

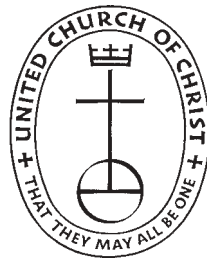
Licensed Ministry

Section 7 of 10

United Church of Christ

MANUAL ON MINISTRY

Perspectives and Procedures for
Ecclesiastical Authorization of Ministry



Parish Life and Leadership Ministry
Local Church Ministries
A Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ

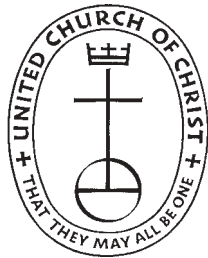
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Perspectives and Procedures for Ecclesiastical Authorization of Ministry

Manual on Ministry is published in ten separate sections or booklets. Each section is available separately or as part of the complete *Manual* that includes all ten sections in a single binder. The ten sections are:

1. Partners in Authorizing Ministry

An overview of the covenantal relationships and underlying assumptions about authorized ministry, including the ministerial codes.

2. Student in Care of Association

Commentary, processes, and procedures for those preparing to enter the Ordained Ministry of the United Church of Christ.

3. Ordained Ministry

Commentary, processes, and procedures for Ordained Ministry, including Ordained Ministerial Standing.

4. Dual Standing and Privilege of Call

Commentary, processes, and procedures for those ordained ministers of denominations other than the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who seek to serve in the United Church of Christ or who seek to enter the Ordained Ministry of the United Church of Christ. Ordained ministers of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) should see section 5, "Ordained Ministerial Partner."

5. Ordained Ministerial Partner

Commentary, processes, and procedures related to the reconciliation of ministries with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

6. Commissioned Ministry

Commentary, processes, and procedures for Commissioned Ministry, including Commissioned Ministerial Standing.

7. Licensed Ministry

Commentary, processes, and procedures for Licensed Ministry.

8. The Oversight of Ministries Authorized by the United Church of Christ

Commentary, processes, and procedures for the nurture and accountability of the ministries of the Church.

9. Ecclesiastical Endorsement

Commentary, processes, and procedures for those seeking to serve as chaplains in professional organizations and military or other U.S. government agencies.

10. Supplemental Materials

Commentary, appendices, and a glossary related to multiple sections of *Manual on Ministry*.

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MINISTRY
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CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

20. The United Church of Christ recognizes that God calls the whole church and every member to participate in and extend the ministry of Jesus Christ by witnessing to the Gospel in church and society. The United Church of Christ seeks to undergird the ministry of its members by nurturing faith, calling forth gifts, and equipping members for Christian service.

21. The United Church of Christ recognizes that God calls certain of its members to various forms of ministry in and on behalf of the church for which ecclesiastical authorization is required. Recognizing God's call, the ecclesiastical authorization is granted by the Association through the rite of ordination, through commissioning, licensing, granting either ordained ministerial standing or ordained ministerial partner standing, and other acts of authorization.

29. Licensing is the act whereby the United Church of Christ through an Association, in cooperation with a person and a Local Church of the United Church of Christ, recognizes and authorizes that member whom God has called to perform specified duties in a designated Local Church or within that Association, mainly preaching and conducting services of worship, for a designated time under the supervision and guidance of that Association. The license may be renewed. Voting membership in that Association may be granted.

30. A Licensed Minister of the United Church of Christ is one of its lay members whom God has called and who has been recognized and authorized by an Association to perform specified duties in a designated Local Church or within that Association, mainly preaching and conducting services of worship, for a designated time under the supervision and guidance of that Association. The license may be renewed.

BYLAW PROVISIONS

151. A person seeking recognition and authorization as a Licensed Minister applies through his or her Local Church to the Association in which that church is a member.

152. The Committee on the Ministry of the Association examines the applicant with respect to Christian faith, character, ability to do the work expected, and knowledge of the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ. If the applicant is found to be qualified, a license is granted by the Association for not more than one year at a time to serve in a designated Local Church or within that Association. Following a review by the Committee on the Ministry, the license may be renewed.

153. In special cases and at the request of the Local Church which the person serves, the Association may grant the Licensed Minister the right to administer the sacraments and rites of the Church for this Local Church.

154. A Licensed Minister is listed separately from Ordained Ministers and from Commissioned Ministers on the rolls of the Association that has licensed him or her. A Licensed Minister is eligible for service only in the category of laymen or laywomen for all positions referred to in the Bylaws.

155. The discipline of Ordained Ministers, persons with ordained ministerial partner standing, Commissioned Ministers, and Licensed Ministers is the responsibility of the Association in which their current ecclesiastical authorization is held.

156. All authorizations for ordained ministerial standing, for ordained ministerial partner standing, and for commissioned and licensed ministry granted by an Association are subject to periodic review by that Association.

INTRODUCTION

Licensed ministry is a form of ministry in the United Church of Christ created by the adoption of 1983–1984 amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ. While replacing the category of lay minister, licensed ministry continues this form of ministry but establishes much more comprehensive requirements and standards for it. Licensed ministry is a form of ministry in and on behalf of the Church for which ecclesiastical authorization is required.

By definition, a licensed minister performs specified duties in a designated local church or within an Association, mainly preaching and conducting services of worship. Licensed ministry has been created by the United Church of Christ for those special situations when ordained ministers are not available to provide these services to a local church. Licensed ministry, therefore, is a form of service through which those persons who are not ordained fulfill some of the functions more generally performed by ordained ministers.

Licensed ministry is of two primary types within the United Church of Christ: licensed ministers available for “pulpit supply” or “supply preaching” from church to church in an Association and licensed ministers who serve over an extended period as pastors of small-membership churches that, for a period of time, have little prospect of securing a fully trained, ordained minister.

Licensed ministry is not a track to ordination and is no substitute for meeting all the educational and other requirements for ordained ministry. However, seminarians preparing for ordination are not precluded from being licensed for service in a local church while enrolled in and attending seminary.

COMMENTARY

STEP 1

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

With the provision for licensed ministers in the United Church of Christ, it is necessary for each Association to develop its own policies and procedures for administering this form of ministry, taking into consideration the norms and practices prevailing throughout the United Church of Christ. Among its decisions are the following:

- Does the Association need a licensed ministry program? Some Associations will have more need than others for the services of licensed ministers. The Committee on the Ministry, Conference minister, and placement officers will need to assess the ongoing

need for licensed ministers and, therefore, what kinds of recruiting and training programs are needed.

In those Associations with a regular and ongoing need for licensed ministers, there often is an informal recruiting program present. Conference and Association staff persons, Committee on the Ministry members, pastors, and others seek out persons whom they perceive have the gifts for licensed ministry. They invite or challenge these persons to consider this form of ministry for a brief or extended period to meet the needs of the local churches of the Association. When persons respond to this invitation or challenge, they then initiate the authorization procedures through their local churches.

- What criteria will be used in making decisions about local churches that are qualified for service by a licensed minister? The major consideration is whether or not an ordained minister is available. In most instances, the services of a licensed minister should be viewed as temporary until the local church is able to secure an ordained minister. The Committee on the Ministry should seek the counsel of the Conference minister to determine which local churches he or she believes are qualified for the services of a licensed minister.
- What qualifications will the Association expect its licensed ministers to have? The outline of “The Church’s Expectations of Its Candidates for Licensed Ministry,” found immediately following the Licensed Ministry Chart, provides the basis for establishing the educational, training, and personal qualifications for licensed ministers.
- Will the Association have a licensed ministry training program? If so, how will it be developed and administered? A licensed ministry training program would consist of some or all of the following components approved by the Association:
 - a. A prescribed reading list that the person completes and on which certain reports are made or tests given.
 - b. Certain educational courses that may be taken at nearby seminaries, colleges, or other accredited educational institutions.
 - c. Seminars or workshops developed and offered by the Association or Conference specifically for its candidates for licensed ministry.
 - d. An apprenticeship with a qualified ordained minister in which the person gets on-the-job training and experience under direct supervision.
- How will the Association work with Conference and Association staff in placing licensed ministers in local churches?
- Will the Association grant voting membership to some or all of its licensed ministers? The Bylaws of the United Church of Christ make this a decision of the Association.

- Will the Association delegate authority to the Committee on the Ministry to act for the Association in licensing qualified persons or will the authorization require a vote of the Association?

STEPS 2–6

THE PERSON AND LOCAL CHURCH

Behind these initial steps in the authorization process is the conviction that local churches are primary places where persons are nurtured in the Christian faith, hear the call of God to ministry, and make decisions about the specific forms their ministries will take. While some will hear the call to a ministry requiring licensing, others will hear a call to a ministry requiring ordination or commissioning.

Pastors and lay leaders play an important role in helping members identify and claim their gifts for ministry and in helping members to make the decisions to prepare for and seek a specific church-related ministry. Pastors and lay leaders often will recognize those among the members of their local church who have gifts to offer to licensed ministry and should challenge, encourage, and support these persons in their decisions about this ministry.

Initially, a person who has an interest in becoming a licensed minister should talk with his or her pastor about this interest.

This *Manual on Ministry* calls for a deliberative process in which a committee, consisting of the pastor and representatives of the local church, sits down with the member to explore the person's decision to prepare for licensed ministry. This committee then determines if the local church and pastor will recommend the person to the Association to become a candidate for licensing. The local church will need to decide on the appropriate group to represent it in these conversations—governing board, deacons, consistory, church and ministry committee, and others.

It is recommended that the pastor or a lay leader of the local church notify the Association Committee on the Ministry that one of the members of this local church is considering applying to become a candidate for licensing and request any guidance the Committee on the Ministry can give in preparing the application.

In preparation for the meeting with the local church committee, the person prepares and provides to the committee certain specified written materials. (See step 4 in the Licensed Ministry Chart.) Included in this material will be a narrative account of the person's life pilgrimage, a statement of her or his interest in and sense of call to licensed ministry, a summary of church activities that help to qualify the person for this form of ministry, and documentation of her or his formal education.

During the interview the local church committee will explore some or all of the following with the person:

- The person's history with the local church and level of participation. How has the person's experience in the local church as well as in other settings of the Church contributed to his or her sense of call to licensed ministry? How has this person's participation in

the local church given evidence that he or she has the gifts necessary for licensed ministry?

- The person's understanding of licensed ministry. Does the person have a realistic view of licensed ministry and the Church's expectations of licensed ministers? Is the person aware of the preparation that will be required by the Association?
- The person's involvement in the local church. What are the implications for the person in relation to the restrictions this will place on her or his opportunities for involvement and participation in the life of the local church where she or he is a member?

On behalf of the local church, the committee and pastor then decide whether or not to recommend the person to the Association as a candidate for licensed ministry. If the church has reservations about the person's fitness for this form of ministry, it will be important to share those with both the person and the Association at the time the recommendation is made.

If the recommendation is to be made, the local church accompanies its letter of recommendation to the Association Committee on the Ministry with the following documentation, some of which it secures from the person:

- a letter of application to the Association from the person to be received as a candidate for licensing.
- a letter verifying the person's membership in the local church and the length of time the person has been a member of the United Church of Christ.
- three letters of reference, including one from a pastor of that local church.
- the background material the person provided the local church committee, revised if necessary, including the person's life pilgrimage, interest in licensed ministry, and formal education.
- a description of the process used by the local church to interview and recommend the person.

INITIAL PROCESSING BY THE ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE ON THE MINISTRY

The Association Committee on the Ministry receives the recommendation from the local church and arranges for an interview with the person. It is recommended that the person be accompanied at the interview by her or his pastor or a lay leader of the local church.

The purpose of the interview is to provide the Committee on the Ministry with enough information to decide whether or not the person has the potential to become a licensed minister of that Association. Throughout the interview, the Committee is seeking to determine the person's fitness, aptitudes, Christian experience, and commitment as a basis for preparing for licensing. The Committee also needs to answer these questions:

STEPS 7-8

1. Can this person faithfully and effectively carry out the responsibilities of licensed ministry?
2. What additional education, training, study, or experiences does this person need to become qualified for licensing?
3. Will there be a place for this person to serve once she or he has met the requirements for licensed ministry?

The Committee on the Ministry may utilize “The Church’s Expectations of Its Candidates for Licensed Ministry” following the Licensed Ministry Chart.

A sample interview agenda follows:

- Introduction of the person, representatives from the local church, members of the Committee on the Ministry, and any others who may be present.
- A time for prayer or worship.
- A statement about the purpose of the meeting and preview of the agenda.
- A statement by the pastor or lay leader about the person, including information about the person’s history with and involvement in the local church, the process the local church went through to recommend the person to the Association, and rationale for the local church’s recommendation.
- A statement by the person that includes sharing her or his life pilgrimage, those factors that have led to the decision to seek licensing, educational background, and plans.
- Discussion by the Committee with the person about questions or issues raised by the person’s statement or by any of the written materials provided by the person.
- Description and interpretation by the Committee of its requirements for licensed ministry and its expectations of candidates for licensing. The Committee will explore with the person the additional training and preparation it will require if he or she is accepted as a candidate for licensing.
- Closure, including a statement by the Committee to the person about next steps.

Following the interview, the Committee on the Ministry deliberates and makes its decision. The decision may take one of several forms:

- “Yes.” The Committee senses that this is a person with gifts for licensed ministry, an authentic call to ministry, and the ability and determination to meet the requirements for licensing.
- “Yes, but . . .” The Committee senses that the applicant may have the potential for licensed ministry, but it has certain reservations or concerns that must be addressed. These may have to do with a perceived lack of maturity in the person, a deficient understand-

ing of ministry, questions about the applicant's ability to secure the necessary training, and so on. In this case, the Committee will need to share its reservations with the applicant and determine together steps to be taken to address these reservations and check points along the way to reassess them. The decision to accept the applicant as a candidate for licensing is postponed until these steps are complete.

- “No, but . . .” The Committee may feel that, at this time, it is not able to make a positive decision to approve the applicant as a candidate for licensing. However, it could indicate its openness to consider the request at a later time if the person is able to address the identified deficiencies and wishes to make application again.
- “No.” In some cases a Committee may need to say no to a person. This is not a decision that can be made lightly or without considerable deliberation. But in cases where it is clear that the applicant does not have the gifts for licensed ministry, is not authentic in her or his intentions, exhibits obvious immaturity or emotional problems, or does not give evidence of openness to the Committee's requirements, the Committee can express its caring for the person and for the Church by denying the request.

The Committee on the Ministry makes its decision and communicates it to the applicant and the applicant's local church. When the decision is not to proceed with the person, the Committee on the Ministry should ensure that there is pastoral follow-up and concern expressed for the person and his or her local church. When its decision is to proceed with the person, the Committee outlines the program of preparation it expects the candidate to undertake, the procedures to be followed during the preparation period, and the materials to be provided to the Committee at the conclusion of the preparation period. These could vary widely from candidate to candidate, depending on the different qualifications each has at the beginning of the process. In some cases, the Committee could decide to grant a license to the person for a specified period of time and for specified responsibilities while the candidate is engaged in the program of preparation.

The Committee on the Ministry appoints an advisor for the candidate to assist him or her in the program of preparation. In most cases, the advisor will be a pastor within the Association who may be a member of the Committee on the Ministry. The candidate's pastor also may be appointed as the advisor.

PREPARATION AND DOCUMENTATION

The candidate engages in the prescribed program of preparation with the assistance of the advisor. When the candidate has completed her or his program of preparation and any additional requirements of the Committee on the Ministry, she or he then prepares documentation indicating readiness for licensed ministry. The substance of this documentation is outlined in the Licensed Ministry Chart.

STEPS 9–10

STEP 11

CONSIDERATION OF THE DOCUMENTATION

After the program of preparation has been completed and any other requirements fulfilled, the requested materials are prepared and forwarded to the Association Committee on the Ministry. The Committee meets with the candidate's advisor to review the materials and to hear the advisor's report and recommendation.

The Committee then decides whether or not to continue the process and examine the candidate. In most cases, the decision to proceed is made if the documentation that has been provided is complete and provides a basis for an examination of the candidate. If the necessary materials are not complete or are unsatisfactory, the Committee may request further documentation from the candidate before proceeding.

As the Committee reviews the materials, it will decide the key issues to be explored and the questions to be raised with the candidate. Next, it will develop a procedure for examining the candidate. The Committee will then notify the candidate and the candidate's local church of its decision to examine the candidate. It sets a date to meet with the candidate and shares with the candidate a description of how the examination will be conducted. It is recommended that the candidate be accompanied at the examination by his or her advisor.

STEP 12

LICENSING EXAMINATION

The purpose of the examination is to determine the preparedness and fitness of the candidate for licensed ministry in that Association, including his or her Christian faith, character, ability to do the work expected, knowledge of the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ, and personal qualities (Bylaw 152). A sample outline of the licensing examination follows:

- Introduction of the candidate, the advisor, the members of the Committee on the Ministry, and any others who may be present.
- A time of prayer or worship.
- Preview of the agenda and procedure to be used in the examination.
- A statement by the advisor reviewing the period of preparation and sharing his or her perceptions of the candidate based on that experience.
- A statement by the candidate about his or her experience during the period of preparation and his or her present sense of call to licensed ministry.
- Discussion by the Committee with the candidate about questions or issues raised by the candidate's statement or by any of the documentation provided by the candidate. The Committee may use "The Church's Expectations of Its Candidates for Licensed Ministry," found immediately following the Licensed Ministry Chart, to inform its discussion.

- Closure, including a statement by the Committee to the candidate about next steps.

After the candidate and any guests have been dismissed, the Committee deliberates and makes its decision. Options before the Committee include:

- “Yes.” The Committee believes that the person has the qualifications for licensing within the United Church of Christ and, in the Committee’s judgment, will be an effective and faithful licensed minister. The person is considered approved for licensing.
- “Yes, but . . . ” The Committee believes that the person has the potential for licensed ministry within the United Church of Christ, but it has certain reservations or concerns that must be addressed. It may want to stipulate additional requirements of the candidate before making its final decision. It will be clear with the candidate what additionally needs to be done in preparation for a subsequent examination and decision. In some cases, the Committee could approve the person for licensing while the additional work is being completed to meet its requirements.
- “No, but . . . ” The Committee believes that, at this time, significant qualifications for licensing in the United Church of Christ are lacking. It may indicate under what terms and conditions it would consider the person’s application again.
- “No.” In some cases the Committee may have to say no to a candidate if, in its judgment, the candidate has not fulfilled and cannot fulfill in the foreseeable future the requirements for licensing or will not be an effective and faithful licensed minister of the United Church of Christ. It may specify the conditions under which it would consider an application from the person to become a candidate for licensing at some time in the future.

The Committee informs the candidate and the candidate’s local church of its decision. If the person is approved for licensing, the licensing will not take place until the person approved for licensing has entered into an agreement to serve a specific licensed ministry.

In some cases, the Association will extend the call in order for the person to be available “on call” to engage in “pulpit supply” or “supply preaching” at the request of the Conference or Association staff. If this is done, a meeting is held that includes the candidate, the Committee on the Ministry, and the Conference Minister or other designated Conference or Association staff member. The purpose of this meeting is to share information and reach agreements about the following:

- The availability of the licensed minister for pulpit supply. How often will the licensed minister be available? On how short a notice will the licensed minister be available? What distance will the licensed minister travel? Will the licensed minister be available for duties in addition to preaching and conducting services of worship?
- The typical remuneration, expense reimbursement, and fringe benefits that will be requested for the services of the licensed minister.
- Procedures by which the licensed minister will be informed about opportunities to serve and how the licensed minister will report on assignments fulfilled.

- Procedures by which ongoing guidance and supervision of the licensed minister by the Association will be done.
- Expectations of the Association about participation by the licensed minister in the life of the Association and Conference.

STEPS 13-14

SECURING PLACEMENT IN A LOCAL CHURCH

Persons who have been approved for licensing are available for placement in a local church, within that Association, that has been qualified for service by a licensed minister. The placement of a person approved for licensing is facilitated by a Conference placement officer. The Conference placement officer arranges for a meeting between representatives of the local church and the person approved for licensing to explore the basis for a covenantal relationship among them and to develop the terms of the agreement. The specific items to be covered in the agreement are outlined in the Licensed Ministry Chart.

Once the terms of the agreement have been concluded, they are reported to the Committee on the Ministry by the Conference placement officer, by the person approved for licensing, or by the local church.

STEP 15

GRANTING THE LICENSE

The Committee reviews the terms of the agreement and authorizes the duties to be performed by the licensed minister in the designated local church. The Committee also determines the beginning and ending times for which the licensing will be valid, up to one year.

The Committee on the Ministry provides the person with a letter granting the license and outlining the conditions (setting for the ministry, terms of the agreement, functions to be performed, time period for which the license is valid) under which it is conferred.

STEP 16

AUTHORIZATION TO ADMINISTER RITES AND SACRAMENTS

If the services of an ordained minister to administer the rites and sacraments of the Church are not available to a local church being served by a licensed minister, the local church may request that the licensed minister be authorized to administer them as specified.

In making its decision to grant this authorization, the Association Committee on the Ministry will ensure that the licensed minister is qualified to administer the specified rites and sacraments. It may require the licensed minister to receive some additional training under the guidance of an ordained minister, both in the theological meaning of the rites and sacraments and in the mechanics of their administration.

It is the responsibility of the Association Committee on the Ministry to inform its licensed ministers about state laws governing the performing of marriages.

SUPERVISION OF THE LICENSED MINISTER

STEP 17

The Committee on the Ministry establishes procedures for the supervision of the work of the licensed minister. It is recommended that an ordained minister of that Association be named as the supervisor for the licensed minister. This ordained minister could be a neighboring pastor, a member of the Conference or Association staff, or a member of the Committee on the Ministry.

Responsibilities of the supervisor may include:

- Meeting regularly with the licensed minister to review her or his work and providing counsel and advice.
- Periodically reviewing with the licensed minister the style and manner in which worship is being conducted in the local church.
- Periodically meeting with representatives of the local church to hear their assessment of the ministry being performed by the licensed minister.
- Periodically reviewing and critiquing the sermons preached by the licensed minister.
- Encouraging the licensed minister to continue to study and seek training opportunities to enhance his or her knowledge and skills.
- Ensuring that the licensed minister participates actively in the life of the Association and Conference.
- Reporting regularly to the Committee on the Ministry about the work of the licensed minister.
- Participating in the periodic review of the licensed minister and in any deliberations about renewing the license for a particular local church.

REPORTING AND RECORD KEEPING

STEP 18

It is important that complete and accurate records of authorizations by the Association Committee on the Ministry and the Association be kept. Often, the record keeping and reporting responsibilities are done by the Conference.

It is recommended that a file for each person processed for licensing be kept in the Association or Conference office. The file should contain all documentation provided by the person, letters of reference, reports by the advisor, records of participation and training, and copies of those portions of the minutes of meetings of the Committee on the Ministry at which the person's authorization for licensing was considered.

The actions to license should be reported to the Office of General Ministries and to the Parish Life and Leadership Ministry Team. Office of General Ministries keeps a listing of all United Church of Christ licensed ministers.

STEP 19

RECOGNITION

The actions of the Committee on the Ministry to authorize certain persons as licensed ministers are reported at an official gathering of the Association.

If persons are licensed for pulpit supply or supply preaching, a way is found within the Association to recognize these licensed ministers and to celebrate their ministries. If persons are licensed for service over an extended period of time in a designated local church, a service of recognition may be held in that local church to celebrate the covenant.

The local churches where licensed ministers are members are encouraged to recognize and celebrate the ministries of these members.

STEP 20

MEETING WITH THE SUPERVISOR

The supervisor meets with the licensed minister periodically to review his or her work, to offer counsel and guidance, and to provide any instruction needed. The supervisor also may oversee an ongoing program of study, training, and education for the licensed minister.

STEPS 21–22

RENEWAL OF THE LICENSE

The Bylaws provide for a license to be granted for no more than one year at a time. Each time the designated period of the license ends, the local church being served by the licensed minister, with the consent of the licensed minister, may request that the license be renewed for another period of time, not to exceed one year. In the case of licensed ministers engaged in pulpit supply or supply preaching for the Association, the request for renewal of the license can come from the Conference minister or a placement officer.

The Association Committee on the Ministry reviews the request and makes its decision on whether or not to renew the license. As part of its decision-making process, the Committee may request the Conference minister to certify that the local church being served still qualifies for the services of a licensed minister.

The Committee may request that the licensed minister, the supervisor, representatives from the local church, and the Conference minister or other designated staff member meet with it in order to consider the request. At that meeting, the Committee will review the experience of the local church and the licensed minister, determine the ongoing need for licensed ministry in that local church, review the terms of the agreement and renegotiate them if necessary, and consider ways to strengthen the relationship between the licensed minister, the local church, the supervisor, and the Association.

TERMINATION OF A LICENSE

The Association Committee on the Ministry terminates a person's license when any of the following conditions occur:

1. The period for which the person was licensed has expired and action to renew the license has not been taken.

2. The death of the licensed minister occurs.
3. The licensed minister resigns as a result of:
 - a. Withdrawal from the functions or setting for which the person was licensed.
 - b. The desire to avoid disciplinary procedures.
 - c. The desire to leave the licensed ministry of the United Church of Christ.
4. The licensed minister is no longer engaged in the functions of licensed ministry or is no longer in the setting for which he or she was licensed and has not resigned from the licensing.
5. The Association has implemented its disciplinary procedures and voted to terminate the person's license.

CONSIDERATIONS IN TERMINATION

Terminations should be accompanied by a pastoral intervention by the Association Committee on the Ministry, one of its members, or by a member of the Conference or Association staff. One type of pastoral intervention is an "exit interview," in which the person has an opportunity to reflect on and talk about his or her years of licensed ministry. In some cases, this is an opportunity for the Association to learn more about the causes of termination in order that it may develop programmatic responses to ensure better care and support of its authorized ministers and to prevent the loss of quality persons from the Church's ministries for which ecclesiastical authorization is required.

Whenever termination of ministerial authorization occurs, it is important for the Association Committee on the Ministry to keep detailed records of the action, noting the reasons for the termination and anticipating the kind of information that will be important if the person seeks to be licensed at a time in the future.

All terminations of licensing should be reported to the Conference Office, Office of General Ministries, and the Parish Life and Leadership Ministry Team.

NON-TRANSFERABILITY OF A LICENSE

Because a licensed minister is licensed by an Association only for service within that Association, neither a licensed minister nor a license can be transferred from one Association to another. However, an Association may accept the authorization process of another Association in licensing a person. Thus, an Association could license a person from another Association for service in a local church within its bounds based on its knowledge of the person, its familiarity with the program of preparation the person has completed, or on recommendation from the Association where the person has been approved for licensing. This practice will be particularly applicable among the Associations of a Conference that has a Conference-wide program of preparation for candidates for licensed ministry.

LICENSED MINISTRY STEPS 1–5

Procedures for the CANDIDATE	Procedures for the LOCAL CHURCH
<p>2 A local church member of the United Church of Christ desiring to prepare for licensed ministry talks with his or her pastor about expectations and procedures.</p>	
<p>3 If the person decides to proceed, application is made to the governing board (or other designated committee) of the local church for an interview and its recommendation to the Association that the person become a candidate for licensing.</p>	
<p>4 The person provides the governing board of the local church where he or she is a member with a statement of his or her interest in and sense of call to licensed ministry, Christian pilgrimage, documentation of formal education, and a summary of church-related activities that have contributed to the call to and preparation for this form of ministry.</p>	
<p>The person is interviewed by the governing board and pastor of his or her local church.</p>	<p>5 The governing board and pastor review the material and interview the person. They determine whether or not to recommend that person to the Association as a candidate for licensed ministry.</p>

Procedures for the CALLING BODY	Procedures for the ASSOCIATION
	<p>1 The Association Committee on the Ministry, in consultation with the Conference Minister and placement officers of the Conference or Association, develops policy and procedures for licensed ministry—both in the local church and within the Association—and communicates these to the local churches of the Association. The Conference or Association placement officers work with the local churches in assessing and meeting their pastoral needs. In the process, the Conference Minister or placement officers periodically will advise the Committee on the Ministry of their assessment of local churches which qualify for the services of a licensed minister.</p>

LICENSED MINISTRY STEPS 6–8

Procedures for the CANDIDATE	Procedures for the LOCAL CHURCH
	<p>6 If application is made to the Association Committee on the Ministry, the local church provides the following documentation about the person in support of the application:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The person’s letter of application to be received as a candidate for licensing, including his or her statement of interest in licensed ministry. b. Verification of membership in a local church of the United Church of Christ. c. Three letters of reference, including one from a pastor of that local church. d. The material provided to the governing board and pastor, revised if necessary. e. Educational background, including verification of graduation from high school. f. A description of the process used by the local church to interview and recommend the person.
<p>The applicant is interviewed by the Committee on the Ministry.</p>	<p>Representatives of the applicant’s local church may be present for the interview.</p>

Procedures for the CALLING BODY	Procedures for the ASSOCIATION
	<p>7 The Association Committee on the Ministry receives the application and recommendation and reviews the material received from the local church. If it decides to proceed, it notifies the person and local church and sets a date to meet with and interview the applicant.</p>
	<p>8 The Association Committee on the Ministry interviews the candidate to determine (a) fitness, (b) aptitudes, (c) Christian experience, and (d) commitment as a basis for preparing for licensing. It utilizes the chart, "The Church's Expectations of Its Candidates for Licensing," following this chart. If the Committee is satisfied, it receives the person as a candidate for licensing, prescribes a program of preparation, and appoints an advisor to assist the candidate with the program of preparation.</p>

LICENSED MINISTRY STEPS 9–10

Procedures for the CANDIDATE	Procedures for the LOCAL CHURCH
<p>9 The candidate engages in the prescribed program of preparation to prepare for licensed ministry.</p>	
<p>10 When the candidate has completed the program of preparation, the candidate indicates readiness to be examined by the Association Committee on the Ministry and provides the Committee with the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Documentation that the program of preparation has been completed. b. A paper setting forth her or his theological perspective, including her or his understanding of the theology of the sacraments. This paper will deal with basic issues of faith, the candidate's spiritual pilgrimage, and the candidate's understanding of and call to licensed ministry. c. A paper on the history, theological roots, polity, and practice of the United Church of Christ. d. A sermon by the candidate. e. At least four letters of reference attesting to the character of the candidate and presence of demonstrated skills and abilities needed in the practice of licensed ministry. One of these letters is to come from someone involved in the candidate's educational preparation; one from a United Church of Christ ordained minister, preferably the candidate's pastor; and one from the candidate's advisor. f. Verification of local church membership. g. Updated report on church-related activities. h. Updated report on educational background. 	

Procedures for the CALLING BODY	Procedures for the ASSOCIATION
	The advisor provides guidance, counsel, and support throughout the period of preparation.
	The advisor provides guidance in the preparation of these materials.

LICENSED MINISTRY STEPS 11-14

Procedures for the CANDIDATE	Procedures for the LOCAL CHURCH
The candidate meets with the Committee on the Ministry to be examined.	Representatives of the local church where the candidate is a member may be present for the examination.

Procedures for the CALLING BODY	Procedures for the ASSOCIATION
	<p>11 The Association Committee on the Ministry receives the materials requested from the candidate and reviews them with the advisor. It informs the candidate and the candidate's local church of its decision. If it decides to proceed, it sets a date to meet with and examine the candidate.</p>
	<p>12 The Association Committee on the Ministry examines the candidate to determine his or her:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Christian faith. b. Character. c. Ability to do the work expected. d. Knowledge of the history, theological roots, polity, and practice of the United Church of Christ. e. Personal qualities. <p>The Committee decides whether or not to recommend the candidate as approved for licensing, subject to placement in a designated local church or within the Association.</p>
	<p>13 The Conference or Association placement officers enable placement of the qualified candidate in a local church or in an Association position qualifying for licensed ministry.</p>
<p>14 The local church to be served or the body within the Association to utilize the licensed minister submits the following to the Association Committee on the Ministry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Name of the candidate. b. Description of the ministry position, telling how the position provides mainly for preaching and leading worship, and specifying time requirements. c. Time for participation in the life of the wider United Church of Christ. d. Provision for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. remuneration. 2. fringe benefits. 	

LICENSED MINISTRY STEPS 14–19

Procedures for the CANDIDATE	Procedures for the LOCAL CHURCH
	Representatives of the local church where the candidate is a member participate in planning the service of recognition.

<p style="text-align: center;">Procedures for the CALLING BODY</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Procedures for the ASSOCIATION</p>
<p>3. evaluation procedures. 4. continuing education time and funds. 5. reimbursement for professional expenses. 6. conflict resolution procedures to be used if needed. 7. termination procedures.</p>	
	<p>15 If licensing is granted, the Association establishes the dates licensing is in effect, for up to one year. It specifies the duties to be performed, mainly preaching and conducting services of worship. If Association policy so warrants, voting membership in the Association is granted. The Association presents to the newly licensed minister a certificate attesting to the action taken. Requests for these certificates must be received by the Parish Life and Leadership Ministry Team at least three weeks prior to the date needed.</p>
<p>16 In special cases, the local church requests that the Association grant the licensed minister the right to administer the rites and sacraments of the Church for this local church during the time of license.</p>	<p>The Association may grant the right for the licensed minister to administer the rites and sacraments of the Church for that local church during the term of the license.</p>
	<p>17 The Association Committee on the Ministry appoints a supervisor to oversee the work of the licensed minister.</p>
	<p>18 An accurate record of the proceedings and actions of the Committee on the Ministry and the Association are kept. The Association informs the Conference of the actions taken. The Association or Conference informs the Office of General Ministries and the Parish Life and Leadership Ministry Team of the actions taken.</p>
<p>Representatives of the local church being served participate in planning the service of recognition.</p>	<p>19 A service of recognition for the licensed minister may be held in her or his local church or the local church being served and in a meeting of the Association.</p>

LICENSED MINISTRY STEPS 20–22

Procedures for the CANDIDATE	Procedures for the LOCAL CHURCH
The licensed minister meets regularly with his or her supervisor.	
The licensed minister agrees to seek renewal of his or her license.	
The licensed minister is interviewed by the Committee on the Ministry.	

Procedures for the CALLING BODY	Procedures for the ASSOCIATION
	<p>20 The supervisor meets with the licensed minister to provide ongoing guidance, counsel, and support.</p>
<p>21 The designated place where the licensed minister is serving, with the consent of the licensed minister and with the ongoing demonstrated need for a licensed minister, seeks renewal of the license and submits the request to the Association.</p>	
<p>Representatives of the local church being served participate in the interview.</p>	<p>22 The Association Committee on the Ministry reviews the request, interviews the licensed minister and representatives of the local church being served and, if warranted, grants licensing for up to an additional year, reappoints a supervisor, and repeats step 14 if necessary.</p>

THE CHURCH'S EXPECTATIONS OF ITS CANDIDATES FOR LICENSED MINISTRY

FAITH AFFIRMATIONS

Is compelled by the gospel of Jesus Christ

Has a sense of having been called by God and the Church to licensed ministry

Is committed to the mission of the Church

Can clearly articulate a personal theological position

CHURCH LOYALTY

Is an active member of a local church of the United Church of Christ

Is committed to service in and on behalf of the United Church of Christ

Is committed to active participation in the United Church of Christ beyond the local church (Association, Conference, national)

Keeps informed about the issues and concerns facing the United Church of Christ and its various parts

Is familiar with the publications and resources of the United Church of Christ

Is committed to the up building of the whole people of God

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Has a high school education or its equivalent

Has engaged in study of and can give evidence of acquired knowledge in:

The Bible

Biblical interpretation

Christian ethics

Church history

Contemporary culture

Theology

United Church of Christ history, polity, and practice

Worship, sacraments, liturgy

Has acquired skill in:

Listening and communicating

Pastoral care

Preaching and worship leadership

Is prepared to lead the church as a community in mission

Personal Qualities

Is able to acknowledge own limitations

Is accepting of diversity

Is adaptable

Has capacity for growth and development

Is courageous

Has empathy

Has integrity

Lives a Christian lifestyle

Is mature

Has an open and affirming style of relating to persons and ideas

Is resourceful

Has a sense of her or his identity

Has a sense of proportion

Has a sense of responsibility

Has vision