

THE MARKS OF FAITHFUL AND EFFECTIVE BOUNDARY AWARENESS TRAINERS WHOSE WORK MAY BE CONSULTED OR UTILIZED FOR OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF AUTHORIZED MINISTERS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Theological & Denominational Perspective:

1. Exhibits a spiritual foundation and commitment to ongoing spiritual development in relationship to the teaching of healthy boundaries.
2. Demonstrates commitment to the health of the Body of Christ.
3. Values all persons and speaks relevantly to a diversity of life experiences (including race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender expression, ability) in the inclusive spirit of the United Church of Christ.
4. Knows and appreciates UCC history, polity and theology, including the covenantal relationships between authorized ministers, local churches, associations, conferences, General Synod and the national setting.
5. Models a commitment to the purpose, vision, and mission of the UCC.

Purpose Statement (from the Gospel of Matthew):

To love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and our neighbor as ourselves.

Vision Statement:

United in Christ's love, a just world for all.

Mission statement:

United in Spirit and inspired by God's grace, we welcome all, love all, and seek justice for all.

6. Is called to this ministry by God and the church.
7. Understands the Revised Ministerial Code and is able to articulate its relationship to boundaries and oversight.
8. Embodies excellence in areas of the Marks of Faithful and Effective Ministers, in particular the Strengthening Inter and Intra-personal Assets category.

Professional Role & Qualifications

1. Provides a personal and professional example of maturity in one's own faith and life experiences, appropriate communication and information sharing, as well as healthy self-care and relationships.
2. Maintains a current criminal background check and list of references, both of which must be made available to the United Church of Christ body that would utilize the boundary trainer.
3. Exhibits life-long habits of learning, including ongoing education in the best practices and current studies of boundary training, organizational systems and philosophies, etc.
4. Demonstrates effective leadership in group presentations, including the organization of materials, the management of group time and dynamics, the ability to foster an engaging and challenging environment, the skill to support (not solve) participants' discomfort when topics provoke new understandings of self and of others, and the flexibility to "read" and adapt to a group's needs. Invites feedback for one's own professional growth in excellence.
5. Observes necessary boundaries as a trainer, such as the confidentiality of case studies and "in class" conversations, and a professional clarity in those instances when the trainer is also a colleague to participants. (It should be noted that the latter scenario is not ideal.)
6. Nurtures an ongoing attention to intercultural awareness, implicit/explicit bias in one's own leadership and in group dynamics; faithfully addresses bias, intersectionality and power in training events.
7. Cultivates a safe environment in which a diversity of persons can learn and participate; building relationships of mutual trust and interdependence.

Training Content

1. Discusses power and privilege in a nuanced way; recognizing the relational and intersectional aspects of power and ability to exercise appropriate authority.
2. Provides resources including the Revised Ordained Ministers Code.
3. Recognizes cultural differences in the living out of boundaries and is able to respectfully invite conversation between the Revised Ministerial Code and contextual interpretations.
4. Focuses on a topic appropriately to meet the identified need(s) as well as the constraints of time.
5. Reflects cultural shifts of the past decade.

6. Demonstrates the study and incorporation of boundary materials, UCC Resources, leadership development, systems theories, legal revisions, and other relevant resources developed in the past decade.
7. Utilizes case studies.
8. Provides concrete preventative tools and identifies critical support networks for participants.
9. Engages the “gray areas” of boundaries and ethics, that is, fosters critical thought and awareness of situations that cannot be resolved simply with “Yes/No” or “Do/Don’t”; extends training goals beyond the logistics of boundaries to include increased self-awareness for participants.
10. Promotes a spirit of accountability and cooperation, debunking ministry as a solo endeavor.
11. Implement curricula with fidelity.

Topics for Boundary Training

Authorized ministers of the United Church of Christ should participate in boundary training once every three years, at a minimum, studying a diversity of boundary topics for holistic professional formation. The breadth of topics critical to authorized ministers’ boundary education includes but is not limited to:

1. The Revised Ordained Ministers Code
2. Understanding of Power, Privilege and the Intersections
3. Healthy Boundaries with Parishioners/Constituents including overlapping relationships (friendships, etc.).
4. Healthy Boundaries with Family and Self
5. Financial Health and Boundaries
6. Domestic and Sexual Violence
7. Child Abuse and Safe Church
8. Healthy Boundaries with Teens and for Teens and vulnerable adults
9. Social Media Boundaries in Ministry
10. Healthy Boundaries during Ministerial Transition

11. Healthy Boundaries for Retired Ministers, including Retired Ministers in Active Service
12. Healthy Boundaries for Ministers serving in Specialized Settings
13. Legal Developments, Obligations and Ramifications