

## **The Local Church in Relation to Its Pastor**

### **The Ministry**

The local church recognizes itself as part of the People of God and fulfills its purpose as it becomes a community for ministry and mission. We recognize our pastor as a person called by God who has attained particular skill and competence in leading our local church in fulfilling its mission and ministry.

We have called our pastor to preach and teach the gospel, to administer the sacraments and rites of the Church, and to exercise pastoral care and leadership. As we expect the pastor to be responsible in preaching and teaching the gospel and in administering the sacraments and rites, so will we be responsible for receiving and heeding the Word of God which comes through the proclamation of the gospel and the celebration of the sacraments, and for responding to the pastoral care and leadership offered.

### **Partnership in Ministry**

We believe that the ministry and mission of the Church is given to all baptized Christians. We will nurture and join our gifts for ministry with those of the pastor in the Church and in the world.

In all matters pertaining to the life, organization, and mission of this local church, we will work cooperatively and collegially with the pastor.

We recognize that our church and our pastor are part of the larger faith community which is the United Church of Christ and we will be, and support our pastor in being, a responsible participant in our Association, Conference and the United Church of Christ.

We recognize that our church and our pastor are part of the Church Universal and we will be, and support our pastor in being, a responsible participant in ecumenical activities in order to strengthen the unity, witness and the mission of the Church everywhere.

### **The Ethics of Ministry**

We will regard all persons with equal respect and concern, and support and expect our pastor to undertake to minister impartially. We will not discriminate against any person, group or organization on the basis of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, faith, nationality, ethnicity, marital status, or physical, mental or emotional disability.

We recognize that we have called our pastor as pastoral leader of this local church, and we will not invite other pastors to provide pastoral services within this church or to members of this church without our pastor's consent.

We recognize and respect that our pastor receives confidential and privileged

communication.

We will establish policies regarding baptism, communion, marriages, funerals, use of church facilities, and personnel in consultation with our pastor and will honor them in our life as a local church.

We respect the privacy of the pastor's family and the family's right to time together without interruption.

We do not expect the pastor's family to assume roles of leadership or levels of involvement beyond the family's wishes.

We recognize that conflict or tension between our pastor and the local church can arise. Should divisive tensions threaten our life together, we will seek the counsel of the Conference or Association Minister or the Association Committee on the Ministry.

### **Growth in Ministry**

We recognize the need for regular assessment of the relationship between our pastor and our local church and we will make provision for this.

We recognize our pastor's need for continued growth and we will provide time, money and encouragement for participation in continuing education.

### **Commitments in Ministry**

We recognize the many and diverse expectations we have of our pastor and we will offer our support through prayer, encouragement, and partnership in the ministry of this church.

We recognize our responsibility to provide our pastor with adequate compensation and fringe benefits. We will make these decisions in consultation with our pastor and in light of the compensation guidelines established by our Conference. We will provide for an annual review of compensation which considers effectiveness, cost of living, ministerial competence, and years of service.

We recognize our pastor's need for physical and spiritual renewal and we will provide adequate time and resources for study, devotion, leisure, vacation, and sabbatical.

**Relying on the grace of God, we will lead lives worthy of the calling to which we have been called.**