

ORDER OF MINISTRY POLICIES

for

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
of Northern California-Nevada

Incorporating. . .

“The Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry”

(as approved by the General Board and General Assembly
of the Christian Church [Disciples of Christ])

and

“Regional Procedures”

(of the Christian Church [Disciples of Christ] of
Northern California-Nevada, as approved by the
Regional Board of Directors)

Fall 1998 Reviewed and endorsed by staff

Summer/fall 1998, reviewed by Pastoral Leadership and Care

Regional Board consideration 2/99 and 6/99

Reviewed by Dwight Carlson, Pastor and Attorney-at-Law, Spring 1999

Approved as the Region’s Working Practices by Regional Board 6/19/2004

Order of Ministry Polices 6-19-04.wpd

A Note of Explanation: Each Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is given the ministry of “care and oversight” for the Order of Ministry. Each Region is asked to develop specific policies — which must be in harmony with the “Policies and Criteria”-- which implement that “care and oversight” (see section V, Part F, below). Accordingly, in this document, any text which is in an italic font represents the Christian Church of Northern California-Nevada’s “Regional Procedures” which implement the provisions of the “Policies and Criteria.” Likewise, any text which is non-italicized is the actual text from the “Policies and Criteria.” Please note that the complete text of the “Policies and Criteria” — which is also available from the Division of Homeland Ministries — is printed here).

I. 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 in the life of the world the reality of God as Creator, Lord of History, Judge, Savior, Father. By baptism all Christians are inducted into the corporate ministry of God’s people and by sharing in it fulfill their own callings 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 find confirmed 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 of its procedures concerning the Order of Ministry the church seeks these qualities in the men and women whom it inducts into office;

- 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 inducted into the Order of Ministry are to prepare themselves for their work. That preparation shall include:
- a. Participation in the life and work of a congregation of Christians, *ordinarily including at least one year's membership and participation in a congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).*
 - b. Breadth of theological study so that the candidate shows an understanding of the Christian faith, the Bible, the church, the history and polity 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.
3. These Order of Ministry Policies *"affirm the worth, gifts, and dignity of all people, regardless of sexual orientation."*¹

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. Candidacy for the Order of Ministry

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

¹ *As mandated by the House of Representatives of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California-Nevada in its approval of Resolution 9301, "Toward an Open and Inclusive Church," at its Annual Meeting, April 23-25, 1993, these Order of Ministry Policies "affirm the worth, gifts, and dignity of all people, regardless of sexual orientation." This shall specifically be understood to apply to ministerial candidacy, standing, licensing, or ordination. Sexual orientation shall not in and of itself be a bar to candidacy, standing, licensing, or ordination. Moreover, congregations are encouraged to "welcome all persons, regardless of sexual orientation, into church membership, with all of its privileges and responsibilities, including full opportunities for positions of leadership and ministry, subject to the Biblical qualifications for all people."*

of that congregation. The applicant shall have acceptance, approval and support of the congregation. In unusual circumstances, that 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 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 congregations, appropriate regions and educational institutions) 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.

A person who wishes to be a candidate for ordination and who is also a seminary student in a Master of Divinity program or its equivalent, shall make application for candidacy to the Training and Care Committee of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California-Nevada (hereinafter called "the Region") and shall be given information about the Region's curricular and other requirements for ordination. (The Training and Care Committee shall produce and make available application materials, curricular and other requirements, reference letters forms, and other procedures to carry out these processes of the training and care of M.Div. (or equivalent, in their judgment) candidates for ordination.) The candidate will meet at least annually with the Training and Care Committee for oversight, nurture, and counsel, and will supply the information requested. At an initial or subsequent interview (and after any required materials have been received) the Training and Care Committee will vote on whether to formally receive the applicant into candidacy and to thereby initiate a formal "in care" relationship. An affirmative vote in this regard will be presented to the next Annual Meeting of the Region for its confirmation.

The Region's Training and Care Committee will consist of five to eight members, including a Chairperson. These members shall be active members of a local Disciples congregation in the Region. The Chair of the Committee shall be appointed by a Regional Minister in consultation with the Moderator. The members of the Committee shall be appointed by a Regional Minister in consultation with the Chair of the Committee. Terms on the Committee will ordinarily be for two years (renewable upon the request of a Regional Minister) and as specified at the time of appointment. A Regional Minister (or his/her designee) and the Dean and Associate Dean of the Disciples Seminary Foundation shall be ex officio non-voting members of the Committee.

- C. 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 regional and general units of the church. Where possible these opportunities will be developed in consultation and cooperation with either or both the**

congregation(s) and educational institution(s) to which the candidate is related.

In the exercise of its 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 Training and Care Committee will be responsible for specifying the requirements in these regards.*

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.

III. 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 inducts into 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 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) 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, offering gifts of mind and body in 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 or ordination. *(See Section II.B., above, for procedures used by the Training and Care Committee for procedures regarding candidacy).*

Near the end of the candidate's course of study as directed by the Training and Care Committee, he/she will petition the Committee to be approved for ordination, will submit a letter of sponsorship/recommendation from at least one congregation, will submit three letters of reference and recommendation, will submit one ordination paper to the Committee, and will meet with the Committee to discuss the paper, and to satisfy the Committee that all other requirements have been completed. The Committee may then a) approve the candidate for ordination; b) approve the candidate pending completion of certain items; c) decline to approve the ordination and drop the candidate from the 'in-care' process; d) make no recommendation while continuing the "in care" process for the candidate with the decision about ordination approval deferred until a later date.

Persons from other denominations who already hold the M.Div. degree (or its equivalent) and who are seeking ordination through the Christian Church of Northern California-Nevada will be assigned by a Regional Minister to either the Training and Care Committee or the Recognition and Standing Committee for their oversight, care, and a decision on ordination approval.

- 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. Such a seminary course of study will ordinarily consist of the attainment of the Master of Divinity degree (or equivalent) from an accredited graduate seminary.**

D. The Act of Ordination

1. *The act of ordination shall be under the authorization and guidance of the Region. A Regional Minister (or his/her designee) will give guidance to and approve the format of the ordination service. A Regional Minister (or his/her designee) will attend each ordination service, and will ordinarily convene and preside during the Laying on of Hands and offer the Ordination Prayer. Candidates are advised to work from a Model Ordination Service developed by Homeland Ministries and the Region. The candidate, Regional Pastor, and sponsoring congregation and its minister shall work together in a mutually agreeable way in planning and convening the service of ordination.*

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. Any processes of oversight required by the sponsoring congregation recommending ordination are understood to be separate and distinct from Regional Church requirements; the congregation may request of the candidate whatever information it believes it needs in order to make a responsible decision about ordination recommendation/sponsorship. The congregation recommending/sponsoring ordination will send a letter noting that sponsorship to the Region's Training and Care Committee in a timely fashion prior to the candidate's final ordination interview with the Committee.*
 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 any decision or prolonged inaction of the Region to the General Commission on Ministry. *Applicants and candidates may appeal the decisions of the Training and Care Committee, Recognition and Standing Committee, or Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing Committee to the Executive Committee of the Regional Board (which may decide to decline to hear the appeal or accept the appeal. If the Executive Committee accepts the appeal, it shall, within a reasonable time, review all documents and other materials related to the matter, and invite all parties to meet with the Committee. The Committee shall, except for the invited parties at a time specified by the Committee, meet in executive session and deliberate confidentially. The Committee shall convey its judgment to the appellant as soon as possible.) Alternatively, the applicant or candidate may appeal directly to the General Commission on Ministry or may appeal a decision of the Executive Committee there as well. In either case, a Regional Minister shall assist applicant or candidate in understanding the appeal process.*
- F. Ordained ministers with standing are voting members of the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).**

IV. The Office of Licensed Minister

- A. Descriptions 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 inducts into the office of licensed minister. By the act of licensing, the church recognized 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; and grants authority to perform 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 or other legal functions.)

In accepting this license, licensed ministers affirm their vocation to obey God by caring for the church, offer gifts of mind and body to that service, and agree to fulfill the functions of a minister appropriate to the prescribed area of responsibility.

- 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. *For students who are in an “in care” process for ordination, the Training and Care Committee shall have the responsibility for authorizing ministerial licensing. For other persons, the Recognition and Standing Committee shall ordinarily have the responsibility for authorizing ministerial licensing. Such persons shall be invited to meet with the Committee at least yearly. No person shall be licensed without a specific request from the calling congregation or church-related agency which details the nature and scope of the ministry for which the license is sought. Licensing is ordinarily granted for one year, but exceptions may be made for good reason. In unusual circumstances, a Regional Minister may extend the term of the license in consultation with the Chair of the Recognition and Standing or Training and Care Committee. Such extension will only be until the next occasion that the licensee is able to meet with the Committee (which shall occur as soon as possible).*
- 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/Commissioned Minister*
 - a. Men and women licensed as commissioned church workers or *commissioned ministers* 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 may be for more than one year’s duration as determined by the Training and Care or Recognition and Standing Committee*) and is determined by the candidates’s vocational

intention, the kind of service authorized, and the recommendation of the Region granting the license.

- c. *The status of Commissioned Minister is granted to those who, through life experience and training in the academic and applied disciplines of ministry (though this training is different from the traditional course of study leading to ordination), have developed the skills and qualities of ministry.*

2. *The Licensed Lay Preacher*

- a. Men and women licensed as lay preachers are authorized to perform general ministerial functions under supervision of the Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) granting the license. *As approved by the Region's Training and Care Committee or Recognition and Standing Committee, such licensing is ordinarily for one year's duration.*
- 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/Minister-in-Training*

- a. Men and women licensed as theological students are authorized to perform general ministerial functions under supervision of the educational institution and the Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) granting the license. *No person shall be licensed without a specific request from the calling congregation or church-related agency which details the nature and scope of the ministry for which the license is sought.*
- 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

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. Such recommendation shall detail the nature and scope of the ministry for which the license is sought.*
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 licensing. A Regional Minister (or his/her designee) ordinarily shall confer the license during the service.*
4. *The service shall ordinarily take place in the congregation. The service shall be designed in consultation with the recommending congregation and a Regional Minister (or his/her designee).*
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 any decision or prolonged inaction of the Region to the General Commission on Ministry. *Applicants and candidates may appeal the decisions of the Training and Care Committee or Recognition and Standing Committee to the Executive Committee of the Regional Board, which may decide to decline to hear the appeal or accept the appeal. If the Executive Committee accepts the appeal, it shall, within a reasonable time, review all documents and other materials related to the matter, and invite all parties to meet with the Committee. The Committee shall meet in executive session and deliberate confidentially. The Committee shall convey its judgment to the appellant as soon as possible.) Alternatively, the applicant or candidate may appeal directly to the General Commission on Ministry or may appeal a decision of the Executive Committee there as well. In either case, a Regional Minister shall assist applicant or candidate in understanding the appeal process.*
- F. **Licensed ministers with standing are voting members of the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).**

V. 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 an 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 Yearbook and Directory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and may call upon the church for services and support such as search and call assistance, ecclesiastical endorsement, scholarship aid; and have voting privileges in the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).*
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 Commission on Ministry.*

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 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 Commission on Ministry.*
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 or in service 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 IC1)*
4. *The Region or the General Commission on Ministry will provide means by which the standing of all ministers in its care will be reviewed periodically.*
 - a. *The Region's Recognition and Standing Committee is composed of five to eight members, including a Chairperson. A Regional Minister shall appoint the Chairperson in consultation with the Regional Moderator. The Regional Minister, in consultation with the Chairperson, shall appoint the members of the Committee for a term of two years, or for such time as may be mutually agreeable.. In addition, a Regional Minister shall be an ex officio member of the Committee without vote. The Committee's duties shall include:*
 1. *meeting with persons (non-M.Div.students, or persons who have the M.Div. already but who have not yet been ordained)) who are seeking ministerial licensing or ordination and making a determination concerning such licensing or ordination;*
 2. *meeting with ordained persons from other denominations who seek ministerial standing with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and making a determination concerning such standing;*

(In order that the Committee may effectively carry out these task, applicants from other denominations or those who have been assigned

to the Recognition and Standing Committee by a Regional Minister, shall submit to the Committee the Application for Standing [Appendix Three] and the related letters of reference [Appendix Four]

At any point in the “in care” process for such persons, the Committee may decide to a) cease consideration of the candidate’s application for licensing or ordination and will so notify the candidate.

3. *having oversight of persons charged with violating the Region’s Clergy Ethics Policies and making a determination as to the disposition of such matters.*
4. *having oversight for and authority to certify ministerial standing.*
5. *Annually, or on a regular basis, the Committee shall review the list of ministers with standing (including retired ministers) and shall make a determination as to continued standing. If a minister with standing apparently ceases to meet the criteria for standing specified in this section (Section V), the Committee shall notify the minister of its concern and shall invite the minister to meet with the Committee. The Committee shall then render a judgment about continued standing. If standing is removed in such an instance, it shall be understood that standing was removed not-for-cause. Such a minister may have his or her standing reinstated by petition to the Committee if, within three years of the time standing was removed, he/she again meets the criteria specified in this Section (Section V).*

For reporting purposes, the Committee shall, using the categories supplied by the General Commission on Ministry, assign each minister with standing to an appropriate category (for example, “P” for “Pastor of a Recognized Congregation,” etc.

5. *When an ordained minister moves from a ministry position in one Region to a ministry position in another, standing in the Order of Ministry is retained. The Recognition and Standing Committee may invite such persons to meet with the Committee. Responsibility for review and subsequent certification is assigned to the Region in which the minister functions or to the General Commission on Ministry. When an ordained minister who is not actively seeking a call moves from a ministry position in one Region to another Region and is no longer engaged in ministry, ministerial standing will lapse in six months, except in the case of retirement, until review and subsequent certification is granted by the Region into which the minister has moved. The standing of licensed ministers is removed by the Region or by the General Commission on Ministry when they are no longer engaged in the ministry for which they were licensed.*
6. *Ministers with standing at the time of retirement retain this standing except when the minister no longer meets the personal qualifications for admission to the Order of Ministry. (see Section IC1) Retired ministers with standing are encouraged to*

be active in the life of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), in the Region, and in a recognized Disciples congregation.

- 7. In implementing this section, the Region understands that ministerial standing requires (except for retired ministers) that a minister a) be a member of recognized congregation in the Region; b) be engaged in the practice of ministry, c) be accountable for the performance of the ministry, ordinarily to a Disciples congregation or related agency. Alternatively, the minister may retain standing for up to three years (with the possibility, at the discretion of the Committee, of two one-year extensions) if he or she is actively seeking a ministerial position which would meet the requirements for ministerial standing. In unusual circumstances and for good reason, the Committee may make temporary exceptions to these requirements upon recommendation of a Regional Minister.*

Occasionally, ministers with standing are in "transitions" which are not easily defined by these Policies. Normally, these persons will be assigned by the Committee or Regional ministerial staff to the standing category "Z" and will be continued in standing for up to a three-year transitional period. If, at the end of three years from the time the minister was first assigned to the "Z" category, the minister still does not meet the criteria for standing then the minister will be removed from standing with the understanding that such removal is not-for-cause.

Ministers whose standing is removed by Recognition and Standing Committee because they no longer meet the requirements specified in this section may appeal such decisions to the Executive Committee of the Regional Board, which may decide either to decline to hear the appeal or to accept the appeal. If the Executive Committee accepts the appeal, it shall, in a reasonably timely way, review all documents and other materials related to the matter, and invite all parties to meet with the Committee. The Committee shall meet in executive session and deliberate confidentially. The Committee shall convey its judgment to the appellant as soon as possible. Alternatively, the applicant or candidate may appeal directly to the General Commission on Ministry or may appeal a decision of the Executive Committee there as well. In either case, a Regional Minister shall assist applicant or candidate in understanding the appeal process.

C. Recognition and Reconciliation of the Ordained Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ

- 1. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ recognize the ordained ministries of the other church to be efficacious ministries of grace within that church and these ministries to be valid and full ministries of the one Church of Jesus Christ.*
- 2. The ordained ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ are reconciled. An ordained minister with ordained ministerial standing in one church may function, whenever invited, and as established procedures permit, as an ordained minister of the other.*

3. *The designations “Ordained Ministerial Partner” and “Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing” manifest the corporate and individual nature of the recognition and reconciliation of the ordained ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ.*
4. *Each member of the United Church of Christ who holds ordained ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ is an Ordained Ministerial Partner of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).*
5. *Each member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who holds ordained ministerial standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is an ordained minister partner of the United Church of Christ.*
6. *When a person no longer has ordained ministerial standing in either the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) or the United Church of Christ, that person is no longer an Ordained Ministerial Partner and Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in nullified.*
7. *United Church of Christ ministers with Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing is recognition granted to an ordained minister with ordained ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ who has a call to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). This recognition is based upon a demonstration of knowledge of and appreciation for the history, polity, and practices of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing provides ongoing ecclesiastical authorization to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).*
 - a. *A United Church of Christ minister has Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) only when serving a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) calling body.*
 - b. *Once a United Church of Christ minister has demonstrated knowledge of and appreciation for the history, polity, and practices of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), that Ordained Ministerial Partner may seek a call in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).*

The Region and the Northern California-Nevada Conference of the United Church of Christ shall convene a joint Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing Committee. The Committee shall be composed of six persons, three of whom are Disciples and who are appointed for staggered two-year terms by a Regional Minister (who shall also be an ex officio member of the Committee without vote), and three of whom are United Church of Christ members appointed in a manner of the Conference’s choosing. Upon satisfactory completion of the Committee’s requirements for demonstrating “knowledge of and appreciation for the history, polity, and practices of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ),” the Committee shall certify to the Regional Minister(s) that the person has Ordained Ministerial Partnership

*Standing **eligibility**, and will receive ministerial standing upon receipt of a call which meets the requirements for ministerial standing. **Eligibility** for Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing continues for five years from the end of service which qualifies the person for standing. Note that “eligibility” for Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing is not the same as standing itself; a minister may be eligible for Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing but does not have the standing itself until or unless he/she meets the requirements for standing specified in this section and in Section V, A-B. In unusual or extraordinary cases, the Recognition and Standing Committee may confer Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing.*

c. A United Church of Christ Ordained Ministerial Partner who secures a call in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) applies for Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing to the Region in which the minister’s congregational membership is held. *Such standing shall be routinely granted by Regional ministerial staff or the Recognition and Standing Committee when the requirements for standing outlined in Section V.A-B are met.*

d. A United Church of Christ Minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall maintain ordained ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ. Ordained ministerial standing shall be held in the association in which the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) membership is held.

e. A United Church of Christ minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing shall maintain relations with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) including participating membership in a recognized congregation in the community where feasible.

f. A United Church of Christ minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in a Region has voting privileges in the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

g. A United Church of Christ minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall relate to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for his or her primary support and accountability in ordained ministry.

h. When a United Church of Christ minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) accepts a call in another Region, they shall be subject to review and subsequent certification by that Region.

i. When a disciplinary review is instituted in relation to a United Church of Christ minister holding Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the association of the United Church of Christ in which the United Church of Christ minister’s ordained ministerial standing is maintained shall be informed and invited to participate in the procedures.

8. *Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) ministers with Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ.*

Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing is recognition granted to an ordained minister with ordained ministerial standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who has a call to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ. This recognition is based upon a demonstration of knowledge and appreciation for the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ. Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing provides ongoing ecclesiastical authorization to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ.

- a. A Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister has Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ only when serving a United Church of Christ calling body.
- b. Once a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister has demonstrated knowledge of and appreciation for the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ, that Ordained Ministerial Partner may seek a call in the United Church of Christ.
- c. A Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Ordained Ministerial Partner who secures a call in the United Church of Christ applies for Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing to the association in which the minister's congregational membership is held.
- d. A Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ shall maintain ordained ministerial standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Ordained ministerial standing shall be held in the Region in which the United Church of Christ membership is held.
- e. A Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ shall hold local church membership in the United Church of Christ.
- f. A Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ is eligible for election as a delegate to a Conference or General Synod or election as a member of any instrumentality board.
- g. A Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ shall relate to the United Church of Christ for his or her primary support and accountability in ordained ministry.
- h. A Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ is subject to periodic review by the Region in which ordained ministerial standing is maintained.
- i. When a disciplinary procedure is instituted by an association in relation to a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister holding Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Region in which standing is held shall be informed and invited to participate. The Region may accept the procedures and outcome of the association or utilize its own procedures to

determine the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister's ongoing standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

D. 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 Commission on Ministry. *The Recognition and Standing Committee shall have oversight of this process. Such persons shall make written application (see Appendix Three) to the Recognition and Standing Committee, shall meet with a Regional Pastor (who shall forward a confidential recommendation concerning the applicant to the Committee), shall meet as requested with the Committee, and shall provide the Committee with any requested waivers for the Committee confidentially to check any references. The Committee will make a decision concerning taking the applicant "in care" and, at an appropriate point, granting temporary recognition or ministerial standing. At any point, the Committee may decline to continue the person's "in care" process and/or remove him or her from temporary recognition. Such a decision by the Committee is final. Ordinarily, a person seeking admission to ministerial standing from another denomination will be in an "in care" process for at least one year before being eligible for 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. *The candidate's signed application for Ministerial Standing authorizes and gives the Committee permission to consult with such persons as named on the application.*
 - b. Investigation of personal and ministerial references. *The candidate's signed application for Ministerial Standing authorizes and gives the Committee permission to consult with such persons as named on the application*
 - c. Filing of the Ministerial Profile 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). Temporary recognition shall be reviewed annually by the body granting it, either the Region or the General Commission on Ministry. *Temporary recognition implies that the applicant has "privilege of call" and may make use of the Search and Call process of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) until such time as temporary recognition may be removed.*
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 Commission on Ministry upon fulfillment of the following requirements:*

- a. Membership in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) or recognition by a 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.

E. Termination of Ministerial Standing. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) shall develop policies and criteria by which ministerial standing can be terminated. Until such a time as these policies and criteria 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 normal functions of a minister.
 - d. The minister discontinues active relationships with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
 - e. The minister no longer meets the personal qualifications for admission to the Order of Ministry. (see Section IC1).
2. When the Region or the General Commission on Ministry 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 Commission on Ministry
3. *When the minister takes the initiative in the review, the procedures shall include:*
 - a. Written notice to the regional minister or the General Commission on Ministry 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.*

F. Standing in Regions. Nothing in these statements of policy and criteria is intended to preclude a Region from developing further appropriate statements pertaining to recognition and/or standing within that Region. However, only those persons meeting the specific criteria established by the

policies of this document should be recognized as holding standing in the ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). *Sexual orientation shall not in and of itself be a bar to candidacy, standing, licensing, or ordination*

- G. Right of Appeal.** All decisions with respect to standing may be appealed to the General Commission on Ministry within one year from the date on which Regional decisions were final.

VI. Ministerial Search and Call

- A. The General Principle.** Ministerial Search and Call 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 convenental 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 search and call.

B. Operating Principles.

- 1. Ordained ministers with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will have complete and unhindered access to the ministerial search and call process of the church.*
- 2. Licensed ministers with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will have access to the ministerial search and call 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 personnel file in the Division of Homeland Ministries, Center for Leadership and Ministry, will be open to the minister concerned except for confidential references for which a 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 ethnic origin, sex, age or physical disability, or sexual orientation.*

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 search and call process, congregations will function within the convenental relationship of 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 congregations 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. Congregations will strive to be fair and open in the consideration of all candidates, putting aside prejudice based on race, ethnic origin, sex, age or physical disability.
 - e. Congregations will treat with confidentiality all information including personal biographical information and reference material, taking care to ensure 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.
 - f. 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 a call 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.
 - g. Congregations will issue a written call providing copies of the call for the congregation, the minister, and the Region.
 - h. 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).

- i. Congregations will provide for the reimbursement of church-related expenses to cover actual expenses of accomplishing ministry.
- j. 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 congregations and ministers in matters of ministerial search and call. Regions may delegate or share this responsibility with their subdivisions, e.g., areas or districts. In the ministerial search and call process, regions will function within the convenental 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 search and call materials from the Division of Homeland Ministries, Center for Leadership and 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 a call outside the Region to the Division of Homeland Ministries, Center for Leadership and Ministry, for entry into the search and call process.
- d. Each Region will share with search committees biographical and reference materials on candidates who appear to meet the requirements of the congregations and institutions with whom the Region is working.
- e. Each Region will encourage congregations to give fair and equal consideration to candidates regardless of their race, ethnic origin, sex, age, or physical disability.
- f. 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 request consideration in that congregation.
- g. 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 a call.
- h. Each Region will secure permission from any minister not actively seeking a call before releasing references to a search committee. The minister has the right to know the name and location of the interested congregation.
- i. Each Region will provide, upon request of ministers seeking a call, a list of congregations which have received their biographical and reference material.
- j. Each Region will treat with confidentiality all confidential material reported on the search and call form.
- k. Each Region will communicate to the Division of Homeland Ministries, Center for Leadership and 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 will also be placed in the minister's file.

- l. Each Region will refer all requests for assistance from congregations outside the Region to the appropriate regional office.
- m. Each Region will notify the Division of Homeland Ministries, Center for Leadership and Ministry, monthly of all ministerial calls occurring within, to, or from the Region.
- n. Each Region will grant provisional standing, for the purpose of entering the search and call 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).
- o. Each Region will make information available about vacancies to be filled on the regional staff through such channels as The Disciple, regional publications and the Division of Homeland Ministries, Center for Leadership and Ministry.

3. *Educational institutions. The undergraduate department of religion and the theological educational institutions have unique responsibilities with respect to the search and call 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 search and call processes of the church. In the ministerial search and call process, educational institutions will function within the convenental 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 search and call assistance to the appropriate regional office when the congregation is one that is not a student congregation.
- c. Educational institutions will cooperate 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 cooperate with regions in orienting seminary students to the search and call 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, general units and their staffs will not engage in programs or practices related to ministerial search and call. In the ministerial search and call process, general units will function within the convenental relationship of the whole church.*

- a. General units will call their own staff, establish the terms of employment, undergird their staff and effect terminations within their own procedures.
- b. General units will refer all requests for search and call assistance to the Division of Homeland Ministries, Center for Leadership and Ministry.

- c. General units will refrain from making nominations to congregations for ministerial vacancies. Refer requests for candidates' 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 The Disciple, regional publications and the Division of Homeland Ministries, Center for Leadership and Ministry.
- e. General units will notify the Division of Homeland Ministries, Center for Leadership and Ministry, of vacancies in ecumenical and experimental ministries, when known, so the information can be made available to clergy seeking a call to 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 retired clergy in interim and supply ministries. In the ministerial search and call process, The Pension Fund will function within the convenental 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 search and call assistance to the Division of Homeland Ministries, Center for Leadership and Ministry.

6. *The Division of Higher Education. The Division of Higher Education is charged with responsibility of 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 search and call process, the Division of Higher Education will function within the convenental 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 Education will refer all clergy seeking search and call assistance in ministries other than higher education to the Division of Homeland Ministries, Center for Leadership and Ministry.

7. *The Division of Homeland Ministries. The Center for Leadership and Ministry is the primary focus of the ministerial records of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and is responsible for coordinating the search and call process of the church. In the ministerial search and call process, the Division of Homeland Ministries will function within the convenental relationship of the whole church.*

- a. The Division of Homeland Ministries will maintain the personnel files of 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 by the regions and the General Commission on Ministry.
 - c. The Division of Homeland Ministries will receive, reproduce and make available search and call assistance materials of ministers with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to regions and general units. The search and call form will be reproduced as prepared and submitted by the minister.
 - 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 search and call 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 ministers not actively seeking a call 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 profile form or disclosure form.
 - g. The Division of Homeland Ministries will secure, maintain, and release to regions, and on request, to ministers who have applied for search and call 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 education and informational materials regarding the search and call 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 regions.
 - 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.
 - l. The Division of Homeland Ministries will share with regions, and where appropriate, general units, the record of any official by a Region's Commission on the Ministry concerning the conduct of a minister who is entering the search and call 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 search and call process of the church. In the ministerial search and call process, the ministers will function within the conventional relationship of the whole church.

- a. Ministers will provide information for a personnel file to the Division of Homeland Ministries, Center for Leadership and Ministry, upon entry into the ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and maintain current data in that file. For purposes of search and call, the search and call form will be reproduced as prepared and submitted by the minister.
- b. Ministers will utilize the search and call process of the Region in which the minister is located when a move is desired within that Region. If a call is desired beyond the Region where the minister is presently serving, search and call assistance may be requested from the Division of Homeland Ministries, Center for Leadership and Ministry, and the appropriate regions.
- c. Ministers will strive to be as specific and honest as possible about any limiting factors in seeking a call, such as geographical preferences and salary requirements.
- d. Ministers will provide the Region or the Division of Homeland Ministries, Center for Leadership and Ministry, with reference material that will be held in confidence once received by the Region or Center if a waiver has been signed by the minister.
- e. 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 a call 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.
- f. 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.
- g. 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 search and call process by contacting the congregation directly.
- h. Ministers will advise the Region, if contacted directly by a congregation, should mutual interest in exploring a possible call be determined.
- i. Ministers will advise the Region where currently located, the Region where moving, and the Division of Homeland Ministries, Center for Leadership and Ministry, as soon as a call has been accepted.

D. Right of Review and Counsel. The right to 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, Center for Leadership and Ministry. If the perceived violation involves the division, the request for review and counsel may be directed to the General Commission on Ministry.

VII. Clergy Ethics and Sexual Misconduct

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) understands ministerial sexual misconduct to be activity of a sexual nature which violates the covenantal character of the ministerial office as expressed in the Ministerial Code of Ethics.

1. Responsibilities.

- a. It is the responsibility of each Region to have specific definitions of sexual misconduct and procedures for receiving, investigating and adjudicating sexual misconduct charges of ministers with standing in the Region. It is the responsibility of the Region to communicate such definitions and procedures to ministers and congregations within the Region.
- b. It is the responsibility of the General Board to have specific definitions of sexual misconduct and procedures for receiving, investigating and adjudicating sexual misconduct charges of minister engaged in non-regional ministries. It is the responsibility of the General Commission on the Ministry to communicate such definitions and procedures to ministers, units, and other organizations in the general church.

2. Reporting.

Regions will report formal actions and decisions to remove standing for sexual misconduct to the Center for Leadership and Ministry, Division of Homeland Ministries and these will be communicated to all regions.

3. Temporary Suspension of Standing.

In extreme situations of alleged sexual misconduct, ministerial standing may be temporarily suspended by the Region or the General Commission on Ministry during investigation and adjudication.

Addendum to Section VII — Regional Clergy Ethics Policy and Procedures

*The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California-Nevada understands clergy sexual misconduct (as discussed in Section VII, above) as **one type** of clergy ethics violation. This section, "VII — Addendum — Regional Clergy Ethics Policy and Procedures," defines the Region's understanding of clergypersons' ethical obligations (and is intended to implement the standards and issues mentioned in Sections VII, I.C.1, V.B.3.d, and V.E.1.e).*

Premise: The whole church receives the call of God to embody and carry forth Christ's ministry in the world. For the sake of the mission of Christ Jesus and the most effective witness to the Gospel, and in consideration of their influence as representatives of Christ, ministers should be willing to make a complete dedication of themselves to the highest ideals of the Christian life. Furthermore, they are called to exercise responsible self-control in personal habits, and to be persons in whom the community can place

trust and confidence. Violation of the ministerial relationship by unethical behavior is a sin against God and an offense to the church.

Further, the ethical conduct of all who minister in the name of Jesus Christ is of critical importance to the church because through its leaders is conveyed an understanding of God and the good news of the gospel. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and the world. For,

*As (God) who called you is holy,
be holy yourselves in all your conduct...*

*...tend the flock of God that is in your charge...
not under compulsion but willingly...
not for sordid gain but eagerly.
Do not lord it over those in your charge
but be examples to the flock.*

*You know that we who teach
shall be judged with greater strictness.
(1 Peter 1:15; 5:3; James 3:1, NRSV)*

A. Types of Misconduct:

1. *A sexual relationship between a minister and a person with whom he/she is in a ministerial or pastoral relationship.*
2. *Rape, or touching by force, threat, or intimidation.*
3. *Any other type of sexual conduct which is injurious to the physical or emotional health of another.*
4. *Sexual harassment which includes but may not be limited to: making unsolicited advances, requesting sexual favors, inducing a person into a sexual relationship, giving unwanted sexual attention to a person, punishing a refusal to comply with sexual demands, or engaging in sexual behavior with minors. This may involve a wide range of behavior from verbal innuendo, subtle suggestions and inappropriate sexual jokes and remarks to overt demands and physical abuse.*
5. *Violation of confidentiality except as required by law.*
6. *Unauthorized use of church or employer funds for personal purposes.*
7. *Abuse of alcohol or drugs.*
8. *Flagrant, repeated, or serious violations of the Ministerial Code of Ethics.*
9. ***Failure to be truthful in information provided to the Region, congregation, or employer.***

B. Principles of Procedure

1. *All claims of clergy ethical misconduct will be taken seriously by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California-Nevada. When received in a signed, written format, such claims will be responded to as quickly as possible by the Recognition and Standing Committee, and the Regional Minister(s) will be advised of such claims. It is recognized that in some cases the complainant may not be the victim of the alleged misconduct. However, it is the right of anyone affected by the conduct and who may therefore be a secondary victim, including congregational or Regional church officials, to bring forth a complaint.*
2. *Ordinary Initial Process in Sexual Misconduct or Other Flagrant Ethical Violations:*
 - a. *Upon the receipt of such a signed, written complaint by the Regional Church office, the Chair of the Recognition and Standing Committee in conjunction with the Regional Minister(s) will make an initial review of the allegation.*
 - b. *That initial review shall include appointment by the Chair and Regional Minister(s) of a 2-3 person response team (one of whom to be designated as the leader) to meet with the complainant in a timely fashion and to offer support and to hear further the nature of the complaint and to be a resource concerning the process.*
 - c. *The confidential written results of such an interview will be forwarded as quickly as possible by the response team leader to the Chair and Regional Minister(s).*
 - d. *The Regional Minister(s) and Chair (or designee) will advise the accused of the complaint, giving him/her a copy of the complaint and a copy of these Order of Ministry Policies. The accused will be invited to submit a written, signed response which can be shared with the complainant. The accused will be cautioned to have no direct contact with the complainant during this process. The accused will also be offered the appointment of a support person by the Regional Minister(s).*
 - e. *As part of this initial review, concern and care for the welfare of the complainant and the accused will be exhibited, and steps will be taken to protect the community involved and other potential victims. Where such reporting is required by law, suspected violations of the law will be reported to civil authorities. The innocence of the accused in regard to the allegations will be presumed until unethical conduct is admitted or sustained.*
 - f. *By mutual agreement of complainant, accused, Chair of Recognition and Standing, and Regional Minister(s) the above process (a through e)*

may be modified by mutual agreement if and where appropriate to the nature of the complaint.

- g. At the conclusion of the initial review, if the Chair of Recognition and Standing (or designee) can resolve the complaint with satisfaction to **all** parties involved, and if there is concurrence by the Regional Minister(s), then the matter will be considered closed and a report of the process and its disposition will be retained by the Regional Minister(s) for the protection of all parties. In such an instance, the clergyperson will be understood **not** to have been subject to an "Official Disciplinary Review" as the term is used in the Search and Call processes (commonly referred to as "Relocation Papers").
- h. The interest of the accused's employing congregation/agency in the matter is affirmed. Upon counsel with the Regional Minister(s), the Chair of Recognition and Standing will seek appropriate ways to involve the congregation's or employer's leadership in the matter, recognizing the complexity and sensitivity of the issues involved.

3. *Further Process: If, after the initial review is completed, the complaint cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, a formal hearing shall be held as soon as reasonably possible by the Recognition and Standing Committee concerning the matter. Upon the invitation by the Chair to the accused to participate in such a formal hearing, the accused shall be understood to be the subject of an "Official Disciplinary Review."*

At such a formal hearing, the accused and complainant will be invited to appear, although not necessarily at the same time. The Chair will also invite the Regional Minister(s) to attend and participate in the hearing. The Chair will also seek to have any further written information that he/she deems helpful to the Committee. Any written information to be reviewed by the Committee — except that which is deemed confidential by its writer, including reports from the initial response team — will be made available to the accused. It is understood that the formal hearing is not a legal proceeding. While the accused and complainant may bring support person(s) to the hearing (with the permission of the Chair or Regional Minister), legal counsel shall not participate in the hearing.

4. *During or at the conclusion of such a hearing, if the Recognition and Standing Committee sustains the complaint, it may take a variety of actions including:*
- a. *Continuing the hearing until a later date.*
 - b. *Reprimanding the accused.*
 - c. *Suspending ministerial standing for a stated period, with the understanding that re-application may thereupon be considered after further meeting with the Committee.*
 - d. *Revoking ministerial standing, with no intention of entertaining any re-application.*

- e. *Mandating counseling (with the option of requiring a waiver from the accused allowing Committee communication to/from the counselor) regarding the accused.*
- f. *Other appropriate sanctions and growth programs.*
- g. *Per Section VII.2., above, the results of the hearing will be communicated to the Center for Leadership and Ministry.*

At the conclusion of such a hearing, if the Recognition and Standing Committee does not sustain the complaint, it will offer assistance to the minister for counseling, and will work with the congregation or employer to report that the complaint was not sustained. Further, a report will be sent to the Center for Leadership and Ministry noting that the complaint was not sustained and asking that the report be made a part of the minister's permanent record. Moreover, the minister in response to the question on the Search and Call forms asking if he or she has ever been subject to an official disciplinary review, may answer "no" to that question.

- 5. *In the event that the accused is a member of the Regional Ministerial Staff, all of the above procedures and process described in 1-4 will be followed, but with the following specific changes:*

- a. *Upon initial receipt of a signed, written complaint, the Chair of Recognition and Standing shall consult with the Regional Moderator. The Moderator shall name a person to be Consultant Staff to the Committee; the Consultant Staff will carry the responsibilities and duties outlined above that would ordinarily be carried out by the Regional Minister(s). The Consultant Staff will ordinarily be an Northern California-Nevada minister with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and who has no staff relationship to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California-Nevada. The Moderator and Chair of Recognition and Standing shall insure that the Consultant Staff has necessary access to all persons and documents that would be needed to carry out his/her work for the Committee. The Moderator may, at his/her discretion, grant a stipend to the Consultant Staff for this work and for support services if needed. The Moderator, Chair of the Committee, and Consultant Staff will consult with the Office of General Minister and President, the General Commission on Ministry, and other Regional Ministers as necessary and as desired. The Moderator will ordinarily serve as spokesperson regarding the handling of public communication in the region and beyond regarding this matter.*

- b. *If the complaint is not resolved at the initial review stage of this process (2, above), and is dealt with by the full Committee (3, above), the Recognition and Standing Committee shall, if the complaint is sustained, make a report and recommendation to the Regional Board Executive Committee concerning this matter. This recommendation*

shall be in addition to any actions taken by the Committee which shall affect ministerial standing. If the complaint is not sustained, the Moderator, the Regional Minister, the Chair of Recognition and Standing, and the accused staff person shall determine appropriate responses and statements to be made, and the accused staff person shall have the right to have a statement noting that the complaint was not sustained made a part of his/her regional personnel file.

- 6. Appeal: Any minister may appeal the Recognition and Standing Committee's decision to either the Regional Board Executive Committee or General Commission on Ministry, where the procedures outlined in the third paragraph of Section V.B.7, above, will be followed. Any such appeal must be initiated within one year of the Recognition and Standing Committee's judgment.*

In the event of an appeal to the Executive Committee, the following procedures will be used:

- A. The Executive Committee shall receive notice of an appeal in writing from the appellant. This notice should come via the office of the Regional Minister and/or Regional Moderator. The appellant shall supply a written waiver to the Committee via the Regional Minister allowing the Executive Committee access to all documents that were part of the original decision that is being appealed.*
- B. The Regional Moderator and/or Regional Minister shall convene the Executive Committee at a mutually agreeable time for an initial review of the matter.*
- C. For this initial review, the Regional Minister will make available to the Executive Committee the important documents that will help them make a decision on how to proceed or whether to accept the appeal.*
- D. The Executive Committee and/or Regional Minister and/or Regional Moderator may invite, at its/their discretion, the appropriate committee chair to be a part of this initial review.*
- E. At this initial review the Executive Committee shall discuss this matter with the intention of making a decision about whether to accept the appeal for formal review. Any decision will be reached by the Committee in executive session.*
- F. While understanding that the distinction between "process" and "fact" is not an absolute one, the Executive Committee at this initial review shall focus primarily on the "process" question of whether or not the committee whose decision is being appealed substantially abided by the processes related to standing, ordination, etc., as outlined by the Order of Ministry Policies and of its own internal policies and practices, rather than the question of whether the committee whose decision is being appealed ascertained the facts*

correctly.

- G. *At the conclusion of this initial review, the Executive Committee may take the following actions: a) decline to accept the appeal for formal review. (In this case the decision will be communicated to the appellant and the chair of the appropriate committee), b) sustain the findings of fact of the committee being appealed from but change the response/punishment that was rendered (in this case the decision will be communicated to the appellant and the chair of the appropriate committee), c) accept the appeal for a formal review (in this case the appellant and the chair of the appropriate committee will be notified and the further process outlined below will apply).*
- H. *In the event that the Executive Committee accepts the appeal for a formal review, a) the Committee shall convene at a mutually agreeable time, b) shall invite the appellant to meet personally with the Committee at that time, c) invite the appellant to provide, if desired and within reason, written statements from others who the appellant believes have an interest in and important perspective on the matter under appeal, d) invite the Chair and/or members of the committee whose decision is being appealed to meet with the Committee at that time, e) the Committee may request to receive any other materials or interview any other persons that it feels will be helpful in deciding this matter. (NOTE: Because this is an ecclesial, churchly matter, rather than a legal one, the appellant may not have the presence of an attorney during his/her interviews with the Executive Committee. If the appellant insists on this, then the Committee can decide to indefinitely table the matter). In all of the above, the Regional Minister will assist the Regional Moderator in making these arrangements.*
- I. *The Executive Committee will deliberate in executive session and make a decision concerning the appeal. It may at any time continue its deliberations or investigations or interviews to subsequent sessions. At the conclusion of its deliberations, the Executive Committee may a) reverse the decision (in whole or part) of the committee whose decision is being appealed, b) sustain the action of the committee whose decision is being appealed. The Executive Committee's decision will be communicated to the appellant and to the Office of Christian Vocations at the Division of Homeland Ministries.*
- J. *In the event that during the course of the appeal process (at any stage, either initial or subsequently) either the Regional Moderator or Regional Minister or members of the Executive Committee should change, the Moderator/Regional Minister/Executive Committee members under whom the initial review began will be invited to sit in on the Executive Committee's continuing/final discussions and*

deliberations, although will have no vote after they have ceased to hold office.

7. *In the event that a minister accused of ethical misconduct resigns his/her ministerial standing or refuses to make him/herself available to the Committee's at any stage of the processes outlined in this section, the Recognition and Standing Committee may take any action it deems appropriate in the absence of the minister's participation, and after reasonable effort to secure the accused minister's participation. The Committee at its discretion may make a report to the Center for Leadership and Ministry and to the minister's congregation or employer about its action(s) in such a situation.*

VIII. 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 member of the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) at least 30 days prior to the time of the vote.

Amendments to the "Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry" in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) may also be amended by a majority vote of the voting members of the General Assembly present and voting, providing such amendment shall have been regularly filed 120 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.

The "Regional Procedures" portion of these Order of Ministry Policies may be amended by the Regional Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California-Nevada. It is assumed that committees named in the "Procedures" will implement their own materials and processes for carrying out the responsibilities assigned to them by this document. Any revisions to the "Policies and Criteria" section of these Order of Ministry Policies which may be approved by either the General Board or General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will automatically be made a part of this document.

It is recognized that no written policy either fully defines the work of the Holy Spirit in calling persons to ministry or in calling the church to its ministry of oversight of such persons. It is also recognized, therefore, that no policy may utterly apply to every situation in complete detail. In such unusual situations which do not exactly "fit," the Regional Board grants to the Regional Ministers the discretion to apply and interpret this document in consultation with relevant Committee Chairs or Regional Moderator as necessary.

APPENDIX ONE

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California-Nevada Date Received in Office _____

Please return this signed form to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California-Nevada, 9260 Alcosta Blvd., Suite C18, San Ramon CA 94583. It will be signed in turn by the Regional Minister-President and a copy returned to you.

**Ordination Candidacy
Agreement and Covenant
For M.Div Students "In care"**

In the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) "authorization for ordination" rests with the Regional Church, in partnership with a local congregation who is sponsoring and supporting a candidate for ordination. There are therefore two aspects to a call to ordained ministry: the candidate's sense of call (to be strengthened and further discerned by prayer, studies, and supervised field education in ministry and other experiences) and the call of the church to support the candidate and at the same time to assess and make a judgment about the candidate's gifts and graces for ministry. In order to carry out its ministry, therefore, of "Training and Care," the Regional Church operating through the Training and Care Committee and Regional Ministerial Staff, needs suitable and adequate information to responsibly carry out that task on behalf of the whole church. Thus, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California-Nevada asks of student candidates for ordination to agree and covenant with the Regional Church as follows:

1. I, _____, hereby request to be admitted to candidacy for ordination, and I agree to submit to the Training and Care Committee: a) my "Spiritual Autobiography," b) a letter of sponsorship for that candidacy from a local congregation, c) three confidential letters of reference from persons of my choosing concerning my gifts and graces for ministry, d) the "Application for In-care Status," and e) this signed "Agreement and Covenant." I understand that these items shall be required before a decision can be made about my candidacy. I further understand that a decision by the Training and Care Committee to approve my candidacy does not mean that I am thereby approved for ordination itself.
2. *I further grant the Training and Care Committee permission routinely to receive: a) Field Education reports from my Field Education supervising pastor(s) and/or committee(s); b) reports and evaluations from faculty or staff of Pacific School of Religion (or other seminary where I am enrolled); c) reports from the Lloyd Center (or similar institution) concerning my assessment process; d) reports from other Regions of the Christian Church (or other judicatories) in the event that I have been in a previous "in care" process; e) reports from my Clinical Pastoral Education supervisor, f) reports from my sponsoring congregation(s). I understand that the Training and Care Committee, through Regional Ministerial staff may request other references or evaluations that the Committee believes might be relevant concerning my candidacy, and I will give waivers if necessary in order to facilitate such references/evaluations. I understand that the Training and Care Committee will respect the wishes of any persons supplying reports mentioned in this paragraph with regard to confidentiality, but will also make no judgments about my candidacy based on anonymous information.*
3. I will make available yearly to the Training and Care Committee a copy of my seminary transcript. (I will also make available any transcripts reflecting any previous graduate education).
4. *I hereby assert that I have never been the subject of an official disciplinary review by an oversight body of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) or any other church body that resulted in official censure or suspension of ministerial standing or other serious consequence. I further assert that I have never been the subject of an official disciplinary review by any other professional or trade organization or association that resulted in censure or sanction. I further assert that I have never been arrested or convicted on a felony charge, or on any charge that would call into question my*

fitness for ministry. (**NOTE:** If you **cannot** affirm this paragraph, please initial here ____ and give details on a separate signed page.)

5. In light of the statement in the "Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)" that admission to the Order of Ministry includes "Personal fitness sufficient to the demands of the office, including mental and physical capacities, emotional stability and maturity, and standards of morality" (par. C.1.c.), I hereby assert that I believe I meet these criteria and that there is nothing in my past background or actions that would significantly call that assertion into question. (**NOTE:** If you **cannot** affirm this paragraph, please initial here ____ and give details on a separate signed page.)
5. During the course of my relationship with the Training and Care Committee, I agree that should my circumstances change such that either of the previous two paragraphs would no longer be true, I will disclose those circumstances to the Training and Care Committee. I understand that failure to do so may be treated as grounds for the revocation of candidacy.
7. I acknowledge receiving a copy of the information packet for new candidates in care, a copy of the Region's "Order of Ministry Policies," and will read and seek to understand this document. In this regard, I understand that the Regional Church's requirements for ordination are not necessarily the same as the requirements for the M.Div. degree.
8. I understand that by prior request to the Regional Minister-President, I may examine my Training and Care file in the Regional Office at a mutually agreeable time, with exception of individual Committee members' notes or items otherwise denoted as "confidential" by the writer.
9. I agree to make myself available for regular meetings at least annually with the Training and Care Committee, and I understand that after each meeting with the Committee, I will receive from the Chair or Regional ministerial staff a summary of the meeting, including ongoing issues and concerns, and any actions taken by the Committee. I understand that the Training and Care Committee and Region warrant that any materials that are a part of my file and all dealings with the Committee will be confidential unless I give explicit written permission otherwise (with the exceptions of: [a] any matters that may be required by law to be reported to civil authorities, or [b] if I shall initiate a formal appeal of any Committee decision. In the latter event, the materials upon which the Committee based its decision will be forwarded to the body charged with dealing with my appeal request).
10. I understand that should the Training and Care Committee at any point decline to approve my candidacy, withdraw my approval for candidacy, decline to approve me for ordination, decline to approve a request for licensing by a congregation/agency where I am serving and which has made such a request, or any other serious action affecting my vocation, I may request formal appeal of such action(s) to the Regional church body specified by Regional policy or to the General Commission on Ministry and that Regional ministerial staff will help to facilitate such a request.
11. I agree that near the end of my M.Div. studies, if I desire to be considered for ordination approval, I will submit to the Training and Care Committee in a timely way: a) a letter of request for ordination, b) an Ordination Paper, c) a letter of sponsorship for ordination, d) and three letters of reference.
12. I understand that any process(es) used by my sponsoring congregation(s) to help them make decisions concerning that sponsorship are distinct from the Training and Care process, and that the congregation may specify what information it needs from me in order to make decisions about sponsorship. The Region will release no information/materials without my written permission.

(signed/date) _____
(COUNTERSIGNED) Ben Bohren

(name printed) Transitional Regional Minister-President

Christian Church of Northern California-Nevada
9260 Alcosta Blvd, C-18
San Ramon, CA 94583-4143
925-556-9900
925-556-9904 Fax
Email info@ccncn.org

Reference Letter for Ordination Candidacy

_____ (*name of candidate*) has applied for candidacy for ordination with the Training and Care Committee of the Christian Church of Northern California-Nevada. "Candidacy" is not **approval** for ordination but is entrance in a process of oversight, care, and certification leading to a consideration for approval for ordination at the end of the seminarian's schooling. He/she has given you as a reference. Would you please fill out the following (using the back if necessary) and **return to the above address**? Thank you!

13. *How long have you known the candidate?* _____
14. *In what way have you known the candidate:*
15. *What particular "gifts and graces" will he/she bring to the ministry:*
16. *What concerns do you have regarding this person's potential to be a faithful and effective Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister? Where can he or she improve his/her potential for ministry?*
17. *Do you have any concerns about this person's ethics or personal fitness for ministry?*
___ Yes ___ No. (*If "yes," please explain on the back*).

Your name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

You may share this letter with the candidate

This letter is not to be shared with the candidate.

*(If no answer is check,
the letter will not be shared)*

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Reference Letter for Ordination Candidacy

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13. *How long have you known the candidate?* _____
14. *In what way have you known the candidate:*
15. *What particular "gifts and graces" will he/she bring to the ministry:*
16. *What concerns do you have regarding this person's potential to be a faithful and effective Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister? Where can he or she improve his/her potential for ministry?*
17. *Do you have any concerns about this person's ethics or personal fitness for ministry?*
___ Yes ___ No. (*If "yes," please explain on the back.*)

Your name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

You may share this letter with the candidate

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*(If no answer is check,
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Reference Letter for Ordination Candidacy

_____ (*name of candidate*) has applied for candidacy for ordination with the Training and Care Committee of the Christian Church of Northern California-Nevada. “Candidacy” is not **approval** for ordination but is entrance in a process of oversight, care, and certification leading to a consideration for approval for ordination at the end of the seminarian’s schooling. He/she has given you as a reference. Would you please fill out the following (using the back if necessary) and **return to the above address**? Thank you!

13. *How long have you known the candidate?* _____

14. *In what way have you known the candidate:*

15. *What particular “gifts and graces” will he/she bring to the ministry:*

16. *What concerns do you have regarding this person’s potential to be a faithful and effective Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister? Where can he or she improve his/her potential for ministry?*

17. *Do you have any concerns about this person’s ethics or personal fitness for ministry?*
___ Yes ___ No. (*If “yes,” please explain on the back.*)

Your name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

___ You may share this letter with the candidate

___ This letter is not to be shared with the candidate.

(If no answer is check, the letter will not be shared)

APPENDIX THREE

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California-Nevada Date Received in Office

Please return this signed form to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California-Nevada, 9260 Alcosta Blvd., Suite C18, San Ramon CA 94583. It will be signed in turn by the Regional Minister-President and a copy returned to you.

(Check one of the following: This is an)

___ Application for Ministerial Standing with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for Ordained Ministers from other Denominations

___ Application for Ordination with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for Who Have Previously Completed the Academic Prerequisites for Ordination

In the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) admission to ministerial standing of persons ordained by another denomination, or approval for ordination of persons who have previously completed the academic prerequisites for ordination (normally the M.Div. degree), rests with the Regional Church. In order to carry out this role, therefore, the Regional Church operating through the Recognition and Standing Committee and Regional Ministerial Staff, needs suitable and adequate information to responsibly carry out those tasks on behalf of the whole church. Thus, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Northern California-Nevada asks of applicants for ministerial standing from other denominations to agree and covenant with the Regional Church as follows:

1. I, _____, hereby request to be considered for (**check whichever one applies**) ___ admission to ministerial standing with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), ___ approval for ordination by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). I agree to submit to the Recognition and Standing Committee: a) three confidential letters of reference from persons of my choosing concerning my gifts and graces for ministry, b) this signed "Agreement and Covenant," and (in the case of those seeking ordination) letter(s) of sponsorship by a congregation for ordination. I understand that these items, along with any other information specified in this application or which may be required by the Committee shall be required before a decision can be made concerning my application.

2. *I further grant the Recognition and Standing Committee permission to confidentially receive: a) reports and evaluations from faculty or staff of the seminary I attended; b) reports from any previous or psychological assessment processes or any that may be requested by the Committee; c) reports from judicatory officials in the denomination(s) in which I have had ministerial standing or its equivalent; d) reports from any Clinical Pastoral Education work, e) any reports concerning arrests or convictions. I understand that the Recognition and Standing Committee, through Regional Ministerial staff may request other references or evaluations that the Committee believes might be relevant concerning my candidacy, and I will give waivers if necessary in order to facilitate such references/evaluations. I understand that the Training and Care Committee will respect the wishes of any persons supplying reports mentioned in this paragraph with regard to*

confidentiality, but will also make no judgments about my candidacy based on anonymous information.

3. I will supply the Recognition and Standing Committee with a copy of my seminary transcript. (I will also make available any transcripts reflecting any other graduate education).
4. *I hereby assert that I have never been the subject of an official disciplinary review by any judicatory oversight body that resulted in official censure or suspension of ministerial standing or other serious consequence. I further assert that I have never been the subject of an official disciplinary review by any other professional or trade organization or association that resulted in censure or sanction. I further assert that I have never been arrested or convicted on a felony charge, or on any charge that would call into question my fitness for ministry. (NOTE: If you **cannot** affirm this paragraph, please initial here ____ and give details on a separate signed page.)*
5. In light of the statement in the "Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)" that admission to the Order of Ministry includes "Personal fitness sufficient to the demands of the office, including mental and physical capacities, emotional stability and maturity, and standards of morality" (par. C.1.c.), I hereby assert that I believe I meet these criteria and that there is nothing in my past background or actions that would significantly call that assertion into question. (NOTE: If you **cannot** affirm this paragraph, please initial here ____ and give details on a separate signed page.)
5. *During the course of my relationship with the Recognition and Standing Committee, I agree that should my circumstances change such that either of the previous two paragraphs would no longer be true, I will disclose those circumstances to the Committee. I understand that failure to do so may be treated as grounds for termination of the application process.*
7. I acknowledge receiving a copy of the Christian Church of Northern California-Nevada's "Order of Ministry Policies," and will read and seek to understand this document.
18. I agree to make myself available for regular meetings with the Recognition and Standing Committee, or Regional Ministerial Staff, and I understand that after each meeting with the Committee, I will receive from the Chair or Regional ministerial staff a summary of the meeting, including ongoing issues and concerns, and any actions taken by the Committee. I understand that the Recognition and Standing Committee and Region warrant that any materials that are a part of my file and all dealings with the Committee will be confidential unless I give explicit written permission otherwise (with the exceptions of any matters that may be required by law to be reported to civil authorities)

(signed/date) _____
(COUNTERSIGNED) Ben Bohren

(name printed) Transitional Regional Minister-President

APPENDIX FOUR

Christian Church of Northern California-Nevada
9260 Alcosta Blvd, C-18
San Ramon, CA 94583-4143
925-556-9900
925-556-9904 Fax
Emailinfo@ccncn.org

Reference Letter re Application For Ministerial Standing

_____ (*name of candidate*) has applied for ministerial standing with the Recognition and Standing Committee of the Christian Church of Northern California-Nevada. He/she has given you as a reference. Would you please fill out the following (using the back if necessary) and **return to the above address?** Thank you!

1. *How long have you known the candidate?* _____
2. *In what way have you known the candidate:*

3. *What particular "gifts and graces" will he/she bring to the ministry:*

4. *What concerns do you have regarding this person's potential to be a faithful and effective Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister? Where can he or she improve his/her potential for ministry?*

5. *Do you have any concerns about this person's ethics or personal fitness for ministry?*
 Yes No. (*If "yes," please explain on the back*).

Your name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

You may share this letter with the candidate

This letter is not to be shared with the candidate.

(If no answer is check, the letter will not be shared)

APPENDIX FOUR

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1. *How long have you known the candidate?* _____
2. *In what way have you known the candidate:*

3. *What particular "gifts and graces" will he/she bring to the ministry:*

4. *What concerns do you have regarding this person's potential to be a faithful and effective Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister? Where can he or she improve his/her potential for ministry?*

5. *Do you have any concerns about this person's ethics or personal fitness for ministry?*
 Yes No. (*If "yes," please explain on the back*).

Your name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

<input type="checkbox"/> You may share this letter with the candidate <input type="checkbox"/> This letter is not to be shared with the candidate. <p style="text-align: center;"><i>(If no answer is check, the letter will not be shared)</i></p>

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4. *What concerns do you have regarding this person's potential to be a faithful and effective Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) minister? Where can he or she improve his/her potential for ministry?*

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*(If no answer is check,
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