

COMMISSIONED MINISTRY

In the United Church of Christ, commissioned ministry is one of three forms of ministries requiring authorization by the church. The others are ordained and licensed ministry.

A commissioned minister is a lay person who performs "specific church-related ministry which is recognized by an Association, but does not require" the administration of the sacraments. Typically, commissioned ministers may be engaged in Christian education, parish nursing, music ministry, spiritual direction, community organizing, or other ministries that the church values as part of its mission and ministry. In order to require commissioning these must be ministries over which it is appropriate for the Association to have oversight. In some sense they are also performed *on behalf of* the entire denomination. A commissioned minister is a representative minister of the United Church of Christ and is in ministerial covenant with the local church where the person holds UCC membership, the calling body where the person is engaged in ministry, and the Association acting on behalf of the whole United Church of Christ.

Persons are commissioned by an Association of the United Church of Christ where the person holds membership. The Association determines that the person has the "faith, character, ability to do the work expected" and also that the person has adequate "education and training to meet the responsibilities of the office to be filled."

A commission is transferable to another association provided the person will continue to carry out the same "specific church-related ministry" (i.e. education, music, nursing, etc.) in the new setting for ministry. Commissioned ministers are able to participate in the Search and Call process of the United Church of Christ and seek a new setting for ministry where their specific commission can continue to be practiced. If a commissioned minister is no longer serving in the specific church-related ministry for which they were originally commissioned, their standing is withdrawn.

The basic qualifications generally required of all commissioned ministers include:

- Membership in a Local Church of the United Church of Christ.

- A bachelor's degree or its equivalent in a field of study related to the specific church-related ministry for which the commission is sought.

- Demonstrated knowledge and affirmation of the faith, polity and practice of ministry in the UCC.

For more information about licensed ministry in the United Church of Christ, persons should contact the Conference or Association where they hold UCC membership. Persons may also discuss commissioned ministry with a United Church of Christ pastor. Or persons may obtain the section of "Manual on Ministry" that describes "Commissioned Ministry" in detail, on the website www.ucc.com/ministers, or in print for a modest charge from United Church of Christ Resources at 1-800-537-3394. The complete "Manual on Ministry" describing all forms of ministry in the UCC is also available both online and in a published format.