

My  
Ministerial  
Code  
of  
Ethics



Christian Church  
(Disciples of Christ)

This revised edition was published on 10/01/2011.  
This version supercedes all previous versions.

## Foreword

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

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

Most recently, the contents of this document were revised and adopted in 2009 by General Assembly resolution #0922 and can be found in Section II., I, of *Theological Foundations and Policies and Criteria for the Ordering of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*. This version became official on August 1, 2011.

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

~General Commission on Ministry

# Ministerial Code Of Ethics

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

## **Personal Conduct**

- **Witnessing to the ministry of Jesus Christ**
- **Dedicating time, strength, vitality and energy for effective ministry**
- **Growing in faith, knowledge, and the practice of ministry through the spiritual disciplines, study, continuing education and service**
- **Living a life that honors my commitments to my family, including the need for privacy and time together**
- **Taking time for physical and spiritual renewal, recreation and vacation**
- **Being a faithful steward of God's gifts to me by managing time, talents and financial resources responsibly and generously**
- **Accepting responsibility for all debts which I incur**
- **Keeping physically and emotionally fit, and refraining from substance abuse and other abusive behaviors**
- **Using my position, power and authority in non-exploitive ways**
- **Maintaining high moral standards in my sexual behavior**
- **Regarding all persons with equal respect and concern, and undertaking to minister impartially**

## **Relationships To The Church I Serve**

- **Nurturing and offering my gifts for ministry to the church**
- **Calling forth and nurturing the gifts of others in the church, and joining their gifts with mine for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ and the health of the church.**
- **Preaching and teaching the gospel without fear or favor, and speaking the truth in love**
- **Administering the sacraments, ordinances and services of the Church with integrity and not for financial gain**
- **Working cooperatively and collegially with those whom I serve in the particular ministry to which I have been called**
- **Administering the corporate finances of the church with personal integrity**
- **Refraining from accepting any gift which would compromise the church's ministry**
- **Protecting confidences; covenanting to only tell those who need to know, what they need to know, when they need to know it**
- **Acting to prevent and to report known or suspected cases of physical or sexual abuse or neglect**
- **Encouraging and participating in the regular evaluation of my ministry and cooperating with the Region in an annual review of my ministerial Standing**
- **Seeking the counsel of the Regional Minister should divisive tensions threaten my relationship with those I serve**

## **Relationships To Ministry Colleagues**

- **Engaging in covenantal relationships with colleagues which involve nurture, discipline, family support, vigorous dialogue, mutual teaching/learning and spiritual formation**
- **Supporting colleagues in ministry and their families while not exploiting their problems or crises**
- **Performing pastoral services within another congregation or for a member of another congregation only at the request of that congregation's elders and current pastor.**
- **Supporting and at no time speaking maliciously of the ministry of my predecessors or another minister**
- **Encouraging the ministry of my successor upon my retirement or other departure from a ministry position, without interfering or intruding, and by making it clear to former parishioners that I am no longer their pastor, nor will I perform any pastoral services unless requested by the congregation's elders and current pastor**

## **Relationships To The Community and The Wider Church**

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

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