

F. A CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE PRACTICE OF MINISTRY

(POLICY)

(The term “minister” herein shall mean all those persons who have the status of Full Member, Probationary member, Associate member, Local Pastor, or Ministerial candidate.)

A MINISTER in the Central Pennsylvania Conference of The United Methodist Church will:

- Keep oneself spiritually, intellectually, physically, and emotionally fit.
- Give the time a family expects and to which they are entitled and give guidance, through training and experience, that will contribute to their fulfillment and enrichment.
- Maintain a high moral standard in speech and conduct.
- Be careful that attire and grooming do not detract from effectiveness.
- Be honest in personal business transactions and act responsibly in the stewardship of resources of the Charge which is being served.
- Be Christlike in attitudes and conduct toward all people — not setting aside convictions to win popular favor and regard all persons with equal love, concern, and understanding impartially considering the needs of all.
- Follow such a life style that the parsonage is kept in presentable condition.
- Be aware that there is a difference between reality and appearance and, therefore, will conduct oneself sensitively in that awareness.
- Be “intellectually honest” in teaching and preaching: give credit for ideas and words of others.
- Carefully develop personal programs of study augmented periodically by involvement in organized educational activities.

And a minister under appointment to a *parish* will:

- Perform the “Duties of a Pastor” as described in Paragraph 438.2 of the *1980 Discipline*.
- Serve as pastor, preacher, teacher and administrator, and will observe proper work habits and responsible schedules, doing all things in a manner above reproach.
- Minister to the needs of all persons regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, sexual orientation, age or handicap.
- Keep all shared information confidential.
- Share the ministry with other professional or lay persons assigned or employed to be a part of the ministry, and seek a just compensation for all persons so involved, as well as creating a spirit of mutual cooperation and support, and providing for opportunities of continuing education.
- Seek no gifts, bequests, or material benefits for self or members of the family from any organization or individual.
- Accept “Full-time Service” to mean that the pastor is not substantially supported in non-pastoral work without the knowledge of the District Superintendent and the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee of the local charge.
- Upon leaving the appointment have the parsonage clean and presentable for the successor pastor and family.
- Upon leaving the appointment have all records and membership lists current and well organized.
- Upon leaving the appointment, including retirement, sever pastoral relationships with the parish, recognizing that all future weddings, baptisms, communions, counseling, visitations, and funerals should be fulfilled by the successor pastor, unless an unusual situation exists and is approved by the successor pastor.
- Recognize the need for regular evaluation of the work of the pastor, being responsive to constructive criticism, striving to be the best possible representative of The United Methodist Church.

And, in relationship with *other ministers and churches* will:

- Live within the covenant community of the Annual Conference in ways that only enhance and affirm its members.
- Make no disparaging remarks about the work or life style of a predecessor, successor or other ministers.
- Upon retirement, give a pastor loyal support.
- Practice the same ministerial code of ethics with pastors and congregations of other denominations as would be expected in The United Methodist Church.
- Perform no pastoral functions in any church or charge to which the minister is not appointed, except at the request and under the direction of the pastor in charge.

And in relationship to *the Community* will:

- Participate in community action and service and will encourage members of the congregations to serve as well.
- Be active in positive programs to alleviate injustice and prejudice, and be sensitive to the needs and aspirations of the disadvantaged.
- Cooperate with agencies that build character as well as working with agencies offering human services.

And in relationship to the *denomination and Church Universal* will:

- Recognize that The United Methodist Church is a connectional fellowship in which obligations to support and to criticize constructively are to be accepted so that the Kingdom of God may be extended.
- Familiarize the local church with the mission, program, structure, and budget of the Annual Conference, and interpret them for the local congregations so that they may be responsible and effective in the total work of the denomination.
- Participate in the work of the ecumenical church, and support whatever measures may be proposed toward the strengthening of the fellowship and mission of Christians everywhere.