

## PASTORAL CALL AGREEMENT

On this day, \_\_\_\_\_, in \_\_\_\_\_, having sought the guidance of the Holy Spirit and believing that God has called us to share in a mutual and common ministry in Christ, the people of \_\_\_\_\_ United Church of Christ at a regularly-called meeting of this congregation, held on \_\_\_\_\_ voted to enter into covenant with a servant of God to become a pastor and teacher of this church beginning on \_\_\_\_\_

### I. TERMS OF CALL

This is an agreement between \_\_\_\_\_ United Church of Christ and \_\_\_\_\_ called as \_\_\_\_\_. All parties based the execution of the agreement upon their good faith.

The terms of call outlined in this agreement are contingent upon your holding Ordained Ministerial Standing with the Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ Acting as an Association. Should Ordained Ministerial Standing be suspended, revoked or transferred for any reason, this agreement can be terminated immediately.

Believing that the cause and mission of Christ's church will be forwarded under the pastoral and spiritual leadership of \_\_\_\_\_, the congregation of \_\_\_\_\_ United Church of Christ joins in this agreement.

Our church calls the pastor to accept this pastoral office in our church by recognizing and acknowledging with us the responsibilities and duties as our pastor including: those outlined in the attached position description; those included in the constitution and bylaws of this church and those by the customs and usages of the pastoral office of the United Church of Christ as defined in the United Church of Christ *Manual on Ministry*, particularly sub-sections entitled "The Local Church in Relation to Its Pastor", and "The Ordained Minister's Code", which include the right and responsibility of participation and leadership in the mission of the United Church of Christ, the ecumenical movement, and the community.

As a congregation, we wholeheartedly commit ourselves to the following terms of the covenant as we call our pastor and teacher. The terms of this agreement are for a \_\_\_\_\_ (specify full-time or FTE) commitment, which although there will be fluctuations, we expect \_\_\_\_\_ hours per week to be adequate to meet the terms of this agreement.

## II. RELOCATION EXPENSES

Our church will pay reasonable relocation costs to move the pastor and family from \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_. It is the pastor-elect's responsibility to secure written estimates of the costs involved and submit them to our church's \_\_\_\_\_ (person/body of the church) so that we can adequately plan and execute our part of these logistics. Relocation costs include the expense of \_\_\_\_\_ (# of trips) advance home hunting trips for the pastor-elect and family, moving their household goods, mileage for transporting their automobiles, and meals and lodging for the pastor-elect and family enroute. These costs will not exceed \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

## III. SALARY AND HOUSING

Because our church is committed to fair and just compensation, we honor our God and one another by providing the following financial care. All figures listed in this section are annual amounts and will be pro-rated during the remainder of the current budget year.

### CASH SALARY

Beginning on \_\_\_\_\_, our church will pay \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (cash salary) annually, as cash salary payable on a \_\_\_\_\_ (frequency of payroll cycle) basis. The treasurer of our church will make these payments.

### HOUSING

(select one option)

#### A HOUSING ALLOWANCE IS PROVIDED

Our church will provide a housing allowance, in accordance with Internal Revenue Service guidelines, of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per annum. Your housing allowance includes the costs of your housing, all utilities, maintenance, and furnishings.

#### A PARSONAGE IS PROVIDED

Our church will provide a parsonage for the pastor and family, including the cost of all utilities, maintenance and taxes. As discussed with the pastor-elect, we have made the following repairs and improvements to the parsonage to make it more suitable and attractive.

Further, in accordance with Internal Revenue Service guidelines, we will provide a furnishings allowance in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per annum, and an equity allowance of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per annum.

#### **IV. BENEFITS**

##### **HEALTH, DENTAL AND GROUP LIFE BENEFITS**

Our church will 1) pay the contribution costs required to provide health and dental coverage for our pastor and, if applicable, the pastor's immediate family who are eligible, in the United Church of Christ Health and Dental Benefits Plans, or 2) pay an amount not to exceed the UCC annual premium applied to the cost of a comparable plan of another insurer.

##### **SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE OFFSET**

Our church will compensate our pastor for ½ of the Social Security and Medicare tax based on the pastor's pension basis. The current percentage equals \_\_\_\_\_% of cash salary, housing allowance and furnishings/allowance, as applicable, and will be paid to you on a \_\_\_\_\_ (frequency of payment) basis.

##### **PENSION PLAN**

###### **WHEN A HOUSING ALLOWANCE IS PROVIDED**

Our church will pay, on the pastor's behalf, an amount equal to \_\_\_\_\_% (14% is standard) of the pension basis to the pastor's pension account in The Annuity Fund of the United Church of Christ. The pension basis equals total cash salary plus housing allowance. Using the information contained in this agreement, the pension basis for this year is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (calculated pension basis) and the annual contribution is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (contribution rate x pension basis.)

###### **WHEN A PARSONAGE IS PROVIDED**

Our church will pay, on the pastor's behalf, an amount equal to \_\_\_\_\_% (14% is standard) of 130% of the pension basis to the pastor's pension account in The Annuity Fund of the United Church of Christ. The pension basis equals total cash salary plus furnishings allowance. Using the information contained in this agreement, the pension basis for this year is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (calculated pension basis) and the annual contribution is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (contribution rate x pension basis).

##### **LIFE INSURANCE AND DISABILITY INCOME BENEFITS**

If the pastor is eligible to participate, our church will pay 1.5% of the pension basis to the Life Insurance and Disability Income Benefit Plan of the United Church of Christ on the pastor's behalf. Using the information contained in this agreement, the pension basis for this year is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ and the annual contribution is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (1.5% of the pension basis).

## **V. OTHER PASTORAL MINISTRY EXPENSES**

Our church recognizes that to call forth the gifts God has given our pastor-elect to lead our church faithfully, we must provide both resources and support that will assist the pastor in remaining vital, creative, and energetic for this ministry. Therefore, our church will provide for our pastor and teacher the following pastoral ministry expenses and reimbursement for expenses incurred while the pastor is carrying out the ministry of this church.

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPENSES**

Our church will reimburse the pastor for professional expenses not to exceed \$\_\_\_\_\_ per annum. Professional expenses include such items as books, journals, entertainment expenses for church guests, professional dues, vestments, and other legitimate costs incurred as a result of the pastor's service to this ministry. The pastor may submit expense items for reimbursement on a \_\_\_\_\_ (frequency of payment) basis.

Our church will reimburse the pastor for the cost (currently \$175) of the "Power and Boundaries" training the Minnesota Conference requires of authorized ministers within 24 months of receiving standing. The cost for such training is a professional expense and the time required to attend (one day, 8:30-4:30) will be paid time away, not counted as vacation or continuing education.

Our church will reimburse the pastor \$\_\_\_\_\_ for the cost of the required criminal background check.

### **CONFERENCE, ASSOCIATION AND OTHER WIDER CHURCH MEETINGS**

Our church values our pastor's participation in the wider church. Thus, we will pay reasonable expenses for attendance and participation in our United Church of Christ denominational, conference and other meetings. When these events occur during a time we regularly gather for worship, the church will make other provisions to provide leadership for our worship services. The amount established for meeting expenses is \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for this year.

### **CONTINUING EDUCATION**

Our church encourages and supports our pastor's opportunities to participate in clergy in-service training programs and continuing education programs to strengthen the pastor's ministry in this church. Therefore, we have budgeted \$ \_\_\_\_\_ annually for the cost of the educational opportunities, not including travel costs. It is the pastor's responsibility to discuss in advance with the \_\_\_\_\_ (pastor/parish relations committee or other appropriate body) the nature, timing and programmatic impact of these opportunities so that we can negotiate with the pastor the dates and types of events that best support our church's programs and needs for development.

## TRAVEL COSTS

Our church reimburses our pastor for using the pastor's automobile in fulfilling the duties of the office. The church pays for miles driven at the Internal Revenue Service mileage rate established each year. It is the pastor's responsibility to keep a log of mileage for appropriate services and submit it monthly for reimbursement. The current automobile mileage rate is \_\_\_\_\_ cents per mile. There are also times when other transportation means will be necessary, as well as the cost of room and board while attending conference, association, and wider church meetings, and continuing education events. Therefore, we have established \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for this year to cover such costs.

## VI. SABBATICAL LEAVE

Our church provides the pastor with a sabbatical leave of \_\_\_\_\_ months after \_\_\_\_\_ years of full-time ministry with our church. During the sabbatical, the pastor is paid full salary and benefits. It is the pastor's responsibility to share with \_\_\_\_\_ (name of governing board or pastor/parish relations committee), at least one year prior to beginning the sabbatical, the developing plans for time away. In the pastor's absence, we covenant with integrity to care for our church, our programs, our worship life and each other. Further, we covenant not to use this time to accomplish or decide alone what we have not been willing or able to do together. We will, and we expect the pastor will also, use this time to reflect on our mutual ministry in Christ and how we can live more fully into our call as a church of Jesus Christ. Upon the pastor's return, we will invite the pastor to share with the church an overview of activities and learnings from the sabbatical. Unless otherwise agreed before the sabbatical, we expect that the pastor will continue as our pastor and teacher for at least one year after the return.

## VII. WEEKLY SCHEDULE, VACATION, FAMILY LEAVE AND COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

### WEEKLY SCHEDULE

We realize that the demands of church life come at all hours of the day and night and that the covenant with our church requires the pastor's attention to matters at times often beyond control. In addition, we recognize the pastor's need each week to take time for self and family. Therefore, we encourage and support the pastor's ability to manage the equivalent of \_\_\_\_\_ days off per week for rest and relaxation and to be with family.

### VACATION LEAVE

Our church provides our pastor and teacher \_\_\_\_\_ days (or \_\_\_ weeks, including Sundays) of vacation leave during each twelve months of service. The congregation is responsible for our church, our programs, our worship life and each other during the pastor's vacation leave.

## FAMILY LEAVE

Family leave is extended to our pastor if the pastor and family experience the birth or adoption of a child. The pastor receives \_\_\_\_\_ days of family leave so that the pastor can care for self and family. Family leave does not accrue and unused leave is not payable upon termination.

## COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

Our church realizes that life is not always predictable or within our own control. Therefore, in the event of special circumstances, compassionate leave is available. We understand special circumstances to include the death of an immediate family member, sickness or personal crisis. We provide our pastor with up to \_\_\_\_\_ days of compassionate leave per incident. Compassionate leave does not accrue and unused compassionate leave is not payable upon termination.

## VIII. OTHER BENEFITS

### DISABILITY BENEFITS

**Initial Disability:** If the pastor becomes disabled and unable to meet pastoral responsibilities while serving our church, the church is responsible for paying full salary, housing and benefits for the first 30 days of disability.

**Period of Disability:** If the disability prevents the pastor from performing pastoral responsibilities longer than 30 days, the United Church of Christ Life Insurance and Disability Income Benefits Plan would become effective. During the 30 day waiting period, the church would also be expected to pay Health, Dental, Annuity and Insurance contributions.

**Permanent Disability:** If it becomes apparent that a disability will keep the pastor from performing pastoral responsibilities for longer than 90 days, the church will negotiate with the pastor or a responsible member of the pastor's family regarding the possible continued use of the parsonage (if applicable) for a mutually agreed upon time period beyond the initial period of disability.

### DEATH BENEFITS

In the event of the pastor's death while serving our church, the church provides the immediate family, in addition to salary earned but not yet paid: cash salary and housing for the current month; cash salary, housing, and Social Security and Medicare offset for a period of \_\_\_\_\_ days; and the cash value of any vacation leave earned. Further provisions, if necessary, may be considered and will be discussed with the pastor's family by our \_\_\_\_\_ (governing body or other appropriate body), and our Associate Conference Minister/Conference Minister of the Minnesota Conference.

## DISABILITY AND DEATH BENEFITS

If death occurs during the first thirty days of the pastor's disability, the church provides the pastor's immediate family with up to \_\_\_\_\_ days of cash salary, housing, health and dental benefits, and Social Security and Medicare offset for both the initial period of disability and for a death benefit.

## IX. REVIEW OF PASTORAL CALL AGREEMENT

Through our \_\_\_\_\_ (council/governing board), and in accordance with our church's budget cycle \_\_\_\_\_ (frequency of budget cycle), the church negotiates with the pastor to update this agreement, keeping in mind increases in the cost-of-living.

## X. MINISTRY AND PASTORAL/PARISH RELATIONSHIP EVALUATION

Our church accepts its responsibility to live faithfully and in covenant with our pastor and teacher. Accordingly, at the end of our first year together and every \_\_\_\_\_ (number of) years thereafter, we covenant to study and review the priorities of our church regarding our program and administrative goals; the pastor's relationship with our congregation; and the stated goals agreed to with the pastor in the position description, for the effectiveness of our mutual ministry.

## XI. MEDIATION PROCEDURES

Our church acknowledges that even as we pledge our faithfulness to God, one another, and our pastor and teacher, there may be times when difficulties within our relationship begin to overwhelm us. In those instances, we covenant with the pastor to seek the support, advice and wisdom of our Associate Conference Minister/Conference Minister or the Committee on Ministry of the Minnesota Conference Acting as an Association, in order that we actively maintain the mutuality of our relationship. Either the pastor or the \_\_\_\_\_ (governing board) representing our congregation may request such a consultation if, in the opinion of either, our relationships are strained.

## XII. TERMINATION OF PASTORAL CALL

Our church recognizes that most relationships do not last forever. We also acknowledge that there are many reasons that may lead to a separation. Thus, this pastoral call agreement may be terminated by either party giving at least \_\_\_\_\_ days' written notice to the other, or upon other terms to which we both mutually agree.

## XIII. FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PULPIT

Notwithstanding any of the other responsibilities outlined for our pastor and teacher in the attached position description and other resources referenced on the first page of this document, in accepting pastoral leadership we also accept our pastor's freedom of expression in the pulpit as it pertains to matters of faith and faithfulness according to the dictates of the Word

of God, the work of the Holy Spirit, the received traditions of the United Church of Christ and the context in which we live our lives.

**XIV. AFFIRMATION OF THIS PASTORAL CALL AGREEMENT**

Believing that God has led \_\_\_\_\_ (name of pastor) to be our pastor and teacher and that, with God as our helper, both the pastor and our local church will remain faithful to the terms outlined in this pastoral call agreement, we affirm and validate all parts of this pastoral call agreement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Pastor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Pastor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Moderator/President of the Congregation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Moderator/President of the Congregation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \*\*\*\*\*

Having reviewed the covenant between \_\_\_\_\_ (pastor) and \_\_\_\_\_ United Church of Christ to enter into this pastoral call agreement, we affirm and celebrate the ministerial covenant undertaken on behalf of the United Church of Christ.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Associate Conference/Conference Minister of the Minnesota Conference Acting as an Association

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Associate Conference/Conference Minister of the Minnesota Conference Acting as an Association

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date  
Cc: Pastor  
Church  
ACM