

**The Eastern Association of the Missouri Mid-South Conference
of the United Church of Christ
A Four-Way Covenant for Ministry in a Specialized Setting
Between
[Ordained Minister], [Hospital], [Local Church,] and [Association]**

The Ordained Minister

I have been called by God to be a minister of Jesus Christ, ordained by the United Church of Christ in accordance with its standards and requirements. I have been ordained into the Ministry of Word and Sacrament, which means I am called to preach and teach the Gospel, to administer the sacraments of the Church, and to exercise pastoral care and leadership. The way in which I seek to embody God's call is through the specialized ministry of chaplaincy, currently in the particular setting of [Hospital]. To this end, I will faithfully seek to live out my calling and perform this ministry to the best of my ability. I will offer my ministry with integrity to the values and beliefs I hold, but also with respect, concern and tolerance of those from other faith traditions or no faith tradition. I will do my best to meet people where they are and not where I would have them be. I will honor and keep confidences shared with me.

I will be an active member of [Local Church]. I will seek to be nourished as well as to help nourish others. I may serve in an official capacity when asked by the pastor(s) currently serving [Local Church} or by the Church Council in the pastor(s)' absence. I will participate both in the wider ministry of the UCC and the Church universal.

I will strive to live a life of integrity, integration and to honor the commitments I have made. I will encourage and participate in regular evaluations of my ministry. I will regularly participate in continuing education events. I will regularly make use of spiritual disciplines, physical exercises and other forms of self-care so that I might, through the grace of God, most effectively offer and engage in this ministry.

Signed _____ [Ordained Minister], Date _____

The Calling Body, [Hospital Name]

[Hospital] recognizes the calling of [Ordained Minister] to work among us as Chaplain. We value and affirm the vital role that faith and spirituality play in the healing process. The role of pastoral care and chaplaincy has an integral place in the healing mission of [Hospital]. We have called [Ordained Minister] to preach, teach, administer the sacraments, other religious rites, administer pastoral care, and provide leadership according to the needs and abilities of the families, children, staff and students. This is to be done mindful of the practices of the respective faiths, traditions and beliefs.

We will hold [Ordained Minister] accountable for this ministry through regular reviews. This will be accomplished through the review of his/her job description, adherence to the policies and procedures of [Hospital], and a performance review.

We recognize that the ministry of an ordained minister is a ministry of the United Church of Christ and not just a ministry of the person. To that end, we encourage and support his/her participation in denominational activities. We also encourage and support her/his involvement in activities and organizations that enhance her/his functioning as a professional chaplain. We will provide time and resources for his/her participation in these activities. We also affirm and encourage her/his regular use of spiritual disciplines, physical exercise and other forms of self-care.

We pledge our support and guidance to [Ordained Minister] by our willingness to enter into this covenantal relationship with her and the church so that we might, through the grace of God, most effectively offer and engage in this ministry.

Signed _____ [Hospital Representative], Date _____

**The [Association] of [Conference]
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Between
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The Local Church, [Local Church Name]

We affirm the importance of our role in the recognition and authorization of ministry in and on behalf of the United Church of Christ. We recognize the calling of those who minister in our local churches, as well as recognizing and affirming the call of those who seek to minister in our name in other specialized settings of healing and reconciliation.

We promise to support [Ordained Minister] in the nurturing of faith, the calling forth of gifts, and in the work of equipping others for Christian service. We trust and expect [Ordained Minister] to represent us as our missionary to [Hospital], even as s/he represents the care and concern of all the United Church of Christ.

We will seek intentional ways to celebrate the gifts and graces of [Ordained Minister]. We invite him/her to share in the Ministry of Word and Sacrament in this congregation through the invitation and consent of our pastor(s) or, in their absence, through invitation and consent of the Church Council.

We affirm our covenantal partnership with [Ordained Minister] and [Hospital]. We will seek ways to make tangible our continuing support and celebration of this covenant. We pledge our support and guidance to [Ordained Minister] by our willingness to enter into this covenantal relationship with him/her and the [Hospital], so that we might through the grace of God most effectively offer and engage this ministry.

Signed _____ [Local Church President], Date _____

The [Association] of [Conference], United Church of Christ

We celebrate, affirm and support the partnership of [Ordained Minister] and [Hospital]. We authorize and recognize the covenant of ministry between [Ordained Minister] and [Hospital]. We recognize that this ministry is happening within and on behalf of the United Church of Christ. We also acknowledge and authorize [Hospital] as an appropriate setting for the ordained ministry of the United Church of Christ.

We recognize, authorize and affirm that [Ordained Minister] meets the requirements and qualifications for the specialized ministry of chaplain to which s/he has been called. [Ordained Minister] is a responsible representative of the United Church of Christ and of the Church universal in that setting and to the world.

We promise our continuing prayers, support and guidance to nurture and enrich this congregation. We promise to seek ways to make this support tangible and purposeful, including but not limited to periodic support consultations.

We, the [Association] of [Conference] of the United Church of Christ, join with the congregation of [Local Church] and the staff of [Hospital] in pledging our support and guidance to [Ordained Minister] by our willingness to enter into this four-way covenant, so that we might together, through the grace of God, most effectively offer and engage this ministry.

Signed _____ [Association Representative], Date _____