

## **Authorized Ministry in the Northern California Nevada Conference**

### **A. COVENANTING IN MINISTRY**

Our United Church of Christ Statement of Faith describes the covenant within which we live as faithful Christians.

Authorized Ministry in the United Church of Christ is always ministry within the context of a covenantal relationship. Referring specifically to Ordained ministry, paragraph 25 of the United Church of Christ Constitution and Bylaws [2001] gives voice to the understanding of Covenant in all forms of authorized ministry, in stating that “The Call of an Ordained Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner to a Local Church establishes a covenantal relationship among the Ordained Minister, the Local Church, and the United Church of Christ as represented by an Association or a Conference. The Call of an Ordained Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner to other forms of ministry recognized by an Association or Conference of the United Church of Christ establishes a covenantal relationship among the Ordained Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner, the calling body, the United Church of Christ as represented by an Association or Conference and the Local Church where the Ordained Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner is a member.”

1. ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING THE MINISTERIAL COVENANT
  - a. Authorized Ministry is always carried out on behalf of the United Church of Christ as a whole.
  - b. The Covenant exists because God has called this person to Authorized Ministry and that call has been affirmed and recognized by the Church.
  - c. The Local Church or other calling body initiates the authorization for ministry through the call to ministry of the person.
  - d. The Northern California Nevada Conference on behalf of the Associations, through the Conference Committee on the Ministry [Section A], grants licenses to Licensed Ministers, and acts to recommend to Associations candidates for ordination, commissioning, and installation.
  - e. Associations grant active ministerial standing to ordained and commissioned ministers, by ordaining or commissioning, and by installing Ordained and Commissioned Ministers into their setting for ministry.
  - f. The Standing of all Authorized Ministers is held in the Conference.
  - g. The Conference Committee on the Ministry [Section B] provides for consultation and review of Ordained and Commissioned Ministers.
2. FORMS OF MINISTERIAL COVENANT
  - a. There are three forms of Authorized Ministry, as described in Article 6 of the UCC Constitution and Bylaws [2001]:
    - i. Ordained
    - ii. Commissioned
    - iii. Licensed

- b. In the Northern California Nevada Conference, there is a ministerial Covenant between and among:
  - i. The Authorized Minister, the Local Church, and the Association whose geographic area includes the Local Church, when the Local Church is the calling body and the Minister serves that Local Church. This is a “Three-Way Covenant,” which is inherent in the completed Call Agreement to a pastor as provided by the Conference. If the Local Church calls the Authorized Minister to serve elsewhere, in circumstances which are not encompassed in the sample Call Agreement, the Three-Way Covenant is put into written form. (See Appendix for sample Call Agreement and sample Three-Way Covenant).
  - ii. The Authorized Minister, the calling body (if other than a Local Church), the Local Church of which the Authorized Minister is a member, and the Association of which the Local Church is a member. This is a “Four-Way Covenant,” and is put into written form. (See Appendix for sample Four-Way Covenant).
  - iii. See the *Manual on Ministry* for further detail.
- c. The Conference expects all Authorized Ministers to abide by the applicable Code of Ethics whether for Ordained, Commissioned, or Licensed Ministers (*Manual on Ministry*), as part of the covenantal relationship for Authorized Ministry.
- d. Authorized Ministers in the Northern California Nevada Conference are encouraged to affirm the Conference Covenant:

### **THE COVENANT OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA NEVADA CONFERENCE**

We are people of God, a community of congregations  
diverse in our ethnicity, culture and lifestyle.

We are the Northern California Nevada Conference, United Church of Christ.

We covenant with God and each other  
to worship God through Word and Sacrament,  
to proclaim to all the world the Gospel of Jesus Christ through word and deed,  
to be open to the movement of the Spirit in our midst.

We covenant with God and each other  
to speak of our dreams and visions,  
to share our resources,  
to draw strength from one another in the work of ministry.

We covenant with God and each other

to affirm our journey together, in our diversity,  
for justice, peace and healing, throughout all of God's creation,  
to grow with one another, building our future out of past memories and present hopes.

We covenant with God and each other

to love and support one another,  
to listen to and learn from one another,  
to forgive and trust one another,  
to pray for and with one another,  
to answer God's call to be the body of Christ.

*Adopted by the 1991 Annual Meeting, Asilomar, 5/18/91*

**B. MINISTERIAL STANDING** is ongoing recognition as an Authorized Minister of the United Church of Christ and provides ecclesiastical authorization to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained, commissioned, or licensed ministry.

1. "Ordained ministerial standing is ongoing recognition as an Ordained Minister of the United Church of Christ and provides ecclesiastical authorization to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry." (UCC Constitution, VI.24, 2001 edition.)
  - a. When a Person-in-Care is ordained by an Association of the Northern California Nevada Conference, ordained ministerial standing in the Conference is granted. The newly-ordained minister is then installed by the Association in which the newly-ordained minister is to serve as a called minister. If the call to ministry is outside the Northern California Nevada Conference, the newly-ordained minister's standing is transferred to the Association/Conference wherein the calling body is located.
  - b. Ordained ministerial standing can be maintained throughout active ministry, leave of absence, or retirement. (See MOMSA, Section III, "Ministerial Accountability).
  - c. Those whose ordained ministerial standing has been dropped or terminated may apply for reinstatement of ministerial standing through Section A. (See *Manual on Ministry*).
2. Commissioned Ministers hold ministerial standing.
  - a. When a Person-in-Care is commissioned by an Association of the Northern California Nevada Conference, commissioned ministerial standing in the Conference is granted. The newly-commissioned minister is then installed by the Association in which the newly-commissioned minister is to serve as a called minister. If the call to ministry is outside the Northern California Nevada Conference, the newly-commissioned minister's standing is transferred to the Association/Conference wherein the calling body is located.

- b. Commissioned Ministers can maintain standing throughout active ministry, leave of absence, or retirement. (See MOMSA, Section III, "Ministerial Accountability).
  - c. Those whose commission has been dropped or terminated may apply for reinstatement of a commission. (See *Manual on Ministry*).
3. Licensed Ministers hold ministerial standing for the duration of their license.
- a. License is granted for a one-year period, and can be renewed.
  - b. Those whose license has been dropped or terminated may apply for a new license.

**C. ROLE OF THE ASSOCIATION**

**IN AUTHORIZING MINISTRY AND MAINTAINING MINISTERIAL COVENANT**

1. Upon recommendation from the Conference Committee on the Ministry [Section A], the Association in which the candidate holds Local Church membership ordains, commissions, or installs and thereby confers ministerial standing. [See B.1 and B.2. above.] Ordination and Commissioning are performed on behalf of the entire United Church of Christ, and persons thus authorized by the Associations are recognized throughout the denomination in the capacities to which the Association officially designates them.
2. The Association installs Ordained or Commissioned Ministers who have been called to a new ministry within that Association.
  - a. The Committee on the Ministry [Section A] recommends to the Association for installation Ordained or Commissioned Ministers who hold ministerial standing in other Conference or denominations. The act of installation confers ministerial standing in the Northern California Nevada Conference.
  - b. When the Association installs an Ordained or Commissioned Minister who already holds standing in Northern California Nevada Conference, ministerial standing is maintained through a new Covenant of ministry.
3. Before acting upon the recommendation from the Conference Committee on the Ministry [Section A] to ordain, commission, or install, the Association, through its Credentials Committee, Executive Committee, Church & Ministry Committee, or according to other practice, reviews the recommendation from the Committee on the Ministry [Section A], the letter of call, the Three-Way or Four-Way Covenant, and any other pertinent documents.
4. The Association gathers in Ecclesiastical Council, which is an officially-called meeting of the Association for the purpose of authorizing ministry:
  - a. To make decisions related to ordination and commissioning;
  - b. To make decisions related to installation when such installation grants ministerial standing in the UCC for the first time through Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing, Dual Standing, or Privilege of Call;
  - c. When it is the practice of the Association, to make decisions related to installation of a minister who holds UCC ministerial standing;
  - d. By special request at the ending of a pastorate.

5. Services of Ordination or Commissioning usually take place in the Local Church of which the minister to be ordained or commissioned has been a member while a Person-In-Care.
6. Ordained or Commissioned Ministerial standing is conferred by the Association in the acts of Ordination, Commissioning, or Installation, then given over to and held by the Northern California Nevada Conference.
7. The Association prepares certificates appropriate to services of ordination, commissioning, and installation and reports all ordinations, commissioning, and installations promptly to the Conference Office, which notifies the UCC National Offices.
8. Although, in the Northern California Nevada Conference, the Conference Committee on the Ministry [Section A] grants Licensed Ministry status, and takes into care persons preparing for Ordained or Commissioned Ministry, the Association maintains collegial contact with Licensed Ministers serving within that Association, conducting services of recognition when appropriate and requested; and offers spiritual support to persons-in-care.

**D. ROLE OF THE CONFERENCE**

**IN AUTHORIZING MINISTRY AND MAINTAINING MINISTERIAL COVENANT**

1. The Conference Board of Directors, by request of the Associations,
  - a. Holds the ministerial standing of the Authorized Ministers who are members of this Conference.
  - b. Reviews the processes employed by Committee on the Ministry, Section B, in situations involving termination of ministerial standing.
  - c. Notifies the appropriate denominational bodies regarding the granting, dropping, reinstatement, or termination of ministerial standing or in-care status.
  - d. Through Sections A and B of the Conference Committee on the Ministry:
    - i. Grants In-Care status, License, Privilege of Call, approval for Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing, and Leave of Absence.
    - ii. Recommends to the Associations candidates for Ordination, Commissioning, and Installation.
    - iii. Maintains Covenant with Authorized Ministers.
    - iv. Terminates In-Care Status and Authorization for Ministry.
2. Section A of the Committee on the Ministry deals with preparation and authorization for ministry in the Northern California Nevada Conference. It:
  - a. Grants, renews, dissolves, and terminates In-Care Status
  - b. Licenses ministers, renews, dissolves, and terminates licenses
  - c. Grants and renews Privilege of Call
  - d. Grants approval for Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing
  - e. Grants Transfer of Standing from other Conferences/Associations to Ordained or Commissioned Ministers who are:
    - i. Retired
    - ii. Seeking Leave of Absence or Retired status upon transfer of standing

- f. May grant Transfer of Standing, with the designation, “Inactive,” to Ordained or Commissioned Ministers from other Conferences/Associations who are Retired or are seeking Leave of Absence or Retired status upon transfer of standing
  - i. “Leave of Absence, Inactive” is ministerial standing for the sake of receiving benefits through the UCC Pension Boards, but does not allow the Ordained or Commissioned Minister to circulate a Ministerial Profile.
  - ii. “Retired, Inactive” is ministerial standing for the sake of receiving benefits through the UCC Pension Boards, but does not allow the Ordained or Commissioned Minister to circulate a Ministerial Profile, or to serve as an interim minister, replacement minister, or in any other capacity as an authorized minister of the United Church of Christ.
  - iii. Ordained or Commissioned Ministers who have been designated “Inactive” may request Section B to review and remove the designation.
- g. May grant reinstatement of standing to Ordained or Commissioned UCC Ministers who do not have standing and who are seeking Leave of Absence or Retired status. (See *Manual on the Ministry*).
- h. May grant reinstatement of standing, as inactive, to Ordained or Commissioned UCC Ministers who do not have standing and who are seeking Leave of Absence or Retired status.
  - i. “Leave of Absence, Inactive” is ministerial standing for the sake of receiving benefits through the UCC Pension Boards, but does not allow the Ordained or Commissioned Minister to circulate a Ministerial Profile. “Leave of Absence, Inactive” status is reported to the Pension Boards, but the minister is not listed in the Conference Directory or the UCC Yearbook.
  - ii. “Retired, Inactive” is ministerial standing for the sake of receiving benefits through the UCC Pension Boards, but does not allow the Ordained or Commissioned Minister to circulate a Ministerial Profile, or to serve as an interim minister, replacement minister, or in any other capacity as an authorized minister of the United Church of Christ. “Leave of Absence, Inactive” status is reported to the Pension Boards, but the minister is not listed in the Conference Directory or the UCC Yearbook.
  - iii. Ordained or Commissioned Ministers who have been designated “Inactive” may request Section B to review and remove the designation.
- i. May grant standing to retired ministers with Privilege of Call or to ministers on Leave of Absence with Privilege of Call. (See *Section I.F.10, 11*).
- j. Recommends to the Associations candidates for:
  - i. Ordination
  - ii. Commissioning
  - iii. Installation *via*:
    - (1) Transfer of Standing
    - (2) Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing

- (3) Dual Standing
  - (4) Privilege of Call
  - (5) Reinstatement of Standing. (See "Reinstatement of Ministerial Standing," or "Reinstatement of a Commission," *Manual on the Ministry*).
3. Section B of the Committee on the Ministry works with Ordained and Commissioned Ministers who hold standing in the Northern California Nevada Conference. It:
  - a. Provides nurture and accountability for these Authorized Ministers in various ways, particularly through:
    - i. Periodic Support Consultations
    - ii. Situational Support Consultations
    - iii. Information Reviews
    - iv. Fitness Reviews  
(See "The Oversight of Ministries Authorized by the United Church of Christ," a new section of the *Manual on Ministry*, replacing pp.84, 184-205 of the one-volume version)
  - b. Transfers ministerial standing to other Conferences/Associations at the request of the authorized minister.
  - c. Grants and renews Leave of Absence for Ordained or Commissioned Ministers.
  - d. Grants Retired status.
  - e. May designate as "Inactive" Authorized Ministers who are on Leave of Absence or Retired or grant "Retired, Inactive" or "Leave of Absence, Inactive" status to Authorized Ministers in NCNC.
    - i. "Leave of Absence, Inactive" is ministerial standing for the sake of receiving benefits through the UCC Pension Boards, but does not allow the Ordained or Commissioned Minister to circulate a Ministerial Profile. The "inactive" minister's name is removed from listing as an Authorized Minister in the Conference Directory and the UCC Yearbook.
    - ii. "Retired, Inactive" is ministerial standing for the sake of receiving benefits through the Pension Boards, but does not allow the Ordained or Commissioned Minister to circulate a Ministerial Profile, or to serve as an interim minister, replacement minister, or in any other capacity as an authorized minister of the United Church of Christ. . The "inactive" minister's name is removed from listing as an Authorized Minister in the Conference Directory and the UCC Yearbook.
    - iii. Ordained or Commissioned Ministers who have been designated "Inactive" may request Section B to review and remove the designation.
  - f. Reviews the qualifications of Authorized Ministers seeking Ecclesiastical Endorsement and makes recommendations for Ecclesiastical Endorsement to the national UCC office of Parish Life and Leadership.

- g. Drops Ordained or Commissioned Ministerial Standing at the request of the Authorized Minister, or when such action is appropriate due to changed circumstances.
  - h. Terminates Ordained or Commissioned Ministerial Standing in accord with the policies outlined in "The Oversight of Ministries," *Manual on Ministry*, and/or the ethics procedures and policies of the Conference. (See on "Ministerial Ethics")
- E. TRANSFER OF ORDAINED OR COMMISSIONED MINISTERIAL STANDING**
- 1. Ordained or Commissioned Ministers from another Conference who have received a call to ministry within the Northern California Nevada Conference
    - a. Initiate their requests for transfer of standing by sending the following documents to the Conference Office for consideration by the Committee on the Ministry [Section A]:
      - i. Verification of Ordained or Commissioned ministerial standing from the Conference/Association in which standing is currently held, stating that the Authorized Minister is in good standing there and requests transfer of ministerial standing to Northern California Nevada Conference..
      - ii. A copy of the letter of call to a ministry in Northern California Nevada Conference.
      - iii. If called to serve a Local Church, verification of membership in that Local Church.
      - iv. If entering into a Four-Way Covenant, evidence of membership in a UCC Church of the Northern California Nevada Conference.
      - v. A completed, signed, Background Disclosure Form (if not already on file in the Conference Office as part of the Ministerial Profile).
    - b. Requests for transfer of Ordained or Commissioned ministerial standing into the Northern California Nevada Conference are received and reviewed by Section A of the Conference Committee on the Ministry.
    - c. Following a favorable review of the documents, the Committee on the Ministry [Section A] on behalf of the Board of Directors recommends to the appropriate Association that Ordained or Commissioned ministerial standing be transferred.
    - d. The Association, according to its practice, reviews the Call Agreement and the Three-Way or Four-Way Covenant, and, upon approval, conducts a Service of Installation, which may be preceded by an Installing Ecclesiastical Council (an officially-called meeting of the Association for the purpose of authorizing ministry) in cooperation with the Local Church (and the calling body if other than a Local Church).
    - e. Once the transfer has been completed by the Association at the service of installation, Ordained or Commissioned ministerial standing is held in the Northern California Nevada Conference, with records maintained at the Conference Office.

- f. The Association reports its action immediately to the Conference Office, which notifies the UCC National Offices, as well as the Association or Conference in which standing was previously held.
2. Retired Ordained or Commissioned Ministers from another Conference
  - a. Initiate their requests for transfer of standing by sending the following documents to the Conference Office for consideration by the Committee on the Ministry [Section A]:
    - i. Verification of Ordained or Commissioned ministerial standing from the Conference/Association in which standing is currently held, stating that the Authorized Minister is in good standing there and requests transfer of ministerial standing to Northern California Nevada Conference.
    - ii. Verification of membership in a UCC Church of the Northern California Nevada Conference
    - iii. A completed, signed, Background Disclosure Form.
  - b. Requests for transfer or Ordained or Commissioned ministerial standing in the Conference are received and reviewed by Section A of the Conference Committee on the Ministry.
  - c. Following a favorable review of the documents, Section A of the Committee on the Ministry, acting on behalf of the Conference Board of Directors, will vote on the request for transfer of standing.
  - d. Upon positive vote,
    - i. The transfer is complete and
    - ii. The Conference Office notifies the UCC National Offices as well as the former Association/Conference.  
(See also Section I.I., "Ministerial Standing in Retirement").
3. Ordained or Commissioned Ministers from another Conference who are on Leave of Absence:
  - a. Initiate their requests for transfer of standing by sending the following documents to the Conference Office for consideration by the Committee on the Ministry [Section A]:
    - i. Verification of Ordained or Commissioned ministerial standing from the Conference/Association in which standing is currently held, including a statement of the terms of the Leave of Absence and the record of the minister's and the Association's/Conference's fulfillment of those terms to date, and stating that the Authorized Minister is in good standing there and requests transfer of ministerial standing to Northern California Nevada Conference.
    - ii. Verification of membership in a UCC Church of the Northern California Nevada Conference.
    - iii. A written statement indicating the reasons for seeking transfer of standing into the Northern California Nevada Conference and including a projection of continuation of Leave of Absence and/or return to active ministry.

- iv. A completed, signed Background Disclosure Form.
  - b. Requests for transfer or Ordained or Commissioned ministerial standing into the Northern California Nevada Conference are received and reviewed by Section A of the Conference Committee on the Ministry.
  - c. Section A of the Committee on the Ministry will review the terms of the Leave of Absence granted by the other Conference/Association and meet with the Authorized Minister to develop a new plan for Leave of Absence.
  - d. Following a favorable review of the documents and an interview with the Authorized Minister, Section A of the Committee on the Ministry, acting on behalf of the Conference Board of Directors, will vote on the request for transfer of standing.
  - e. Upon positive vote:
    - i. Transfer of standing is complete;
    - ii. The minister is on Leave of Absence as granted by the Northern California Nevada Conference;
    - iii. The Conference Office notifies the UCC National Offices and the former Association/Conference.
  - f. After Committee on the Ministry [Section A] has granted transfer of standing and Leave of Absence upon transfer, Committee on the Ministry [Section B] will maintain the terms of the Leave of Absence.
- 4. Ordained or Commissioned Ministers from another Conference who do not have a call to ministry in Northern California Nevada Conference and are in a mode of discernment, are seeking an advanced theological degree, and/or desire a period of hiatus from active ministry:
  - a. Initiate their requests for transfer of standing by sending the following documents to the Conference Office for consideration by the Committee on the Ministry [Section A]:
    - i. Verification of Ordained or Commissioned ministerial standing from the Conference/Association in which standing is currently held and stating that the Authorized Minister is in good standing there and requests transfer of ministerial standing to Northern California Nevada Conference.
    - ii. Verification of membership in a UCC Church of the Northern California Nevada Conference.
    - iii. A written statement indicating the reasons for seeking transfer of standing into the Northern California Nevada Conference and including a proposal for a Leave of Absence as described in the "Manual on the Ministry," and "MOMSA."
    - iv. A completed, signed Background Disclosure Form.
  - b. Requests for transfer or Ordained or Commissioned ministerial standing into the Northern California Nevada Conference are received and reviewed by Section A of the Conference Committee on the Ministry.

- c. Section A of the Committee on the Ministry will meet with the Authorized Minister and review the terms of the proposed Leave of Absence along with other documents.
  - d. Following a favorable review of the documents and an interview with the Authorized Minister, Section A of the Committee on the Ministry, acting on behalf of the Conference Board of Directors, will vote on the request for transfer of standing.
  - e. Upon positive vote:
    - i. Transfer of standing is complete;
    - ii. The minister is on Leave of Absence as granted by the Northern California Nevada Conference;
    - iii. The Conference Office notifies the UCC National Offices and the former Association/Conference.
  - f. After Committee on the Ministry [Section A] has granted transfer of standing and Leave of Absence upon transfer, Committee on the Ministry [Section B] will maintain the terms of the Leave of Absence.
5. Ordained or Commissioned UCC Ministers who hold standing in the Northern California Nevada Conference and are called to a new ministry in a different Association within the Conference do not transfer their ministerial standing since standing is held in the Conference.
6. Transferring out of the Conference  
Requests for transfer of ministerial standing out of the Northern California Nevada Conference should be made in writing to the Northern California Nevada Conference Committee on the Ministry [Section B] and sent to the Conference Office.

**F. PRIVILEGE OF CALL**

1. An Ordained Minister of another denomination who desires to enter the Ordained Ministry of the United Church of Christ and who lives within the boundaries of the Northern California Nevada Conference applies for Privilege of Call by preparing the following documentation and sending it to the Conference Office for review by the Committee on the Ministry [Section A].
  - a. Evidence of ordination to the Christian ministry
  - b. Verification of the completion of [or current enrolment in] a course of study of UCC History and Polity.
  - c. Verification of current ministerial standing.
  - d. A written statement setting forth the reasons for desiring to leave the current denomination and become an Ordained Minister of the United Church of Christ.
  - e. If currently serving the United Church of Christ as an Ordained Minister, a copy of the letter of call.
  - f. If retired from active ministry in the other denomination, a certificate or other written acknowledgement of retired status.
  - g. A recent sermon that the minister has prepared and presented.
  - h. Current Ministerial Profile or *curriculum vitae*.

- i. Five letters of reference, at least one of which is from an Ordained Minister of the United Church of Christ, and one from the denominational counterpart of the United Church of Christ Conference Minister or Associate Conference Minister, if confidentiality allows.
  - j. A completed and signed Background Disclosure Form (if not already included in the Ministerial Profile).
  - k. A completed and signed Release of Information Form.
  - l. A copy of seminary/divinity school diploma[s] and transcript of courses; copy of undergraduate diploma[s].
2. The Committee on the Ministry [Section A] will meet with the minister to review the above materials, and may make modifications in the above requirements or stipulate further requirements.
3. During the interview the Committee on the Ministry will seek
  - a. To determine whether the minister's ordination is analogous to ordination in the United Church of Christ, particularly with regard to whether:
    - i. Requirements, especially academic requirements, for the minister's ordination, were comparable to the normal ordination requirements of the United Church of Christ;
    - ii. The concept of ordination was analogous to the concept or ordination in the United Church of Christ;
    - iii. Ordination vows were made within a community and the vows were similar to those found in the United Church of Christ *Book of Worship*;
    - iv. The ordination was recognized within a community of congregations (a denomination) beyond the Local Church.
  - b. To understand the minister's reasons for seeking Ordained Ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ.
  - c. To determine whether the minister has knowledge of and appreciation for the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ and will serve faithfully and effectively as an Ordained Minister of the UCC.
4. If, after reviewing the documentation and examining the minister, as described in the *Manual on Ministry*, the Committee on the Ministry [Section A] is convinced that the minister meets the requirements for Ordained Ministry in the United Church of Christ and will serve the UCC effectively and faithfully, the Committee may grant Privilege of Call. (The course of study of UCC History and Polity and the Ministerial Profile must be completed before Privilege of Call is granted).
5. Privilege of Call is granted for a period of one year and is renewable upon request of the minister.
6. Privilege of Call allows the minister access to the United Church of Christ system of search and call.
7. Upon being granted Privilege of Call, the minister is bound by the UCC Ordained Ministers' Code of Ethics.

8. The Conference Office notifies the National Offices of the United Church of Christ that Privilege of Call has been granted.
9. Upon receiving a call to ministry in the United Church of Christ the minister with Privilege of Call will be installed by the Association (or Conference) in which the minister's calling body is located and thus is granted UCC Ordained Ministerial Standing and leaves the ministry of the other denomination.
10. Privilege of Call—Leave of Absence  
Section A may, at its discretion and in particular circumstances, after granting Privilege of Call to a minister with standing in another denomination, grant Leave of Absence status to the minister, in accord with the provisions of MOMSA, thus granting ministerial standing in the Northern California Nevada Conference.
11. Privilege of Call in retirement
  - a. If the minister granted Privilege of Call is retired (see 1.f. above) and intends to remain retired, Section A may grant the minister retired status, in accord with the provisions of MOMSA, thus granting ministerial standing in the Northern California Nevada Conference, upon receiving from the retired minister:
    - A written request from the minister for retired status in NCNC
    - Verification of membership in a UCC congregation in NCNC
  - b. If a minister has been granted Privilege of Call by another UCC Conference or Association, is retired from active ministry in another denomination, intends to remain retired, and seeks ministerial standing, retired status, with NCNC, COM-A may grant standing as a retired minister upon receiving from the retired minister:
    - Verification of current Privilege of Call
    - A written request from the minister for retired status in NCNC
    - Verification of membership in a UCC congregation in NCNC

**G. ORDAINED MINISTERIAL PARTNERSHIP STANDING**

The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ affirm our mutual recognition of ministry. All Ordained Ministers of these two denominations are Ordained Ministerial Partners. (See "Ordained Ministerial Partner" 1997 addition to the *Manual on Ministry*).

1. Ordained Ministers of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Northern California Nevada initiate the process of securing Approval for Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing by sending the following materials to the Conference Office for consideration by the Sub-Committee on Approval for Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing of the Committee on the Ministry [Section A]:
  - a. Verification from the Regional Office of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) that the minister is an Ordained Minister in good standing.
  - b. A written statement of the minister's reasons for seeking Approval for Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing.
  - c. Evidence of knowledge of and appreciation for the history, polity and practices of the United Church of Christ through:

- d. Verification of successful completion of a course of UCC History and UCC Polity [either for academic credit, or audited, with certification from the professor that all requirements for completion of the course were met]  
OR
  - e. Verification of completion of a course of study designed by the minister and approved by the Conference Minister, on UCC theological roots and current theological realities; the sacraments, polity, terminology, ministerial standing and authorization, pastor/congregation dynamics, ministerial ethics, diversity, denominational history, and mission.
2. The Committee on the Ministry [Section A] Sub-Committee on Approval for Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing meets with the minister to:
    - a. Review the above materials
    - b. Determine whether the minister has knowledge of and appreciation for the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ and will serve faithfully and effectively as an Ordained Minister of the UCC.
    - c. Grant Approval for Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing, based on the review of the materials and the interview. Approval for Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing gives the approved minister access to the United Church of Christ process of Search and Call.
  3. Ministers who have been Approved for Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing and then receive a call to a ministry of The United Church of Christ in Northern California Nevada Conference initiate their requests for Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing by sending the following documents to the Conference Office for consideration by the Committee on the Ministry [Section A]:
    - a. Verification of Approval for Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing
    - b. A copy of the letter of call to a ministry in Northern California Nevada Conference.
    - c. If called to serve a Local Church, verification of membership in that Local Church.
    - d. If entering into a Four-Way Covenant, evidence of membership in a UCC [or, if appropriate, a DOC] Church of the Northern California Nevada Conference [or Region].
    - e. A completed, signed, Background Disclosure Form (if not already on file in the Conference Office as part of the Ministerial Profile).
  4. Following a favorable review of the documents, the Committee on the Ministry [Section A] on behalf of the Board of Directors recommends to the Association where the minister has Local Church membership that the minister be installed and, through the installation, granted Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing.
    - a. The Association, according to its usual practice, reviews the Call Agreement and the Three-Way or Four-Way Covenant, and, upon approval, the Association conducts a service of Installation in cooperation with the Local Church (and the calling body if other than a Local Church) at which point Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing is granted.

- b. Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing is full Ordained Ministerial Standing within the United Church of Christ, held in the Northern California Nevada Conference, for the duration of a particular call, granting the Ordained Minister full rights and membership in the Northern California Nevada Conference and obligation to the UCC Ordained Ministers' Code of Ethics. (See *UCC Constitution & Bylaws* [2001], paragraphs 126-139, for specifics).
  - c. The Association reports its action immediately to the Conference Office, which notifies the Regional Office and the UCC National Offices.
5. Ordained Ministers of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who are called to a ministry of The United Church of Christ without having first been granted Approval for Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing follow the procedures indicated above (1-4) in seeking Ordained Ministerial Partnership Standing.

**H. DUAL STANDING**

1. An Ordained Minister of another denomination [other than the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)] who wishes to retain Ordained Ministerial Standing in that denomination and who
  - a. has become the pastor of a Local Church of the United Church of Christ, or
  - b. has become pastor of a yoked charge or a federated church one part of which is affiliated with the United Church of Christ, or
  - c. has been called to an ecumenical or interfaith ministry, one constituent of which is the United Church of Christ, may apply to the Conference for Dual Standing which is limited to the duration of that pastorate or ministerial responsibility.
2. Application for Dual Standing is made by preparing the following documentation and sending it to the Conference Office for review by the Committee on the Ministry [Section A].
  - a. A written request for Dual Standing, setting forth the reasons for seeking Dual Standing.
  - b. A copy of the letter of call to a UCC Local Church, or other UCC-related ministry in Northern California Nevada Conference
  - c. Verification of current ministerial standing.
  - d. Verification of the completion of [or current enrolment in] a course of study of UCC History and Polity, or, at the determination of the Committee on the Ministry [Section A] the minister's presentation of [or plan for presentation of] understanding, knowledge, support, and appreciation of the history, polity, and practice of the United Church of Christ
  - e. A recent sermon that the minister has prepared and presented.
  - f. Current *curriculum vitae*.
  - g. Five letters of reference, at least one of which is from an Ordained Minister of the United Church of Christ, and one from the denominational counterpart of the United Church of Christ Conference Minister or Associate Conference Minister.
  - h. A completed and signed Background Disclosure Form

- i. A completed and signed Release of Information Form.
- j. A copy of seminary/divinity school diploma[s] and transcript of courses; copy of undergraduate diploma[s].
3. The Committee on the Ministry [Section A] may approve modifications in the above documentation and may stipulate additional requirements.
4. If, after reviewing the documentation and examining the minister seeking Dual Standing, as described in the *Manual on Ministry*, the Committee is convinced that the minister
  - a. meets the requirements for Ordained Ministry in the United Church of Christ;
  - b. has knowledge of and appreciation for the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ; and
  - c. will serve the UCC faithfully and effectively;the Committee, on behalf of the Board of Directors recommends to the appropriate Association that the minister be installed and, through the installation, granted Dual Standing.
5. The Association, according to its practice, reviews the Call Agreement or Four-Way Covenant, and, upon approval, calls for an Installing Ecclesiastical Council (which is an officially-called meeting of the Association for the purpose of authorizing ministry) in cooperation with the Local Church (and the calling body if other than a Local Church).
6. The Ecclesiastical Council, after approving the Covenant, conducts a Service of Installation, at which point Dual Standing is granted.
7. The Association reports its action immediately to the Conference Office, which notifies the UCC National Offices, as well as the other denomination, of the action taken.
8. Dual Standing is full Ordained Ministerial Standing within the United Church of Christ for the duration of that particular call, granting the Ordained Minister full rights and membership in the Northern California Nevada Conference and obligation to the UCC Ordained Ministers' Code of Ethics. (See paragraph 143, *UCC Constitution & Bylaws* [2001]. Dual Standing does not allow the minister administrative access to the UCC system of ministerial search and call.

**I. MINISTER EMERITUS/EMERITA**

Minister or Pastor Emeritus/a is an honorary designation that a congregation may bestow upon a departing or departed pastor. There are no particular qualifications established regarding this honorary status. It is important to be very clear that this is an honorary status. It does not mean that the person continues to serve in a ministerial function in that congregation. The Minister Emerita/us has no particular responsibilities. The Minister Emeritus/a does not perform any services in the congregation, such as funerals, weddings, baptisms, or pastoral calling, except at the invitation of the present minister. It is suggested that this understanding be communicated to the Minister Emerita/us and the total congregation in written form as well as explained during the service of recognition itself. Procedures commonly undertaken to honor a minister emerita/us are included as an appendix to this document.

**J. MINISTERIAL STANDING IN RETIREMENT**

1. Retirement status is granted by the Committee on the Ministry [Section B] to ordained and commissioned ministers holding standing in the Northern California Nevada Conference.
  - a. Ordained and Commissioned Ministers with ministerial standing in the Northern California Nevada Conference may initiate the move to retired status by sending a written request to the Conference Office, for consideration by the Committee on the Ministry [Section B].
  - b. Section B of the Committee on the Ministry will review the request, meet with the minister if possible, verify that the minister holds membership in a Local Church of the Northern California Nevada Conference, and, if all is in order, reclassify the minister as retired.
2. Section A of the Committee on the Ministry may grant transfer of standing into the Northern California Nevada Conference to retired UCC ministers with standing in other Associations/Conferences. These ministers continue their retired status after transfer into NCNC.
3. Section A of the Committee on the Ministry may grant standing to retired ministers who are granted Privilege of Call. These ministers then become UCC ministers with standing in the Northern California Nevada Conference and retired status.
4. Understandings of Retired status:
  - a. Retirement is a form of ministerial standing.
  - b. Retired status does not preclude further ministry, but it does indicate a difference in work expectations.
  - c. Retired status is not to be used for practicing ministry without a Call Agreement or Four-Way Covenant.
  - d. A retired minister may, if eligible, choose to begin receiving pension and/or Social Security benefits, however, the pension and Social Security status of an authorized minister are not regulated by the Committee on the Ministry, nor are pension and Social Security status determining factors for the granting of retired status by the Committee on the Ministry.