

MY
MINISTERIAL
CODE
OF
ETHICS

Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)

1 **FORWARD**

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3 In 1994 a ministerial code of ethics for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was published by
4 the Division of Homeland Ministries. That code was developed over a period of several years
5 through the efforts of a widely diverse church-wide committee. It was reviewed and refined as
6 dozens of ministers' associations and fellowships and hundreds of individuals responded to the
7 committee's request for evaluation of the document.

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9 The code of ethics has been periodically reviewed by a general committee. Occasionally, editorial
10 changes have been made. The General Commission on Ministry and its predecessor, the General
11 Board Task Force on Ministry, have worked over the past several years with the Center for
12 Leadership and Ministry, Homeland Ministries, to update the code of ethics. Proposed changes have
13 been reviewed by regional commissions on ministry as well as by many individuals.

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15 The revised code of ethics maintains much of the language of the original; the principles which
16 guide ministry remain the same from generation to generation. The ministerial code of ethics has
17 withstood the test of time and is commended to be read and followed by all ministers as a high code
18 of professional conduct.

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20 *The General Commission on Ministry*

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24 **CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)**
25 **MINISTERIAL CODE OF ETHICS**
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29 Believing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God and proclaiming him Lord and Savior of
30 the world, I reaffirm my vows as an ordained or licensed minister. Through dedication and discipline
31 I will lead and serve with integrity. Relying on the grace of God, I commit myself to the following:
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PERSONAL CONDUCT

- witnessing to the ministry of Jesus Christ
- dedicating time, strength, vitality and energy for effective ministry
- growing in faith, knowledge and the practice of ministry through the spiritual disciplines, study, continuing education and service
- living a life that honors my commitments to my family, including the need for privacy and time together
- taking time for physical and spiritual renewal, recreation and vacation
- being a faithful steward of God's gifts to me by managing time, talents and financial resources responsibly and generously
- accepting responsibility for all debts which I incur
- keeping physically and emotionally fit and refraining from substance abuse and other abusive behaviors
- using my position, power and authority in non-exploitive ways maintaining high moral standards in my sexual behavior
- regarding all persons with equal respect and concern and undertaking to minister impartially

RELATIONSHIPS TO THE CHURCH WHICH I SERVE

- nurturing and offering my gifts for ministry to the church
- calling forth and nurturing the gifts of others in the Church and joining their gifts with mine for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ and the health of the church
- preaching and teaching the gospel without fear or favor and speaking the truth in love
- administering the sacraments and services of the Church with integrity and not for financial gain
- working cooperatively and collegially with those whom I serve in the particular ministry to which I have been called
- administering the corporate finances of the Church with personal integrity
- refraining from accepting any gift which would compromise the Church's ministry
- honoring all confidences which come to me in my role as minister and refraining from gossip
- encouraging and participating in the regular evaluation of m, ministry and cooperating with the Region in the periodic review of my ministerial standing
- seeking the counsel of the Regional Minister should divisive tension threaten my relationship with those I serve

RELATIONSHIPS TO MINISTRY COLLEAGUES

- engaging in covenantal relationships with colleagues which involve nurture, discipline, family support, vigorous dialogue, mutual teaching/learning and spiritual formation
- supporting colleagues in ministry and their families while not exploiting their problems or crises
- performing pastoral services within another congregation or for a member of another

- 1 congregation only at the invitation of the pastor of that congregation
2 • supporting and at no time speaking maliciously of the ministry of my predecessor or another
3 minister in the congregation in which I hold membership
4 • encouraging the ministry of my successor upon my retirement or other departure from a
5 ministry position, without interfering or intruding and by making it clear to former
6 parishioners that I am no longer their pastor
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8 **RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMMUNITY AND THE WIDER CHURCH**

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- 10 • participating responsibly in the life and work of my community, bearing prophetic witness to
11 the Gospel of Jesus Christ, working toward a just and morally responsible society
12 • participating faithfully in the life and work of all manifestations of the Christian Church
13 (Disciples of Christ)
14 • seeking to know, understand and respect the diversity of opinions and people within the
15 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
16 • being a responsible representative of the one Church of Jesus Christ and participating in
17 activities which strengthen its unity, witness and mission