



Personal Code of Professional Practice For Minister Disclosure File

Submit to: Marie Steele, msteele@naccc.org
(800) 262-1620 ext. 1614 – Disclosure File Fax (269) 749-7290

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

As a Christian minister I give my full assent to this code of professional life as a statement of my serious intent, and my awareness of the lines and directions that bind me to a congregation I will serve, with common concern, shared hopes, and loyalties. I will endeavor to conduct my life and ministry in accordance with the life and principles of Jesus Christ.

SELF

- Because the religious life is a growing life, I will respect and protect my own needs for spiritual growth, ethical integrity, and continuing education in order to deepen and strengthen myself and my ministry.
- I commit myself to honest work, believing that the honor of my profession begins with the honest use of my own mind, skills, and time.
- I will try to understand my own weaknesses and strengths. Knowing my limits, I will not hesitate to seek help in discouragement and difficulty.
- I will sustain a respect for the ministry. Because my private life is woven into my practice of the ministry, I will refrain from private as well as public words or actions degrading to the ministry or destructive of congregational life.
- Because the demands of others upon me will be many and unceasing, I will try to keep especially aware of the rights and needs of my family and my relation to them as spouse, parent, and friend.

COLLEAGUES

- I will stand in a supportive relation to my colleagues and keep for them an open mind and heart.
- I will strictly respect confidences given me by colleagues and expect them to keep mine.
- I will not speak scornfully or in derogation of any colleague in public. In any private conversation critical of a colleague, I will speak responsibly and temperately.
- I will inform my colleague in advance of any public engagement I may accept in his or her church, which might bear upon local issues or policies. I will accept no request for my service in the office of the ministry within my colleague's congregation without his or her explicit invitation or permission.

- If I am to share the ministry of a church with (an) other minister(s), I will earnestly seek clear delineation of responsibility, accountability, and channels of communication before responsibilities are assumed. I will thereafter work in cooperation and consultation with them, taking care that changing roles and relations are renegotiated with clarity, respect, and honesty.
- If I am a member of a colleague's congregation, I will in all ways honor the priority of his or her call to the ministry of that congregation, and I will carefully shun inappropriate influence which other members may tend to yield to me. I will be generous toward a colleague who is a member of my congregation.

CONGREGATION

- I will uphold the practices of congregational polity, including the autonomy of the local church and the fellowship of the churches. If I come from a tradition other than the NACCC, I will complete the **NACCC On-line Congregational History and Polity Course, Levels I and II**, within the first year of my ministry. I will contact the Center for Congregational Leadership (bmauro@naccc.org or 800.262.1620 x1613) to apply for admittance. Throughout my ministry I will teach the history, meaning, and methods of congregational polity, recognizing informed and faithful adherence of these practices as the bond preserving and reforming our free corporate religious life.
- I will respect the traditions of my congregation, enriching and improving these in consultation with the members, finding ways to meet the challenges of church members who come from increasingly-diverse cultural and religious backgrounds.
- I will hold to a single standard of respect and help for all members of the church community of whatever age or position.
- I will respect absolutely the confidentiality of private communications of members.
- I will not invade the private and intimate bonds of others' lives, nor will I trespass on those bonds for my own advantage or need when they are disturbed. In any relationship of intimate confidentiality, I will not exploit the needs of another person for my own.
- I will exercise a responsible freedom of the pulpit with respect for all persons, including those who may disagree with me.
- I will encourage by my example an inclusive, loyal, generous, and critical church leadership.
- I will take responsibility for encouraging clear delineation of responsibility, accountability, and channels of communication for the minister(s) and other staff.
- I will take responsibility for encouraging adequate and sensible standards of financial and other support for my own ministry and the ministry of all church staff.

- Prior to sabbatical or other educational leaves, I will clearly negotiate a minimum amount of time to serve as minister to the congregation upon my return before making myself available as a candidate for another pulpit.
- I will inform the board of the congregation immediately when I have accepted a call to another position.

MOVEMENT AND ASSOCIATION

- I will share and support the concerns of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches.
- I will encourage the growth of our congregations and the spread of the ideals of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches tradition and fellowship.
- I will participate and encourage lay participation in meetings and activities of our Association.
- I will encourage financial support of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches and its associated programs.
- I will make myself a candidate for a pulpit only with serious intent.

COMMUNITY

- In word and deed I will live and speak in ways representing the best Congregational tradition and leadership in the larger community.
- I will maintain a prophetic pulpit, offering to the community religious and ethical leadership.
- I will encourage members' participation in efforts to solve community problems.
- I will offer sympathetic support to neighboring ministers of other religious bodies.

Name of Minister (please print) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

NACCC Division for Ministry, 2009, originally adapted from the Code of Professional Practice of the Unitarian-Universalist Ministers' Association, 1985 version

Revised 11/2010

PO Box 288, 8473 South Howell Avenue, Oak Creek, WI 53154-0288
 414-764-1624 | 800-262-1620 | FAX 414-764-0319
 EMAIL naccc@naccc.org | www.naccc.org

Bringing together Congregational Christian Churches for mutual care and outreach to our world in the name of Jesus Christ.

This form will become part of the Ministry Disclosure File

12/6/2010