

1 Minnesota Conference of the
2 United Church of Christ, Acting as an Association
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4 **Administrative Termination of Ordained Ministerial Standing**
5 **When the Authorized Minister no Longer Serves in a Position Requiring Authorization**
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7 **Preamble**
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9 The Constitution of the United Church of Christ (paragraph 24) states: “Ordained
10 ministerial standing is ongoing recognition as an ordained Minister of the United Church of
11 Christ and provides ongoing ecclesiastical authorization to perform the duties and exercise the
12 prerogatives of ordained ministry. Ordained ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ
13 is granted by and held in an Association and confers voting membership in the Association.”
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15 The Committee on Ministry of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ
16 (Committee on Ministry) recognizes that ordained ministerial standing in the United Church of
17 Christ is a responsibility and privilege. The authorized minister serves in and on behalf of the
18 United Church of Christ. Hence, ordained ministerial standing is granted by the Committee on
19 Ministry or its Sub-Committee for Authorized Ministry on behalf of the Minnesota Conference,
20 Acting as an Association exclusively for the sake of the whole people of God, and not to promote
21 or enhance the ordained minister’s individual status.
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23 This policy does not supersede the Manual on Ministry of the United Church of Christ,
24 but provides an orderly method for administratively terminating ordained ministerial standing
25 based on the authority granted the Committee on Ministry in Section 8 pages 28 and 29 of the
26 Manual on Ministry of the United Church of Christ. However, where this policy explicitly
27 differs from the Manual on Ministry of the United Church of Christ this policy shall take
28 precedence.
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30 **Annual Review of Ordained Ministerial Standing**
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32 Each year the Sub-Committee for Authorized Ministry shall, in consultation with the
33 Conference Minister and Associate Conference Ministers of the Minnesota Conference United
34 Church of Christ, review the ecclesiastical authorization of all clergy holding ordained
35 ministerial standing within the Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ.
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37 Those clergy holding ordained ministerial standing who, upon determination of a
38 majority of the members of the Sub-Committee for Authorized Ministry, are no longer engaged
39 in ministry requiring ordained ministerial standing or whose current ministry setting is unknown
40 to the Sub-Committee for Authorized Ministry may have their ordained ministerial standing
41 terminated using the procedure described in the section of this policy titled “Procedure for
42 Terminating Ordained Ministerial Standing.”
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44 In determining whether or not an ordained minister holding ordained ministerial standing
45 currently requires ecclesiastical authorization the Sub-Committee for Authorized Ministry will

46 utilize the Manual on Ministry of the United Church of Christ Section 3 page 12 which provides
47 the following guiding questions:
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- 49 • “Does the position provide the opportunity to perform the functions of
50 ordained ministry – preach and teach the gospel, administer the sacraments
51 and rites of the Church, and exercise pastoral care and leadership?”
52
- 53 • “If the position does not provide the opportunity to perform the functions of
54 ordained ministry in any obvious or regular way, is the ordained minister
55 committed to performing these functions on request in local churches or in
56 other settings within the Association or Conference?”
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58 Those clergy holding ordained ministerial standing in the Minnesota Conference United
59 Church of Christ who are retired, disabled, have been granted a Leave of Absence that is still in
60 effect, or have been granted a Period of Discernment that is still in effect are exempt from this
61 policy provided that the ordained minister completes and returns an annual Information Review,
62 if requested by the Committee on Ministry.
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64 **Procedure for Terminating Ordained Ministerial Standing**

65 **Notification Required Before Termination**

66 An ordained minister with ordained ministerial standing in the Minnesota Conference of
67 the United Church of Christ may not have their ordained ministerial standing
68 administratively terminated unless:
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- 71 1. She or he is mailed a letter to the address maintained by the Minnesota Conference
72 United Church of Christ at least 90 days in advance of the termination hearing stating
73 that her or his ordained ministerial standing may be terminated, and giving her or him
74 an opportunity to give reason why her or his ordained ministerial standing should not
75 be terminated;
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- 78 2. If there is no response to the first mailing, she or he is sent a second letter to the
79 address maintained by the Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ at least 30
80 days in advance of the termination hearing stating that her or his ordained ministerial
81 standing may be terminated, and giving the authorized minister an opportunity to give
82 reason why her or his ordained ministerial standing should not be terminated;
83
- 84 3. If the Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ does not have a current mailing
85 address on file for the authorized minister subject to termination, or if the letter is
86 returned to the Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ business office
87 because of an erroneous or incomplete address, the Conference office will attempt to
88 obtain a current address of the authorized minister from both the Office of President
89 and General Minister of the United Church of Christ and the Pension Boards of the
90 United Church of Christ and then resend the letter. If a current address cannot be
91 obtained by this method or if delivery of the letter is refused, the 90 and 30 day

92 written notification period provided for above does not apply and ordained ministerial
93 standing may be administratively terminated at the next meeting of the Committee on
94 Ministry or its Sub-Committee for Authorized Ministry.
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96 **Termination Hearing**

97 An ordained minister with ordained ministerial standing whose correct mailing address is
98 known to the Committee on Ministry will be given an opportunity either to send a letter
99 explaining why her or his ordained ministerial standing should not be terminated or appear in
100 person before the Sub-Committee for Authorized Ministry to explain why her or his ordained
101 ministerial standing should not be terminated. The Sub-Committee for Authorized Ministry will
102 take this written or in-person information into account as it discerns whether or not to terminate
103 ordained ministerial standing.
104

105 All terminations of ordained ministerial standing are final and may not be appealed.
106 Ordained ministerial standing may be reinstated by following the process regarding the re-
107 instatement of ordained ministerial standing as provided for in Section 8 of the Manual on
108 Ministry of the United Church of Christ.
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110 **Initial Implementation of Policy**

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112 This policy becomes effective six months after being adopted by the Committee on
113 Ministry. During this six month period the policy will be available on the Minnesota Conference
114 United Church of Christ's website and in the COMMANtary email. The Conference Minister
115 and Associate Conference Ministers are also urged to share the policy at cluster meetings and at
116 other times they meet with clergy.
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121 Policy Adopted by the Committee on Ministry 10/23/08
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