

## A THREE-WAY MINISTRY COVENANT

### Among

[Authorized Minister seeking exempt status](#)

[Local Church of membership](#)

[Association / Conference](#)

### ABOUT THE THREE-WAY COVENANT for Exempt Status

The rite of Ordination is understood as lifelong, however there may come a time when the public ministry of an Ordained Minister comes to a close. In these circumstances, Ordained Ministers currently in Active Ministerial Standing may apply to their Committee on Ministry for Exempt Standing, covenanting to no longer perform acts of public ministry (defined below). The United Church of Christ advises, that when an Authorized Minister has chosen to maintain Exempt Standing a covenantal relationship be established among the Authorized Minister, the Local Church, and the United Church of Christ as represented by an Association or Conference. This relationship is known as a three-way covenant, with each party accountable to and for the others. The purpose of this covenant is three-fold:

1. to strengthen, support and sustain the ministries of all the partners that share in this covenant;
2. to encourage mutual participation and accountability of and for the life of each by the others;
3. to observe, nurture, celebrate, and call forth the ministry of the Ordained Minister with Exempt Standing.

### COVENANTS OF MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

[Authorized Minister seeking Exempt Standing, as an Authorized Minister of the United Church of Christ covenants:](#)

*To Local Church of membership United Church of Christ in City/State:*

- to serve a congregation (the Local Church of membership) in roles of service traditionally performed by lay persons such as participate on a committee, teach a class or serve as liturgist in worship, and guest preach when invited by the Local Church minister;
- Maintain membership in good standing with **Local Church**, including financial support for the general ministries of this church and a commitment to earnest prayer for the well-being of this congregation and its ministry and to embody the ethics of the UCC Ministerial Code;
- Fidelity to the terms of **this covenant** and dedication to the tasks as set forth.

*To the Association/Conference where Standing is held:*

- Participation in Association Annual Meetings, Ministerium gatherings, Conference Annual Meetings and to communicate with the Association and Conference when able;
- To vote at meetings when appropriate;
- Adherence to oversight by the Association Committee on Ministry in accordance with the guidelines outlined in this Covenant;
- To refrain from seeking ministerial positions, entering into Call Agreements, providing on-going Pulpit Supply;
- To refrain officiating at weddings and funerals, unless invited by an Ordained Minister in good standing;

*Additionally, as a Minister with Exempt Standing I understand: that my standing can transfer across Associations; that I may take Local Church membership in a Local UCC Church outside of the Association where my Exempt Standing is held; that I may request to reinstate my Active Ministerial Standing in the Association where my Exempt Standing is held should I desire to return to Active Ministerial Standing.*

**Local Church United Church of Christ, as the Local Church of Membership covenants:**

*To Authorized Minister with Exempt Standing:*

- Belief in God's call that has led you to this particular season of mission and ministry
- Prayers for *her/his* work with the **Local Church**;
- Public recognition of an Ordained Minister with Exempt Standing as a member of the congregation and extend invitations to co-officiate rites and sacraments when appropriate;

*To the Association/Conference*

- Appropriate documentation of an ordained minister with Exempt Ministerial Standing;
- Fidelity to the covenants of mutual accountability as articulated in this document.

**The Association of the United Church of Christ covenants:***To Authorized Minister:*

- All of the rights and responsibilities of an authorized minister in this Association.
- Clear communication of this Association's/Conference's requirements for good Exempt Ministerial Standing;
- Will maintain annual contact with the Minister holding Exempt Standing, in order to keep accurate contact information and communicate relevant information from the Association/Conference, ensuring that the minister's Exempt Standing is recorded in the UCC Data Hub.

*To Local Church, United Church of Christ:*

- Belief in the local church as the locus for mission and ministry in the United Church of Christ and thankfulness for your support of the ordained minister with Exempt Standing;
- Appropriate support and oversight of all ministers in three- or four-way covenants with your congregation.

We trust in God’s presence with us as we seek to be faithful to this covenant:

\_\_\_\_\_ Ordained Minister with Exempt Standing

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Authorized Minister of Local Church/President,  
Local Church, City/State

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Representative, Association UCC

Date:\_\_\_\_\_