

December 1, 2015

Procedure Manual
for Licensure,
for Use by Local Churches and the
Committees on Ministry
of the
Associations of the Wisconsin Conference
United Church of Christ

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1. 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 of the United Church of Christ is one of its 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 word and sacrament, for a designated time within a covenant of mutual accountability that includes appropriate supervision and guidance of that Association. All authorizations for licensed ministry granted by an Association are subject to periodic review by that Association. The license may be renewed.

Licensed ministry is of two primary types within the United Church of Christ: licensed ministers available for word and sacrament from church to church in an Association and licensed ministers who serve over an extended period as pastors of small membership churches that, for whom 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.

Members who were licensed prior to the adoption of this manual may be exempted from the requirement for a psychological assessment. All other requirements of this manual are binding upon currently licensed ministers.

2. THE PERSON AND LOCAL CHURCH

Foundational to these initial steps in the authorization process is the conviction that local churches are the 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 their pastor about this interest.

The Manual on Ministry calls for a deliberative process in which a committee (the Ministry Discernment Committee - MDC), 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. The MDC 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 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 Ministry can give in preparing the application. The pastor shall ask the Association Committee on Ministry if there is a need within the Association for a

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licensed minister. Licensing will not be approved if there is no need within the Association or the local church.

In preparation for the meeting with the MDC, the candidate prepares and provides to the committee certain specified written materials. Included in this material will be a narrative account of the person's faith journey, 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 their 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?

The candidate engages in the prescribed program of preparation with the assistance of an advisor. The advisor may be the candidate's pastor or someone else appointed by the MDC. When the candidate has completed the program of preparation she or he then prepares documentation indicating readiness for licensed ministry.

On behalf of the local church, the MDC and pastor then decide whether or not to recommend the person to the Association as a candidate for licensed ministry. If the

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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.

The MDC shall provide to the Committee on Ministry a summary of the process used to determine the candidate's readiness for licensure. The documentation will provide the reasoning for the recommendation and provide an explanation of any areas of concern that were identified by the MDC.

If the recommendation is to be made, the local church accompanies its letter of recommendation to the Association Committee on 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. Membership shall be for a minimum of two years at the local church that is making the recommendation.
- 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.
- Completed criminal background check and self-disclosure form done through the Wisconsin Conference.

3. PROCESSING BY THE ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY

The Association Committee on Ministry receives the recommendation from the local church and arranges for an interview with the person. The purpose of the interview is to provide the Committee on Ministry with enough information to decide whether or not the person has the potential to become a licensed minister of that Association. Throughout

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the interview, the Committee is seeking to determine the person's fitness, aptitudes, Christian experience, and commitment as a basis for licensing. The Committee also needs to answer these questions:

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

As the Committee reviews the materials, it will decide the key issues to be explored and the questions to be raised with the candidate. The Committee 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. 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.

If the necessary materials are not complete or are unsatisfactory, the Committee may request further documentation from the candidate before proceeding. If after review of the documentation the Committee on Ministry determines the candidate requires a program of preparation prior to meeting with the Committee, the Committee shall inform the candidate and their advisor of the program.

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 Ministry. The Committee meets with the candidate's advisor to review the materials and to hear the advisor's report and recommendation.

4. LICENSING EXAMINATION

The purpose of the examination is to determine the preparedness and fitness of the candidate for licensed ministry in that Association, including their 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. The candidate shall be accompanied at the examination by their advisor and a pastor. A sample outline of the licensing examination follows:

- Introduction of the candidate, the advisor, the members of the Committee on 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 their perceptions of the candidate based on that experience.
- A statement by the candidate about their experience during the period of preparation and their 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," (Appendix 3), to inform its discussion.
- Closure, including a statement by the Committee to the candidate about its next steps.

Following the interview, the Committee on Ministry deliberates and makes its decision. At this point, it is making a decision if there is a reasonable expectation that with the proper preparation the person can meet the requirements for licensed ministry and can function as a licensed minister in the United Church of Christ. 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 candidate is now a licensed minister.

- “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 on Ministry communicates its decision to the applicant and the applicant’s local church. When the decision is to proceed the Committee on Ministry appoints a Mentor for the person. When the decision is not to proceed with the person, the Committee on Ministry should ensure that there is pastoral follow-up with and concern expressed for the person and their local church.

The Committee on Ministry may require the licensed minister to obtain additional skills and knowledge beyond those already obtained by the licensed minister. The skills and knowledge to faithfully and skillfully lead a church are found in “The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers of The United Church of Christ” (Appendix 1) and “The Church’s Expectations of Its Candidates for Licensed Ministry,” (Appendix 3). The

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Committee, licensed minister and Mentor will review the need for a program of study to meet that licensed minister's needs, the needs of the church, and the anticipated length of service of the licensed minister.

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

- The availability of the licensed minister for word and sacrament. 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.

5. SECURING PLACEMENT IN A LOCAL CHURCH

a. Ministry of Word and Sacrament for the Association

Persons may be licensed for word and sacrament from church to church in an Association.

The licensed minister and mentor shall meet with Committee each year for review of the ministry being provided by the licensed minister. The Committee may use

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“The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers of The United Church of Christ” (Appendix 1) to explore the licensed minister’s growth.

The licensed minister shall attend boundary training at the earliest opportunity after licensing has been granted or provide evidence of successful completion of boundary training within the past two years.

The licensed minister, in cooperation with the Committee on Ministry, shall complete a psychological assessment with a person or agency selected by the Association's Committee on Ministry and provide the final report to the Committee for its review within 6 months of the granting of the license. After the review has been completed the licensed minister and the Committee shall meet to discuss any concerns raised in the report.

The psychologist should use tests seeking a minimum of two kinds of information: one set to determine the candidate's self-awareness and where areas for growth might be and another set to identify people who might be unfit for ministry (the MMPI or its equivalent). The Committees on Ministry will use this information as well as other information from the tests to obtain a deeper understanding of the candidate. The psychologist and the Associations Committees on Ministry would determine the specific tests for each Association.

In addition to the objective test results, the Committees on Ministry will seek a narrative assessment from the psychologist based on an interview with the candidate. The psychologist will offer insights on whether those preparing for licensed ministry have at least the following qualities of personal character needed for leadership in the church: personal maturity, the commitment and emotional capacity to deal with conflict, personal courage, and the ability to trust others while also being trustworthy. Both the candidate and the Committee on Ministry will receive the report from the psychologist.

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The cost of the testing and evaluation will be split in thirds among the candidate, the congregation and the association. Within 30 days of first meeting with the Committee on Ministry the candidate should schedule the tests and interview.

A signed release of the results of the psychological exam to the Committee on Ministry is required for the association to authorize proceeding with the psychological exam, release its third of the funding, and proceed with consideration of the applicant.

The Committee shall have the authority to revoke the license if serious concerns are raised in the psychological assessment which cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the Committee.

b. Sabbatical Leave

Churches and ministers occasionally have a need for pulpit supply during the time when the minister serving the church is on sabbatical leave. Churches facing this situation may choose to have a lay person lead worship services. In this instance a licensed minister is not required.

If a church being served by a lay person (non-licensed) finds the need for an authorized minister to administer the rites and sacraments a nearby local church may be contacted or the Associate Conference Minister may be contacted.

A church may choose to have a licensed minister serve during a sabbatical leave. The Committee shall grant the license only for the duration of the sabbatical leave. The Committee shall assign a mentor to the licensed minister.

The candidate for licensure shall successfully complete sections 2 – 4 of this procedure manual. The candidate for Licensure, for a sabbatical leave of the pastor, is not required to complete boundary training or a psychological assessment. This is the only circumstance in which a licensed minister is not

required to complete boundary training and a psychological assessment. If the candidate has not completed Healthy Boundary training the candidate should discuss this with the Mentor if possible.

c. Extended Pastorate of Small Membership Churches

Persons who have been approved for licensing are available for placement in a local church, within that Association, that has been qualified by the Associate Conference Minister or designated representative for service by a licensed minister. The placement of a person approved for licensing is facilitated by an Associate Conference Minister or designated representative. The Associate Conference Minister or designated representative 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. Once the terms of the agreement have been concluded, they are reported to the Committee on Ministry by the Conference Minister or designated representative, by the person approved for licensing, or by the local church.

The licensed minister shall attend boundary training at the earliest opportunity after licensing has been granted or provide evidence of successful completion of boundary training within the past two years.

The licensed minister, in cooperation with the Committee on Ministry, shall have completed a psychological assessment with a person or agency selected by the Association's Committee on Ministry and provide the final report to the Committee for its review within 6 months of the granting of the license. After the review has been completed the licensed minister and the Committee shall meet to discuss any concerns raised in the report.

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In addition to the objective test results, the Committees on Ministry will seek a narrative assessment from the psychologist based on an interview with the candidate. The psychologist will offer insights on whether those preparing for licensed ministry have at least the following qualities of personal character needed for leadership in the church: personal maturity, the commitment and emotional capacity to deal with conflict, personal courage, and the ability to trust others while also being trustworthy. Both the candidate and the Committee on Ministry will receive the report from the psychologist.

The cost of the testing and evaluation will be split in thirds among the candidate, the congregation and the association. Within 30 days of first meeting with the Committee on Ministry the candidate should schedule the tests and interview.

A signed release of the results of the psychological exam to the Committee on Ministry is required for the association to authorize proceeding with the psychological exam, release its third of the funding, and proceed with consideration of the applicant.

The Committee shall have the authority to revoke the license if serious concerns are raised in the psychological assessment which cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the Committee.

The licensed minister and mentor shall meet with Committee each year for review of the ministry being provided by the licensed minister. The Committee may use “The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers of The United Church of Christ” (Appendix 1) to explore the licensed minister’s growth.

d. Other Church Settings

From time to time a church may require the use of a licensed minister to assist in the proper functioning of the ministries of the church. A larger church who is served by one ordained minister, and is unlikely to secure the services of an additional ordained minister may consider the use of a licensed minister. The member must complete sections 2 – 4 including the requirements for boundary training and a psychological assessment.

Licensing, typically, will not be granted for these circumstances:

- Specific wedding
- Specific baptism
- Medical leave of the pastor for less than 3 months
- Music ministry
- Pastor’s vacation
- Christian education

e. Other Ministry Settings

From time-to-time there can be a need for a Licensed Minister in settings not covered elsewhere in the manual. Examples can be, but are not limited to Nursing Home Visitation Minister, Elder Care Visitation, 3-way and 4-way covenant settings. Members must complete Sections 2-4 of this procedure manual.

6. 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 or within the Association. The Committee also determines the beginning and ending times for which the licensing will be valid. Following an annual review by the Committee on Ministry,

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the license may be renewed annually for two more years after which the Association may grant the license for a time determined to be appropriate. In the case of a person serving a church while the pastor is on sabbatical the length of the license shall not exceed the length of the sabbatical.

The Committee on 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.

Licensed Ministers to either the Association for word and sacrament or serving in an Extended Pastorate shall complete a course in UCC Polity.

7. 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 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 Ministry to inform its licensed ministers about state laws governing the performing of marriages.

8. SUPERVISION OF THE LICENSED MINISTER

The Committee on Ministry establishes procedures for the supervision of the work of the licensed minister. An ordained minister of the Association shall be named as the mentor

for the licensed minister. This ordained minister could be a neighboring pastor, a member of the Conference staff, or a member of the Committee on Ministry.

Responsibilities of the mentor may include:

- Meeting regularly with the licensed minister to review their work and providing counsel and advice.
- Periodically reviewing with the licensed minister the style and manner in which worship is being conducted, including how rites and sacraments are performed, 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, critiquing and offering feedback about the sermons preached by the licensed minister.
- Encouraging the licensed minister to continue to study and seek training opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills.
- Ensuring that the licensed minister participates actively in the life of the Association and Conference.
- Reporting regularly to the Committee on 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.
- Engaging the licensed minister in conversations about healthy boundaries.

All authorizations for licensed ministry granted by an Association are subject to oversight by that Association, including periodic consultation and review.

9. REPORTING AND RECORD KEEPING

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

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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 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.

10. RECOGNITION

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

If persons are licensed for word and sacrament, 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. If a licensed minister is serving a church whose minister is on sabbatical leave a service of recognition is not required.

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

11. MEETING WITH THE MENTOR

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

12. RENEWAL OF THE LICENSE

The license is initially granted for no more than one year. 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 word and sacrament for the Association, the request for renewal of the license can come from the Conference Minister or designated representative.

Following an annual review by the Committee on Ministry, the license may be renewed annually for each of the first two years. After the 3rd year of Licensure the Association may grant the license for a time determined to be appropriate.

The Association Committee on 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 shall request the Conference Minister or designated representative 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 mentor, 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 mentor, and the Association.

13. TERMINATION OF A LICENSE

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

- A church engaged in the process of search and call for an ordained minister may be served by a licensed minister. When a new minister is called the governing body of the church, the pastor, and the licensed minister shall meet to determine the continued need for a licensed minister. If an agreement is reached that there is not a need the license may be relinquished. If an agreement is not reached then the

church may ask for assistance from the Conference.

- The period for which the person was licensed has expired and action to renew the license has not been taken.
- The Committee shall have the authority to revoke the license if serious concerns are raised in the psychological assessment which cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the Committee.
- If the licensed minister fails to complete a psychological assessment within 6 months or provide the final report to the Committee for its review within 6 months of the granting of the license.
- The licensed minister resigns as a result of:
 - Withdrawal from the functions or setting for which the person was licensed.
 - The desire to avoid disciplinary procedures.
 - The desire to leave the licensed ministry of the United Church of Christ.
 - 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.
 - The Association has implemented its disciplinary procedures and voted to terminate the person's license.

14. CONSIDERATIONS IN TERMINATION

Terminations should be accompanied by a pastoral intervention by the Association Committee on 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 their 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

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Association Committee on 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.

15. 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.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: THE MARKS OF FAITHFUL AND EFFECTIVE AUTHORIZED MINISTERS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION FOR MINISTRY

1. A lived faith showing love of God, trust in Jesus, and openness to the Holy Spirit.
2. Devotion to the word of God as revealed through scripture and Christian traditions.
3. Commitment to life-long spiritual growth and practice, individually and in community.
4. A sense of being called by God and the community to authorized ministry in the church.
5. Openness to continuing discernment of one's call in community.

UCC IDENTITY FOR MINISTRY

1. Acknowledgment of Jesus Christ as sole Head of the Church.
2. A passion for the oneness of the body of Christ as expressed through commitment to ecumenism, justice, and the full embrace of all persons in the radical hospitality of God.
3. Active membership in a local church of the United Church of Christ.
4. An understanding of the concept of covenant and how it informs the nature, purpose, and polity of the United Church of Christ.
5. A willingness to live in the covenants of mutual accountability that characterize authorized ministry in the United Church of Christ.
6. Ongoing demonstration of commitment to the United Church of Christ.
7. Stewardship of resources, including financial support of the church in all of its settings.
8. Participation in the various settings of the United Church of Christ, including the conference/association and local church.

The ability:

9. to articulate diverse histories that comprise the United Church of Christ, to situate them in the broader evolution of faith traditions and to relate them to the theology, polity, and practices of the Member's local church, association, and conference.
10. to explain and work within the current polity of the UCC and its denominational structure, and to describe the covenantal relationships among the General Synod, national setting, conferences, associations, and local congregations of the UCC.
11. to share key elements of the UCC's statement of faith, constitution with its preamble, and bylaws regarding the governance, mission, and theologies of the UCC and their implications for the life of the church.
12. to articulate the UCC's commitment to being a united and uniting, multiracial and multicultural, open and affirming, accessible to all and just peace church.
13. to envision how the UCC in its various settings may respond to religious, social, economic, and political trends, changing demographics, and other emerging factors.
14. to use and promote the informational and educational resources available through UCC publications and websites.

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL FORMATION FOR MINISTRY

1. A healthy sense of self as shaped by God, community, and personal experience.
2. A sense of theological identity and authority, while being responsive to the opinions and values of others, including those whom the Member will serve.
3. A healthy awareness of strengths, weaknesses and limits, and assumption of responsibility for one's body, mind and spirit.
4. Knowledge and observance of personal and professional boundaries in interpersonal, congregational, and community settings.
5. A commitment to continuing education, professional development, and life-long learning.
6. Demonstrated moral maturity, including integrity in personal and public life and responsibility to self, family, church, and community.

The ability:

7. to affirm the identities of others, including others very unlike oneself.
8. to engage in self-reflection and to seek and use feedback from others appropriately.
9. to engage productively in public discourse, expecting to grow and be transformed through the exchange of viewpoints.
10. to take initiative in leadership, and to frame and test a vision in community.
11. to listen empathically, communicate appropriately, and keep appropriate confidences.
12. to function as part of a team, to give and receive supervision, and to mutually equip and motivate the community of faith.
13. to be resourceful and adaptable, and know where to locate additional resources and seek consultation when needed.
14. to accept and promote diversity, to inspire others to do so, and to minister in a multicultural and multiracial, open and affirming, just peace, accessible to all, united and uniting church.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR MINISTRY

General Knowledge and Skills

The Ability:

1. to understand and appreciate a variety of perspectives of life.
2. to understand the profound differences that physical, psychological, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, class, cultural, religious, racial, and ethnic factors make in the ways that human beings experience the world.
3. to comprehend the impact of historical change upon the thoughts, feelings, and actions of individuals and societies.
4. to perceive how a person's perspectives and interests shape communication, and to appreciate the virtues and limitations of those perspectives and interests.
5. to grasp and evaluate the justifications that people give for their opinions.
6. to apply basic concepts of psychology to the understanding of oneself, others, and human interactions.
7. to appreciate the importance of symbols and images in human culture(s).
8. to understand various meanings and purposes of the arts.

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9. to analyze social, political, environmental, and economic dynamics, using the tools of the social and natural sciences.
10. to use respectfully and relationally a basic knowledge of specific human cultures.
11. to communicate clearly and effectively with appropriate media and technologies.

Knowledge and Skills Specific to Authorized Ministry

1. A thorough knowledge of, and personal engagement with, the Bible.
2. Skill with methods of biblical interpretation, including the historic interpretive traditions of the church and contemporary methods, particularly those from historically underrepresented communities.
3. A deepening familiarity with the global history of the Christian churches through the ages and across cultures, including the newest Christian populations, and an understanding of the evolution of Christian communities in the United States.
4. A deepening familiarity with contemporary theological ways of thinking and with the rich and varied theological heritages, creeds, liturgies, and spiritual practices of the Christian churches.
5. An understanding of other religions and their foundational documents.

The ability:

6. to articulate a theological understanding of authorized ministry, and to relate it to the practice of ministry.
7. to analyze, evaluate, and integrate the biblical, historical, theological, and pastoral disciplines and practices in ways that contribute to fruitful and faithful Christian ministry.
8. to understand the nature, use, and misuse of power and authority, and to exercise them appropriately and effectively in authorized ministry.
9. to engage in community leadership that is collaborative and transformative.
10. to engage in respectful ecumenical and interfaith dialogue.
11. to celebrate the unique features of local faith communities while encouraging them to be receptive to perspectives from the broader church and world.
12. to appreciate, practice, and pass on traditions of faith while interpreting them in light of the context of a diverse and changing world.
13. to adapt the practices of ministry to the unique social, cultural, environmental and ecclesiastical aspects of particular settings.
14. to discern God's mission in the world and, in response, to lead ministries of compassion, nurture, justice, and proclamation that support fullness of life for all people.
15. to preach the good news, lead worship and participate in the sacraments in a manner faithful to the broader Christian heritage and appropriate to the characteristics of a specific culture and setting.
16. to provide effective and appropriate pastoral care and Christian education, and to equip and motivate others to share in these ministries.
17. to organize and implement programs, administer the operations of a complex organization, and initiate change when appropriate.
18. to read the contexts of a community's ministry and creatively lead that community through change or conflict.

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19. to lead and encourage ministries of evangelism, service, stewardship and social transformation.
20. to understand and participate in the financial administration of the church and other religious organizations.

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APPENDIX 2: APPLICANT'S STATEMENT OF CONSENT

We are called to speak the truth in love. Our primary goal is, in all circumstances, to build up the body of Christ. Relationships between Church and Ministry Committees and persons seeking Authorization for Ministry in The United Church of Christ require honesty, integrity, and truthfulness for the health of the church. In that spirit:

I attest that the information contained herein is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any misrepresentations or omission may be grounds for rejection of consideration for authorized ministry.

An open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing healthy relationships between the Church and Ministry Committee and persons seeking Authorization. In that spirit:

I have read and reviewed the Procedure Manual for Licensure, for Use by Local Churches and the Committees on Ministry of the Associations of the Wisconsin Conference United Church of Christ

I authorize the Church and Ministry Committee to make inquiries as needed for assessing the readiness for authorization, including conversations with professors, pastors, supervisors and other appropriate persons. I understand that such persons may comment on and state their opinions regarding my background and character and fitness for authorized ministry. To encourage such persons to speak openly and responsibly, I hereby release them from all liability arising from their responses and comments made in good faith and without malice. I also authorize the release to the Church and Ministry Committee of transcripts, reports, evaluations, and psychological and spiritual assessment results as outlined in the licensure policy.

Signature _____

Date _____

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APPENDIX 3: THE CHURCH'S EXPECTATIONS OF ITS CANDIDATES FOR LICENSED MINISTRY

Faith Affirmations

1. Is compelled by the gospel of Jesus Christ
2. Has a sense of having been called by God and the Church to licensed ministry
3. Is committed to the mission of the Church
4. Can clearly articulate a personal theological position

Church Loyalty

1. Is an active member of a local church of the United Church of Christ
2. Is committed to service in and on behalf of the United Church of Christ
3. Is committed to active participation in the United Church of Christ beyond the local church (Association, Conference, national)
4. Keeps informed about the issues and concerns facing the United Church of Christ and its various parts
5. Is familiar with the publications and resources of the United Church of Christ
6. Is committed to the up building of the whole people of God

Knowledge and Skills

1. Has a high school education or its equivalent
2. Has engaged in study of and can give evidence of acquired knowledge in:
 - a. The Bible
 - b. Biblical interpretation
 - c. Christian ethics
 - d. Church history
 - e. Contemporary culture
 - f. Theology
 - g. United Church of Christ history, polity, and practice
 - h. Worship, sacraments, liturgy
3. Has acquired skill in:
 - a. Listening and communicating
 - b. Pastoral care
 - c. Preaching and worship leadership
4. Is prepared to lead the church as a community in mission

Personal Qualities

1. Is able to acknowledge own limitations
2. Is accepting of diversity
3. Is adaptable

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4. Has capacity for growth and development
5. Is courageous
6. Has empathy
7. Has integrity
8. Lives a Christian lifestyle
9. Is mature
10. Has an open and affirming style of relating to persons and ideas
11. Is resourceful
12. Has a sense of her or his identity
13. Has a sense of proportion
14. Has a sense of responsibility
15. Has vision

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APPENDIX 4: LICENSED MINISTRY STEPS

LICENSED MINISTRY			
<u><i>Procedures for the Candidate</i></u>	<u><i>Procedures for the Local Church</i></u>	<u><i>Procedures for the Calling Body</i></u>	<u><i>Procedures for the Association</i></u>
Step 1 A local church member of the United Church of Christ desiring to prepare for authorized ministry talks with their pastor about expectations and procedures.	Step 1 The pastor meets with the candidate.	Step 1 None	Step 1 None
Step 2 If the person decides to proceed, application is made to the Ministry Discernment Committee (MDC) or governing board of the local church for an interview and its help in discerning the particular gifts for ministry.	Step 2 FORM MDC? The pastor of the local church notifies the Association Committee on Ministry (CoM) of a candidate’s interest in Authorized Ministry.	Step 2 None	Step 2 None
Step 3 In preparation for the meeting with the MDC, the candidate prepares and provides to the committee certain specified written materials. Included in this material will be a narrative account of the person’s life pilgrimage, a statement of their interest in and sense of call to licensed ministry, a summary of church	Step 3 None	Step 3 None	Step 3 None

<p>activities that help to qualify the person for this form of ministry, and documentation of her or his formal education.</p>			
<p>Step 4 The candidate meets with the MDC.</p>	<p>Step 4 The MDC meets with the candidate and determine whether to recommend the candidate to the CoM for a covenant of discernment.</p>	<p>Step 4 None</p>	<p>Step 4 None</p>
<p>Step 5 None</p>	<p>Step 5 A candidate requests that the MDC (or governing board) of the local church where they are a member recommend to the Committee on Ministry (CoM) that they be examined for authorized ministry in the United Church of Christ.</p>	<p>Step 5 None</p>	<p>Step 5 None</p>
<p>Step 6 When the candidate has completed, if required, the program of preparation, the candidate provides the CoM with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The candidate’s Portfolio • Reports of previous assessments with the Committee on Ministry • Documentation of formal education • Documentation (written, oral recordings, personal testimony by the individual and other responsible and knowledgeable persons) of other educational 	<p>Step. 6 If application is made to the CoM, the local church provides the following documentation about the person in support of the application:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The candidate’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 for at least 2 years in the local church that is making the recommendation. c. Three letters of reference, including one from a pastor of 	<p>Step 6 None</p>	<p>Step 6 The CoM 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>and life experiences related to particular Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers of the United Church of Christ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testimony of the candidate’s Christian faith and call to ministry, from the individual and from others within the community of faith • Testimony of the candidate’s gifts for licensed ministry • Assessments of the person’s knowledge, experience, strengths, weaknesses, and development related to the Marks • One or more case studies prepared by the candidate which demonstrate particular Marks as understood and engaged by the Member • Sermons, lesson plans, or liturgies • Evidence of satisfactory, and recent, completion of Boundary Training • Psychological Assessment 	<p>that local church.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. g. Completed criminal background check. 		
<p>Step 7 The candidate meets with the CoM to be examined.</p>	<p>Step 7 Representative attends the examination</p>	<p>Step 7 None</p>	<p>Step 7 The CoM examines the candidate to determine their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Christian faith. b. Character. c. Ability to do the work

			<p>expected.</p> <p>d. Knowledge of the history, theological roots, polity, and practice of the United Church of Christ.</p> <p>e. Personal qualities.</p> <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>
Step 8 None	Step 8 None	Step 8 None	Step 8 The CoM informs the candidate and the local church of its decision.
Step 9 None	Step 9 None	Step 9 None	Step 9 If the CoM requires additional skills from the candidate the CoM, licensed minister and mentor review the program of study. The Com assigns a mentor.
Step 10 None	Step 10 None	Step 10 None	Step 10 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, word and sacrament. 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. 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.
Step 11 , The licensed minister in cooperation with the CoM completes a psychological assessment within 6 months of the licensing examination	Step 11 None	Step 11 None	Step 11 None
Step 12 The licensed minister completes Boundary Training as soon as possible.	Step 12 None	Step 12 The local church to be served or the body within the Association to utilize the licensed minister submits the following to the CoM: 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.	Step 12 None

		<p>c. Time for participation in the life of the wider United Church of Christ.</p> <p>d. Provision for the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. remuneration. 2. fringe benefits. 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. 	
Step 13 None	Step 13 None	Step 13 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.	Step 13 None
Step 14	Step 14 None	Step 14 None	Step 14 An accurate record of the proceedings and actions of the CoM and the Association are kept. The Association informs the Conference of the actions taken. The Conference informs the Office of General Ministries and the Parish Life and Leadership Ministry Team of the

			actions taken.
Step 15	Step 15 None	Step 15 Prepares a recognition service for the licensed minister.	Step 15 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.
Step 16 The licensed minister meets regularly with their mentor	Step 16 None	Step 16 None	Step 16 The mentor meets with the licensed minister to provide ongoing guidance, counsel, and support.
Step 17 The licensed minister agrees to seek renewal of their license.	Step 17 None	Step 17 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.	Step 17 None
Step 18	Step 18 None	Step 18 Representatives of the local church being served participates in the interview.	Step 18 The CoM 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 mentor.