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Preface

Theological Foundations and Policies and Criteria for the Ordering of Ministry, as it may be amended from time to time, (*TFPCOM*) became the policy document on the Ordering of Ministry for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada on August 1, 2011. The *TFPCOM*, therefore, is the foundational document for all expressions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), including the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Arizona (the “Arizona Region”), with respect to the Ordering of Ministry. References to relevant sections of the *TFPCOM* included in this document are based upon the *TFPCOM* document as adopted effective August 1, 2011.

As the primary instrument to carry out this aspect of its mission, the Arizona Region has formed a Regional Commission on Ministry (the “RCOM”). Acting on behalf of the Arizona Region, the RCOM will exercise the rights and fulfill the responsibilities for the Ordering of Ministry set out in the *TFPCOM*, and will only establish additional policies and criteria (i) to the extent it is authorized to do so under the *TFPCOM*; and (ii) to the extent that those policies and criteria are consistent with the *TFPCOM*.

This document, *Policies and Criteria for the Ordering of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Arizona, 2014*, (as it may be amended from time to time) (*AZPCOM*), contains a brief summary of the rights and responsibilities of the Arizona Region for the Ordering of Ministry under the *TFPCOM*. It also contains additional policies and criteria established by the Arizona Region, primarily through the RCOM, to facilitate the exercise of those rights and the fulfillment of those responsibilities. For more specific information, please refer to the *TFPCOM* document, which is available on the Regional Website, www.azdisciples.org, or contact the Regional Office or members of the RCOM. The *TFPCOM* is also available on the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) website in English, Spanish, French, and Korean at <http://disciples.org/>.

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99 **I. Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**
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101 As set out in the *Design of the Christian Church*, the Christian Church (Disciples of
102 Christ) “recognizes an order of ministry, set apart under God, to equip the whole
103 people to fulfill their corporate ministry” (Paragraph 86).
104

105 “Currently, in its Ordering of Ministry, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
106 recognizes a Commissioned ministry and an Ordained ministry. The church expects
107 the women and men it Commissions and Ordains to demonstrate educational
108 qualifications and competencies in several areas of personal integrity and pastoral
109 practice, as well as a clear call to, and passion for, ministry. The church is called to
110 provide significant Congregational and Regional support for those seeking to serve in
111 ministry, whether Ordained or Commissioned” (*TFPCOM*, p. 10).
112

113 In particular, “the church expects to find within the women and men it receives into
114 the order of ministry [the following personal qualifications]:
115

- 116 ■ Faith in Jesus Christ, commitment to a life of Christian discipleship and
117 nurturing spiritual practices;
- 118 ■ A sense of call to the ministry affirmed by the church;
- 119 ■ An understanding of pastoral identity;
- 120 ■ Capacity to engage in theological reflection;
- 121 ■ Strong moral character and personal integrity;
- 122 ■ Commitment to spiritual, physical and emotional wellness sufficient for
123 healthy ministry;
- 124 ■ Care and compassion for all people, with appropriate relational skills;
- 125 ■ Responsible personal financial management;
- 126 ■ Wise and generous stewardship in the use of God’s gifts; and
- 127 ■ Skills and abilities necessary for the rigorous, pastoral tasks of ministry”
128 (*TFPCOM*, p. 16).
129

130 **A. The Commissioned Ministry**
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132 **i. Definition and Scope:**
133

134 Commissioned ministry is a relatively recent phenomenon in the church.
135 In 1948 the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) initiated a licensing
136 process which provided certification for ministry for a limited period of
137 time. It was primarily designed to permit college and seminary students
138 to serve the church during their preparation for ministry or for those lay
139 persons who wished to serve as part-time ministers. Under the *TFPCOM*,
140 the church has expanded this concept of ministry to provide “opportunity
141 for creativity and imagination in acknowledging the fresh work of the

142 Holy Spirit. These [Commissioned] ministries may include pastors,
143 evangelists, Christian educators, ministers of music, youth ministers,
144 parish nurses, chaplains, bi-vocational ministers, recognized
145 congregationally-based or non-congregationally-based community
146 ministers, or others, where Regional nurture and authorization are
147 deemed appropriate” (TFPCOM, p. 16).

148
149 There are currently two categories of Commissioned Ministry:
150 • Those not seeking Ordination, whose call is context specific and
151 affirmed by the Region, in consultation with the calling
152 congregation, Region or General church; and
153 • Those seeking Ordination, serving in a Congregationally or
154 Regionally authorized call, who are under care of a Region in
155 preparation for Ordination.

156
157 Since persons are Commissioned by Regions for ministry in a specific
158 context, change of ministry context requires re-Commissioning. The role
159 and responsibilities of Regions for Commissioned ministry are discussed
160 in more detail below.

161
162 ii. Common Criteria for Commissioned Ministry:

163
164 In order to be Commissioned, persons must
165 • Be baptized members of a Disciples congregation in the
166 commissioning Region and serving in a Congregationally,
167 Regionally or Generally recognized call;
168 • Be recommended for Commissioning by a recognized
169 congregation or congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples
170 of Christ)- in the Arizona Region this is understood to include
171 congregations in formation and affiliating congregations, including
172 the one in which their membership is held;
173 • Meet with the Regional Commission on Ministry;
174 • Comply with other reasonable expectations established by the
175 Region from time to time; and
176 • Agree to adhere to the *Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian
177 Church (Disciples of Christ)*, (TFPCOM, p. 17).

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179 iii. Regional Role and Responsibilities, in General:

180
181 Under the TFPCOM, Regions have the following designated
182 responsibilities for Commissioned ministry:
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- To establish procedures to identify candidates for Commissioned ministry; candidates for Commissioned ministry are those persons who have received a call from a recognized congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) or a recognized non-congregational ministry and have applied to the Region for Commissioning;
 - To establish procedures to evaluate applicants and candidates for Commissioned ministry, which must include the *Ministerial Profile* and may include a current denominational criminal background check and such additional methods as the Region deems to be reasonable and necessary (e.g., personal interviews, letters of reference, etc.);
 - To consult and/or notify General Offices with respect to specific candidates, as appropriate;
 - To bring applicants/candidates “under care”;
 - To provide for their nurture;
 - To provide opportunities for building collegiality with other ministers;
 - To make available appropriate programs of study (such as readings, experiential learning, intensive weekend seminars, guided reflection on ministerial practice with a mentor-companion, and distance learning, etc.) in preparation for ministry;
 - To authorize the designation of an applicant/candidate as a Commissioned Minister;
 - To offer resources and presence of the Regional Minister or their designee for services of Commissioning;
 - To oversee formation processes for candidates for Ordination;
 - To encourage lifelong learning through continuing education opportunities, including training in healthy boundaries and anti-racism; and
 - To establish additional requirements as desired (*TFPCOM*, pp. 18-19).

217

218 iv. Additional Guidelines and Resources for Commissioned Ministry in the

219 Arizona Region

220

221 Those seeking to attain and maintain recognition as Commissioned

222 ministers in the Arizona Region must comply with such additional policies

223 and criteria as may be established by the RCOM, from time to time, as set

224 out in Attachment A (as it may be amended from time to time), attached

225 to and by this reference made a part of this document.

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227 B. The Ordained Ministry

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i. Definition and Scope

As set out in the *TFPCOM*, “by Ordination the church recognizes the work of the Holy Spirit in calling particular persons to creative and imaginative servanthood in Christ; accepts their ministry in and for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and for the whole body of Christ; covenants to undergird that ministry; and grants authority to perform that ministry as a representative of the church.

“Historically called a ministry of word and sacrament, among others, this ministry may include pastors, educators, ecumenical leaders, recognized congregationally-based or non-congregationally-based community ministers, chaplains, pastoral counselors, and ministers who serve in the General and Regional church” (*TFPCOM*, p. 19).

ii. Educational Requirements.

The current education track for those preparing for Ordination is a seminary track, in which Candidates will demonstrate competency in the 16 areas of ministerial practice set out below by securing a Master of Divinity degree, or its equivalent, from a theological school accredited by the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, or its equivalent (*TFPCOM*, p. 19).

Candidates for Ordination are generally expected to follow the seminary track. In some instances an alternate track (AT) may be approved by the Regional Commission on Ministry. (*TFPCOM*, p. 20).

In any event, the church expects Candidates for Ordination to demonstrate competency in the following 16 areas:

- Biblical Knowledge;
- Church Administration and Planning;
- Communication;
- Cross Cultural and Anti-racism Experience;
- Ecumenism;
- Education and Leader Development;
- Ethics;
- Evangelism;
- Mission of the Church in the World;

- 269 • Pastoral Care;
- 270 • Proclamation of the Word;
- 271 • Spiritual Development;
- 272 • Stewardship;
- 273 • Theology;
- 274 • Understanding of Heritage; and
- 275 • Worship (*TFPCOM*, pp. 20-21).

276
277 iii. Regional Role and Responsibilities, in General:

278
279 The following responsibilities are specifically assigned to Regions:

- 280
- 281 • To establish procedures to evaluate applicants for Ordination;
- 282 • To evaluate the educational experience of candidates for an AT
- 283 program, which would include a high school diploma or its
- 284 equivalent and some post secondary educational experience;
- 285 • To connect with the appropriate General Church ministry with
- 286 respect to specific Candidates, as appropriate;
- 287 • To bring applicants “under care”;
- 288 • To provide for their nurture;
- 289 • To be in relationship with the sponsoring congregation and the
- 290 Candidate’s educational setting;
- 291 • To authorize and supervise the act of Ordination;
- 292 • To facilitate continuing education, including training in healthy
- 293 boundaries and anti-racism; and
- 294 • To grant ongoing Standing

295
296 iv. Candidacy for Ordination:

297
298 Candidacy for Ordination is defined as “. . . that period of time in which

299 the individual is under the care of a Regional Commission on Ministry and

300 involved in a specified program of study and formation in preparation for

301 Ordination” (*TFPCOM*, p. 22). It begins with the applicant’s declaration of

302 intent to seek Ordination through the Christian Church (Disciples of

303 Christ) and affirmation of that intention by the local DOC congregation of

304 which the applicant is a member (*TFPCOM*, p. 22).

305
306 To apply for candidacy, an applicant must be a baptized member of a

307 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) congregation. They should generally

308 apply to the Region where they hold congregational membership or the

309 Region where they are a student. A letter of recommendation from a

310 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) congregation in the Region in which
311 they are a member should accompany the application (*TFPCOM*, p. 22).

312
313 Once the application is received, the Region will begin the process of
314 assessing the applicant’s spiritual, emotional, moral, intellectual, and
315 educational capacities for the practice of ministry, which will continue
316 throughout the period of candidacy, should the applicant be accepted.
317 Once accepted as a Candidate, the individual will come under the care
318 and direction of the Regional Commission on Ministry.

319
320 Early in the pre-candidacy process, the Region will contact the Christian
321 Church (Disciples of Christ) congregation of which the applicant is an
322 active participant and which is expected to sponsor their candidacy.
323 During this preliminary phase, the Region will assure that the
324 congregation understands the expectations that the Region has for both
325 the applicant and the congregation, should they be taken under care.
326 Once accepted as a Candidate, the Region (primarily through the RCOM)
327 will continue to work in close cooperation with the sponsoring
328 congregation throughout the period of candidacy.

329
330 Following acceptance as a Candidate, they will seek Ordination through a
331 process of discernment established by the Region, which may include
332 authorization as a Commissioned Minister, as well as the following:

- 333
- 334 • Participation in the life and work of a congregation;
 - 335 • Breadth of theological study;
 - 336 • Professional and ecclesiological study;
 - 337 • Formation of responsible relations with, and concern for, the
338 church;
 - 339 • Growth in personal character and spiritual formation; and
 - 340 • Formation of, and adherence to, ethical principles, as set out in
341 the *Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of*
342 *Christ)* (*TFPCOM*, p. 23).
- 343

344 “At the discretion of the Region of care, candidates for Ordination may be
345 granted authorized access to Search and Call. . . . All candidates for
346 Ordination with authorized access to Search and Call . . . may be
347 considered for any ministerial position” (*TFPCOM*, p. 34 and 35).

348
349 Completion of the educational requirements for Ordination does not
350 guarantee Ordination. The period of candidacy is concluded by
351 Ordination, withdrawal from candidacy, or the decision by the Region to

352 terminate candidacy. Generally, the period of candidacy should not
353 exceed seven years (*TFPCOM*, p. 24).

354
355 v. The Act of Ordination:

356
357 The act of Ordination is under the authority and guidance of the
358 sponsoring congregation and the Region, with the Regional Minister, or
359 their designee, presiding. The service is usually held in the sponsoring
360 congregation, with representatives of the recommending
361 congregation(s), the Regional church, the ecumenical church and, where
362 possible, the General church participating. After signing the *Ministerial*
363 *Code of Ethics*, the Ordained Minister will receive a signed Ordination
364 document from the Region.

365
366 vi. Ordination in the Arizona Region:

367
368 In the Arizona Region, there are five steps leading to Ordination:

- 369
- 370 • Step One: Preliminary Inquiries. This step begins with the
371 potential candidate's initial contact with the Regional Office
372 expressing interest in, and requesting information about,
373 Ordination. At this point the potential candidate is encouraged to
374 begin to meet certain specific prerequisites involving exploration
375 of, and personal reflection on, DOC history, polity and theology.
376
 - 377 • Step Two: Initial Approach/Contact with the Regional Commission
378 on Ministry. This step involves concrete actions evidencing the
379 seriousness of the potential candidate's interest in Ordination.
380 Such actions begin with the submission of a formal application
381 and completion of the specific prerequisites noted above. They
382 include a period of determining "fitness and fit"--is the applicant
383 mentally, psychologically, and physically fit, and would ordination
384 in the DOC be a good fit in terms of theology, polity, and
385 understanding of ministry? In addition, this step includes initial
386 contact by the RCOM with the Christian Church (Disciples of
387 Christ) congregation of which the applicant is an active participant
388 and which is expected to sponsor their candidacy.
389
 - 390 • Step Three: Period of Candidacy. During this step, the Candidate
391 for Ordination will be taken under care by the RCOM. Shortly
392 after being taken under care, the Candidate will undergo an
393 assessment/evaluation to determine their mental and
394 psychological fitness for ministry, in general, and Ordination, in

395 particular. During this period, the RCOM will work with the
396 Candidate to identify their gifts and abilities and to formulate an
397 individualized plan for further discernment and enhancement of
398 those gifts and abilities. In addition, the Candidate is expected to
399 maintain a high level of congregational participation, which will
400 give them the opportunity to utilize those gifts and abilities in the
401 actual practice of ministry. The RCOM will continue to work
402 closely with the sponsoring congregation to assess the
403 Candidate's progress and fitness for congregational and other
404 forms of ministry.

- 405
- 406 • Step Four: Final Preparation. This step involves final interviews
407 with the Candidate and input from the sponsoring congregation,
408 as well as a review of prior contacts, assessments, evaluations,
409 references, and recommendations as to the Candidate's
410 preparation and fitness for Ordination. This is the point at which
411 the RCOM will determine whether to recommend them for
412 Ordination and concludes with one of the following actions:
413
 - 414 • Ordination (following the RCOM's determination that they
415 have met all relevant requirements);
 - 416 • The Candidate's withdrawal from candidacy; or
 - 417 • The decision by the Region to terminate their candidacy.
- 418
- 419 • Step Five: Act of Ordination. Assuming that the RCOM is
420 satisfied that the Candidate is ready for Ordination, the final step
421 consists of the actual planning for, and carrying out of, the
422 Ordination service.
- 423

424 In order to meet the specific requirements of the five-step process outlined
425 above, those seeking Ordination in the Arizona Region must comply with such
426 additional policies and criteria as may be established by the RCOM, from time to
427 time, as set out in Attachment B (as it may be amended from time to time),
428 attached to and by this reference made a part of this document.

429 C. Ministerial Standing

431 i. General Definition:

432
433
434 "Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is credentialing for
435 ministry within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), a call to
436 accountability to the church, and collegiality with other ministers both
437 denominationally and ecumenically (*TFPCOM*, p.24).

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Standing affirms that Commissioned and Ordained ministers are currently engaged in the practice of ministry, with continuous accountability maintained with a local congregation or other manifestation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and grants to them the following privileges:

- Lists such ministers in the *Year Book and Directory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*;
- Permits such ministers to call upon the church for various services and support; and
- Grants to such ministers voting privileges in the General Assembly of the DOC.

Ordained ministers also have access to Search and Call (*TFPCOM*, p.25).

Responsibility for certification of Standing depends upon the nature of the ministry in which the Commissioned or Ordained minister is engaged:

- Responsibility for certification of Standing of ministers and for annual review of that Standing within the Order of Ministry is lodged with the Region where the minister is currently engaged in the practice of ministry. Regions are permitted to create additional policies and procedures related to Standing as long as they are consistent with the Order of Ministry;
- For those engaged in non-Regional ministries, responsibility for certification of Standing and for annual review of that Standing within the Order of Ministry is lodged with the General Commission on Ministry (GCOM). The GCOM will notify Regions about persons within their Region that have Standing with the GCOM;
- Responsibility for certification of Standing of Regional Ministers is jointly lodged with the Region where the Regional Minister serves and the GCOM (*TFPCOM*, p.25).

ii. Certification of Standing of those Commissioned and Ordained by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

A minister becomes eligible for Standing by virtue of Commissioning or Ordination according to the Order of Ministry of the Christian Church

479 (Disciples of Christ). Standing for ministers in active service continues as
480 long as the minister does and reports the following:

- 481
- 482 • Performs faithfully the duties of a minister in a “ministerial”
483 occupation;
- 484 • Participates regularly in programs of study, growth, and renewal;
- 485 • Maintains relations with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ),
486 including participating membership in a recognized local Disciples
487 congregation, where feasible;
- 488 • Adheres to the *Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church*
489 *(Disciples of Christ)*;
- 490 • Continues to meet the personal qualifications for admission to the
491 Order of Ministry, as set out in Section II.A.2 of the *TFPCOM*; and
- 492 • Seeks and meets the requirements for annual certification as
493 requested by the Region or the General Commission on Ministry,
494 as appropriate (*TFPCOM*, p.26).
- 495

496 The Region (or GCOM) will provide for annual review of Standing for all
497 ministers in its care, in consultation with, or notification to, such General
498 Offices, as may be appropriate. Standing may be continued, at the
499 discretion of the Region or GCOM, in cases of disability or other special
500 hardships affecting ministerial service (*TFPCOM*, p.26).

501

502 Standing is retained when an Ordained Minister moves from a ministry
503 position in one Region to a ministry position in another; nevertheless, the
504 minister should notify both the former and new Regional Ministers.
505 Responsibility for review and subsequent certification is assigned to the
506 new Region (or to the GCOM, if applicable). In contrast, Commissioned
507 Ministers who move to another Region must contact that Regional
508 Minister and meet the new Region’s requirements for Commissioned
509 Ministry (which is generally context specific) in order to establish
510 Standing in the new ministry position (*TFPCOM*, pp.26-27).

511

512 When an Ordained Minister who is not actively seeking relocation moves
513 from a ministry position in one Region to another Region and is no longer
514 engaged in ministry, ministerial Standing generally will be provisionally
515 retained for up to one year, until review and certification is granted by
516 the new Region. The Ordained Minister is required to initiate contact
517 with both the former and new Regional Ministers (*TFPCOM*, p.27).

518

519 iii. Certification of Standing of Retired Ministers, Commissioned or Ordained
520 by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

521 Although not clearly defined in the *TFPCOM*, the term “retirement” or
522 “retired” minister appears to include both those Commissioned and
523 Ordained Ministers who no longer continue in an active ministerial
524 position and those who are treated as “retired” for pension fund
525 purposes but continue in active ministry beyond that point. In the latter
526 case, those Commissioned and Ordained Ministers who continue in active
527 ministry are referred to as “active retired” ministers. Those who no
528 longer engage in active ministry are referred to as “inactive retired”
529 ministers.

531 With respect to Standing upon retirement, Commissioned Ministers
532 retain Standing as active retired ministers if they continue serving in an
533 approved ministry site and continue to meet the requirements for annual
534 certification of Standing by the Region where the ministry site is located
535 or by the GCOM, as appropriate. Standing may be granted to “inactive
536 retired” Commissioned Ministers, but only at the discretion of the Region
537 (*TFPCOM*, p.27).

538
539 Ordained Ministers with Standing retain their Standing at the time of
540 retirement, on the terms and conditions set out below (*TFPCOM*, p.27-
541 28):

- 542
- 543 • A retired minister who intends to continue ministry must continue
544 to seek and meet the requirements for annual certification of
545 Standing by the Region where the ministry site is located or by the
546 GCOM, as appropriate;
 - 547 • The active retired minister will be listed in the *Yearbook of the*
548 *Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* as active retired;
 - 549 • To be eligible for such Standing, the active retired minister
 - 550 • Performs faithfully the duties of a minister as authorized by
551 Commissioning or Ordination in a recognized ministerial
552 occupation or service;
 - 553 • Participates regularly in programs of study, growth, and
554 renewal;
 - 555 • Maintains relations with the DOC, including participating
556 membership in a recognized local Disciples congregation,
557 where feasible; and
 - 558 • Continues to meet the personal qualifications for admission to
559 the Order of Ministry, as set out in Section II.A.2 of the
560 *TFPCOM*, and to adhere to the *Ministerial Code of Ethics*.
- 561

- 562 • Retired ministers who are no longer engaged in the practice of
- 563 ministry may seek Standing as inactive retired ministers, on the
- 564 terms and conditions set out below (*TFPCOM*, p.28);
- 565 • Inactive retired ministers will continue to be listed in the
- 566 *Yearbook of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* as
- 567 inactive retired ministers;
- 568 • Inactive retired ministers must continue to seek and meet the
- 569 requirements for annual certification of Standing by the
- 570 Region where they reside; and
- 571 • Inactive retired ministers must continue to adhere to the
- 572 *Ministerial Code of Ethics* and must hold participating
- 573 membership in a recognized local Disciples congregation,
- 574 where feasible.
- 575
- 576 • If an inactive retired minister decides to once again take up the
- 577 practice of ministry, that minister must once again seek status as
- 578 an active retired minister (*TFPCOM*, p.28).
- 579

580 iv. Suspension, Termination, Surrender or Lapse of Ministerial Standing

581
582 Subject to the special rules that apply to disciplinary review of those who
583 have Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the DOC or UCC, the
584 following rules will apply with respect to suspension, termination,
585 surrender or lapse of ministerial Standing.

586
587 Review of Standing may be initiated by the minister, the Region, or the
588 GCOM when one or more of the following conditions are present
589 (*TFPCOM*, pp.28-29):

- 590
- 591 • The minister desires to be released from the practice of ministry;
- 592 • The minister requests transfer of credentials from the DOC to
- 593 another denomination or non-Disciples congregation;
- 594 • The minister enters into a full-time non-ministerial occupation
- 595 and/or no longer performs the functions of a minister;
- 596 • The minister fails to meet the requirements for annual
- 597 certification by the Region or the GCOM;
- 598 • The minister no longer meets the personal qualifications for
- 599 admission to the Order of Ministry, as set out in Section II.A.2 of
- 600 the *TFPCOM*, or fails to adhere to the *Ministerial Code of Ethics*.
- 601

602 When initiated by the Region or the GCOM, the review of Standing
603 process will include the following (*TFPCOM*, p.29):

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- Written notice to the minister that Standing is to be reviewed, with the possibility of suspension or termination;
 - Consultation with, or notification to, such General Offices, as may be appropriate; and
 - A hearing by a committee appointed by the Region or the GCOM.

610

611 When initiated by the Minister, the review of Standing process will

612 include the following (*TFPCOM*, p.29):

613

- 614
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- Written notice to the Region or GCOM that Standing is to be reviewed, with the possibility of suspension or termination; and
 - Consultation with a committee appointed by the Region or the GCOM.

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619 Additional rules relating to termination, suspension, surrender or lapse of

620 Standing include the following (*TFPCOM*, pp.29-30):

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- Standing may be granted to a minister whose Standing has been terminated or suspended by another Region or GCOM only upon the recommendation of the terminating or suspending body.
 - When a minister surrenders Standing, Standing can be granted again only upon the recommendation of the body to which Standing was surrendered. Before reinstating Standing, however, the Region or GCOM must address any outstanding allegations of misconduct.
 - When a minister's Standing has lapsed, Standing may only be granted after consultation with the body where the Standing was previously held.

633

634 Those seeking Standing in the Arizona Region must comply with such additional

635 policies and criteria as may be established by the RCOM, from time to time, as

636 set out in Attachment C, with respect to general requirements, and in

637 Attachment D, with respect to issues relating to potential misconduct, attached

638 to and by this reference made a part of this document.

639

640 D. Recognition and Reconciliation of Ordained Ministries

641

642 i. Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing with the United Church of Christ

643

644 "The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) (DOC) and the United Church of

645 Christ (UCC) recognize the Ordained ministries of the other church to be

646 efficacious ministries of grace within that church and these ministries to

647 be valid and full ministries of the one Church of Jesus Christ” (*TFPCOM*, p.
648 30).

649
650 The Ordained ministries of the DOC and the UCC are reconciled; that is,
651 an Ordained minister with Ordained ministerial Standing in one church
652 may function, whenever invited, and as established procedures permit,
653 as an Ordained minister of the other. The designations "Ordained
654 Ministerial Partner" and "Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing" reflect
655 this recognition and reconciliation, as set out below:

- 656
- 657 • Each member of the UCC who holds Ordained ministerial Standing
 - 658 in the UCC is an Ordained Ministerial Partner of the DOC;
 - 659 • Each member of the DOC who holds Ordained ministerial
 - 660 Standing in the DOC is an Ordained Ministerial Partner of the UCC;
 - 661 and
 - 662 • When a person no longer has Ordained ministerial Standing in
 - 663 either the DOC or the UCC, that person is no longer an Ordained
 - 664 Ministerial Partner, and Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing is
 - 665 nullified.

666

667 ii. United Church of Christ Ministers with Ordained Ministerial Partner
668 Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

669
670 Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing is recognition granted to an
671 Ordained minister with Standing in the UCC who has been called to an
672 Ordained ministry setting in the DOC. Ordained Ministerial Partner
673 Standing authorizes the Ordained Ministerial Partner to exercise the
674 rights and responsibilities of Ordained ministry in the DOC, on the
675 following terms and conditions (*TFPCOM*, pp. 30-32):

- 676
- 677 • Once a UCC Ordained minister has demonstrated knowledge of,
 - 678 and appreciation for, the history, polity, and practices of the DOC
 - 679 to the RCOM where the minister resides, that Ordained
 - 680 Ministerial Partner may be granted access to the Search and Call
 - 681 process in the DOC. Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the
 - 682 DOC, however, is not granted at this point in the process;
 - 683 • A UCC Ordained Ministerial Partner who secures a call in the DOC
 - 684 applies for Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing to the Region in
 - 685 which their calling body is located. Once granted, Ordained
 - 686 Ministerial Partner Standing is reviewed by the Region for
 - 687 certification annually;
 - 688 • A UCC Ordained minister has Ordained Ministerial Partner
 - 689 Standing in the DOC only when serving a DOC calling body;

- 690 • A UCC minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing
- 691 in the DOC will maintain Ordained ministerial Standing in the UCC;
- 692 • Ordained ministerial Standing will be held in the UCC Association
- 693 in which the DOC calling body is located;
- 694 • A UCC minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing
- 695 will maintain relations with the DOC, including (where feasible)
- 696 holding associate membership in a recognized DOC congregation
- 697 in the community;
- 698 • A UCC minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing
- 699 in a Region has voting privileges in the General Assembly of the
- 700 DOC;
- 701 • A UCC minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing
- 702 in the DOC shall relate to the DOC for their primary support in
- 703 Ordained ministry;
- 704 • A UCC minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing
- 705 in the DOC will be accountable to the Region for Ordained
- 706 Ministerial Partner Standing and to the UCC for Ordained
- 707 ministerial Standing;
- 708 • When a disciplinary review is instituted in relation to the UCC
- 709 minister holding Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the
- 710 DOC, the association of the UCC in which the UCC minister’s
- 711 Ordained ministerial Standing is maintained will be informed and
- 712 invited to participate in the process.
- 713 • When a UCC minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner
- 714 Standing with the DOC accepts a call in another Region, they shall
- 715 be subject to review and subsequent annual certification of
- 716 Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing by the new Region.

717
718 iii. Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Ministers with Ordained Ministerial
719 Partner Standing in the United Church of Christ

720
721 Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing is recognition granted to an
722 Ordained minister with Standing in the DOC who has been called to an
723 Ordained ministry setting in the UCC. Ordained Ministerial Partner
724 Standing authorizes the DOC Ordained Ministerial Partner to exercise the
725 rights and responsibilities of Ordained ministry in the UCC, on essentially
726 the same terms and conditions as set out in Section II.D.ii above with
727 respect to UCC Ministers with Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in
728 the DOC (*TFPCOM*, pp. 32-34), with the following differences:

- 729
- 730 • The DOC Ordained Ministerial Partner must demonstrate
- 731 knowledge of, and appreciation for, the history, polity, and
- 732 practices of the UCC to the UCC Association Committee where the

- 733 minister resides, before being granted access to the Search and
734 Call process in the UCC;
- 735 • The UCC Association in which the DOC Ordained Ministerial
736 Partner’s calling body is located will perform functions with
737 respect to that Ordained Ministerial Partner (and the granting and
738 ongoing certification of Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing)
739 comparable to those performed by the DOC Region for a UCC
740 Ordained Ministerial Partner;
 - 741 • A DOC minister who holds Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing
742 in an Association has voting privileges in the Association and
743 Conference and is eligible for election as a delegate to General
744 Synod or election as a member of any Covenanted Ministry Board
745 in the UCC; and
 - 746 • When a disciplinary review is instituted in relation to the DOC
747 minister holding Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the
748 UCC, the Region of the DOC in which the DOC minister’s Ordained
749 ministerial Standing is maintained, shall be informed and invited
750 to participate in the process.

751
752 iv. Granting Standing to Persons Ordained in Other Churches

753
754 Ministers Ordained by other denominations or non-Disciples
755 congregations may be considered for recognition of Ordination and the
756 granting of Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
757 Provisional or temporary Standing may be granted to individuals applying
758 for recognition of Ordination by the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
759 Responsibility for this process is lodged in the Region, except in the case
760 of Military Chaplains stationed overseas (*TFPCOM*, p. 34).

761
762 The following requirements must be met before provisional or temporary
763 Standing may be granted (*TFPCOM*, p. 34):

- 764
765 • Consultation with appropriate officials of the denomination or
766 congregation from which the candidate transfers;
- 767 • Satisfactory investigation of personal and ministerial references
768 and a criminal background check; and
- 769 • Filing of appropriate forms with the Region to which the applicant
770 is applying or with the GCOM.

771
772 Provisional or temporary Standing shall be reviewed annually by either
773 the granting Region or the GCOM.
774

775 The provisional or temporary conditions for Standing may be removed by
776 the Region or the GCOM upon fulfillment of the following requirements
777 (*TFPCOM*, pp. 34-35):
778

- 779 • Membership in a recognized congregation of the DOC;
- 780 • Demonstrated knowledge and appreciation for the history, polity,
781 and practices of the DOC;
- 782 • Fulfillment of the prerequisites and preparation, including
783 educational attainment, for the Order of Ministry;
- 784 • One year minimum service under the supervision or mentoring of
785 a DOC minister with Standing;
- 786 • Manifesting the personal qualifications for the Order of Ministry
787 as listed in Section II.A.2. of the *TFPCOM*; and
- 788 • Commitment to adhere to the *Ministerial Code of Ethics of the*
789 *Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*.

790
791 Those seeking recognition and reconciliation of Ordained ministries in the
792 Arizona Region must comply with such additional policies and criteria as may be
793 established by the RCOM, as set out in Attachment C (as it may be amended
794 from time to time), with respect to general requirements, and in Attachment D
795 (as it may be amended from time to time), with respect to issues relating to
796 potential misconduct, attached to and by this reference made a part of this
797 document.
798

799 II. Ministerial Conduct

800
801 The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) (DOC) requires all DOC Commissioned and
802 Ordained ministers engaged in active ministry (including active retired ministers) to
803 continue to meet the personal qualifications for admission to the Order of Ministry,
804 as set out in Section II.A.2 of the *TFPCOM*. This includes, but is not limited to, strong
805 moral character and personal integrity. In addition, all Commissioned and Ordained
806 ministers with Standing in the DOC, whether active, retired active or retired inactive,
807 must adhere to the *Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of*
808 *Christ)* as set out in Section II.I. of the *TFPCOM*, as it may be amended from time to
809 time.
810

811 A. Ministerial Code of Ethics

812
813 Under the *TFPCOM*, all DOC Commissioned and Ordained ministers with
814 Standing must periodically (at least annually) do the following:
815

- 816 i. Believing that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God and proclaiming
817 him Lord and Savior of the world, reaffirm their vows as a minister;

- 818 ii. Through dedication and discipline, pledge to continue to lead and serve
819 with integrity;
820 iii. Relying on the grace of God, continue to commit themselves to adhere to
821 the *Ministerial Code of Ethics* in the following four areas:
822 • Personal conduct;
823 • Relationship to the church/ministry currently served;
824 • Relationships to ministry colleagues; and
825 • Relationships to the community and the wider church (*TFPCOM*,
826 pp. 42-43).

827
828 B. Misconduct

829
830 Under the *TFPCOM*, “the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) understands
831 ministerial misconduct to be activity which violates the covenantal character of
832 the ministerial office as expressed in the *Ministerial Code of Ethics*. Investigation
833 and adjudication of violations of the *Ministerial Code of Ethics* shall be the
834 responsibility of the Region through the . . .” RCOM of that Region or the GCOM,
835 as applicable (*TFPCOM*, p. 44).

836
837 At a minimum, appropriate processes will be implemented at the Regional and
838 general levels of the DOC to do the following:

- 839
840 i. Regions (or the GCOM) will report formal actions and decisions to
841 remove Standing for misconduct to the Office of Search and Call and/or
842 other appropriate General Church office(s) with responsibility for ministerial
843 vocations, which may change from time to time. These actions will be
844 communicated to all Regions.
845 ii. In extreme situations of alleged misconduct, ministerial Standing may be
846 temporarily suspended by the Region (or the GCOM) during the period of
847 investigation and adjudication.
848 iii. With respect to sexual misconduct, it is the responsibility of each Region
849 to have specific definitions of sexual misconduct and procedures for
850 receiving, investigating, and adjudicating sexual misconduct charges of
851 ministers with Standing in the Region. Each Region will periodically and
852 systematically review its definitions and procedures. It is the
853 responsibility of the Region to communicate such definitions and
854 procedures to ministers and congregations within the Region (*TFPCOM*,
855 p. 44).
856 iv. In addition, from time to time, the RCOM shall establish specific
857 definitions for other categories of serious ministerial misconduct or
858 abuse of power and procedures for receiving, investigating, and
859 adjudicating those charges, as well. Such categories may include, but not
860 be limited to, personal relationships within the congregation (including

861 dating), impairment, exercise of undue influence, abuse of the elderly
862 and disabled, and financial mismanagement.

863
864 C. Right of Appeal

865
866 The GCOM understands that the Right to Appeal extends to persons who, at the
867 time of their appeal, are subject to a decision with adverse effect regarding
868 Ordination, Commissioning, transfer of credentials, and/or Standing. The GCOM
869 will not consider any appeal if legal proceedings are pending or in process
870 (*TFPCOM*, pp. 44-45).

871
872 The Region may also implement an intermediate level of appeal at the Regional
873 level for decisions with adverse effect regarding Ordination, Commissioning,
874 transfer of credentials, and/or Standing.

875
876 D. Related Additional Regional Policies and Procedures

877
878 Commissioned and Ordained ministers with Standing in the Arizona Region must
879 comply with, and are subject to, such additional policies and procedures
880 regarding ministerial ethics and conduct (including investigation and adjudication
881 of suspected misconduct) as may be established by the RCOM, from time to
882 time, and set out in Attachment D (as it may be amended from time to time),
883 attached to and by this reference made a part of this document.

884
885

1 **Attachment A**
2 **Additional Guidelines and Resources for Commissioned Ministry**
3 **in the Arizona Region**
4

5 **I. Additional Guidelines for Commissioned Ministry**
6

7 Those seeking to attain and maintain recognition as Commissioned ministers in the
8 Arizona Region must comply with all relevant requirements set out in the *TFPCOM* and
9 the additional requirements set out in this Attachment A. Assuming that all
10 requirements are met, such recognition may be granted for a specific ministry in a
11 specific place for a specified period (usually one year).
12

13 A. The procedures for candidates seeking recognition as Commissioned ministers
14 include the following initial steps:
15

- 16 i. The Candidate will submit an application on an appropriate form provided by
17 the Regional Office, including evidence in writing of their educational
18 preparation and theological base appropriate for the ministry they will be
19 performing. (Candidate Form*) (See Section II, “Current Regional Forms and
20 Informational Materials Relating to Commissioned Ministry” for the most
21 current version of each of the forms/informational pieces marked with an “*”
22 below.)
23 ii. In response to the Candidate’s application, the Regional Office will provide
24 information to the Candidate about Commissioned ministry, including a copy
25 of the Commissioned Ministry Requirements Completion Check List*.
26 iii. In addition, the Candidate may request an initial interview with the
27 Commission to obtain additional information about Commissioned ministry,
28 the process for recognition and what it means to be “taken under care” by the
29 Commission.
30 iv. The Candidate will submit a comprehensive statement giving evidence of their
31 understanding of the Christian faith, the nature and work of the church and its
32 ministry, which, at a minimum, will include completing the prerequisites set
33 out in the Disciples of Christ (DOC) Discovery* document involving exploration
34 of, and personal reflection on, DOC history, polity and theology.
35 v. Following receipt of the above-noted items (i-iv), the Commission will set an
36 interview date with the Candidate.
37

38 Assuming that all of the above requirements have been met, prior to being
39 Commissioned, the Candidate must complete the following additional steps:
40

- 41 vi. The Candidate will complete the Wallace SC&W Foundations Course or other
42 currently approved program (Option 1)* or obtain a Certificate of Ministry or

- 43 its equivalent from a seminary approved by the Commission (Option 2)*.
44 vii. The Candidate will complete a “Disciples History and Polity” class approved by
45 the Commission.
46 viii. The Candidate will request their congregation to recommend them for
47 Commissioning and to send a letter of recommendation signed by the minister
48 and board moderator to the Commission on Ministry.
49 ix. The Candidate will complete a candidate assessment/evaluation with an
50 approved counseling center
51

52 In addition, the Region may require such additional assurances of the Candidate’s
53 fitness for Commissioning as they deem reasonable and necessary, including, but not
54 limited to, personal interviews, letters of reference, or a criminal background check.
55

- 56 B. The Commission on Ministry will review the information gathered during the process
57 of Candidacy to determine if the Candidate displays the qualities and standards
58 necessary to grant Commissioned status to a specific ministry for the period of one
59 year. Such qualities and standards include, but are not limited to, those set out in
60 the *TFPCOM*, Paragraph II.A.2 (p. 16) and the *AZPCOM*, Section I (p. 4). In addition,
61 the Candidate must adhere to the *Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church*
62 (*Disciples of Christ*)*. Assuming that the Candidate meets all relevant requirements,
63 they will be recognized as a Commissioned minister for one year, so long as they
64 have a specific place to practice ministry. In the event that their ministry or location
65 is changed or the period of Commissioning expires, they will need to seek re-
66 Commissioning.
67

- 68 C. Minimum annual continuing education requirements for ongoing recognition as a
69 Commissioned Minister will include the following:
70

- 71 i. The Commissioned Minister must complete a minimum 10 hours of ongoing
72 education/training, which can include Regional Workshops, Certificate of
73 Ministry courses, as well as formal Continuing Education seminars or
74 coursework.
75 ii. The Commissioned Minister must participate in Regional and General events.
76 iii. The Commissioned Minister must attend Commission approved Clergy Ethics &
77 Boundary Training within the first year of Commissioning and once every four
78 years thereafter.
79

- 80 D. Procedures for Candidates seeking re-Commissioning.
81

- 82 i. Candidates are Commissioned for a specified ministry in a particular place for a
83 limited period of time, generally one year. Thus, Commissioned Ministers need
84 to seek re-Commissioning every 12 months. Failure to do so will result in a loss
85 of Standing as a minister in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

- 86 ii. The Candidate will submit an application for re-Commissioning that is provided
- 87 by the Regional Commission on the Ministry.
- 88 iii. The Candidate will be responsible for obtaining evaluations/recommendations
- 89 from their congregation and/or ministry supervisor and having them sent to
- 90 the Commission.
- 91 iv. The Candidate may be asked to participate in an annual review with the
- 92 Commission. (A Candidate may also request an interview).
- 93 v. Upon approval of the Commission for re-Commissioning, an appropriate
- 94 ministerial Standing card will be issued.
- 95

96 E. The Act of Commissioning

- 97
- 98 i. The Candidate will be Commissioned in the local congregation in which the
- 99 Candidate is serving. A sample service is available from the Regional Office,
- 100 upon request.
- 101 ii. The Regional Minister or a representative from the Commission on Ministry
- 102 will preside in a service of Commissioning.
- 103 iii. The following persons may be included in the Commissioning Service.
- 104 a. Pastor(s) of the congregation
- 105 b. Board Chair or Moderator
- 106 c. Regional Minister and/or member(s) of the Commission on Ministry
- 107 d. Other leaders as appropriate
- 108

109 **II. Current Regional Forms and Informational Materials Relating to Commissioned**

110 **Ministry***

- 111
- 112 A. Candidate Form (COM FORM 04/11)
- 113
- 114 B. Commissioned Ministry Requirements Completion Check List (current)
- 115
- 116 C. Disciples of Christ (DOC) Discovery (Rev 6/13)
- 117
- 118 D. COMMISSIONED MINISTRY CURRICULUM (1/19/12), (including information on both
- 119 Option 1 [Wallace SC&W Foundations Course] and Option 2 [Certificate of Ministry
- 120 or equivalent certification from COM-approved seminary]
- 121
- 122 E. Commission on Ministry: Disciples Ministry in Arizona (1/12)
- 123
- 124 F. Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

125 *These forms/informational pieces may be revised or replaced from time to time. To assure that you
126 have the most current information, please check with the Regional Office or Regional Office website:
127 www.azdisciples.org

128

1 **Attachment B**
2 **Additional Guidelines and Resources for Ordained Ministry**
3 **in the Arizona Region**
4

5 I. **Additional Guidelines for Ordained Ministry**
6

7 Those seeking Ordination in the Arizona Region must comply with all relevant
8 requirements set out in the *TFPCOM* and the additional requirements set out in this
9 Attachment B. In the Arizona Region, Ordination is a five-step process, beginning with a
10 period of preparation, referred to as “Preliminary Inquiries” and culminating in the “Act
11 of Ordination,” which is a formal recognition by the Congregational and Regional
12 Church, on behalf of the whole church, that the Candidate has met all qualifications and
13 requirements established by the DOC for Ordination.
14

15 Preferably two years, but not less than one year, prior to the expected date of
16 graduation from Seminary and/or desired Ordination, applicants seeking Ordination will
17 begin the following process:
18

19 A. Step One: Preliminary Inquiries
20

21 This step begins with the potential candidate’s initial contact with the Regional
22 Office expressing interest in, and requesting information about, Ordination.
23

- 24 i. In response to the inquiry and upon request, the Regional Office will provide,
25 at a minimum, the following:
26 a. Information about Ordained ministry, including a copy of the
27 Expectations for Ordination Candidate under Care of the Commission on
28 Ministry*. (See Section II, “Current Regional Forms and Informational
29 Materials Relating to Ordained Ministry” for the most current version of
30 each of the forms/informational pieces marked with an “*” below.)
31 b. A copy of the appropriate form of application (Candidate Form*),
32 including a list of relevant supporting documentation to be submitted
33 with the application.
34 c. A copy of the Disciples of Christ (DOC) Discovery* document establishing
35 guidelines for the exploration of, and personal reflection on, DOC
36 history, polity and theology.
37 ii. At this point, the potential candidate is encouraged to begin to meet certain
38 specific prerequisites set out in the DOC Discovery* document.
39

40 B. Step Two: Initial Approach/Contact with the Regional Commission on Ministry
41 (RCOM).
42

43 This step involves concrete actions evidencing the seriousness of the potential
44 candidate's interest in Ordination. Such actions begin with the submission of a
45 formal application and completion of the specific prerequisites noted above. They
46 include a period of determining "fitness and fit"--is the applicant mentally,
47 psychologically, and physically fit, and would ordination in the DOC be a good fit in
48 terms of theology, polity, and understanding of ministry?
49

50 As noted above, this is primarily a period of exploration for both the RCOM and the
51 applicant, including an initial and, possibly, follow-up interviews. The RCOM will
52 focus on the gathering of information (including input from the sponsoring
53 congregation) necessary to determine whether to take the applicant "under care" as
54 a Candidate for Ordination. This phase might vary significantly, depending upon
55 whether the applicant is active in the Region or other manifestations of the DOC.
56

- 57 i. The applicant will submit an application on an appropriate form provided by the
58 Regional Office, including evidence in writing of their educational preparation
59 and theological base appropriate for the ministry they will be performing.
60 (Candidate Form*)
- 61 ii. In addition, the applicant will request an initial interview with the Commission
62 to obtain additional information about Ordained ministry, the process for
63 Ordination and what it means to be "taken under care" by the Commission.
- 64 iii. In preparation for the initial interview, the applicant will do the following:
 - 65 a. Submit a comprehensive (at least 3-5 pages) statement paper on the
66 topic "Why I want to be ordained into the Ministry of the Christian
67 Church (Disciples of Christ)";
 - 68 b. Begin the exploration and reflection process outlined in the DOC
69 Discovery document.
- 70 iv. There may be additional interviews with the applicant, as well.
- 71 v. At this point, if not before, the Region will contact the Christian Church (Disciples
72 of Christ) congregation of which the applicant is an active participant (and which
73 is expected to sponsor their candidacy) to assure that the congregation
74 understands the Region's expectations for both the applicant and the
75 congregation, should they be taken under care. At a minimum, such contact will
76 include
 - 77 a. Providing the congregation with a document outlining such
78 expectations, as well as the role of the Region (the RCOM, in particular),
79 and other manifestations of the DOC in the Ordination process;
 - 80 b. Establishing lines of communication between the congregation and the
81 Region; and
 - 82 c. Offering congregational leaders an opportunity to meet with the RCOM
83 to answer questions and create a workable arrangement of ongoing
84 communication, support and feedback, should the applicant's candidacy
85 be approved.

- 86 vi. Prior to the RCOM making its decision, the applicant will do the following:
87 a. Complete the exploration and reflection process outlined in the DOC
88 Discovery document;
89 b. Formally contact a local Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
90 congregation (the “sponsoring congregation”) to sponsor their
91 candidacy for Ordination and to provide a letter of recommendation.
92 (This ordinarily is the applicant’s home congregation, but may also be
93 the church in which they are active as a student or in which they
94 presently serve).
95 c. Should the applicant’s candidacy be approved, the Candidate will
96 continue “active participation” (as defined in Step Three below) in the
97 life of the sponsoring congregation throughout the period of candidacy.
98 d. Submit to the Regional Office a statement by an ordained minister of the
99 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who can speak to the applicant’s
100 personality and churchmanship.

101
102 At the culmination of this step, the RCOM will decide whether to take the applicant
103 “under care” as a Candidate for Ordination.
104

105 C. Step Three: Period of Candidacy
106

107 During this step, the Candidate for Ordination will be taken under the care of the
108 RCOM, which will continue to work in close cooperation with the sponsoring
109 congregation throughout the period of candidacy. The RCOM, with input from the
110 sponsoring congregation, will work with the Candidate to identify their gifts and
111 abilities, to formulate an individualized plan for further discernment and
112 enhancement of those gifts and abilities, and to periodically assess and evaluate the
113 Candidate’s progress.
114

- 115 i. Shortly after being taken under care, the Candidate will undergo an assessment
116 to determine their mental and psychological fitness for ministry, in general, and
117 Ordination, in particular.
118 ii. Throughout the period of candidacy, the RCOM will provide ongoing guidance
119 and oversight, including, but not limited to,
120 a. Oversight of the Candidate’s academic progress. This would include
121 review of transcripts and references from instructors, evaluations of the
122 Candidate’s course work, whether they completed a unit of Clinical
123 Pastoral Education, etc.
124 b. Oversight of the Candidate’s “active participation” in the life and work of
125 a DOC congregation (at least one year for those not formerly affiliated
126 with the DOC) and other manifestations of the DOC. Active participation
127 in the life and work of a DOC congregation might include service as a
128 Commissioned Minister. This would include evaluations of supervised

- 129 practice of ministry, references from those who worked with the
130 Candidate within the congregation, etc. "Active participation" might also
131 include, but not be limited to, the following:
- 132 i. Frequent attendance at worship;
 - 133 ii. Participation in Sunday services, as appropriate (e.g., act as
134 diaconate or usher, read scripture, make announcements);
 - 135 iii. Participation in (or leading of) a Sunday school class, Bible study,
136 or other small group study;
 - 137 iv. Volunteering to help with/facilitate social events, children's
138 church, Sunday school classes, discussion groups, nursery, youth
139 groups, outreach projects, facility care, etc.;
 - 140 v. Involvement in congregational committees, task forces and
141 special projects;
 - 142 vi. Singing in the choir or playing in a musical group;
 - 143 vii. Participation in community events/projects as a member of the
144 sponsoring congregation; and
 - 145 viii. Participation in Regional and General church events/projects,
146 including assemblies, retreats, workshops and church camp.
- 147 c. Engagement with the Candidate and the sponsoring congregation in an
148 ongoing assessment of their spiritual, personal and professional growth.
149 This would include the Candidate's self-assessment of progress in relation
150 to the 16 areas of ministerial practice. Such assessment will also include
151 recommendations by the RCOM, with input from the sponsoring
152 congregation, for certain additional educational and practical
153 opportunities to enhance the Candidate's readiness for ministry.
154

155 D. Step Four: Final Preparation

156

157 This step involves final interviews with the Candidate and input from the sponsoring
158 congregation, as well as a review of prior contacts, assessments, evaluations,
159 references, and recommendations as to the Candidate's preparation and fitness for
160 Ordination.
161

- 162 i. In preparation for the final interview, the Candidate for Ordination must do the
163 following:
 - 164 a. Complete the *Ministerial Profile*;
 - 165 b. Submit a comprehensive (at least 3-5 pages) statement paper outlining
166 their personal theology and understanding of ordained ministry, and
167 specific plans for the direction of their ministry following Ordination in
168 the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
- 169 ii. Additional factors on which the Regional Commission on Ministry will base its
170 decision include, but are not limited to,

- 171 a. The Candidate’s academic record;
172 b. Actual leadership experience in the church;
173 c. Assessment of the Candidate’s spiritual, personal and professional
174 growth throughout the period of Candidacy, including their self-
175 assessment of progress in relation to the 16 areas of ministerial practice,
176 with input from the sponsoring congregation.
- 177 iii. The RCOM will also take into consideration relevant additional feedback from
178 the sponsoring congregation and others within the Region with whom the
179 Candidate has been involved, including a letter of recommendation from
180 the congregation (presumably the sponsoring congregation) proposing to
181 partner with the Region in the Candidate's Ordination, if approved.
- 182 iv. In addition, the Region may require such additional assurances of the
183 Candidate’s fitness for Ordination as they deem reasonable and necessary,
184 including, but not limited to, personal interviews, letters of reference, or a
185 criminal background check.
- 186 v. At the discretion of the RCOM, candidates for Ordination may be granted
187 authorized access to Search and Call and may be considered for any ministerial
188 position for which they are otherwise qualified.
- 189 vi. At the completion of this step, the RCOM will determine whether to
190 recommend the Candidate for Ordination and will conclude with one of the
191 following actions:
- 192 a. Ordination (following the RCOM’s determination that they have met all
193 relevant requirements);
194 b. The Candidate’s withdrawal from candidacy; or
195 c. The decision by the Region to terminate their candidacy.

196
197 E. Step Five: Act of Ordination
198

199 Assuming that the RCOM is satisfied that the Candidate is ready for Ordination, the
200 final step consists of the actual planning for, and carrying out of, the Ordination
201 service.
202

203 Ordination is a process of the Congregational and Regional Church, on behalf of the
204 whole church, to commend to Christians everywhere individuals who meet the
205 qualifications and have fulfilled the requirements established by the DOC for
206 Ordination. This process culminates in a celebrative service of Ordination, which
207 meets the following guidelines:
208

- 209 i. The candidate will be recommended for Ordination by a recognized
210 congregation or congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ),
211 including the one in which membership is held.

- 212 ii. The act of Ordination will be under the authorization and guidance of the
213 sponsoring congregation and the Region, with the Regional Minister, or the
214 Regional Minister’s designee, presiding.
215 iii. The service ordinarily will be held in a sponsoring congregation.
216 iv. Representatives of the recommending congregation or congregations, the
217 Regional church, the ecumenical church and, where possible, the General church
218 shall participate in the service.
219 v. The Candidate will create a committee from the recommending congregation or
220 congregations and the RCOM to plan the Ordination service.
221 vi. After the Ministerial Code of Ethics* is signed, the signed Ordination document
222 will be issued by the Region.
223

224 **II. Current Regional Forms and Informational Materials Relating to Ordained Ministry***
225

- 226 A. Candidate Form (COM FORM 04/11)
227
228 B. Expectations for Ordination Candidate under Care of the Commission on Ministry (5
229 /09)
230
231 C. Disciples of Christ (DOC) Discovery (Rev 6/13)
232
233 D. Commission on Ministry: Disciples Ministry in Arizona (1/12)
234
235 E. Summary of “A Handbook for Working with Candidates for Ordination for Use by
236 Regional Commissions on Ministry” (11/13)
237
238 F. *Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*

239 *These forms/informational pieces may be revised or replaced from time to time. To assure that you
240 have the most current version, please check with the Regional Office or Regional Office website:
241 www.azdisciples.org/
242
243
244
245
246
247

1 **Attachment C**
2 **Additional Guidelines and Resources for Standing**
3 **in the Arizona Region**
4

5 I. **Additional Guidelines for Ministerial Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of**
6 **Christ)**
7

8 Standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) (DOC) is credentialing for ministry
9 within the DOC. It is a call to accountability to the church and collegiality with other
10 ministers, denominationally and ecumenically. Those seeking Standing in the Arizona
11 Region must comply with all relevant requirements set out in the *TFPCOM* and the
12 additional requirements set out in this Attachment C.
13

14 Responsibility for certification of Standing of ministers and for annual review of that
15 Standing is generally lodged with the Region where the minister is currently engaged in
16 the practice of ministry or otherwise resides. Responsibility for certification of Standing
17 of Regional Ministers is jointly lodged with the Region where they serve and the GCOM.
18

19 A. Certification of Standing of those Commissioned and Ordained by the DOC

20 A minister becomes eligible for Standing by virtue of Commissioning or Ordination
21 according to the Order of Ministry of the DOC.
22

- 23 i. Standing for ministers in active service continues as long as the minister
24 continues to do and report the following:
25 a. Performs faithfully the duties of a minister in a “ministerial” occupation;
26 b. Participates regularly in programs of study, growth, and renewal;
27 c. Maintains relations with the DOC, including participating membership in
28 a recognized local Disciples congregation, where feasible;
29 d. Adheres to the *Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples*
30 *of Christ)*. * (See Section II, “Current Regional Forms and Informational
31 Materials Relating to Ordained Ministry” for the most current version of
32 each of the forms/informational pieces marked with an “*” below);
33 e. Continues to meet the personal qualifications for admission to the Order
34 of Ministry, as set out in Section II.A.2 of the *TFPCOM*; and
35 f. Seeks and meets the requirements for annual certification on such terms
36 and conditions as required by the Region or the General Commission on
37 Ministry, as appropriate (*TFPCOM*, p.26).
38 ii. As part of the annual certification process to maintain Standing, the Arizona
39 Region requires that all Commissioned and Ordained ministers engaged in
40 active practice of ministry do the following:
41 a. Timely submit a request for continued Standing, in the prescribed format

(annual Ministerial Standing Form*), documenting they continue to meet all of the prerequisites set out in Section I.A.i. above and have also met the following additional requirements:

1. Attended RCOM approved Clergy Ethics and Boundary Training within the past four years. Ministers new to the Arizona Region, including those newly Ordained or Commissioned, will be required to complete such training within the first 12 months of their ministry in Arizona.
2. Completed a minimum of 10 hours of continuing education for the year, including, but not limited to, Regional Workshops, Certificate of Ministry courses, as well as formal Continuing Education seminars or coursework.

- iii. Those Commissioned and Ordained ministers with DOC Standing who are actively engaged in ministry have the following privileges:
 - a. Are listed in the *Year Book and Directory of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*;
 - b. Are permitted to call upon the church for various services and support; and
 - c. Are granted voting privileges in the General Assembly of the DOC.Ordained ministers also have access to Search and Call (*TFPCOM*, p.25).

- iv. When moving from one Region to another, the following rules apply:
 - a. An Ordained minister retains Standing when moving from a ministry position in one Region to a ministry position in another; however, the minister should notify both the former and new Regional Ministers.
 - b. Since Commissioned ministry is congregation and ministry specific, a Commissioned minister who moves to another Region must contact that Regional Minister to qualify for and establish Standing in the new ministry position, based upon the requirements of the new Region.
 - c. When an Ordained minister moves from a ministry position in one Region to another Region and is no longer engaged in ministry, ministerial Standing generally will be provisionally retained for up to one year. If he or she wishes to retain Standing, he or she must notify both the former and new Regional Ministers.

B. Certification of Standing of Retired Ministers (Active and Inactive), Commissioned or Ordained by the DOC

- i. Although not clearly defined in the *TFPCOM*, the term “retirement” or “retired” minister appears to include both those Commissioned and Ordained Ministers who no longer continue in an active ministerial position and those who are treated as “retired” for pension fund purposes but continue in active ministry beyond that point. In the latter case, those Commissioned and Ordained Ministers who continue in active ministry are

85 referred to as “active retired” ministers. Those who no longer engage in
86 active ministry are referred to as “inactive retired” ministers. For purposes of
87 certification of Standing of retired ministers, the Arizona Region adopts the
88 definitions set out in this paragraph.

89 ii. In the Arizona Region, upon retirement, Commissioned Ministers retain
90 Standing as active retired ministers if they continue serving in an approved
91 ministry site within the Arizona Region and continue to meet the
92 requirements of Sections I.A.i. and ii. set out above. As long as they continue
93 to meet these requirements they will also continue to have the privileges set
94 out in Section I.A.iii. above. Because Commissioned Ministry is congregation
95 and context specific, the Arizona Region generally does not grant Standing to
96 “inactive retired” Commissioned Ministers. However, under the TFPCOM,
97 the Region has the authority to do so.

98 iii. In the Arizona Region, Ordained Ministers with Standing retain their Standing
99 at the time of retirement, on the terms and conditions set out below:

100 a. A retired Ordained Minister who intends to continue active ministry
101 (whether occasional, part-time or full-time) within the Arizona Region
102 must continue to seek and meet the requirements for annual certification
103 of Standing by the Region or by the GCOM, as appropriate.

104 1. In the Arizona Region, to maintain Standing, active retired
105 ministers must continue to meet the requirements and follow the
106 annual certification process set out for non-retired Commissioned
107 and Ordained ministers in Sections I.A.i. and ii. above.

108 2. As long as they continue to meet these requirements, active
109 retired Ordained Ministers will also continue to have the
110 privileges set out in Section I.A.iii. above, except that they will be
111 listed in the *Yearbook of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*
112 as active retired.

113 b. Retired Ordained Ministers who are no longer engaged in the practice of
114 ministry may seek Standing as inactive retired ministers, on the terms
115 and conditions set out below:

116 1. Inactive retired ministers will continue to be listed in the *Yearbook*
117 *of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* as inactive retired
118 ministers;

119 2. Inactive retired ministers must continue to adhere to the
120 *Ministerial Code of Ethics*,* hold participating membership in a
121 recognized local Disciples congregation, where feasible, and
122 timely submit a request for continued Standing in the prescribed
123 format.

124 3. If an inactive retired minister decides to once again take up the
125 practice of ministry, that minister must once again seek status as
126 an active retired minister.

- 127 C. Certification of Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing with the DOC and UCC
- 128 i. The Ordained ministries of the DOC and the UCC are reconciled. An
129 Ordained minister with Ordained ministerial Standing in one church may
130 function, whenever invited, and as established procedures permit, as an
131 Ordained minister of the other, with Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in
132 that church. When a person no longer has Ordained ministerial Standing in
133 either the DOC or the UCC, that person is no longer an Ordained Ministerial
134 Partner, and Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing is nullified.
- 135 ii. The specific requirements, duties and privileges to attain and maintain
136 Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in either the DOC or the UCC are more
137 fully set out in Section II.G. of the *TFPCOM* and Section I.D. of the *AZPCOM*.
- 138 iii. In addition, in the Arizona Region, in order to attain and maintain Ordained
139 Ministerial Partner Standing in the Arizona Region, an Ordained UCC minister
140 who seeks to serve a DOC congregation in Arizona must also do the
141 following:
- 142 a. Contact the Regional Office to set up a meeting with the RCOM.
- 143 b. Prior to the meeting, submit the following information in writing:
- 144 1. A preliminary statement of their understanding of ministry within
145 the DOC, including reasons for the request for Ordained
146 Ministerial Standing with the DOC; the meaning of “church”; the
147 role and authority of ministers and their understanding of DOC
148 history, polity and practices;
- 149 2. Documentation of their Ordination;
- 150 3. Resume or personal information schedule (Form*?);
- 151 4. References from clergy and laity concerning their performance in
152 ministry;
- 153 5. Evidence of present Standing in a UCC Conference or Association.
- 154 c. Successfully complete a regionally approved course of study in the
155 history, polity and practices of the DOC, as evidenced by a certificate.
- 156 d. Appear before the RCOM and demonstrate sufficient knowledge of, and
157 appreciation for, the history, polity, and practices of the DOC, at which
158 time they may be granted access to the DOC Search and Call process, but
159 are not yet granted Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing. Such Standing
160 is only granted when, having met all other requirements, the Ordained
161 UCC minister has been called to an Ordained DOC ministry in the Arizona
162 Region.
- 163 1. To pursue Search and Call, the Ordained UCC minister must
164 request the appropriate Center for Leadership and Ministry,
165 Homeland Ministries forms from the Regional Office.
- 166 2. When the forms and references are completed and submitted to
167 the Center for Leadership and Ministry, they will be processed in
168 the next regular submission to the Regions.

- 169 e. In addition to all other requirements, prior to the granting of ordained
170 Ministerial Partner Standing, the Ordained UCC minister must meet the
171 personal qualifications for admission to the Order of Ministry, as set out
172 in Section II.A.2 of the *TFPCOM*, and agree to adhere to the *Ministerial*
173 *Code of Ethics**.
- 174 f. When a call to an Arizona DOC congregation is extended and accepted,
175 the RCOM issues a written statement granting Ordained Ministerial
176 Partner Standing in the DOC. A copy of this statement will be forwarded
177 to the Center for Leadership and Ministry, Homeland Ministries.
- 178 g. It is the expectation of the RCOM that this process will be completed
179 within one year.
- 180 iv. Once granted, an Ordained UCC minister who holds Ordained Ministerial
181 Partner Standing in the DOC shall relate to the DOC for their primary support
182 in Ordained ministry.
- 183 a. They, however, will continue to retain Ordained ministerial Standing in
184 the UCC Association in which the DOC calling body is located.
- 185 i. In the event of a disciplinary review, the UCC Association in which
186 the UCC minister's Ordained ministerial Standing is maintained
187 will be informed and invited to participate in the procedures.
- 188 ii. As long as the Ordained UCC minister maintains Ordained
189 Ministerial Partner Standing with the DOC, they will be required
190 to seek and meet the requirements for annual certification of
191 such Standing, on the same terms and conditions as Ordained
192 DOC ministers engaged in active ministry in the Arizona Region.
- 193 v. Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing may also be granted to an Ordained
194 minister with Standing in the DOC who has been called to an Ordained
195 ministry setting in the UCC, on such terms and conditions as more fully set
196 out in Section II.G. of the *TFPCOM* and Section I.D. of the *AZPCOM*.
- 197 a. Once granted, an Ordained DOC minister who holds Ordained Ministerial
198 Partner Standing in the UCC shall relate to the UCC for their primary
199 support in Ordained ministry.
- 200 b. They, however, will continue to retain Ordained ministerial Standing in
201 the DOC Region in which the UCC calling body is located. In the event of
202 a disciplinary review, the Region in which the UCC minister's Ordained
203 ministerial Standing is maintained will be informed and invited to
204 participate in the procedures.

205
206 D. Granting of Standing to Persons Ordained in Other Churches

- 207
208 i. Ministers Ordained by other denominations or non-Disciples congregations
209 may be considered for recognition of Ordination and the granting of Standing
210 in the DOC. Provisional or temporary Standing may be granted to individuals

- 211 applying for recognition of Ordination by the Region in which they are
212 engaged in ministry or reside.
- 213 ii. The minister seeking provisional or temporary Standing in the Arizona Region
214 must do the following:
- 215 a. Contact the Regional Office to set up a meeting with the RCOM.
216 b. Prior to the meeting, submit the following information in writing:
- 217 1. A preliminary statement of their understanding of ministry within
218 the DOC, including reasons for the request for Ordained
219 Ministerial Standing with the DOC; the meaning of “church”; the
220 role and authority of ministers and their understanding of DOC
221 history, polity and practices;
222 2. Documentation of their Ordination and qualifications for
223 Ordination;
224 3. Resume or personal information schedule (Form*?);
225 4. References from clergy and laity concerning their performance in
226 ministry;
227 5. Evidence of present Standing (or comparable certification) in
228 another denomination or non-Disciples congregation; and
229 6. Contact information for appropriate officials of the denomination
230 or congregation from which the applicant transfers.
- 231 iii. Upon completion of the above prerequisites, the RCOM will make its
232 decision, taking into consideration the information provided in writing and
233 during interviews, as well as additional information obtained from the
234 following sources:
- 235 a. Consultation with appropriate officials of the denomination or
236 congregation from which the candidate transfers; and
237 b. Filing of other appropriate forms with the Arizona Region.
238 In addition, the Region may require a criminal background check.
- 239 iv. If granted, the minister’s provisional or temporary Standing will be subject to
240 the following course of action, during which their provisional or temporary
241 Standing will be reviewed by the RCOM on an annual basis. This course of
242 action will be for a period of 12 to 18 months (at the discretion of the RCOM)
243 and may include the following:
- 244 a. Assignment of an Ordained DOC minister with Standing in the Arizona
245 Region as a mentor. The mentor’s recommendation will be a part of the
246 data used by the RCOM to determine the applicant’s appropriateness for
247 Standing;
248 b. Active participation in a DOC congregation, where feasible;
249 c. Directed study, including suggested readings and other continuing
250 education events/experiences;
251 d. Interviews with established DOC leaders;
252 e. Participation in various national and Regional DOC events, including
253 Assemblies, workshops, etc.;

- 254 f. Completion of a regionally approved course of study in the history, polity
255 and practices of the DOC, as evidenced by a certificate;
- 256 g. Completion of the Ministerial Profile* and other appropriate forms; and
- 257 h. Completion of an assessment to determine their mental and
258 psychological fitness for ministry, in general, and Ordination, in
259 particular.
- 260 v. At the end of the period of directed study, a second interview with the
261 RCOM will be scheduled during which the minister will be asked to share
262 their experiences, including insights gained and increased knowledge of, and
263 appreciation for, the history, polity, and practices of the DOC.
- 264 a. In addition to satisfactory completion of all the above-noted
265 prerequisites, including various evaluations, assessments, background
266 checks and other references, the minister must also meet the following
267 additional requirements in order for the provisional or temporary
268 conditions for Standing to be removed:
- 269 1. Membership in a recognized DOC congregation;
 - 270 2. Fulfillment of the prerequisites and preparation, including
271 educational attainment, for the Order of Ministry;
 - 272 3. One year minimum service under the supervision or mentoring of
273 a DOC minister with Standing;
 - 274 4. Manifesting the personal qualifications for the Order of Ministry
275 as listed in Section II.A.2. of the TFPCOM; and
 - 276 5. Commitment to adhere to the *Ministerial Code of Ethics of the
277 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*.
- 278 vi. If, based upon its review, the RCOM determines that the minister is qualified
279 to have the provisional or temporary conditions for Standing removed, the
280 RCOM will present to the minister a Certificate of Ministerial Recognition to
281 ministerial Standing in the DOC, along with a DOC ministerial Standing card.
- 282 a. As long as the minister Ordained by another church or non-Disciples
283 congregation has Standing with the DOC, they will be required to seek
284 and meet the requirements for annual certification of such Standing, on
285 the same terms and conditions as Ordained DOC ministers engaged in
286 active ministry in the Arizona Region.

287 E. Suspension, Termination, Surrender or Lapse of Ministerial Standing

288 Subject to the special rules that apply to disciplinary review of those who have
289 Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the DOC or UCC, the following rules will
290 apply with respect to suspension, termination, surrender or lapse of ministerial
291 Standing:

- 292 i. Review of Standing may be initiated by the minister, the Region, or the
293 GCOM, when one of the following applies:
- 294 a. The minister desires to be released from the practice of ministry;

- 295 b. The minister requests transfer of credentials from the DOC to another
296 denomination or non-Disciples congregation;
297 c. The minister enters into a full-time non-ministerial occupation and/or no
298 longer performs the functions of a minister;
299 d. The minister fails to meet the requirements for annual certification by
300 the Region or the GCOM;
301 e. The minister no longer meets the personal qualifications for admission to
302 the Order of Ministry, as set out in Section II.A.2 of the *TFPCOM*, or fails
303 to adhere to the *Ministerial Code of Ethics**.
304 ii. When initiated by the Region, the review of Standing process will include the
305 following:
306 a. Written notice to the minister that Standing is to be reviewed, with the
307 possibility of suspension or termination;
308 b. Consultation with, or notification to, such General Offices, as may be
309 appropriate;
310 c. A hearing by a committee appointed by the Region or the GCOM;
311 d. When a review is instituted in relation to a UCC minister holding
312 Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the DOC, the association of the
313 UCC in which the UCC minister's Ordained ministerial Standing is
314 maintained will be informed and invited to participate in the process;
315 e. When a review is instituted in relation to a DOC minister holding
316 Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing in the UCC, the Region of the DOC
317 in which the DOC minister's Ordained ministerial Standing is maintained,
318 shall be informed and invited to participate in the process.
319 iii. When initiated by the minister, the review of Standing process will include
320 the following:
321 a. Written notice to the Region that Standing is to be reviewed, with the
322 possibility of suspension or termination;
323 b. Consultation by a committee appointed by the Region.
324 iv. Standing may be granted to a minister whose Standing has been terminated or
325 suspended by another Region or GCOM only upon the recommendation of the
326 terminating or suspending body.
327 v. When a minister surrenders Standing, Standing can be granted again only upon
328 the recommendation of the body to which Standing was surrendered, assuming
329 any outstanding allegations of misconduct have been addressed.
330 vi. When a minister's Standing has lapsed, Standing may only be granted after
331 consultation with the body where the Standing was previously held.
332

333 Additional policies and procedures relating to review of Standing, including the
334 investigation and adjudication of suspected ministerial misconduct, the outcome of
335 which may affect ministerial Standing, are set out in Attachment D (as it may be
336 amended from time to time) to the AZPCOM.
337

338 **II. Current Regional Forms and Informational Materials Relating to Standing***

339

340 A. Annual Ministerial Standing Form

341 B. Ministerial Record Form

342 C. *Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*

343

344 *These forms/informational pieces may be revised or replaced from time to time. To assure that you
345 have the most current version, please check with the Regional Office or Regional Office website:

346 www.azdisciples.org/

Attachment D
**Additional Guidelines and Resources for Ministerial Conduct
in the Arizona Region**

I. **Additional Guidelines for Ministerial Conduct in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**

To maintain Standing, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) (DOC) requires all DOC Commissioned and Ordained ministers engaged in active ministry (including active retired ministers) to continue to meet the personal qualifications for admission to the Order of Ministry, as set out in Section II.A.2 of the *TFPCOM*. This includes, but is not limited to, strong moral character and personal integrity. In addition, all Commissioned and Ordained ministers with Standing in the DOC, whether active, retired active or retired inactive, must continue to adhere to the *Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* as set out in Section II.I. of the *TFPCOM*, as it may be amended from time to time.

To assure that all such DOC Commissioned and Ordained ministers within the Arizona Region continue to meet the highest standards of ethical ministerial conduct, the Arizona Region has implemented the following policies and procedures:

A. Annual Certification (and Recertification) of Standing of those Commissioned and Ordained by the DOC

In order to maintain Standing as a Commissioned or Ordained minister (whether active, retired active or retired inactive) within the Arizona Region, a minister must continue to meet the applicable requirements set out in Attachment C to the *AZPCOM*, as it may be amended from time to time.

- i. With respect to ministerial conduct, ministers in active service (including retired active) must continue to do and report the following:
 - a. Meet the personal qualifications for admission to the Order of Ministry, as set out in Section II.A.2 of the *TFPCOM*; and
 - b. Adhere to the *Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*. * (See Section II, “Current Regional Forms and Informational Materials Relating to Ordained Ministry” for the most current version of each of the forms/informational pieces marked with an “*” below).
 - c. As part of the annual certification process, all Commissioned and Ordained ministers engaged in active practice of ministry must timely submit a request for continued Standing, in the prescribed format (annual Ministerial Standing Form*), documenting that they continue to meet applicable requirements.
- ii. With respect to ministerial conduct, retired Ordained ministers who are no

41 longer engaged in the practice of ministry may seek and maintain Standing as
42 retired inactive ministers, so long as they continue to adhere to the
43 *Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*, hold
44 participating membership in a recognized local Disciples congregation, where
45 feasible,* and timely submit a request for continued Standing, in the
46 prescribed format. If an inactive retired minister decides to once again take
47 up the practice of ministry, that minister must once again seek status as an
48 active retired minister.

49 B. Misconduct

50
51 In the Arizona Region, ministerial misconduct is defined as activity which violates the
52 covenantal character of the ministerial office as expressed in the *Ministerial Code of*
53 *Ethics*. Investigation and adjudication of violations of the Ministerial Code of Ethics is
54 the responsibility of the Region through the RCOM (or the GCOM, if applicable).
55

56 The Arizona Region has implemented the following procedures to meet its
57 obligations regarding ministerial misconduct:
58

- 59 i. The Arizona Region will report formal actions and decisions to remove
60 Standing for misconduct to the Office of Search and Call and/or other
61 appropriate General Church office(s) with responsibility for ministerial
62 vocations, which may change from time to time.
- 63 ii. In extreme situations of alleged misconduct, the Arizona Region may
64 temporarily suspend Standing during the period of investigation and
65 adjudication.
- 66 iii. With respect to sexual misconduct, the Arizona Region has established key
67 definitions, Regional goals and general guidelines, which are currently set out
68 in Appendix I, entitled *Clergy Sexual Misconduct Policy* (as it may be
69 amended from time to time), attached to and by this reference made a part
70 of this Attachment D.
 - 71 a. The Arizona Region will periodically and systematically review the key
72 definitions, Regional goals and general guidelines contained in the
73 *Clergy Sexual Misconduct Policy* and will communicate this
74 information to ministers and congregations in the Region.
 - 75 b. The policies relating to identification, investigation and adjudication
76 of suspected clergy sexual misconduct shall generally follow and be
77 consistent with other Regional policies and procedures relating to
78 potential clergy misconduct set out in the *AZPCOM* and related
79 attachments, including Sections C., D., and E. below.
- 80 iv. With respect to other serious categories of ministerial misconduct, the
81 Arizona Region may adopt such additional definitions, policies and

82 procedures as they deem necessary and appropriate to identify, investigate
83 and adjudicate suspected misconduct in those categories, as well.

- 84 a. Definitions and unique aspects of each category will be set out in
85 Appendix II, entitled *Other Categories of Serious Clergy Misconduct*,
86 (as it may be amended from time to time), attached to and by this
87 reference made a part of this Attachment D.
- 88 b. General policies and procedures to identify, investigate and
89 adjudicate such misconduct are set out in Sections C., D. and E.
90 below.

91
92 C. Complaint, Investigation and Negotiation

93 i. Prior preparation

- 94 a. The RCOM will identify a pool of persons (e.g., psychotherapists and
95 other counselors with relevant expertise, lawyers with expertise in
96 liability and insurance, human resource professionals, other advisers)
97 authorized to assist them in the investigation and adjudication of
98 suspected misconduct, if applicable. This pool will also include
99 persons to act as translators or interpreters, as necessary to assure
100 that all persons involved in the process set out in this policy
101 understand the process, the information disclosed, and the
102 consequences of actions proposed and/or taken. The RCOM will also
103 identify and be prepared to provide such assistive devices as may be
104 necessary to conduct a fair and thorough investigation and
105 adjudication of any and all complaints received.
- 106 b. The RCOM will identify and train a standing Response Team of four
107 persons, including men and women. Members will be selected for a
108 three-year term, on a rotating basis. The chair of the RCOM or a
109 designee will be an ex-officio member, who is to be kept informed
110 and act as a liaison to the RCOM. The training will include an
111 overview of the RCOM's policies and procedures for investigation and
112 adjudication of alleged misconduct, development of effective
113 interviewing techniques (including appropriate documentation), and
114 training on potential areas of misconduct, including, but not limited
115 to, sexual misconduct.
- 116 c. During every step in the process, the RCOM will provide such
117 resources, including the assistance of translators and interpreters, as
118 well as other appropriate assistive devices, as may be necessary to
119 conduct a fair and thorough investigation and adjudication of any and
120 all complaints received.

121 ii. Receiving the complaints

- 122 a. Any person may submit a complaint charging misconduct by a
123 minister. The complaint will be initially received and reviewed by the

- 124 Regional Minister and the RCOM chair. If reported orally, the receiver
125 must reduce it to writing. In any event, it must be signed by the
126 complainant.
- 127 b. The complaint must be specific with respect to the alleged
128 misconduct, with corroborating documents and other witness
129 statements, if possible.
- 130 c. If the alleged misconduct, if true, would constitute a crime subject to
131 mandatory reporting under Arizona state law, the Regional Minister
132 and RCOM chair will report it to the applicable authorities. Such
133 reporting may occur at any time during the investigation and/or
134 adjudication process or after the final adjudication, as appropriate.
- 135 iii. Initial response to the complaint
- 136 a. The initial response to any ethical complaint against a minister will be
137 made by the Regional Minister. The focus of this response, to both
138 the complainant and the minister named in the complaint, will be
139 pastoral in nature with the aim of resolving the issue of the
140 complaint, if possible, at the pastoral level. Even if resolved at this
141 point, a record of the complaint and its resolution will be retained in
142 the minister's file.
- 143 b. If pastoral resolution is not possible, a brief summary of the
144 complaint will be brought to the RCOM through the chair with a
145 recommendation to investigate or not to investigate.
- 146 1. If the recommendation is not to investigate and the RCOM
147 approves, both the complainant and the minister accused of
148 misconduct will be notified of the decision, the reasons behind
149 it and any recommendations made by the RCOM.
- 150 2. If the recommendation is to investigate, and the RCOM
151 approves, throughout the process that follows it will be the
152 responsibility of the Regional Minister and RCOM chair to
153 ensure that appropriate pastoral care is offered to both the
154 complainant, and the victim(s) if different, and the minister
155 named in the complaint.
- 156 3. In either case, a record of the complaint and the RCOM's
157 decision will be maintained in the minister's file.
- 158 iv. Investigation of the complaint
- 159 a. Upon a decision by the RCOM to investigate, the Chair and the
160 Regional Minister will assign two members of the Response Team to
161 begin a timely investigation and meet with the complainant within 30
162 days. Where sexual misconduct is alleged, the response team must
163 include one man and one woman.
- 164 b. The Response Team will first meet with the complainant and victim(s)
165 if they are different.

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1. The Response Team will explain the process to be followed as per this policy and provide a copy of this policy.
 2. The response team will work with the complainant(s) to make a written record of the complaint(s), including all evidence supporting the allegation(s) made. The complainant(s) will be requested to sign their individual portion(s) of the record.
- c. The Response Team will then meet with the minister named in the complaint.
1. The Response Team will present the complaint and explain the process to be followed as per this policy and provide a copy of this policy.
 2. The Response Team will work with the minister named in the complaint to develop a written record of their response to the complaint and any evidence supporting the response. The minister will be requested to sign this statement.
- d. The Response Team may also interview other persons as deemed necessary to the investigation. A written record of each interview will be made and the person interviewed will be requested to sign the statement.
- e. The Response Team will notify the appropriate leadership of the employing or calling body that this matter is under investigation, communicating to the appropriate leadership a summary of the complaint and response and a copy of this policy.
- v. Negotiation of settlement of complaint
- a. Negotiation of a settlement may occur at any point in the process prior to completion of the investigation. If a settlement is reached, subject to the approval of the RCOM, the investigation is concluded. All negotiations will be conducted by the Chair of the RCOM and the Regional Minister.
 - b. If the minister admits culpability for the substance of the charge(s) in the complaint, negotiation may be held with the minister and complainant in order to determine the appropriate consequences for all involved.
 1. Among the possible consequences, the minister may agree:
 - a) To resign their position;
 - b) To enter into mediation with the complainant to negotiate an appropriate settlement;
 - c) To obtain professional counseling;
 - d) To pay for counseling for the victim(s);
 - e) To accept a period of supervised probation;
 - f) To surrender Standing for cause.
 2. Any negotiated settlement will be forwarded to the RCOM and, if approved, will be reported in writing to the

209 complainant, any victims (if different from the complainant),
210 and the minister. A copy of the terms of the settlement will
211 be retained in the minister's file.

212 c. If the minister does not admit culpability or if negotiation fails to
213 reach a mutually satisfactory resolution approved by the RCOM, the
214 RCOM may proceed to a formal hearing.

215
216 D. Formal Hearing

217
218 i. A formal fact-finding hearing is an ecclesiastical meeting, not a trial or court
219 proceeding. The goal is to find the truth of what happened through a fair,
220 timely, and effective process that respects and preserves the rights of all
221 concerned: the accused minister, the Region, the complainant, any victims (if
222 different from the complainant) and any witnesses. Hearing Board members
223 are neutral decision makers (clergy and laity from the RCOM) who should
224 have no prior involvement in the case (other than as a member of the
225 RCOM), and who must be able to render a fair recommendation. They may
226 be challenged and removed if found to be biased.

227 ii. It is expected that all parties will conduct themselves in a respectful and
228 compassionate manner at the hearing. Hearings are closed except to the
229 Hearing Board, the accused minister, the complainant, one or more members
230 of the Response Team and the witnesses (who are present only during the
231 time they testify, unless they request and receive permission from the
232 Hearing Board to remain in the room after their testimony). Others may
233 attend the hearing only with the approval of the Hearing Board or the RCOM.

234 iii. Other specific procedures include the following:
235 a. A formal hearing may be requested by the RCOM, the minister named
236 in the complaint or by the complainant.
237 b. Three members of the RCOM appointed by the Chair shall comprise
238 the Hearing Board.
239 c. The hearing will seek to be fair to all concerned, but is not held to
240 strict legal procedures.
241 d. This is an ecclesiastical and not a legal proceeding. Both the minister
242 and the complainant may select an advocate to provide support, care
243 and procedural guidance, with 15 days advance notice to the Regional
244 Minister and the RCOM chair.
245 e. At least ten days prior to the formal hearing the Response Team will
246 communicate its written report, including the charges and the
247 response by the minister accused, to the members of the Hearing
248 Board.
249 f. At the hearing, the Response Team will present a summary of their
250 findings and in doing so may call witnesses. The minister and
251 complainant may also call witnesses.

- 252 g. The Hearing Board will make a written report of their findings and
253 recommendations to the RCOM within 15 days of the conclusion of
254 the hearing. The RCOM will make the final adjudication decision.
255 h. The recommendations of the Hearing Board and the decision for
256 action on the part of the RCOM may include any of the consequences
257 listed under Section E. below.
258 i. All decisions and rationale of the RCOM will be recorded in the
259 minister's investigative file. This file will be secured in the Office of
260 the Regional Minister for a minimum of fifty years. The Regional
261 Minister will notify, in writing, the complainant, the minister and the
262 appropriate employer of the action taken.
263
- 264 v. Investigation Disposition
265
- 266 i. The RCOM's responsibility and authority pertains to the minister's Standing.
267 The RCOM has no authority in matters of the minister's relationship to their
268 place of employment or calling.
- 269 ii. The actions of the RCOM regarding a minister's Standing affect that
270 minister's access to search and call. Each ministerial profile contains a
271 Disclosure and Release Form requiring the minister to disclose any
272 disciplinary reviews for ministerial misconduct that resulted in censure,
273 suspension of Standing, or termination of Standing and whether any official
274 disciplinary proceedings are currently pending. A detailed explanation is
275 required for any and all affirmative answers.
- 276 iii. Based on the written record of the Response Team or Hearing Board, the
277 RCOM has several options for disposition of the case:
- 278 a. Dismissal of the complaint. If the RCOM determines that the
279 complaint is without merit, they may dismiss the complaint. A
280 confidential record of the proceedings will be kept, but the minister
281 will not be required to disclose the complaint in future requests for
282 Standing or in the ministerial profile for search and call.
- 283 b. Probation. If the RCOM determines that the complaint has merit and
284 determines that the minister should take action, but that the nature
285 of the complaint is not something that needs to be reported beyond
286 the Region, the Hearing Board (as defined above) or the RCOM may
287 choose to place a minister on probation until the minister has
288 completed a set of required actions to the RCOM's satisfaction.
- 289 1. A timeline for completing the actions will be established.
290 Satisfaction of the requirements is at the discretion of the
291 RCOM. Should the minister fail to complete the tasks in the
292 allotted time, the RCOM may impose a letter of censure,
293 suspension of Standing or removal (termination) of Standing
294 for cause.

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2. While a minister is on probation, the Regional Minister will withhold the Regional reference from the minister's search and call profile. If the minister has an active profile, the Regional Minister will pull the regional reference, in effect removing the profile from circulation.
 3. Once the RCOM is satisfied that the probationary requirements have been met, the Regional reference can be restored, and the minister's profile may be circulated. A letter indicating that the minister has satisfied the requirements of probation will be placed in the minister's file.
- c. Letter of censure. If the Hearing Board or the RCOM determines that the complaint has merit, but the act(s) of the minister is/are not serious enough to warrant suspension or termination of Standing, but any actions taken since the complaint are insufficient to accomplish restitution, the RCOM will provide a letter of censure in the minister's file.
1. A letter of censure would allow the minister to retain Standing, and the minister would still have access to search and call. However, the minister would have to indicate on the Disclosure and Release that the complaint resulted in censure and would have to provide a detailed explanation.
- d. Suspension of Standing. If the Hearing Board or the RCOM determines that the complaint warrants disciplinary action against the minister's Standing, one option is to suspend the minister's Standing. In the event of suspension, the minister's Standing is terminated, subject to the necessary notifications and requirements for reinstatement. Suspension of Standing will carry with it criteria under which the minister can apply for reinstatement of Standing. These criteria might include the passage of a set amount of time or the completion of specific tasks or both.
- e. Removal of Standing for cause. In the case of egregious actions, the Hearing Board or RCOM may determine to remove a minister's Standing for cause, subject to the necessary notifications. When Standing is removed for cause, a minister may not apply for reinstatement for 36 months from the date that termination of Standing is effective. As with any termination of Standing, reinstatement may only be granted by the Region that terminated Standing.
- f. Voluntary surrender of Standing. In some cases the minister may voluntarily surrender Standing. In such cases, the RCOM has the discretion to continue to investigate the matter at issue. When a minister surrenders Standing, the RCOM has sole discretion regarding any future reinstatement of Standing, and ongoing investigation may

338 be necessary to inform such decisions. Surrender of Standing is
339 handled like termination of Standing as regards reporting and
340 reinstatement. Reinstatement may only be granted by the region
341 where Standing was surrendered.
342

343 F. Restoration of Standing

- 344
- 345 i. Restoration of Standing is reentry into the Ordering of Ministry in the
346 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) after a clergy person has had their
347 Standing removed or resigned their Standing because of an actual or pending
348 investigation, clergy misconduct or disciplinary action. This process attempts
349 to offer clergy forgiveness and reevaluates the individual's personal and
350 spiritual fitness for returning to ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of
351 Christ).
- 352 a. After a minimum period of 36 months from the time Standing was
353 removed, the offender may petition the commission for the
354 restoration of Standing. The restoration may be granted if all the
355 requirements are completed and the RCOM votes in favor of
356 restoration of Standing.
- 357 b. The following requirements are the established protocol intended to
358 provide a course of action for justice, reconciliation, forgiveness and
359 mercy to clergy (Comissioned or Ordained) who have had their
360 Standing removed or resigned their Standing because of alleged or
361 substantiated clergy misconduct.
- 362 1. Criteria for Restoration Candidacy; the offender shall
- 363 a) Be an active and participating member of a Christian
364 Church (Disciples of Christ) in an Arizona congregation
365 for at least one year prior to the petition.
- 366 b) Give a full account of the events that resulted in the
367 removal of Standing to the pastor and board of the local
368 congregation where the applicant holds membership.
- 369 c) Seek and obtain the forgiveness, approval, and support
370 from the congregation in which the applicant holds
371 membership.
- 372 d) Request that the local congregation where they are
373 presently a member submit a strong letter of
374 recommendation to the Commission in support of the
375 individual's restoration to ministry.
- 376 e) Seek forgiveness and reconciliation from the
377 individual(s)/congregation that they harmed.
- 378 f) Make financial restitution to the Region for all
379 appropriate expenses incurred as a result of their
380 behavior.

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g) Request that their counselor and/or pastor furnish a written report on the rehabilitation actions and results to the RCOM.

2. Procedures for Restoration Candidacy

- a) The applicant for restoration to ministry will follow the procedures for Candidacy to the Ordering of Ministry as outlined in Section I.A. of the *AZPCOM* and related Attachment A (Commissioned Ministry) and Section I.B. of the *AZPCOM* and related Attachment B (Ordained Ministry).
- b) Upon completion of a satisfactory interview with the RCOM and favorable vote, the offender is accepted as a candidate and taken under care for restoration.
- c) The requirements to be fulfilled by the offender during the restoration period are outlined in the above-referenced sections of the *AZPCOM* and related attachments. If the Ordained Minister offender has completed the academic requirements, that requirement is waived for the Ordained Minister. However, the Commissioned Minister offender will be required to complete any educational requirements outstanding. In addition, the RCOM may require additional research, study and writing in areas that it deems appropriate to assist the offender in the restoration process.
- d) If the RCOM determines that this individual is fit for restoration to ministry within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), it will vote and submit its recommendation to the Regional entity responsible for such determinations to reinstate this individual's Standing. The authorized Regional entity will receive a full report from the chair of the RCOM that this individual has completed all requirements, exhibited genuine repentance for the substantiated misconduct, received a favorable recommendation from the local congregation, and by the recommendation of the RCOM is now deemed fit to reenter ministry within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).
- e) The authorized Regional entity will vote on this matter and if approved, the candidate's Standing will be restored. If Standing is restored, the offender will receive notification in writing and notification will also be sent to the appropriate General Church office(s) with

424 responsibility for ministerial vocations, which may
425 change from time to time. Only after the completion of
426 this process, will all rights, privileges and responsibilities
427 associated with being a Commissioned or Ordained
428 minister within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
429 in the United States and Canada as determined in the
430 Ordering of Ministry, be fully reinstated.

431
432 G. Right of Appeal

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434 i. Right of appeal at the Regional level

435 a. All decisions by the RCOM or Hearing Board with adverse effect
436 regarding Ordination, Commissioning, transfer of credentials, and/or
437 Standing may be appealed at the discretion of the Regional
438 Moderator within 30 days from the date on which the decisions
439 become final.

440 1. The acceptable grounds for appeal are:

- 441 a) The appellant believes the Region violated its own related
442 written policies and procedures.
443 b) The appellant believes the Region violated the *Theological*
444 *Foundations, Policies and Criteria for the Ordering of Ministry*
445 *of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*.

446 2. An appeal will not be considered, however, if legal proceedings
447 are pending or in process.

448 ii. Right of appeal at the General level

449 a. The right of appeal at the Regional level does not in any way infringe
450 upon, hinder or limit any right of appeal to the GCOM by persons
451 subject to decisions with adverse effect on Ordination,
452 Commissioning, transfer of credentials, and/or Standing. Such right
453 of appeal shall be in accordance with relevant provisions in the
454 *TFPCOM* (as it may be amended from time to time) and applicable
455 policies and procedures established by the GCOM.
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457
458 **II. Current Regional Forms and Informational Materials Relating to Standing***

459
460 A. Annual Ministerial Standing Form

461 B. Ministerial Record Form?

462 C. *Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)*

463 D. *The Arizona Regional Christian Church Policy and Procedure for Response to Clergy*
464 *Sexual Misconduct*

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*These forms/informational pieces may be revised or replaced from time to time. To assure that you have the most current version, please check with the Regional Office or Regional Office website: www.azdisciples.org/

1 **Appendix I**
2 **Clergy Sexual Misconduct Policy**

3 This *Clergy Sexual Misconduct Policy* is Appendix I to Attachment D of the *Policies and Criteria*
4 *for the Ordering of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Arizona (AZPCOM)*.
5 This policy has been established by the Regional Commission on the Ministry (RCOM), acting on
6 behalf of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Arizona (the Arizona Region) to assure that
7 all clergy with Standing (whether as Commissioned or Ordained ministers) within the Arizona
8 Region meet the highest standards of personal and professional conduct.

9 The RCOM has identified sexual misconduct as an extremely serious breach of ministerial
10 ethics, and, acting on behalf of the Arizona Region, has created this *Clergy Sexual Misconduct*
11 *Policy* to establish key definitions, Regional goals and general guidelines to address this issue.
12 The RCOM has also established more specific policies and procedures to identify, investigate
13 and adjudicate allegations of various types of clergy misconduct, including sexual misconduct.
14 These specific policies, as set forth in Attachment D, Sections C., D., and E., will be used to
15 respond to allegations of clergy sexual misconduct involving Ordained or Commissioned clergy
16 whose Standing as ministers in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is maintained through
17 the Arizona Region.

18 **Preamble**

19 Let us begin with a statement reflecting the theological understanding of the Christian Church
20 (Disciples of Christ), in its General, Regional and congregational manifestations, of the value and
21 worth of each human being and the role of the church in honoring and protecting the dignity of
22 each person it serves.

23 Historically the church has believed, and continues to believe, that all people are created by
24 God, in the image of God, and thus have been made equal in Christ. The Church Universal
25 believes that God intends all people to have worth and dignity in all relationships with God and
26 others.

27 God intends justice for all. Pastoral misconduct involving inappropriate sexual behavior or
28 sexual harassment within the pastoral relationship is a misuse of the power and responsibility
29 of the pastoral role. Such misconduct distorts a person's feelings of equity, worth, and dignity.
30 The abused person usually has less power in the relationship than the abuser, often feels
31 dehumanized and victimized, and bears the scars of the violation of trust for years.

32 When pastoral misconduct involving sexual behavior or harassment occurs within the pastoral
33 relationship, it poses a threat to the quality of community life and compromises the church's
34 ministry. The church is called to prevent such violations and to respond with integrity when
35 allegations of pastoral misconduct surface.

36 The professional pastoral office is a position of trust, power and responsibility. As such it
37 provides unique opportunities for caring and close personal relationships and often

38 unquestioned authority. Unfortunately, a few pastors have exploited this vulnerability. This
39 policy is offered as a guideline for actions to be taken should such a situation occur.

40 Actions that violate the integrity of ministry not only injure the persons involved, but also
41 compromise the entire church and its ministry, and the effect may go far beyond these actions.
42 Considering these consequences, this policy addresses not only the individuals immediately
43 involved, but also those peripherally involved such as spouses, immediate families, and other
44 staff members.

45 What does it mean for the church to respond with integrity when a person it has authorized for
46 ministry in the name of the church is charged with violating the relationship? The church has
47 responded in a range of ways, representing many points on a spectrum.

48 At one end of the spectrum the church has strongly valued the collegium of the clergy at almost
49 any cost. Persons have gone to great lengths to assist a pastor when an allegation is made. In
50 its most extreme form, this end of the spectrum could be described as covering-up or denying
51 misconduct in the pastoral role. This extreme not only embodies an injustice to past and
52 potential victims, but also prevents the possibility for true repentance, reconciliation, and
53 restoration on the part of the clergyperson.

54 The other end of this spectrum virtually presumes the guilt of the person whose fitness is being
55 questioned prior to any careful process of investigation and adjudication.

56 Either extreme on the spectrum falls short of ensuring a genuine opportunity for assessing the
57 realities of a situation and taking actions that stand in support of the healing and integrity of all
58 persons involved, as well as ensuring the integrity of the pastoral role and the ministry of the
59 church. It is important to take seriously the pain and injustice experienced by those making
60 accusations of misconduct as well as to respond with justice and mercy to those whose fitness
61 is being questioned.

62 “It is the responsibility of each Region to have specific definitions of sexual misconduct and
63 procedures for receiving, investigating, and adjudicating sexual misconduct allegations of
64 ministers with Standing in the Region. Each Region will periodically and systematically review
65 its definitions and procedures. It is the responsibility of the Region to communicate such
66 definitions and procedures to ministers and congregations within the Region” (*TFPCOM* p. 43-
67 44).

68 **Key Terms**

69 The following section contains definitions of key terms as used in this policy:

70 Clergy Sexual Misconduct: A range of behaviors defined as sexual harassment; sexual
71 misconduct; adultery and promiscuity; and child sexual abuse between a minister and their
72 parishioners, clients, and those the minister supervises or serves in a professional capacity
73 within or outside the church. Such behavior crosses appropriate professional boundaries and is
74 an abuse of the trust placed in, and the responsibilities and privileges of, the pastoral role. Such

75 misconduct violates pastoral ethics. In all instances, the minister is responsible for maintaining
76 professional boundaries, regardless of the behavior of other persons.

77 Sexual Harassment: Under applicable federal law, generally defined to include sexual advances,
78 requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal, written, electronic, or physical conduct of a
79 sexual nature when:

80

- 81 • Submission to such is made either explicitly or implicitly a term of an individual’s
82 employment (in this case, paid or volunteer) or their continued status in an institution.
- 83 • Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for
84 employment decisions affecting such individuals.
- 85 • Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with work performance by
86 creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment based on the declared
87 judgment of the affected individual.
- 88 • Such conditions create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment for another
89 individual regardless of the specific setting or circumstances or the relationship between
90 the two individuals most directly involved.

91 Sexual Minsconduct: Includes any of the following:

- 92 • Sexual contact with a minor. (Minor is defined by law in the state or province where the
93 alleged misconduct occurred.)
- 94 • Sexual harassment.
- 95 • Rape or sexual contact by force, threat, or intimidation.
- 96 • Sexual malfeasance, which is defined as a breach of trust resulting from sexual contact
97 (contact with genitalia, buttocks or breasts) within a ministerial or professional
98 relationship.
- 99 • Unwelcome or offensive behaviors, including winks, leers, suggestive comments, crude
100 language, pinching or tickling someone, or inappropriate hugs and kisses.

101 Child Sexual Abuse: Includes, but is not limited to, any sexualized contact or interaction
102 between a minor and an adult. The behavior may or may not involve touching. Sexual behavior
103 between a minor and an adult is always considered forced.

104 **Policy Goals**

105 As noted above, the role of the RCOM, acting on behalf of the Arizona Region, is to assure that
106 all clergy with Standing (whether as Commissioned or Ordained ministers) within the Arizona
107 Region meet the highest standards of personal and professional conduct.

108 Within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), persons who have Standing for ministry agree
109 to abide by commonly held values and norms for the ethical conduct of ministry. These values
110 are expressed in the *“Theological Foundations and Policies and Criteria for the Ordering of
111 Ministry” (TFPCOM)* and in the *“Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of*

112 *Christ) (Ministerial Code of Ethics)."*

113 Clergy Sexual Misconduct is unethical behavior and provides the basis for disciplinary action
114 within the Arizona Region. The ministerial relationship exists whenever the bond between the
115 parties involved is primarily a result of the minister's role and identity as a professional minister
116 with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Because the ministerial office in the
117 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is one involving formal vestment, the pastor is inherently
118 in a position of power and authority relative to parishioners, employees, clients, students and
119 colleagues. This means that those with whom the minister serves in a ministerial relationship
120 are vulnerable to that power and authority.

121 Sexual contact or sexualized behavior within the ministerial relationship is therefore a violation
122 of ethics. When pastors use the power of their office to manipulate or coerce sexual contact
123 with persons whom they have been called to serve, the pastoral office has been compromised
124 and the personhood of the parishioner, client, or employee has been abused by that sexual
125 misconduct.

126 The vision of the Region is for all members to be able to work together in an atmosphere of
127 mutual support and trust. Since any form of sexual intimidation or exploitation violates trust
128 and damages the integrity and credibility of the church's mission, the RCOM's specific goals in
129 establishing this policy are the following:

- 130 • To educate pastors and congregations about sexual misconduct;
- 131 • To respond to all forms of sexual intimidation and exploitation within our Region;
- 132 • To help the perpetrator and victim address the issues of repentance, treatment, and
133 rehabilitation;
- 134 • To provide pastoral care for the victim and the perpetrator, the families of the victim
135 and the perpetrator, and the congregation(s) involved in their leadership;
- 136 • To provide support and guidance for the involved congregation;
- 137 • To provide appropriate guidelines for action when clergy are the victims of sexual
138 harassment.

139 In order to maintain the integrity of the ministerial office and to protect those who are
140 vulnerable to exploitation and abuse within a ministerial relationship, it is necessary to adhere
141 to policies that define and appropriately respond to allegations of clergy sexual misconduct
142 involving Ordained or Commissioned clergy with Standing in the Arizona Region. As noted
143 above, the purpose of this *Clergy Sexual Misconduct Policy* is to provide a theological
144 framework and to establish key definitions, Regional goals and general guidelines.

145 In addition to providing general guidelines, the RCOM has also established detailed policies and
146 procedures for the identification, investigation, and adjudication of all types of clergy
147 misconduct, including alleged clergy sexual misconduct, which are set out in Attachment D,
148 Sections C., D., and E. Establishing and utilizing standard practices for all types of alleged clergy
149 misconduct assure consistency and avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts. These policies and

150 procedures provide for the following:

- 151 • A resource pool of professional advisors and a standing trained Response Team
- 152 prepared to conduct an investigation, if appropriate;
- 153 • Provision of pastoral care for those primarily involved throughout the process;
- 154 • Opportunity for negotiation and early resolution, if possible;
- 155 • A formal hearing process where the Response Team, complainant(s) and minister can
- 156 provide input, including witness testimony;
- 157 • Timely disposition by the Hearing Board or the RCOM, ranging from dismissal of the
- 158 complaint to voluntary or involuntary termination of the minister's Standing;
- 159 • Limited appeal rights to the Regional and General church; and
- 160 • Possible restoration of Standing.

161 In addition to its other goals, the RCOM, acting on behalf of the Arizona Region, will, from time
162 to time, sponsor continuing education events which address areas such as maintaining
163 appropriate personal and professional boundaries, sexual ethics, use and abuse of power, and
164 managing stress. The student-in-care process, periodic review, and times of transfer of
165 Standing are strategic occasions for the Region to communicate expectations regarding
166 professional behaviors as well as the required Healthy Boundaries Training every four years.

167 The Region will continue to encourage all Ordained and Commissioned ministers, Regional staff
168 persons, paid professional church staff and volunteer leaders to be sensitized to risk factors
169 that may lead to the violation of professional boundaries. In particular, clergy and laity are
170 encouraged to seek support from Regional staff at the first indication of a questionable
171 situation. Often, early intervention or counsel can help to avert a more serious situation.

172 The Region will use multiple communication channels to make the *Clergy Sexual Misconduct*
173 *Policy (Attachment D, Appendix I)* available to church members and to the public.

174 **Role of Regional Minister/Staff**

175 In responding to allegations of Clergy Sexual Misconduct, there is great potential for confusing
176 the roles and responsibilities of the Regional staff. Therefore, the Regional Staff will receive
177 special training in responding to allegations of Clergy Sexual Misconduct

178 The Regional Minister will respond promptly to all allegations of Clergy Sexual Misconduct.
179 However, there is a unique tension between the pastoral, administrative and adjudicative
180 functions of the office of Regional Minister. It may not be possible to function effectively as the
181 pastor to either party or the congregation, or as staff to the RCOM which will investigate, act on
182 the charge, and determine the disposition of the allegation. In that case, the Regional Minister
183 may recuse themselves from some or all of these functions and make provision for other
184 Regional Staff/Ministers to assume related responsibilities. The role of the Regional Minister is
185 primarily to coordinate the various functions, not necessarily to personally perform them.

186 After the investigation has begun, the Regional Minister may meet with all parties if they desire,

187 permitting each to have an advocate present. The Regional Minister may be present at all
188 hearings and may address questions to all parties, but may abstain from voting on the final
189 adjudication.

190 Other Regional Staff/Ministers not otherwise involved may serve as the advocate for the
191 accused minister or be called upon to provide procedural counsel and advice to the RCOM.
192 Regional/Staff Ministers may consult with other Regional Ministers for guidance and support in
193 implementing this policy.

194 If the person being investigated is the Regional Minister, the process for investigation and
195 hearings shall be carried out as outlined in this policy, but the recommendation will go to the
196 appropriate Regional and/or General church authorities which shall be authorized to take
197 appropriate action. If the Regional Minister is the person being accused, they shall also be
198 allowed to have pastoral advocacy, but this may need to come from outside the region. Only
199 the appropriate Regional and/or General church authorities can terminate the Regional
200 Minister's employment or remove their Standing in the Arizona Region (*TFPCOM*, p. 25).

Appendix II

Other Categories of Ministerial Misconduct

This policy, which is Appendix II to Attachment D of the *Policies and Criteria for the Ordering of Ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Arizona (AZPCOM)*, has been established by the Regional Commission on the Ministry (RCOM), acting on behalf of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Arizona (the Arizona Region), to assure that all clergy with Standing (whether as Commissioned or Ordained ministers) within the Arizona Region meet the highest standards of personal and professional conduct.

In the *Clergy Sexual Misconduct Policy* (the “*Sexual Misconduct Policy*”), which is Appendix I to Attachment D, the RCOM has identified sexual misconduct as an extremely serious breach of ministerial ethics. From time to time, the RCOM shall also establish specific definitions for additional categories of serious ministerial misconduct. Policies and procedures for identifying, investigating and adjudicating such additional categories of misconduct are set out in Sections C., D. and E. of Attachment D.

The following is a list, with applicable definitions and examples, of additional categories of serious ministerial misconduct. Although the RCOM has attempted to distinguish key aspects of each category of misbehavior, there may be elements of certain ministerial misconduct that are identified under multiple categories. For example, abuse of the elderly or disabled may also involve exercise of undue influence and/or financial mismanagement. The RCOM reserves the right to periodically reevaluate, further refine and add to the categories set out below.

In addition, in order to determine whether a serious breach of ministerial conduct has occurred with respect to one or more of the categories of misconduct set out below, the RCOM will apply a total facts and circumstances scope of review. Depending upon the alleged misconduct, the RCOM will consider certain related facts and circumstances, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Specific examples of the alleged misconduct
- Frequency of the alleged misconduct
- Multiplicity and credibility of sources identifying and/or reporting the misconduct
- Seriousness of the alleged misconduct with respect to the adverse impact to individuals involved, as well as the congregation and the larger church
- Efforts to avoid, minimize and/or resolve the issue
- Attempts to mitigate against harm or to make restitution
- Acknowledgment of inappropriate behavior and other evidence of repentance
- Efforts to bring about reconciliation
- Willingness to seek professional help and otherwise work at changing unacceptable behavior

Inappropriate Personal Relationships within the Congregation

38 Applicable principles from the *Ministerial Code of Ethics of the Christian Church (Disciples of*
39 *Christ)*:

- 40 • Maintaining high moral standards in my sexual behavior
- 41 • Regarding all persons with equal respect and concern and undertaking to minister
- 42 impartially
- 43 • Protecting confidences; covenanting to only tell those who need to know, what they
- 44 need to know, when they need to know it
- 45 • Seeking to know, understand, and respect the diversity of opinions and people within
- 46 the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) [including the congregation currently being
- 47 served]
- 48 • Seeking the counsel of the Regional Minister should divisive tensions threaten my
- 49 relationship with those I serve
- 50 • Supporting and at no time speaking maliciously of the ministry of my predecessors or
- 51 another minister
- 52 • Encouraging the ministry of my successor upon my retirement or other departure from
- 53 a ministry position, without interfering or intruding and by making it clear to former
- 54 parishioners that I am no longer their pastor, nor will I perform any pastoral services
- 55 unless requested by the congregation's elders and current pastor

56
57 Inappropriate relationships within the congregation generally involve a serious, sometimes
58 egregious, failure to meet one or more of the ethical principles set out above. For example, as a
59 general rule, it may be problematic for a minister to enter into a dating relationship with a
60 member of the congregation or organization they serve. Such behavior tends to strain
61 professional boundaries, and the subtlety of power abuse issues in such a relationship makes it
62 challenging. Very close personal relationships with parishioners may also lead to inappropriate
63 sharing of personal and/or confidential information, including information entrusted to the
64 pastor by other members of the congregation.

65
66 In addition, even in a congregation that is part of a denomination that encourages mutual
67 respect for different points of view, there are likely to be significant differences of opinion,
68 from time to time. The minister needs to minister to the entire congregation and to avoid
69 being perceived as taking one side against another. Significant divisions can also occur when
70 there are tensions among clerical staff, particularly when clergy are inappropriately critical of
71 colleagues within the congregation. Additional problems stemming from confusion and mixed
72 loyalties with respect to prior and successor pastors may arise following significant transitions
73 in pastoral leadership.

74 75 **Impairment**

76 Applicable principles from the *Ministerial Code of Ethics*:

- 77 • Dedicating time, strength, vitality, and energy for effective ministry
- 78 • Taking time for physical and spiritual renewal, recreation, and vacation

- 79 • Keeping physically and emotionally fit and refraining from substance abuse and other
80 abusive behaviors

81 Professional ministry is one of the helping professions. Persons in the helping professions
82 generally care about people. Unfortunately, in doing so, they may forget to care for
83 themselves. The stress of everyday life, potentially conflicting loyalties, and often unrealistic
84 and unreasonable expectations, can take their toll on ministers. Addictions of all types,
85 including opioid addiction, are at epidemic levels. Ministers, like the rest of society, can
86 develop inappropriate, even abusive, behavior patterns, which can negatively impact not only
87 the individual, but also their family, friends and congregation.

88 Intemperate, erratic or irrational behavior may be indicative of potential impairment issues.

89 **Exercise of Undue Influence**

90 Applicable principles from the *Ministerial Code of Ethics*:

- 91 • Using my position, power, and authority in non-exploitive ways
92 • Regarding all persons with equal respect and concern and undertaking to minister
93 impartially
94 • Administering the corporate finances of the church with personal integrity

95 The potential for exercising undue influence is an ongoing concern, given the nature of the
96 pastor/parishioner relationship and the inherent imbalance of power. Unfortunately, because
97 of the subtlety of abuse of power issues in this context, it may be difficult to detect. Moreover,
98 pastors often interact with parishioners in circumstances where they are particularly
99 vulnerable. These include situations where parishioners have experienced significant losses—
100 death of family member or friend, employment termination or demotion, breakdown of marital
101 relationship, empty nest—or are otherwise experiencing significant challenges—serious illness,
102 marital infidelity, legal or financial difficulties.

103 In addition, many ministers act as counselors, on either a short- or long-term basis, which may
104 develop into a level of intimacy that may lead to confusion as to the nature of the relationship.

105 At all times, the minister must continually ask themselves whether their motives and actions
106 are primarily in the best interests of individual parishioners, as well as the congregation, rather
107 than for their own personal gain. Finally, the minister must determine whether the influence
108 being exerted is “undue.” That is, the minister must consider the manner and degree of
109 influence being exerted, even in what they otherwise believe to be a “good” cause.

110 **Abuse of the Elderly and Disabled**

111 Applicable principles from the *Ministerial Code of Ethics*:

- 112 • Using my position, power, and authority in non-exploitive ways
113 • Maintaining high moral standards in my sexual behavior

- 114 • Regarding all persons with equal respect and concern and undertaking to minister
115 impartially
- 116 • Acting to prevent and to report known or suspected cases of physical or sexual abuse or
117 neglect

118

119 Adult abuse includes the abuse of any older adult aged 65 and over and adults with
120 developmental or physical disabilities or mental illness under the age of 65. Abuse can happen
121 in a person's own home or the home of family or friends. It can also occur in a professional care
122 setting such as a nursing facility, a residential care facility, an assisted living facility, an adult
123 foster home, a retirement home or a room and board home.

124

125 Specific types of adult abuse include, but are not limited to, the following:

126

- 127 • Physical harm or injury
- 128 • Failure to provide basic care
- 129 • Abandonment by the caregiver
- 130 • Verbal/emotional abuse
- 131 • Financial exploitation
- 132 • Unwanted sexual contact
- 133 • Involuntary seclusion
- 134 • Wrongful restraint
- 135 • Self-neglect

136 As noted above, there may be elements of certain ministerial misconduct that fall under
137 multiple categories. A prime example would be elder abuse involving the exercise of undue
138 influence and/or financial exploitation. Many elderly individuals, in particular, may have
139 outlived close family and friends who would otherwise be able to advise and protect them.
140 Because of the nature of the pastoral relationship and the potential for abuse of power, they
141 may be particularly vulnerable to this type of abuse by unscrupulous clergy. On the other hand,
142 caring pastors may be in an excellent position to identify and report suspected adult abuse by
143 others.

144 **Financial Mismanagement or Impropriety**

145 Applicable principles from the *Ministerial Code of Ethics*:

- 146 • Being a faithful steward of God's gifts to me by managing time, talents, and financial
147 resources responsibly and generously
- 148 • Accepting responsibility for all debts that I incur
- 149 • Administering the sacraments/ordinances and services of the church with integrity and
150 not for financial gain
- 151 • Administering the corporate finances of the church with personal integrity
- 152 • Refraining from accepting any gift which would compromise the church's ministry

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154 All who respond to God’s love through Jesus Christ, including ministers, are called to be
155 responsible stewards of God’s gifts, including financial resources. They are not only
156 accountable for the generous, but prudent, use of their own resources, but for the wise and
157 prudent use of resources entrusted to them for the benefit of the work of their congregations
158 or organizations.

159
160 Mismanagement of financial resources generally refers to instances where a person fails to
161 observe applicable laws or ethical guidelines when handling finances for another person or
162 organization. Most mismanagement involves some form of negligence or neglect on the part of
163 the responsible individual and the failure to implement appropriate internal controls.

164
165 Financial impropriety, on the other hand, usually involves misuse of someone else’s financial
166 resources for private gain. There is generally an element of intent, or, at the very least, gross
167 negligence or willful disregard of the likelihood of harm to the financial resources of others,
168 including both individuals and organizations. Examples of financial impropriety, include, but are
169 not limited to, the following:

- 170
- 171 • Misappropriation of funds
 - 172 • Forgery
 - 173 • Theft
 - 174 • Embezzlement
 - 175 • Misrepresentation or fraud
 - 176 • Padding the expense account

177
178 As noted above, financial impropriety involving exploitation of vulnerable parishioners, in
179 particular, may be part of a larger scheme of adult abuse.