. . . . the word church, in the singular number, is, by sacred and apostolic usage, often made to represent all the churches in a nation, an empire, or in the world. It is a term used as commensurate with the whole body of Christ, or the entire community of all the faithful on earth. Hence, there is but one kingdom of Christ, one body of Christ, or one church or Christ on earth. The word church, by reference to its occurrences in the New Testament, indicates the whole Christian community on earth.

Millennial Harbinger, 1853, p. 303

ii.

**POLICIES AND CRITERIA FOR THE ORDER OF MINISTRY
IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (*Disciples of Christ*)
NORTHWEST REGIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH**

I. MINISTRY IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

- General Church Policies

MINISTRY IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

A. The Ministry of Jesus Christ. Within the church the fundamental ministry is that of Jesus Christ whose servanthood, offered to God in behalf of humanity, defines and gives character to all ministry exercised in his name.

B. The Corporate Ministry. As head of his body, the church, Christ calls upon his people to participate in his ministry and thus to make known Christ. By baptism all Christians are inducted into the corporate ministry of God's people and by sharing in it fulfill their own calling as servants of Christ. This corporate ministry of all Christians is marked by these elements:

1. The praise of God in the Church's public worship and by acts of faithful service;
2. Care for the common life of the whole body within which all members come to know themselves as children of God and to find confirmed in their gifts and callings for special service;
3. Mediation of the divine love to the life of all persons, including the society as a whole, through loving service particularly at the points of greatest human need and primarily through the daily work of God's people.

C. The Order of Ministry. Within the ministry of the whole people of God there is and has been from the beginning a representative ministry called of God and authorized by the church. While all Christians share in the corporate ministry, the term minister particularly describes a person to whom the church entrusts representative responsibility. Through the centuries this Order of Ministry, in various offices, has been responsible to lead in transmitting the Christian tradition from one generation to another, translating and interpreting the scriptures, proclaiming the gospel of Christ, administering the sacraments, serving to maintain a company of Christians in continuity with the life and faith of the Apostles, and acting as pioneers and leaders in the church's reconciling mission in the world.

1. **Personal Qualifications for Admission to the Order.** In all its procedures concerning the Order of Ministry the church seeks these qualities in the men and women whom it sets apart in the Office of Ministry:

- a. Faith in Christ Jesus and commitment to a life of Christian discipleship.
 - b. Definite and informed decision, in response to God, to serve in the Order of Ministry.
 - c. Personal fitness sufficient to the demands of the office, including mental and physical capacities, emotional stability and maturity, and standards of morality.
2. Preparation for Service in the Order of Ministry. Persons to be set apart for the Order of Ministry are to prepare for their work. That preparation shall include:
- a. Participation in the life and work of a congregation of Christians.
 - b. Breadth of theological study so that the candidate shows an understanding of the Christian faith, the Bible, the church, the history and policy of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the world in theological perspective, and the Christian mission.
 - c. Professional study and supervised experience in the work of the ministry, with emphasis upon that form of ministry in which the candidate hopes to serve.
 - d. Formation of responsible relations with and concern for the church, both as community of faith and institution.
 - e. Growth in personal character, Christian insight, spiritual formation and disciplined commitment to ministry.
 - f. Formation of ethical principles to guide professional relationships and personal conduct.

D. Offices within the Order of Ministry. The Order of Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) includes two offices: the office of ordained minister and the office of licensed minister. Each office is authorized to carry out representative ministry according to provisions established by the General Assembly.

II. CANDIDATES FOR THE ORDER OF MINISTRY

- General Church Policies

CANDIDACY FOR THE ORDER OF MINISTRY

A. Pre-Candidacy. (See Vocational Development for Ministry) Pre-Candidacy is the time when a person feels or thinks they may have an interest in ministry as a vocation. No declaration, intent, or commitment has been made. This is an exploratory phase and is spelled out under the heading "Vocational Development for Ministry."

B. A Definition: Candidacy. Candidacy is the initial step for entrance into the Order of Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Candidacy is entered into when a man or

FOR STUDY REFER TO:

Disciples Tradition

As members of the Christian Church,
 We confess that Jesus is the Christ,
 the Son of the living God,
 and proclaim him Lord and Savior of the world.
 In Christ's name and by his grace
 we accept our mission of witness
 and service to all people.
 We rejoice in God,
 maker of heaven and earth,
 and in the covenant of love
 which binds us to God and one another.
 Through baptism into Christ
 we enter into newness of life
 and are made one with the whole people of God.
 In the communion of the Holy Spirit
 we are joined together in discipleship
 and in obedience to Christ.
 At the table of the Lord
 we celebrate with thanksgiving
 the saving acts and presence of Christ.
 Within the universal church
 we receive the gift of ministry
 and the light of scripture.
 In the bonds of Christian faith
 we yield ourselves to God
 that we may serve the One
 whose kingdom has no end.
 Blessing, glory and honor
 be to God forever. Amen.
 The *Design for the Christian Church*, paragraph 1

In order that the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) through free and voluntary relationships may faithfully express the ministry of Christ made known through scripture, may provide comprehensiveness in witness, mission and service, may furnish means by which congregations may fulfill their ministries with faithfulness in Christian stewardship, may assure both unity and diversity, and may advance responsible ecumenical relationships, as a response to God's covenant, we commit ourselves to one another in adopting this design for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
 The *Design for the Christian Church*, paragraph 4

- c. We will not be a part of proselytizing members from other congregations in our community, nor will we exploit the problems or crises of other congregations. We will present the witness of our congregation in a manner not injurious to others.
- d. We will respect the privilege of borrowing from other congregations.
- e. We will consider sharing our facilities according to the necessities of the community and the purpose for which they are needed.

FOR STUDY REFER TO:

Disciples Tradition

With all this evidence before us, we must plead for co-operation among all the citizens of Messiah's kingdom . . .

Millennial Harbinger, 1838, pp.268-269

. . . a combination . . . of churches is essential to accomplish some of the great objects of Christian . . . humanity.

Millennial Harbinger, 1850, pp. 500-501

Churches are all equal and independent in some respects, but not in all. They are also all equally subordinate to one another in the Lord.

Millennial Harbinger, 1841, pp. 46-47

VI.

OUR RELATIONSHIP AS MEMBERS

TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

- a. We will seek to know and to understand the various points of view within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and will respect the opinions of those whose interpretations differ from our own.
- b. We will recognize our covenantal relationship with the Disciples and will give generous and prayerful support to our programs at home and overseas.
- c. We will endeavor to know, claim and live our identity as set forth in the *Preamble for the Design of the Christian church (Disciples of Christ)* and be knowledgeable about the actions of the District, Regional and General Assemblies.
- d. Mission gifts received by our congregation will be used for their intended purpose(s). Budget commitments for world outreach causes are as binding as those secured for our local obligations.
- e. We will encourage our minister(s) and our members to serve beyond the local congregation in the Cluster, District, Regional and/or General manifestations of Disciple work.

woman declares the intention to fulfill the requirements for entrance into the Order of Ministry, and the church affirms that intention.

C. The Criteria for Candidacy. The applicant shall be a member of a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) congregation and shall make application for candidacy to the region of the candidate's choice through the Official Board of that congregation. It is advisable that the candidate make contact with the region at a very early point in their consideration. In unusual circumstances, the person may make direct application to the region.

It is advisable that the candidate be at least a junior in college or university, or have demonstrated sufficient maturity and competency for potential leadership. Candidacy shall be applied for at least one year prior to ordination and ordinarily at least one year prior to licensing or as a commissioned church worker or lay preacher.

Upon receipt of the application, the region will begin the process of assessing [through avenues such as personal interviews, consultation with the congregation(s), appropriate region(s), and educational institution(s)] the spiritual, emotional, moral, intellectual and educational capacities of the applicant for the practice of ministry. Upon approval of the application, the region shall admit the applicant to candidacy.

D. The Procedures During Candidacy. The candidate shall seek admission to the Order of Ministry by preparing for ordination or licensing. The candidate shall seek to be responsive to the opportunities for personal and spiritual growth provided during the period of nurture and care by the regional and general units of the church. Where possible these opportunities will be developed in consultation and co-operation with either or both the congregation(s) and educational institution(s) to which the candidate is related.

In exercise of it's responsibility, the region shall give continuing counsel and guidance to the candidate's preparation for ministry, and shall provide assistance to the candidate in discovering avenues for continued personal and spiritual growth. This may involve experiences such as supervised field education, internships, apprenticeships and individual or group career assessment.

The candidate who has not yet fulfilled all the qualifications for ordination or licensing as a lay preacher or commissioned church worker may be granted license as a theological student. When a candidate seeks licensing for the practice of ministry in a region other than where the person is a candidate, the licensing region shall consult with the region of candidacy. In the event a candidate from one region seeks ordination, commission, or license as a lay preacher in a region other than the one in which the person is a candidate, that region shall consult with the region of candidacy regarding endorsement and transfer of candidacy.

The region shall advise the theological seminaries and, when appropriate, the undergraduate institutions of higher education in which it has candidates of the standards relating to candidacy, ordination and licensing.

Institutions of higher education related to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall: (1) share with the region in the nurture and guidance of enrolled candidates; (2) assist potential candidates to relate to a region; and (3) be aware of standards for licensing and ordination applicable to students in that institution. In non-Disciple-related institutions, the Division of Higher Education shall seek to discover potential candidates, inform the institutions and students of procedures for candidacy in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and shall seek to relate the students to a region for care.

Candidacy is terminated by: (1) ordination or licensing as a commissioned church worker or lay preacher; (2) withdrawal by the candidate; or (3) decision of the region to remove the candidate from candidacy.

- Implementation Procedures for the Northwest Region
CANDIDACY FOR THE ORDER OF MINISTRY

A candidate's sexual orientation in and of itself will not impact their progress towards Ordination or Licensing as the candidate works with the Commission on Ministry.

1. The Region shall keep a file of persons interested in professional ministry, the name to be secured from the congregations of the Region.
2. The Region shall establish a record of persons who declare themselves to be candidates for future ordination.
3. The Commission on the Ministry shall establish a program of nurture involving applicant, congregation, and seminary.
4. The Region may grant a provisional license, subject to annual renewal, to those performing limited ministerial functions under supervision in the Region.
5. All applicants for licensure or Ordination must consent to a criminal background check.

- d. We will maintain a good credit standing in the community. We will expect our staff to do the same.
- e. We will respect the rights and privileges of persons living near the church and will endeavor not to inconvenience our neighbors nor to harm their property.
- f. We will establish no barriers that might prevent anyone from worshiping with us.
- g. We will work in a complementary way with community service agencies and organizations to most effectively serve and improve our community.

FOR STUDY REFER TO:

Scripture
(General)

Matt. 10:35-37; 25:31-46; 28:18-20
Phil 1:29-30; I John 5:17-18
James 1:26-27; 2:14-17

Disciples Tradition

a. . . . It is . . . as essential to our usefulness in this world as it is to our Christian integrity and purity, that truth and justice be supreme in all our transactions with men.
Millennial Harbinger, 1838, pp. 386-389

b. In our country and government, every man is responsible for his vote. When therefore . . . there is a question or a crisis involving, as he judges, any good, or the prevention of any evil, it is his duty to God, who gives him a vote, and it is his duty to man, to use, or to give that vote, to that person, or to that measure, which will, in his judgment, insure the most good, or of two evils to prevent the greater, by voting for the less.
Millennial Harbinger, 1857, p. 174

V.
OUR RELATIONSHIP AS MEMBERS
TO THE CHURCHES IN OUR COMMUNITY

- a. We will seek to understand the beliefs and practices of others. While we may be constructively critical of their doctrine, we will refrain from unkind remarks about people who differ from us.
- b. We will encourage unity and harmony among the various communions of Christian peoples and will give evidence of our sincerity through participation at appropriate local, state, national and/or world levels.

covenantal as well as contractual, and we will maintain and conclude all pastoral relationships in a spirit of Christian love.

- m. The church will be sensitive and will voluntarily find specific ways to go the second mile in ministry with love, compassion and trust in the event of personal and/or psychological or emotional difficulties or other extenuating circumstances.
- n. We will have an active Pastoral Relations Committee or a corresponding body to continually monitor the relationship between our minister and the congregation, and we will call on the assistance of the regional staff before a conflict situation grows into a crisis.
- o. We will observe similar appropriate principles with all other professional staff of our congregation.

FOR STUDY REFER TO:

Scripture
(General)

Eph. 4:11-14; Phil. 2:19-22

II Cor. 6:3-10; 8:16-19 & 22-24

b. I Cor. 9:1-10; Gal. 6:6

m. Gal. 6:2; Rom. 12:15; Matt. 18:21-25

Disciples Tradition

a. & n. Within policies developed by the General Assembly, regions certify the standing of ministers and provide help, counsel and pastoral care to ministers and congregations in such matters as: ordination, licensing, ministerial relocation, establishment and dissolution of pastoral relationships, and installations of ministers. Regions seek to supply a minister for congregations without full-time pastoral services and offer counsel and assistance in cases of difficulties between ministers and congregations.

The Design for the Christian Church, paragraph 95

IV.
OUR RELATIONSHIP AS MEMBERS
TO OUR COMMUNITY AND/OR COUNTRY

- a. We accept our missional responsibility for the moral and spiritual development of our community. We agree to live in a manner consistent with our Christian convictions.
- b. Because our Christian convictions set the standard for our citizenship, our faith will lead us to be informed, to respect law, to vote our conscience and to influence government officials in working toward a just and morally responsible community.
- c. We will be attentive to the moral and ethical implications of every project we are asked to support.

III. THE OFFICE OF ORDAINED MINISTER

- General Church Policies

THE OFFICE OF ORDAINED MINISTER

A. Description of the Office. The broadest authorization for representative ministry granted by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is conferred upon men and women whom it sets apart for the office of ordained minister. By ordination the church recognizes that ordained persons, in fulfilling their calling as servants of Christ, possess the abilities, qualities and preparation needed for the performance of their assigned functions, accepts their ministry in and for the whole body of Christ, covenants to undergird the ministry, and grants authority to perform that ministry as a representative of the church.

In accepting ordination, the ordained minister covenants to obey God by caring for the church, offerings gifts of mind and body to that service, and agreeing to fulfill the functions of a minister.

B. Authorization to Ordain on Behalf of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Within these policies and criteria, established by the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the regions and their related congregations share responsibility for ordination. Specifically assigned to the regions is the responsibility to establish procedures to evaluate applicants, admit them to candidacy, care for their nurture, authorize ordination, and supervise the act of ordination.

C. Theological and professional study in preparation for ordination ordinarily includes the securing of a baccalaureate degree and the completion of a seminary program of study.

D. The Act of Ordination:

1. The act of ordination shall be under the authorization and guidance of the region.
2. The candidate ordinarily shall be recommended for ordination by a recognized congregation or congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), including the one in which membership is held.
3. Representatives of the recommending congregation or congregations, the region, and, if possible, the general and ecumenical church ordinarily shall participate in the act of ordination.
4. The service ordinarily shall take place in the congregation.
5. The certificate of ordination shall be issued by the region and signed by appropriate officials of the church and participants in the ceremony.

E. The Right of Appeal. Applicants and candidates shall have the right of appeal from decision or prolonged inaction of the region to the General Board committee on ministerial standing.

F. Ordained ministers with standing are voting members of the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

- Implementation Procedures for the Northwest Region

i. THE OFFICE OF ORDAINED MINISTER

Degrees obtained from an ATS accredited seminary will be accepted; degrees from other graduate schools will be handled on a case by case basis, with the possibility that the degree may not be acceptable, or that further studies will be required.

1. The candidate for ordination shall write a letter of application to the Regional Minister, who shall forward the same to the Commission on the Ministry.
2. The candidate shall request the congregation sponsoring the ordination to write a letter of intent to sponsor the ordination, this letter to be sent to the Regional Minister and forwarded to the Commission on the Ministry.
3. The candidate will ask the organizations and persons named below to submit letters of recommendation for ordination, including the one in which membership is held, a seminary and/or training facility, and three individuals.
4. The candidate will submit a statement of views on the nature of the church and the understanding of his or her role within it, and a curriculum vita and transcript.
5. The Commission on the Ministry shall convene an Ordination Council which will consist of: One layperson and one clergy from the Commission on the Ministry; the pastor of the congregation sponsoring ordination; a committee of two from the ordaining congregation; and a person selected by the Commission on the Ministry from another congregation in the Region. This Council will review the file assembled relating to the candidate, using the statement referred to in No. 4 above.
6. Following the review and interview, the Ordination Council shall have the authority to authorize ordination on behalf of the Region.
7. The Ordination service shall be planned by the candidate and the local congregation, following the plan recommended by the Commission on the

**III.
OUR RELATIONSHIP AS MEMBERS
TO OUR MINISTER(S)**

- a. When seeking a minister, we will follow our denominational guidelines, work through the Regional Office, and will conduct all negotiations with integrity, courtesy and orderly procedure, without unfair discrimination with regard to marital status, sex, age or race.
- b. We will keep informed on how ministers are compensated in our denomination through information supplied by the Pension Fund of the Christian Church and by the regional office, and will support our ministers with salary, housing, a pension plan, health insurance, necessary expense funds, vacation, and the time and financial means for continuing education consistent with the demands and resources of our congregation.
- c. We will provide our minister with necessary facilities and equipment for his or her work and will respect study hours. We will be considerate of the need for rest and relaxation and will be sensitive to the need for time with family.
- d. We will respect the time and talents of members of the minister's family and will have no greater expectations of them than of other lay people.
- e. We will grant or minister responsible freedom of the pulpit and the right to present Christian convictions without fear.
- f. We will respect and co-operate with our minister's spiritual and intellectual leadership.
- g. We will call on our present minister for weddings, funerals and other special services. Our former ministers or others unconnected with the congregation may be invited to participate in such services only when appropriate and at the present minister's invitation.
- h. We will co-operate with our minister to best utilize our congregation's talents in fulfilling the mission of the church.
- i. We will keep our minister informed when pastoral services are needed.
- j. We will support our minister's responsible participation in District, Regional, and/or General activities of the denomination, as well as civic and ecumenical activities.
- k. We will encourage and assist our minister through constructive feedback, appropriate praise, constant prayer and faithful participation with him or her in ministry.
- l. Because the congregation is a priesthood of believers that minister to one another (pastor to the congregation and congregation to the pastor), our relationships in the church will be

- b. We will endeavor to distribute our offices among many persons and be appreciative of the services of every member.
- c. We will provide them opportunities for training, skill development and faith formation. We will provide the resources needed for each to be an effective leader.
- d. We will nurture through encouragement and prayer our officers, committees, classes, auxiliary groups and the board of the congregation.
- e. We will expect our officers to manifest Christian principles in their conduct.
- f. We will offer constructive support and feedback to our officers and leaders.

FOR STUDY REFER TO:

Scripture
(General)

Matt. 23:1-12
Mk. 10:42-45; 9:35
I Peter 5:1-3; Col. 3:12-17
I Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9

Disciples Tradition
(General)

By virtue of membership in the church, every Christian enters into the corporate ministry of God's people. Within the corporate ministry, each Christian fulfills her or his own calling as a servant of Christ sent into the world to minister. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall seek to provide all its members with opportunities to exercise this ministry.

The Design for the Christian Church, paragraph 90

The offices of the eldership and the diaconate are ordered by the congregations, through election and recognition with appropriate ceremony, for the performance of certain functions of ministry appropriate to the offices. (a) A person elected to the eldership is authorized to exercise within the congregational which elects him or her to ministerial functions which it assigns for periods of time which it specifies, such as: sharing in the ministration of the Lord's Supper and the conduct of worship and sharing in the pastoral care and spiritual leadership of the congregation. The eldership is a voluntary ministry, each congregation have a plurality of elders. (b) A person elected to the diaconate is authorized to serve in the congregation which him or her for periods of time which it specifies by assisting in the ministration of baptism and the Lord's Supper, in the conduct of worship and in the pastoral care and spiritual leadership of the congregation. The diaconate is also a voluntary ministry.

The Design for the Christian Church, paragraph 97

Ministry, and shall include participation by the Regional Minister or representative and a representative of the Commission on the Ministry.

ii) THE PROCESS OF ORDINATION (Guideline adopted October 8, 1993)

In the manual Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Northwest Regional Christian Church you will find four sections which pertain to the process leading to ordination. Before you review this outline of *The Process for Ordination*, please read the following sections of the manual (Policies and Criteria...):

I. Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)	pg. 3
II. Candidacy for the Order of Ministry	pg. 4
II. Implementation Procedures for the Northwest Region	pg. 6
VII. Vocational Development for Ministry	pg. 35

In the case of Section VII this document replaces "Office of the Ordained Minister to Implement within the Northwest Region."

Committees and candidates frequently find the Process for Ordination confusing. Each Candidate for ordination brings unique experience to the ordination process. Most often theological education takes place outside this Region. Sometimes that means that a candidate has had an In-Care Committee in a Region closer to their school and must begin again with a new In-Care Committee in this Region.

Frequently the Pastor of the seminarian has not gone through an ordination procedure with the Commission on the Ministry in the Northwest Region. New members of the Commission on the Ministry appointed to oversee an In-Care Committee or Ordination Council can experience uncertainty as to how to proceed. Each party in the process has questions as to the correct procedure to follow. In an effort to provide clarity to this frequently confusing and long process leading to ordination, the Commission on the Ministry hereby lists the basic responsibilities of each party entering into the process.

Finally, to our In-Care Committees and Ordination Councils and Candidates: as you work through the process listed below please do not hesitate to give feedback to the Commission on the Ministry as to missing steps or procedures that seem unclear. Please write to the Chair of the Commission on the Ministry (care of the Northwest

Regional Christian Church) with your comments and suggestions. It will help all of us.

The Regional Minister:

1. Participates as ex-officio member of the Commission on the Ministry and the Ordination Council.
2. Expedites candidate's relationship with the Commission on the Ministry.
3. Works with the Ordination Council, Commission on the Ministry, host pastor and Candidate to set the date and plan the Ordination Service.
4. Participates in the Ordination Service.
5. Provides the Certificate of Ordination.
6. Provides the Department of Ministry with Candidate's Credentials.

The Commission on the Ministry:

1. Meets with any person interested in exploring the possibility of ordination.
2. Makes the declaration that places that Candidate In-care of the Northwest Region.
3. Appoints and oversees the In-Care Committee.
4. Receives annual reports from the In-Care Committee regarding the progress of the candidate.
5. Receives a written request from the candidate when the Candidate and In-Care Committee determine that she or he can now proceed toward ordination.
6. Authorizes the In-Care Committee to now become the Ordination Council and oversees the work of the Council receiving reports as needed.
7. Receives the recommendation of the Ordination Council as to the fitness of the candidate for ordination.
8. Makes the final decision regarding whether or not the candidate can proceed with ordination.
9. In consultation with the Candidate Ordination Council and Regional Minister, sets the date for ordination.

The In-Care Committee and the Ordination Council:

- I. Appointed by the Commission on the Ministry when the Commission declares the Candidate "in-care" of the Regional Church and includes:
 - a. The Pastor and two Elders from the sponsoring congregation;
 - b. An Elder from another Disciple congregation within the Region;

g. We will establish and follow a policy on receiving and using special gifts, memorials, trusts, and endowed funds in such a way as to be consistent with Christian stewardship. Reception of the gift entails a consideration of its appropriateness. The policy should also give consideration to when an item outlasts its usefulness.

FOR STUDY REFER TO:

Scripture: (General)

- Eph. 4:1-6,15-16; 5:1
I Peter 2:9-10
II Cor. 5: 17-19
- a. Phil. 1:9; 2: 1-4; Jn.13: 34-35; Rom. 3:10
 - b. I Cor 12:12-26; Matt. 5: 23-25; Rom. 12: 3-8
 - c. Gal. 5:13-15; James 4:11-12; Matt. 7: 1-5;18:15-17; Eph. 4:31-32
 - d. I Cor. 10:31-11:1; Gal. 5:22-25; Phil. 1:27

Disciples Tradition

a. The law of love is the supreme law of religion, morality, and expediency. No codes of laws, without it, could make or keep any people . . . peaceable, and happy . . . We cannot love by law, but we can walk in love with no other law but that of love. *Christian System*, 1839, p. 100

. . . Love has a transfiguring or transforming efficacy upon the human mind. To impress the image of God upon the human heart, it is necessary that the love of God should be exhibited to the human mind. *Campbell-Owen Debate*, 1829, p. 373

b. "In essentials, Unity; in non-essentials, Liberty, in all things, Charity (love)."

d. The character of the new man is an elevated character. Feeling himself a son and heir of God, he cultivates the temper, spirit, and behavior, which corresponds with so exalted a relation . . . The character which Jesus sustained amongst men, is the model of his daily imitation. His . . . aspiration is --

"Thy Fair example I would trace,
To teach me what I ought to be;
Make my by thy transforming grace,
Lord Jesus, daily more like thee!"

II. OUR RELATIONSHIP AS MEMBERS TO OUR CHURCH OFFICERS AND LEADERS

- a. We will select our officers intentionally and impartially on the basis of their commitment, competence, compassion and maturity in the faith. We are committed to having men, women and youth serve in the various responsibilities of the congregation.

The Christian Baptist

Non-inclusive terminology by Alexander Campbell has not been altered in respect for historical accuracy. However, it is the intention of these Guidelines that they be understood in this age to be inclusive in their intent. These supplementary materials are designed to enhance your study of the "Ethical Guidelines for Congregational Conduct."

We, the members of this congregation, following much prayer and discussion of our attitudes and practices in the light of the life and teachings of Jesus, hereby resolve to follow the ethical principles delineated in the New Testament. The following "Ethical Guidelines for Congregational Conduct," while not to be construed as a set of rules or law, will help us to make specific application of our New Testament faith to our practices as a congregation.

May God guide us and give us strength and determination as we endeavor to understand and to fulfill the resolves mentioned in these guidelines.

I. OUR RELATIONSHIP AS MEMBERS TO ONE ANOTHER

- a. We will treat one another with courtesy and kindness. We will endeavor to maintain an attitude of Christian love in all our relationships.
- b. We will welcome the expression of differing viewpoints and will seek to create an atmosphere of trust and confidence that will encourage free discussion.
- c. We will seek to keep confidences and will refrain from gossip. We will seek in all we do and say to strengthen character and dignity personality.
- d. We will remember that our personal conduct gives evidence of our sincerity and reflects upon the good name of the Church, the Body of Christ.
- e. We will reaffirm this document at least triennially and review these guidelines whenever we are in the process of calling new pastoral leadership.
- f. We will work within the framework of the constitution and by-laws of this congregation. These guidelines will not supersede our own church's constitution and by-laws but may be helpful in their revision.

- c. Two members of the Commission on the Ministry (one clergy and one lay person), one of whom will serve as Chair of the In-Care Committee and the Ordination Council;
 - d. And the Regional Minister who may serve as an ex-officio member of the In-Care Committee, and who will serve as an ex-officio member of the Ordination Council.
2. Meets at least once a year with the Candidate and makes an annual written report to the Commission on the Ministry.
 3. Provides support, nurture and direction to the Candidate throughout the in-care process.
 4. Collects and maintains a file of materials (transcripts and papers relevant to the process) throughout the in-care process.
 5. Together the Candidate and In-Care Committee determine that the Candidate can now proceed toward Ordination.
 6. Requests that the Commission on the Ministry now appoint them as the Ordination Council.
 7. Receives approval from the Commission on the Ministry to begin the work of the Ordination Council.
 8. Requests that the Candidate submit their Theology of Ministry Paper.
 9. Having gathered all appropriate transcript and papers, and now having received the Theology of Ministry Paper from the Candidate, the Ordination council meets to review the material, examine the candidate regarding their fitness for ministry (see I. C. 1 Personal Qualifications for Admission to the Order, in this document) and make their recommendation to the Commission on the Ministry.
 10. After having received approval from the Commission on the Ministry and in consultation with the Commission, the Ordination Council sets the date for ordination.
 11. The ordination service will be planned by the chair of the Ordination Council (or an appointed representative), the host pastor and the Regional Minister, in consultation with the ordained. The planning committee will use the service provided by the Region. The service may be adapted. However, we expect this structure to serve as the basic form.
 12. Participates in the Ordination Service, especially in the Laying on of Hands.

The Candidate:

- A. Writes a letter to the Regional Minister stating their interest in exploring ministry within the church, their education plans and their desire to seek in-care status with the Commission on the Ministry.
- B. Requests that the home congregation write a letter of support, from the Chair of the Board and the Pastor, to the Regional Minister.
- C. Calls the Regional Office to request and attend a scheduled interview at a regular meeting of the Commission on the Ministry.
- D. Receives a letter from the Commission on the Ministry regarding their decision to the place of the Candidate in-care.
- E. The candidate identifies and requests a congregation to sponsor them during the in-care and ordination process.
- F. Pursues their educational work and appropriate field-work participating in regular meetings with the In-Care Committee.
- G. Submits all documents as requested by the In-Care Committee.
- H. Requests that the In-Care Committee formally consider the Candidate for ordination and with the support of the Committee writes to the Commission on the Ministry stating their intention.
- I. Asks the following individuals to send letters of recommendation to the Commission on the Ministry:
 - a. Letter of reference from sponsoring congregation;
 - b. A seminary professor with direct knowledge of the candidate's work;
 - c. Three individuals who can attest to the Candidate's qualification for the ministry.
- J. Receives approval from the Commission on the Ministry to proceed with consideration for ordination.
- K. Writes a Theology of Ministry paper. The 15 - 20 page paper reflects the Candidate's understanding of: Theology, the Nature and Mission of the Church, and the Role of the Professional Ministry.
- L. Submits all appropriate transcripts and other papers required by the Ordination Council.
- M. Meets with the Ordination Council as requested for examination and review of the Theology of Ministry paper and their fitness for ordained ministry.
- N. Receives approval for ordination from the Commission on Ministry following the recommendation of the Ordination Council.
- O. In consultation with the Ordination Council, Commission on the Ministry and the Regional Minister, sets the date for ordination.

1. The minister should suggest to the Church Board and/or any other appropriate body that they spend parts of each meeting discussing these Guidelines until they have worked through the entire document.
2. A sufficient number of copies should be available to provide:
 - a supply of extra copies for future use
 - a copy for each discussion group participant
 - copies for each "New Member packet"
 - copies for each new board member
 - copies for the church library (available to any church member)
3. Schedule a series of congregational discussions - publicize the dates and places.
4. After thorough discussion in various classes, committees, groups, and/or the cabinet, the Board is encouraged to submit its recommendation to the Congregation for adoption of the guidelines.
5. In studying each section of the Guidelines it will make the process more personal and helpful if the following questions are discussed:
 - a. How do the suggested scriptures and Disciple traditions inform our consideration of this part of the Guidelines? Are there other scriptures and parts of the Disciple tradition that would enhance the study of this section?
 - b. What are the implications of this (these) statement(s)? What does it mean? Why was it included? What are the problems or concerns it addresses?
 - c. What is our congregation's policy at this point? How have we handled such situations in the past? How do we want to handle them in the future?
 - d. What specific steps should be taken to fulfill our responsibilities on this point? To what person or group should the responsibility be assigned?
 - e. Would we be willing approve this part of the Guidelines? If not, what changes are suggested?
 - f. How can our congregation put the principles of these Guidelines into practice?

SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCE MATERIALS

Following each of the seven sections of the document there is a box (lines) that begins with the statement "For Study Refer To:" Inside the box are two sets of information: 1) *Scripture*, and 2) *Disciples Tradition*. If there are letter designations beside them [a., b., c., d., etc.], the remarks correspond to the letter designations in the preceding section of the document. If there are no letter designations, the remarks apply to the preceding section in general. The following materials quoted in the study section of the Guidelines were authored by Alexander Campbell:

The Christian System
The Campbell-Owen Debate
The Millennial Harbinger

XIII. RESOLUTION CONCERNING ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR CONGREGATIONAL CONDUCT

Resolution No. 8921
ADOPTED by the General Assembly

WHEREAS, the Executive committee, Board, and Regional Assembly of the Christian Church in Kansas (Disciples of Christ) perceive tension and distrust between all levels of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) -- congregations, pastors, districts/areas, regions, general units, and recognized organizations--and we seek to help establish and strengthen mutual relationships of trust and covenant between all facets of the church; and

WHEREAS, this discord is most evident in the growing number of churches throughout our regions experiencing conflict, conflict which too often raises ethical questions concerning the relationship of pastor and parish; and

WHEREAS, in the early 1950's the Local Church Life Committee of the Home and State Missions Planning Council of the United Christina Missionary Society published "A Code of Ethics for Local Congregations;" and

WHEREAS, the Christian Church in Kansas (Disciples of Christ) recently completed the first major revision of this code since its original publication, working through several drafts before these "Ethical Guidelines For Congregational Conduct" were received and recommended for use in Kansas' congregations by our 1988 regional Assembly; and

WHEREAS, this document offers practical helps in dealing with congregational life that is both scriptural and Disciple in its orientation, and addresses the priority of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) "to develop vital congregations as dynamic faith communities in prophetic, redemptive, and reconciling ministries to the whole world" (General Assembly Resolution 8730);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, July 28-August 2, 1989, receive these "Ethical Guidelines For Congregational Conduct" for use as regions and congregations deem proper.

ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR CONGREGATIONAL CONDUCT STUDY SUGGESTIONS

P. In consultation with the chair of the Ordination Council (or an appointed representative), the host pastor, and the Regional Minister, the candidate will help plan the ordination service. The planning committee will use the service provided by the Region. This service may be adapted. However, we expect this structure to serve as the basic form.

The Sponsoring Congregation:

1. Provides the Pastor and two Elders for the In-Care Committee/Ordination Council.
2. Supports and nurtures the Candidate in their work and faith development.
3. Writes a letter at the request of the Candidate to attest to the Candidate's fitness for ministry.
4. Issues invitation and hosts the Ordination Service and Reception.
5. Participates in the Ordination Service.

iii) THE PROCESS FOR ORDINATION OF INDIVIDUALS TRAINED AT NON-DISCIPLE SEMINARIES

In the manual, Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Northwest Regional Christian Church, are found four sections, which pertain to the process leading to ordination. The section, entitled "Office of the Ordained Minister to Implement within the Northwest Region," in the III part "i" section, was replaced by "The Process for Ordination Guidelines - adopted October 8, 1993." As a supplement to that process, the process described below establishes guidelines for those individuals seeking ordination, who were trained at seminaries not affiliated with the Disciples of Christ.

Description of the Process for ordination of Non-Disciple Trained Individuals

1. *This process applies to individuals* seeking ordination in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), whose training has been completed in a seminary not affiliated with the Disciples of Christ.
2. *The intent* of this process is to recognize and affirm the theological training that these individuals have received and to educate and prepare these individuals in the life of Disciples through a course of study and mentoring.

3. *The process begins* with personal contact with the Regional Minister and subsequent submission of application materials. The process will be administered by the Commission on the Ministry of the Northwest Region.

The Process

Application for consideration

1. An individual seeking ordination in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), whose training has been completed in a seminary not affiliated with the Disciples of Christ should submit an application to the Regional Minister, who shall forward the same to the Commission on the Ministry. The application should contain:
 1. A letter of motivation and intent to become ordained in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ);
 2. A listing of all educational training and degrees (dates, institutions, locations);
 3. Transcripts from undergraduate and seminary programs;
 4. Letters of reference from at least two professors in seminary;
 5. Letter of reference from pastor and lay leader of recent congregation;
 6. Listing of work history for past five years (include a contact person for each work environment).

All applicants for licensure or Ordination must consent to a criminal background check.

2. Upon completion of all items of the application (Section A) and following evaluation of individual's training and work history, the Commission on the Ministry will request an in-person interview, regarding background education, and faith journey. At this interview, the individual should be prepared:
 1. To give a statement of their faith (What do I believe?)
 2. Explain why they were not ordained in the faith tradition in which they were trained;
 3. Explain why they want to be ordained by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Next steps can include, but not be limited to the following:

- a. Substantiation of the charges
 - b. Meeting with the leadership of the pastor's congregation
 - c. Enrolling either or both parties in a program of therapy
 - d. Recommending disciplinary action to the Commission on the Ministry
 - e. Finding the allegations to be without merit
 - f. other.
8. A meeting is called involving the two parties where these findings are reported. Each party may bring a support person. The primary objective of this meeting shall be the reconciliation (if possible) of the two parties. Any further recommended actions will be shared with the two parties at this time.
 9. Next steps, if any, will be implemented following that meeting.

Adopted by the Commission on the Ministry Northwest Regional Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ) September 26, 1997

XII. Amendment Process

Amendments to these Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) may be made by a two-thirds vote of the members of the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) present and voting, providing such amendment shall have been mailed to the members of the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) at least 30 days prior to the time of the vote.

Amendments to these Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) may also be made by a majority vote of the voting members of the General Assembly present and voting, providing such amendment shall have been regularly filed 180 days in advance of the meetings of the General Assembly and circulated among the congregations and regions 60 days in advance of the General Assembly.

Amendments to these Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Northwest Region may be made by a two-thirds vote of the members of the Regional Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Northwest Region present and voting, providing such amendments shall have been mailed to the members of the regional board at least 30 days prior to the time of the vote.

6. Response Team B meets with the pastor against whom the allegations have been brought.
 - a. The purpose of the meeting is to outline the process which will be followed and to provide the pastor opportunity to tell his/her story. The pastor may have a support person present. It is essential that the Team take the pastor seriously, to express the concern of the wider Christian community, and to offer pastoral and/or professional counsel, if desired.
 - b. Response Team A shall also:
 1. Appoint a recorder who will maintain an accurate record of the plaintiff's statement;
 2. Discourage the pastor from initiating contact with the complainant at this time, nor to disclose the name of the complainant to others; that, to do so, will be considered a breach of professional ethics and can become the basis for an additional complaint.
 3. Draw a distinction between the church's jurisdiction in terms of ministerial authorization from civil and criminal jurisdictions.
 4. Clarify the extent and limits of confidentiality in these procedures, being sure the pastor understands that confidentiality, while desirable, cannot be fully assured.
 5. Reserve the right to meet with and share the complaint with appropriate representatives of the minister's church or calling body.
 - c. Response Team B prepares a written report of its findings.
 1. A copy of the report is shared with the Region's attorney.
 2. With the attorney's approval, the report is shared with the pastor who is invited to comment upon it in writing.
 3. The report is also shared with Response Team A, the Chair of the Commission on the Ministry and the Regional Minister.
7. Response Teams A & B meet with the Chair of the Commission on the Ministry, the Regional Minister, the Region's attorney and any other specialist deemed important to the process by the Regional Minister. The purpose of this meeting is to determine [a] the veracity of the allegations, and [b] the next steps to be pursued.

3. Following the interview, the Commission on the Ministry will complete their evaluation of the application. Upon approval, the applicant will be assigned an advocate from the Commission on the Ministry and enter a period of education and training.

Period of Education and Training in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

The applicant is asked to engage in an approximately one year period of training and education, in which the goal is to acquaint the applicant with the Disciples of Christ: its history and polity, its church life and Christian education, its role in the community and with people, and the focus of communion, the Bible, and service within its congregations.

Upon approval for education and training, the applicant will present to the Commission on the Ministry a proposal of his/her process to accomplish the following objectives. This proposal should be made with the concurrence of the applicant's home congregation and the applicant's mentor.

1. Participation in the church life in our region.
 - The individual must join and participate in the life of a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) congregation.
 - The individual must attend three Disciples of Christ congregations for four Sundays each (contiguous if possible)
 - Engage in regional events, such as:
 - Regional Assembly (general assembly, if possible);
 - Clergy retreats/lectureships;
 - Area clergy meetings;
 - Outdoor ministries.
2. Mentoring program of one year.
 - i. With the concurrence of the Commission on the Ministry the individual shall engage in a mentoring relationship with a minister in the region, most likely the minister of their home congregation.
 - ii. Complete a process of reading and study from a reading list provided by the Commission on the Ministry.

- iii. Participate in regional and area education events.
- 3. Articulation of experience in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and statement of theology.

Process Paper.

* A paper will be submitted to the Commission on the Ministry that represents the individuals reflection on their experiences in Disciple fellowship through their home congregation, their visits with other congregations, and participation in regional events.

Position Paper.

* The individual will submit to the Commission on the Ministry a paper on their statement of theology, the nature and mission of the Church and the role of professional ministry.

- 4. Evaluation of period of education and training in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

At 6 months:

The applicant will submit a progress report to their advocate.

The applicant's mentor will be asked to communicate with the advocate about the applicant's progress.

At 9 months:

The applicant will submit the process paper to the Commission on the Ministry for review.

At 12 months:

The applicant will submit the position paper to the Commission on the Ministry for review.

The mentor will submit a written report of the applicant's progress to the Commission on the Ministry.

At the next regularly scheduled meeting, the individual will appear before the Commission for the purpose of defending their position paper and for final assessment by the Commission.

- 4. The chairperson of the Commission on the Ministry shall appoint two Response Teams within 72 hours of receiving the complaint, Team A to meet with the Complainant and Team B to meet with the pastor charged. Each Response Team shall be composed of two persons, male and female, one of whom shall be a layperson and the other a clergy person.
- 5. Response Team A meets with the complainant.
 - a. The purpose of the meeting is to outline the process which will be followed and to provide opportunity to tell his/her story. The complainant may have a support person present. It is essential that the Team take the complainant seriously, to express the concern of the wider Christian community, and to offer pastoral and/or professional counsel, if desired.
 - b. Response Team A shall also:
 - 1. Appoint a recorder who will maintain an accurate record of the complainant's statement;
 - 2. Determine if the Complainant is aware of other persons who believe they have experienced similar unethical conduct by the pastor in question;
 - 3. Determine what restrictions, if any, the complainant places upon the sharing of this information and clarify how and to whom the complainant wishes to have this matter made known.
 - 4. Clarify the extent and limits of confidentiality in these procedures, being sure the complainant understands that confidentiality, while desirable, cannot be fully assured.
 - 5. Ascertain the extent to which the complainant is willing to participate in the investigation and proceedings.
 - c. Response Team A prepares a written report of its findings.
 - 1. A copy of the report is shared with the Region's attorney.
 - 2. With the attorney's approval, the report is shared with the pastor who is invited to comment upon its accuracy in writing.
 - 3. The report is also shared with Response Team B, the Chair of the Commission on the Ministry and the Regional Minister.

complicating the problem), and not create a situation in which the Region becomes vulnerable to criticism.

HOW THE PROCESS WORKS

1. All complaints are to be submitted in writing to the Regional Minister. No action will be taken by the Commission on the Ministry without a written complaint. The written complaint should contain the following information:
 - a. Description of the event or experience during which the alleged inappropriate or unethical behavior has taken place.
 - b. Explanation of how the Complainant or other people were affected by the behavior.
 - c. Identification of the elements of the Region's Sexual Ethics Policy which have been violated.
 - d. Statement of what action is requested or suggested to be taken by the Commission on the Ministry, or by some other church body or church officer.
2. In the case of allegations of improper professional conduct which are rumored, it is the responsibility of the Regional Minister to pursue them and, if finding them to actually exist, to encourage the complainant to file a written complaint.
3. Upon receipt of a written complaint, the Regional Minister shall:
 - a. Acknowledge receipt of the complaint, determine the bounds of confidentiality, outline the process which will be followed by the Commission on the Ministry, and offer his/her pastoral support.
 - b. Inform the chairperson of the Commission on the Ministry of receipt of the complaint and encourage him/her to appoint Response Teams to investigate the allegations.
 - c. Inform the pastor against whom the complaint has been registered, providing him/her with a summary of the complaint and encouraging him/her to prepare a written response, outline the process which will be followed by the Commission on the Ministry, and offer his/her pastoral support.

Book List

1. Journey in Faith: History of the Christian Church. Lester McAllister and William Tucker.
2. People of the Chalice: Disciples of Christ. Colbert S. Cartwright.
3. The Faith We Affirm: Basic Beliefs of Disciples of Christ. Ronald E. Osborn.
4. Baptism and Belonging. Edited by Keith Watkins.
5. Joined in Discipleship. Mark G. Toulouse (revised and expanded version).
6. From Mainline to Frontline. Richard Hamm.
7. Seeking an Identity. D. Duane Cummins and Robert L. Friedly.
8. The Holy Bible
9. DisciplesWorld magazine

IV. THE OFFICE OF LICENCED MINISTER

- General Church Policies

THE OFFICE OF LICENCED MINISTER

A. Description of the Office. Authorization for representative ministry in specific situations and with periodic review is conferred by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) upon men and women whom it sets apart for the office of licensed minister. By the act of licensing, the church recognizes that licensed persons, in fulfilling their calling as servants of God, possess abilities, qualities and preparation needed for the performance of their assigned functions; accepts their ministry in and for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and for the whole body of Christ; promises to undergird that ministry in the prescribed area of responsibility as a representative of the church. (State/Provincial laws may vary in their recognition of license. The granting of license does not, therefore,

necessarily meet all legal requirements for the performance of marriages and other legal functions.)

B. Authority to license on behalf of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Within these policies and criteria as established by the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the regions and their related congregations share responsibility for licensing. Specifically assigned to the regions is the responsibility to establish procedures to evaluate candidates, care for their nurture, define their prescribed area of responsibility, authorize licensing, and supervise the act of licensing.

C. Classifications within the Office of Licensed Minister. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) recognizes classifications within the office of licensed minister, each of which carries its own title and limitations.

1. The Commissioned Church Worker.
 - a. Men and women licensed as commissioned church workers are authorized to perform specialized functions as stated in the license. These functions ordinarily will be ministerial in purpose, although under some circumstances, such as service in other countries, the work authorized by the license may be of some other type.
 - b. The term of service is stated on the license and is determined by the candidate's vocational intention, the kind of service authorized, and the recommendation of the region granting the license.
2. The Licensed Lay Preacher.
 - a. Men and women licensed as lay preachers are authorized to perform general ministerial functions under supervision in the region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) granting the license.
 - b. The geographical area within which the licensed lay preacher may function and the term of service are stated on the license.
3. The Licensed Theological Student.
 - a. Men and women licensed as theological students are authorized to perform general ministerial functions under the supervision of the educational institution and the region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) granting the license.
 - b. The geographical area within which the licensed theological student may function is stated on the license, which is issued for one year, subject to renewal.

D. The Act of Licensing.

Regional Minister. It is the recommendation of the Working Group that the Regional Minister be fully-involved in the process, but not to the degree that it may prevent him/her from exercising the pastoral duties of the office.

The Working Group is concerned that a process be in place prior to the arrival of a new Regional Minister, and that it be constructed in such a way as to take advantage of the multiple gifts of lay and clergy persons throughout the Region.

Following is the process recommended to the Commission by its Pastoral Misconduct Working Group.

ASSUMPTIONS

1. From time-to-time, it is to be expected that pastoral misconduct will be alleged in the Region.
2. Any alleged pastoral misconduct deserves to be treated with great seriousness.
3. The Northwest Region has been fortunate in experiencing fewer incidents of this nature than many Regions (two incidents over the past seventeen years). There is no need for constructing an overly- complicated implementation process disproportionate to the caseload anticipated.
4. The implementation process should involve people beyond the Regional Minister. Unless these people bring professional expertise to the task, they should undergo training.
5. Each member of the Region's Commission on the Ministry should undergo training, hopefully during the Commission's September, 1997, meeting.

KEY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of an intervention process in all alleged pastoral misconduct cases should include, but not limited to, the following:

- a. That the highest aim of this process shall result in the spiritual reconciliation of all parties;
- b. That the civil and personal rights of each party shall be honored and respected, and that due process will prevail; and
- c. That the process designed and implemented by the Region's Commission on the Ministry shall be considered helpful by each party (vs. further

- f. If it is determined that the professional's standing in the Northwest Regional Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) should be affected, the Regional Minister will discuss the case with the Chairperson of the Commission on the Ministry. If the chair agrees, consideration and action on the individual's standing will be placed on the agenda for the next commission meeting and the individual notified of the pending consideration.
- g. If the Regional Minister believes there is no reasonable evidence of sexual misconduct or exploitation and further corroborative is not secured, investigation of the allegation will be suspended and no record of the complaint placed in the individual's file.
- h. If it is clear there is no reasonable grounds for the complaint, the professional involved may request a statement from the Regional Minister, or designee, exonerating him/her of any misconduct or exploitation. In some cases the professional clergy person/counselor may become a victim of false allegations. Individuals in this situation are to be cared for as victims. The Regional Minister will suggest possible resources for counseling or treatment to assist in recovery. The Northwest Regional Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will provide a reasonable level of financial assistance to such individuals to gain access to appropriate counseling or treatment.

Policy Statement of Sexual Ethics adopted by the Commission on the Ministry-
January 1992

c) PROCESS FOR ALLEGED PASTORAL MISCONDUCT

HISTORY: The Northwest Regional Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) adopted a policy statement addressing Sexual Ethics for Professional Ministry (revised, 1992), published in the Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

CURRENT SITUATION: In January, 1997, the Region's Commission on the Ministry appointed a Working Group to [a] examine the continuing relevance of the policy statement, and [b] develop a more specific process for implementing the policy as circumstances may demand.

FINDINGS: The Working Group concluded that the policy continues to be relevant but feels that its implementations needs to involve more persons than the

1. The act of licensing shall be under the authorization and guidance of the region.
2. The candidate shall ordinarily be recommended for licensing by a recognized congregation or congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), including the one in which membership is held.
3. Representatives of the recommending congregation or congregations, the region, and, if possible, the general ecumenical church, ordinarily shall participate in the act of licensing.
4. The service shall ordinarily take place in the congregation.
5. The certificate of licensing shall be issued by the region and signed by appropriate officials of the church and participants in the ceremony.

E. The Right of Appeal. Applicants and candidates shall have the right of appeal from decision or prolonged inaction of the region to the General Board committee on ministerial standing.

F. Licensed ministers with standing are voting members of the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

- Implementation Procedures for the Northwest Region THE OFFICE OF LICENCED MINISTER

1. **The candidate for licensing** shall send a letter of request to the Regional Minister stating the situation and the need. In addition, an official transcript of academic achievements and a curriculum vita. All applicants for licensure or Ordination must consent to a criminal background check.
2. **The candidate** shall have submitted letters of recommendation from the local congregation providing information regarding the situation and the need leading to the request for licensing, and/or letters of recommendation from two persons. These names shall be sent to the Regional Minister and forwarded to the Commission on the Ministry.
3. **The candidate** shall be interviewed by either a special licensing committee of the Commission on the Ministry.

4. Following the interview, the Licensing Council will make recommendation to the Commission on the Ministry, which shall be responsible for issuing the license. The Commission on the Ministry shall also be responsible for the annual review of license.

V. MINISTERIAL STANDING

- General Church Policies MINISTERIAL STANDING

- A. Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
 1. Standing affirms that the ordained or licensed minister is presently engaged in the practice of ministry, whether on the occasional part-time or full-time basis, with continuous accountability maintained with a congregation, organization, related institution or regional or general unit of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Such ministers are listed in the Year Book and Directory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and may call upon the church for services and support such as location assistance, ecclesiastical endorsement, and scholarship aid; and have voting privileges in the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and the Assembly of the Northwest Christian Church if a resident of the Region.
 2. Responsibility for certification of standing of ministers and for periodic review of that standing within these policies and criteria is lodged with the regions, except in the case of those engaged in non-regional ministries for which these responsibilities concerning standing are lodged with the General Board committee on ministerial standing.
 3. For purposes of this policy statement, non-regional ministries are defined as all ministries outside the United States and Canada and those ministries engaged by and accountable to one of the general administrative units of the church. All other ministries are hereby defined as regional as determined by the primary work location of the minister.
- B. Standing of those Ordained or Licensed by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
 1. By virtue of ordination or licensing according to the criteria and procedures of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the minister becomes eligible for standing in the Order of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
 2. Standing is granted initially by the region in which the minister's service begins or by the General Board committee on ministerial standing.

The Northwest Regional Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall deal with any complaint alleging sexual misconduct or exploitation in the following manner:

The task of the assessment of the complaints or allegations shall be carried out by the Regional Minister or a person(s) designated by the Regional Minister and approved by the Chairperson of the Commission on the Ministry. Frequently, allegations of improper conduct will arrive in the form of verbal, second hand reports or requests for assistance from individuals with elected responsibility in a particular congregation. Occasionally, complaints will be received directly from involved parties. Because of the sensitivity of such charges, it shall be the responsibility of the Regional Minister, or designee, to use the following guidelines in the investigation and resolution of all such complaints, allegations or requests for assistance.

- a. The Regional Minister should inform the professional clergy person/counselor, against whom the allegations are made, of the reported misconduct or exploitation and allow the individual an opportunity to provide an explanation of his/her behavior in question.
- b. The Regional Minister shall ensure the privacy of the individuals involved in the activity is protected until he/she believes there is reasonable evidence of misconduct. At that time he/she will use his/her discretion but is free to disclose evidence and details to appropriate parties involved in the resolution of the misconduct.
- c. If the victim(s) of sexual misconduct or exploitation have no viable resources available for counseling or therapy, the Regional Minister will suggest possible resources for the victims to gain access to counseling and/or treatment. Because each professional is individually responsible for their actions the Northwest Regional Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will not necessarily assume financial responsibility for counseling assistance in such cases.
- d. If the Regional Minister believes there is reasonable evidence that sexual misconduct or exploitation has occurred, the Regional Minister shall counsel with the professional individual involved to provide pastoral care, seek resolution or treatment and follow appropriate legal procedures.
- e. The Regional Minister shall execute appropriate follow-up actions as necessary and document the incident to the extent he/she determines appropriate in the professional's file.

XI. Sexual Ethics

a) POLICY STATEMENT ON SEXUAL ETHICS FOR PROFESSIONAL MINISTRY FOR THE NORTHWEST REGIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

"... but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; continue in these things, for in doing this you will save both yourself and your hearers."

(1 Timothy 4:12-16, NRSV)

The nature of the ministry is such that the professional is in a unique and special relationship with those who she/he serves. Professional clergy people are in a position of power over congregational members or others who seek counsel, leadership, support or service. Any time professional clergy use the influence of the power entrusted to them to coerce or engage in suggestive behavior or sexual activity with those they have been called on to serve, they involve themselves in irresponsible and unethical acts which take advantage of vulnerable persons. Sexual exploitation or misconduct may take any variety of forms and is almost always secretive. These actions in the professional-client relationship damage the bonds of the covenant that tie Christians together as a community of faith.

It is for these reasons that the Northwest Regional Christian Church, Disciples of Christ adopted a policy on sexual ethics at the Regional Assembly in May, 1987. The policy reads as follows:

"Because the professional clergy person has the responsibility to exercise the power inherent in his/her position only in the authentic service of the constituent/client, and not to use the prerogatives of the position in any exploitation of the constituent/client, it shall be the policy of the Northwest Regional Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) that sexual exploitation/misconduct in the professional-client relationship between clergy and the constituent/client is condemned and calls for intervention by the Regional Minister."

- Implementation Procedures for the Northwest Region

b) SEXUAL ETHICS POLICY

3. Standing continues so long as the minister does the following:
 - a. Performs faithfully the duties of a minister as authorized by ordination or licensing, either in an occupation recognized by the church as ministerial in purpose [A person will not be continued in standing who is neither employed by, nor actively seeking employment in, nor accountable to a congregation, organization, related institution or regional or general unit of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)];
 - b. Participates in programs of study, research, growth, and renewal;
 - c. Maintains relations with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) including participating membership in a recognized congregation in the community where feasible;
 - d. Continues to meet the personal qualification for admission to the Order of Ministry (See Section I.C.1.a-c).
 4. The region or the General Board committee on ministerial standing will provide means by which the standing of all ministers in its care will be reviewed periodically.
 5. When a minister moves from one region to another, standing in the Order of Ministry is retained, except in the case of licensed lay ministers whose license limits their practice to a specific region. Responsibility for review and subsequent certification is assigned to the region in which the minister functions or to the General Board committee on ministerial standing.
 6. Ministers with standing at the time of retirement retain this standing except when a minister no longer meets the personal qualifications for admission to the Order of Ministry. (See Section I.C1.a-c)
- C. Admission to Standing of Persons Ordained or Licensed by Other Churches. Ministers ordained or licensed by other churches may be received into the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and granted standing as ordained or licensed ministers. Responsibility for this process is lodged with the region or the General Board committee on ministerial standing.
1. Temporary recognition of applicants shall be granted upon the fulfillment of the following requirements:
 - a. Consultation, whenever possible, with appropriate officials of the church from which the candidate transfers.

- b. Investigation of personal and ministerial references.
 - c. Filing of the Ministerial Record Form with the appropriate offices of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Temporary recognition does not constitute standing in the Order of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) but does enable the candidate to request assistance in relocation by general and regional offices of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Temporary recognition shall be reviewed annually by the body granting it, either the region or the General Board committee on ministerial standing.
2. A Certificate of Ministerial Recognition and admission to ministerial standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will be granted by the region or the General Board Committee on ministerial standing upon fulfillment of the following requirements:
- a. Membership in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) or recognition by the region of the applicant's participation in the life and work of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
 - b. Acquaintance with the history, polity, and practices of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
 - c. Fulfillment of the prerequisites and preparation for the Order of Ministry.
- D. Termination of Ministerial Standing. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall develop policies and criteria by which ministerial standing can be terminated. Until such time as these policies are developed, the following shall apply:
- 1. Procedures leading to a review of standing may be initiated by the minister or the region when one or more of the following conditions are present:
 - a. The minister desires to be released from the practice of ministry, either temporarily or permanently.
 - b. The minister requests transfer into the Order of Ministry of another church.
 - c. The minister enters into a full-time occupation not recognized by the church as ministerial in purpose and no longer performs the functions of a minister.
 - d. The minister discontinues active relationships with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

- Working co-operatively and 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
- Honoring all confidences which come to me in my role as minister and refraining from gossip
- Encouraging and participating in the regular evaluation of my ministry and co-operating 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

Relationship to Ministry Colleagues

- Engaging in covenant relationships with colleagues which involve nurture, discipline, family support, vigorous dialogue, mutual teaching/learning and spiritual formation
- Supporting colleagues in ministry and their families and not exploiting their problems or crises
- Performing pastoral services within a congregation or for a member of a congregation only at the invitation of the pastor of that congregation
- Supporting, and at no time speaking maliciously of, the ministry of my successor, or another minister in the congregation in which I hold membership
- Encouraging the ministry of my successor upon my retirement or departure from a ministerial position by refraining from interference or intrusion and making it clear to former parishioners that I am no longer their minister

Relationship to the Community and the Wider Church

- Participating responsibly in the life and work of my community, bearing prophetic witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and working toward a just and morally responsible society
- Participating faithfully in the life and work of all manifestations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- Seeking to know, understand and respect the diversity of opinions and people within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
- Being a responsible representative of the one Church of Jesus Christ and participating in activities which strengthens its unity, witness, and mission

Signature

- A) It is to be administered by a 3 member sub-committee of the Commission on the Ministry: The Regional Executive, the Chair of the Commission and one other member of the Commission.
- B) The sub-committee has the decision to determine the amount of the grant.
- C) Payment will be made directly to the vendor, when possible.
- D) A monthly report consisting of the amount and the purpose (but not the individual's name) will be made to the donor, using an appropriate form.

X. Ministerial Code of Ethics

Believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, proclaiming Him Lord and 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, and relying on the grace of God, I commit myself to the following ethical code:

Personal Conduct

- Witnessing to the ministry of Jesus Christ
- Dedicating time, strength, vitality and energy to effective ministry
- Growing in faith, knowledge and the practice of ministry through the spiritual disciplines, spiritual disciplines, study, continuing education, and service
- Living a life that honors my commitments to my family, including the need for privacy and time together
- Taking time for physical and spiritual renewal, recreation, and vacation
- Being a faithful steward of God's gifts to me by managing time, talents, and financial resources responsibly and generously
- Accepting responsibility for all debts which I incur
- Keeping physically and emotionally fit and refraining from substance abuse and other abuse behaviors
- Using my position, power, and authority for good and never for exploiting another
- Maintaining high moral standards in my sexual behaviors
- Regarding all persons with equal respect and concern and undertaking to minister impartially

Relationship to the Church I Serve

- Nurturing and offering my gifts for ministry to the church
- Calling forth and nurturing the gifts of others in the church and joining their gifts with mine for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ and the health of the church
- Preaching and teaching the gospel without fear or favor and speaking the truth in love
- Administering the sacraments and services of the church with integrity and not for financial gain

- e. The minister no longer meets the personal qualifications for admission to the Order of Ministry (See Section I.C.a-c.).
2. When the region or the General Board committee on ministerial standing takes the initiative in the review of standing, the procedures shall include:
 - a. Written notice to the minister that standing is to be reviewed with the possibility of termination.
 - b. A hearing by a committee appointed by the region or the General Board on ministerial standing.
 3. When the minister takes the initiative in the review, the procedure shall include:
 - a. Written notice to the Regional Minister of the General Board committee on ministerial standing requesting that standing be reviewed with the possibility of termination.
 - b. A consultation with a committee if appropriate.
 4. Standing may be granted to a minister whose standing has been terminated or suspended by another region or church only after thorough investigation of the reasons for the termination or suspension.
- E. Right of Appeal. All procedures and decisions with respect to standing, and especially those dealing with termination, may be appealed by the minister of region to the General Board Committee on ministerial standing. Appeal from the decision of the General Board Committee may be made to the Administrative Committee of the General Board for final decision.

- Implementation Procedures for the Northwest Region

i) MINISTERIAL STANDING

1. Standing will be reviewed annually.
2. The review shall be made by the Commission on the Ministry and the Regional Minister.
3. That the standing for ordained/licensed persons in special church or non-church related ministries shall be continued as long as accountability is maintained by:

- a. Continuing to perform the duties of a minister either in an occupation recognized by the church as ministerial in purpose or in service recognized by the church as ministerial in purpose.
- b. Maintaining a program of professional and ministerial growth.
- c. Maintaining a relationship with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) including participating membership in a recognized congregation in the person's community where feasible.
- d. In cases where ordained/licensed persons are not accountable to a Congregation, Region or General Unit of the church, the Commission on the Ministry in consultation with the Regional Minister and the person involved will select a four (4) person committee to enter into an accountability process.
 - d.1) This committee will report annually, in writing, to the Commission on the Ministry, the results and recommendations of its accountability process.
 - d.2) This committee would be initially selected for 1 & 2 year bienniums, i.e. ,2 persons for a 2 year term and 2 persons for a 4 year term. Selections thereafter would be for a 4 year term.
 - d.3) Either the Commission on the Ministry or other party could request a joint meeting.

Temporary recognition:

1. The person desiring temporary recognition will write a letter of request to the Commission on the Ministry through the Regional Minister.
2. The applicant will submit the following:
 - A letter of recommendation or introduction from an appropriate official of the denomination from which he or she comes.
 - A resume of ministerial service or curriculum vita and transcripts.
 - Letters from two individuals who are personal references, and letters from two individuals who are professional references.
 - The Commission on the Ministry will review the information submitted and interview the applicant, and where appropriate grant temporary recognition.
 - Temporary recognition will be granted for one year, at which time the status of the applicant will be reviewed.

8. Normally the grant could cover up to one-half the cost, not to exceed \$300.
9. Grants will be made only to those participating in programs that are recognized by some accrediting body beyond the institution or sponsoring organization; approved by a regional or general unit of the church; or endorsed by the Commission on the Ministry as a valid educational program for the participant.
10. All applicants for financial aid shall be submitted to the Commission on the Ministry through the Regional Office for evaluation by the Scholarship Committee by March 1 or September 1, with responses to be made to applicants within 30 days after each date.
11. Grants will be made upon completion of an application from which the following will include:
 - a. Description of program.
 - b. Personal statement of anticipated worth of program to applicant and perceived impact on present ministry.
 - c. A financial statement - How much you plan on paying, church paying, etc.
 - d. Cost of program - include travel, tuition, meals, lodging.
 - e. Amount requested.
 - f. Supply names, addresses and phone numbers of Board Chair and one other reference person that could be contacted.
12. To obtain application form, contact the Northwest Regional Christian Church:
6558 - 35th Ave. SW
Seattle, WA 98126

IX. PASTOR'S EMERGENCY FUND

PASTOR'S EMERGENCY FUND: NORTHWEST REGION

PURPOSE: THE PASTOR'S EMERGENCY FUND will be used for pastors and their families in times of extraordinary need. The Fund may be used for such things as food, clothing, shelter and career counseling.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE FUND

should be send to: A) Regional Minister where college is located; B) Local Pastor where college is located; and C) to student informing him or her of notification for A and B).

2. Request local church to inform Regional Office and/or Commission on the Ministry of any student who makes decision for church vocation.
3. Contact shall be made by Regional Minister and/or Commission on the Ministry as in B-1 of this section.
4. Make available information to students of Disciple Seminary opportunities, and inform seminaries as to location of students under care.

C. In-Care While At Seminary.

1. Maintain contact with individuals while at seminary through letters.
2. The Regional Minister shall be encouraged to visit the campus of the four (4) major Disciple Seminaries (Brite, Phillips, Lexington, and C. T. S.), and our Disciple Houses. Attention should be given to other seminaries such as Claremont, Pacific School of Religion, Chicago, and Vanderbilt, depending on the number of students and the Regional Minister's schedule.
3. Purpose of meeting and contact is for support, information, and dialogue in preparation for ordination. (Dialogues should also be made between Northwest Region and regions where seminaries are located.)

VIII. CONTINUING EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS

CONTINUING EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS : NORTHWEST REGION

1. Recipients shall be ministers in standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Northwest Region.
2. Priority shall be given to applicants for whom no other funds are known to be available.
3. Recipients shall have completed their basic theological education.
4. Grants will be given for advanced professional studies, as well as degrees like the M. A. and D. Min.
5. Candidates for graduate academic degrees will not receive grants for other than the first year of a program.
6. Recipients shall be limited to one grant in a twelve month period.
7. Normally the congregation, or other employer, shall be expected to pay part of the cost of the program for which aid is requested. A statement of board active relative to the employer's contribution shall be submitted with the application from an official other than the applicant.

At the end of the year of temporary recognition, the applicant will be asked to reaffirm their request for standing.

The Commission on the Ministry shall then take appropriate steps to determine that the requirements for standing have been met.

It is suggested that the appropriate announcement be made of the granting of standing by the region and congregation.

Dual Standing:

Standing may be granted to persons ordained or licensed by other churches (denominations) when serving in a position which combines a congregation or agency of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and another denomination. Such standing shall be automatically terminated when the relationship with the combined congregations or agencies is terminated.

1. The person desiring dual standing shall with a letter of request to the Commission on the Ministry through the Regional Minister.
2. The following shall accompany the letter:
 - a. Evidence of the person's ordination or licensing, and standing in present denomination, and a curriculum vita.
 - b. A statement of the position which makes the dual standing desirable.
3. Upon action by the Commission on the Ministry, immediate standing may be given, subject to the above stated limitations.

ii) CONCERNING THE PROCESS OF CLERGY WHO ARE SEEKING RE-INSTATEMENT OF STANDING WITHIN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) BY THE NORTHWEST REGION

Ordinarily, persons ordained to the Order of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will retain that ordination for the rest of their lives. Ministerial standing, however incurs obligations for both the ordained minister and the Church, which requires periodic review and adjustment. Commissions and committees on the Ministry are called to perform this review.

A decision to affirm or deny re-instatement of standing to any individual must come after careful and prayerful consideration of the qualifications

and motivation of the person seeking ministry in our tradition. The regional Commission on the Ministry must work within the instructions and procedures of the specific region, as well as the [Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry in the Christian Church \(Disciples of Christ\)](#).

The original termination of Standing of the individual by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) needs to be examined by the Commission. Copies of records pertinent to their prior standing should be obtained from the individual's permanent file with the Northwest Regional Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), or another region, and from the General office of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). This information should tell the Commission about the candidate's schooling, past ministry, why standing was withdrawn, or what happened in the minister's life or work that caused the lapse in standing. Confidentiality of course will be observed.

The individual shall be asked to:

1. Provide a letter of application for re-instatement of standing.
2. Show active membership and participation in a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) congregation.
3. Write a paper, detailing personal pilgrimage of faith, the meaning of the church and ministry in the world today, and the role of the minister in the Church.
4. Provide documentation of Ordination and previous standing with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
5. Solicit three letters of reference from both clergy and laity persons with recent knowledge of the individual, to include the writer's opinion on the individual's current fitness for ministry.
6. If requested by the Commission, a psychological evaluation by a qualified agency recommended by the Commission. The evaluation will be done at the individual's expense, and the individual will sign a release of permission for the evaluator to give the report to the chair of the Commission on Ministry. Confidentiality as pertaining to the report will be observed.

the request for review and counsel may be directed to the General board committee on Ministerial standing.

VII. VOCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR MINISTRY

- *General Church Policies*

VOCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR MINISTRY

A. Ministry as a vocation.

1. Encourage churches or clusters of churches to make available vocational training for youth.
 - a. The Public Schools. Contact school counselors to explore where the church can help. Explore with public education where input of church vocation can be made.
 - b. If public education is not available, then churches should be encouraged to offer some vocational guidance. This can be done through Regional Events, Districts or local associations. Help youth look at all vocations with church vocation as an option.
2. Names of anyone interested in church vocation should be forwarded to the Regional Office and Commission on the Ministry Chairperson.
 - a. Contact by Regional Minister through a letter and/or personal call. Purpose to encourage youth by giving support, answering questions, and having personal contact.
 - b. Give guidance to students upon entering undergraduate school as to options available.
 - c. Contact from Region, Commission on Ministry, and Local Pastor should be continued until student enters college.
3. Pastors should be encouraged to present to high school students the option of the church vocation.
 - a. Any interested names should be forwarded to the Regional Office and Commission on the Ministry.
 - b. Support and contact should be continued as in A-2.
4. It is understood that all the above contacts are to be presented as options for insights and understanding and that emotional pressure shall not be applied.

B. In-Care While At College. (For those students in pre-seminary courses.)

1. Maintain contact with those students whose names have been received with personal contact at least once a year by the Regional Minister. (It is understood that this contact is for individuals attending college within our Region. For those attending college outside the Northwest Region, a letter

- a. Ministers will provide information for a personnel file to the Division of Homeland Ministries, Department of Ministry, upon entry into the ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and maintain current data in that file. For purposes of relocation, the ministerial Record Form and the Relocation Assistance Form will be reproduced as prepared and submitted by the minister. A brief supplemental resume or statement may be included.
- b. Ministers will utilize the relocation process of the region in which the minister is located when a move is desired within that region. If relocation is desired beyond the region where the minister is presently serving, relocation assistance may be requested from the Division of Homeland Ministries, Department of Ministry, and the appropriate region.
- c. Ministers will provide the region or the Division of Homeland Ministries, Department of Ministry with reference material that will be held in confidence once received by the region or department if a waiver has been signed by the minister.
- d. Ministers will negotiate with only one congregation at a time. A search committee and candidate are in negotiation when both agree that they will not discuss relocation with any other search committee or candidate until the expiration of a mutually agreed upon date. It is the obligation of the minister to be specific with the congregation about the degree of interest.
- e. Ministers will stay in communication with search committees who have indicated interest, especially informing a congregation immediately when a decision has been made not to consider accepting a call to that particular congregation.
- f. Ministers will contact the appropriate region if they wish to be a candidate for a specific congregation in that region, and request that their name be submitted to the search committee. Ministers will not initiate the relocation process by contacting the congregation directly.
- g. Ministers will advise the region, if contacted directly by a congregation, should mutual interest in exploring a possible call be determined.
- h. Ministers will advise the region where currently located, the region where moving, and the Division of Homeland Ministries, Department of Ministry, as soon as a call has been accepted.

D. Right of Review and Counsel. The right of review and counsel is limited to perceived violations of Section VI of Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry and should be initiated with the appropriate region, institution or general unit. A request for review and counsel beyond the region shall be to the Division of Homeland Ministries, Department of Ministry. If the perceived violation involved the department,

The Commission on the Ministry must examine with great care the qualifications and circumstances of each individual asking re-instatement of standing, endeavoring to be both pastoral to the individual and responsible to the faith community in which standing is being sought. Ministry requires skill, preparation, fitness, multiple gifts, and an evident commitment to the Christ of faith and the faith community that bears Christ's name. Most likely, this entire review process will require some time. It is neither wise nor appropriate for any persons seeking standing once again to expect to receive it immediately. During the time of waiting, the individual will be given a suggested Reading List prepared by the Commission, and shall be asked to participate in Regional events.

Upon recommendation by the Commission on the Ministry, standing will be granted, upon which will be reviewed annually as per the policy of the Northwest Regional Christian Church. A letter of recognition will be given to the individual.

January 7, 1995

VI. MINISTERIAL RELOCATION

- General Church Policies
MINISTERIAL RELOCATION

A. The General Principle. Ministerial relocation is the term applied to the process developed to facilitate the employment of ordained and licensed ministers who hold standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). It provides a covenantal framework within which ministers and the general, regional and congregational manifestations of the church can serve to upbuild the whole church of Jesus Christ.

Freedom and responsibility are inherent in the tradition of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). General, regional and congregational manifestations of the church are accorded full freedom to issue ministerial calls within their own established or constitutional provisions. Ministers, likewise, are accorded full freedom to accept or reject a call to any particular service. All, however, covenant to work within these policies in the interest of assuring an orderly and responsible system of ministerial relocation.

B. Operating Principles.

1. Ordained ministers with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will have complete and unhindered access to the ministerial relocation process of the church.
2. Licensed ministers with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will have access to the ministerial relocation process in the region for which their ministry is licensed.
3. Congregations, regions, institutions and general units of the church will be provided assistance when so desired in their search for ministerial leadership.
4. Any minister's relocation file in the Division of Homeland Ministries, Department of Ministry, will be open to the minister concerned, except for confidential references for which waiver has been signed.
5. Confidentiality, when assured to the persons completing the reference forms, will not be violated.
6. Ordained ministers with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) may have their names considered for any ministerial position for which they are qualified following the selection process used for the position.
7. Ordained ministers with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall have access to information regarding available ministerial openings in the church.
8. Every congregation, region, institution and general unit will strive to be open to the ministry of all persons, putting aside prejudice, and considering candidates based on gifts and skills for ministry rather than such givens as race, ethnic origin, sex, age, or physical disability.

C. Responsibilities.

1. Congregations. Within the tradition of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), congregations have the right and responsibility to seek and call their own leadership, establish the terms of employment, undergird the ministry, and to effect terminations within their own procedures. In the ministerial relocation process, congregations will function within the covenantal relationship to the whole church.
 - a. Congregations will advise regions of impending vacancies and work within the regional procedures to receive advice and counsel in seeking ministerial leadership.
 - b. Congregations will have freedom to consider any ordained minister with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The congregation should inform the region and request biographical and reference material on all ministers it wishes to consider.
 - c. Congregations will keep the region informed of all names being considered, including persons who apply directly to the congregation and persons whose names are suggested by members of the congregation.

- d. The Division of Homeland Ministries will collect and release reference material to regions, congregational search committees or general units upon permission of the minister applying for relocation assistance.
- e. The Division of Homeland Ministries will protect the confidentiality of references when confidentiality has been promised.
- f. The Division of Homeland Ministries will secure permission from any minister not actively seeking relocation before releasing references to a search committee. The minister has the right to know the name and location of the interested congregation. Permission need not be secured for the release of the Ministerial Record Form or biographical information.
- g. The Division of Homeland Ministries will secure, maintain, and release to regions, and on request, to ministers who have applied for relocation assistance, a list of staff vacancies in regions, general units, of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and ecumenical organizations.
- h. The Division of Homeland Ministries will make available educational and informational materials regarding the relocation system to congregations, regions, institutions, and general units.
- i. The Division of Homeland Ministries will refer all requests from congregations for names of potential candidates to the appropriate region.
- j. The Division of Homeland Ministries will refer all theological students seeking student preaching/pastoral positions to the field education office of the appropriate institution or to the region in the case of students in non-related institutions of higher education.
- k. The Division of Homeland Ministries will refer all persons seeking academic appointments to the Division of Higher Education and all persons seeking interim-supply positions to the Pension Fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
- l. The Division of Homeland Ministries will share with regions, and where appropriate, general units, the record any official action by a region's Commission on the Ministry concerning the conduct of a minister who is entering the relocation process.

8. Ministers. Ordained and licensed ministers with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have both freedom and responsibility within these policies and criteria. They have the freedom to accept or reject any call offered to them, to negotiate whatever contracts of employment or service seem appropriate, and to have access to the relocation process of the church. In the ministerial location process, the ministers will function within the covenantal relationship of the whole church.

retired clergy in interim and supply ministries. In the ministerial relocation process. The Pension Fund will function within the covenantal relationship of the whole church.

- a. The Pension Fund will maintain current lists and appropriate biographical data on clergy with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who desire to be considered for interim or supply work and periodically make such lists available to the regions.
 - b. The Pension Fund will refer requests from congregations seeking interim or supply leadership to the regions.
 - c. The Pension Fund will refer requests from ministers seeking relocation assistance to the Division of Homeland Ministries, Department of Ministry.
6. The Division of Higher Education. The Division of Higher Education is charged with responsibility for coordinating a referral system of both academic and administrative leadership in institutions of higher education related to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and notification of openings in campus ministries in related institutions and in United Campus Ministries. In the ministerial relocation process, the Division of Higher Education will function within the covenantal relationship of the whole church.
- a. The Division of Higher Education will compile and maintain appropriate personnel and academic dossiers on persons who desire employment in higher education ministries.
 - b. The Division of Higher Education will refer all requests from congregations for candidates' names to appropriate regions.
 - c. The Division of Higher Ministries will refer all clergy seeking relocation assistance in ministries other than higher education to the division of Homeland Ministries, Department of Ministry.
7. The Division of Homeland Ministries. The Department of Ministry is the primary locus of the ministerial records of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and is responsible for coordinating the relocation process of the church. In the ministerial relocation process the Division of Homeland Ministries will function within the covenantal relationships of the whole church.
- a. The Division of Homeland Ministries will maintain the personnel files for all ministers in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
 - b. The Division of Homeland Ministries will maintain the Ministers directory of the Year Book and Directory reflecting the current listing of ministers with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as reported to the department as by regions.
 - c. The Division of Homeland Ministries will receive, reproduce and make available relocation assistance materials of ministers with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to regions and general units. The Ministerial Record Form will be reproduced as prepared and submitted by the minister.

- d. Congregations will treat with confidentiality all information including personal biographical information and reference material, taking care to insure that the information does not go beyond the search committee. When the call has been issued and accepted, all records relating to the minister called to serve, including any minutes of the search committee regarding that minister shall be given to the Regional office for reasons of safe keeping and confidentiality. All records relating to other candidates in the search process shall be destroyed.
 - e. Congregations may talk with a number of ministers concurrently but will negotiate with only one minister at a time. A search committee and candidate are in negotiation when both agree that they will not discuss relocation with any other candidate or search committee until the expiration of a mutually agreed upon date. It is the obligation of the search committee to be specific with the minister about its degree of interest.
 - f. Congregations will issue a written call providing copies of the call for the congregation, the minister, and the region.
 - g. Congregations will provide a fair salary (including parsonage provision) within the capabilities of the congregation, as well as adequate benefits (pension, health insurance, continuing education and Social Security offset).
 - h. Congregations will provide for the reimbursement of church-related expenses to cover actual expenses of accomplishing ministry.
 - i. Congregations will stay in communication with candidates whom the search committee has contacted, especially informing candidates who are no longer being considered for the position.
2. Regions. Regions bear the primary responsibility for providing advice and counsel to both the congregations and ministers in matters of ministerial relocation. Regions may delegate or share this responsibility with their subdivisions, e.g., areas or districts. In the ministerial relocation process regions will function within the covenantal relationship of the whole church.
- a. Each region will provide advice and counsel to congregations either at the request of the congregation or at the initiation of the region when it is known that new ministerial leadership is being or will be sought.
 - b. Each region will receive and review all ministerial relocation materials from the Division of Homeland Ministries, Department of Ministry, giving special attention to those persons who have indicated an interest in their region.
 - c. Each region will refer all ministers within the region who wish to seek relocation outside the region to the Division of Homeland Ministries, Department of Ministry, for entry into the relocation process.

- d. Each region will share with search committees biographical and reference materials on candidates regardless of their race, ethnic origin, sex, age or physical disability.
 - e. Each region will share with specific search committees biographical and reference materials on any minister with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who requests consideration in that congregation.
 - f. Each region will maintain a list of churches seeking ministerial leadership in the region and make it available upon request to ministers who are seeking relocation.
 - g. Each region will secure permission from any minister not actively seeking relocation before releasing references to a search committee. The minister has the right to know the name and location of the interested congregation.
 - h. Each region will provide, upon request of ministers seeking relocation, a list of congregations which have received their biographical and reference material.
 - i. Each region will treat with confidentiality all material on the Regional Ministers Reference Form and confidential material reported on page one of the Relocation Assistance Form.
 - j. Each region will communicate to the Division of Homeland Ministries, Department of Ministry, and to other regions any official action by its commission on the ministry concerning the conduct of a minister. The minister shall be informed and given a copy of the report which also will be placed in the minister's file.
 - k. Each region will refer all requests for assistance from congregations outside the region to the appropriate Regional Office.
 - l. Each region will notify the Division of Homeland Ministries, Department of Ministry, monthly of all relocations occurring within, to or from the region.
 - m. Each region will grant provisional standing, for the purpose of entering the relocation process, to senior theological students whose ordinations have been authorized in their region and to ordained ministers from other denominations who have been given temporary recognition and are in the process of transferring standing to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
 - n. Each region will make information available about vacancies to be filled on the regional staff through such channels as regional publications and the Division of Homeland Ministries, Department of Ministry.
3. Educational institutions. The undergraduate departments of religion and the theological education institutions have unique responsibilities with the

respect to the relocation process of the church. Each relates to a limited number of congregations in which pre-theological and theological students may be employed. The theological institutions have responsibility for relating their graduating students who are candidates for standing as ordained ministers in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to the relocation processes of the church. In the ministerial relocation process, educational institutions will function within the covenantal relationship of the whole church.

- a. Educational institutions will relate to congregations served by students upon approval of the region in matters pertaining to the employment of students during their pre-theological and theological education.
 - b. Educational institutions will refer requests from congregations for relocation assistance to the appropriate regional office when the congregation is one that is not a student congregation.
 - c. Education institutions will co-operate with regions seeking candidates by announcing position vacancies when received. Any nominations or applications for such positions shall be made through the appropriate regional office.
 - d. Educational institutions will co-operate with regions in orienting seminary students to the relocation process of the church.
4. General Units. Except for those units with assigned responsibilities, i.e., The Pension Fund, the Division of Higher Education, and the Division of Homeland Ministries, Department of Ministry, general units and their staff will not engage in programs or practices related to ministerial relocation. In the ministerial relocation process, general units will function within the covenantal relationship of the whole church.
- a. General units will call their own staff, establish terms of employment, undergird their staff and effect terminations within their own procedures.
 - b. General units will refer all requests for relocation assistance to the Division of Homeland Ministries, Department of Ministry.
 - c. General units will refrain from making nominations to congregations for ministerial vacancies. Refer requests for candidate's names to the appropriate region.
 - d. General units will make information available about vacancies to be filled within the general units through such channels as regional publications and the Division of Homeland Ministries, Department of Ministry.
 - e. General units will notify the Division of Homeland Ministries, Department of Ministry, of vacancies in ecumenical and experimental ministries, when known, so the information can be made available to clergy seeking relocation for such positions.
5. The Pension Fund. The Pension Fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is charged with responsibility for coordinating the employment of