

## **OPP 4.7 – PERSONNEL POLICY FOR MINISTERS**

**PURPOSE:** This policy outlines the personnel policies that are specific to Called Ministers serving in positions designated as ministerial by Round Rock Christian Church (RRCC).

### **POLICY**

RRCC adheres to the definitions and processes for ministerial standing, ministerial search and call, and ministerial conduct as defined and documented in “Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry”, Disciples Home Missions, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Any exceptions or additions are documented by the Guiding Board in this policy.

Called Ministers are subject to all RRCC policies and procedures as documented in the RRCC Operating Policy and Procedures Manual (OPP), commonly referred to as “OPPs”. An exception to this is when provisions of an OPP specifically exclude Called Ministers of the congregation from its provisions.

If provisions of a Called Ministers Letter of Calling and Agreement are different than those published in an OPP, then the provisions of the Letter of Calling and Agreement take precedence.

### **CALLED MINISTER STATUS**

A Called Minister at RRCC is defined as any person serving in a position that by its Functional Job Description is designated as a ministerial position. The norm is that the services of a person serving in positions designated as ministerial were secured by means of a Ministerial Search and Call process and that the person has agreed to terms and conditions of employment by signing a Letter of Calling and Agreement.

While Called Ministers are employees of the church they are considered called of God to serve the church by virtue of having been engaged in service by means of the Ministerial Search and Call process.

### **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

Ministers serving at RRCC in positions designated as ministerial are expected to be beyond reproach in ethical behavior. They are expected not only to be accountable to scriptural standards of conduct but are also to adhere to the Ministerial Code of Ethics for the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) as published by the Disciples Home Missions, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Leading by example, Ministers are expected to always be in compliance with any approved and published Operational Policies and Procedures (OPP) of RRCC.

### **SEARCH AND CALL**

A Ministerial Search and Call Committee established by the Guiding Board is the mechanism to identify a candidate, provide for the terms and conditions of employment, and recommend to the Guiding Board a minister to call to service. The Guiding Board approves the recommendation of the Search and Call Committee and then recommends the prospective minister to the

congregation for approval of a call to service. This applies to any and all positions in RRCC designated by Functional Job Description as “ministerial” whether the services provided are paid or unpaid.

Ministerial Search and Call is the term applied to the process developed to facilitate the employment of ordained and licensed ministers who hold standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). It provides a covenantal framework within which the congregation can serve to upbuild the whole church of Jesus Christ. Area and Regional Ministers of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are equipped and resourced to assist congregations in the Search and Call process.

The Guiding Board, as represented by the Moderator and any committee established to conduct Ministerial Search and Call, are to seek the assistance and advice of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Area and/or Regional Minister for all Search and Call processes.

### **LETTER OF CALLING AND AGREEMENT**

Ministerial Search and Call Committees are to document the agreed to terms and conditions of employment of a prospective Called Minister in a Letter of Calling and Agreement. The terms and conditions regarding compensation and benefits are to be coordinated with the Administrative Team to insure compliance with the church budget, consistency with RRCC OPPs’, and compliance with required tax rules and procedures. The Guiding Board will approve the contents of a Letter of Calling and Agreement at the same time it approves a recommendation to the congregation to call a minister to service.

The Letter of Calling and Agreement is in effect the contract of employment with the called minister. It should document at least the following items:

- Commencement date or start date of service.
- Specific duties to be performed.
- Expectations for work days, hours and general availability expectations or the mechanism for determining those expectations.
- Total compensation package with provision for breakout of the package into its component parts (cash salary, housing allowance, social security offset, pension, health care, etc.), and mechanism for later adjustment of the compensation package. If the Called Minister is filling an unpaid position, then this fact should be documented as zero dollars in compensation.
- Supervisory reporting relationships. The Senior Minister will normally report to the Guiding Board. Associate Ministers may report to and receive daily supervision from the Senior Minister or other appropriate supervisor as the situation warrants but are always accountable by oversight to the Guiding Board.
- Annual Leave and Sick Leave benefit terms and rules for use and accrual.
- Medical, Pension, Disability and/or Survivor benefit plans available
- Expense reimbursement provisions for relocation, business travel, mileage, and/or other general expenses incurred on behalf of the church. (Note: Expense reimbursement by the church is normally not considered part of total compensation package)
- Terms and provision for sabbatical after some length of service.

- Terms and provision for continuing education and attendance/participation in programs of the wider church.
- Termination or resignation provisions.
- Signatures of the Moderator, the Trustee that is a member of the guiding board and the called minister.

These items may be documented and incorporated into the agreement by explicit reference to existing OPPs', Functional Job Description or other document previously approved by the Guiding Board.

Ministerial Search and Call Committees will consult the Administrative Team and Personnel Committee regarding budget and policies for compensation, benefits, leave, absence and other terms or conditions proposed for offer in a Letter of Calling and Agreement.

### **SPECIAL TAX STATUS FOR MINISTERS**

A Called Minister at RRCC qualifies as a "Minister" under the guidelines of the Internal Revenue Service. A number of federal tax laws have unique application to Called Ministers. This not only has legal implications for Called Ministers but also has legal implications for RRCC as a corporate entity.

Called Ministers serving in RRCC positions designated as ministerial are eligible for the following five special tax rules with respect to services they perform in the exercise of their ministry: the housing allowance; the parsonage exclusion; exemption from social security coverage (if several conditions are met); self-employed status for Social Security (if not exempt); and exemption from income tax withholding. Accordingly, both the Called Minister and the church may be obligated to report or treat certain elements of the minister's compensation as employee pay and/or as self employed pay.

The Treasurer will insure that RRCC performs its due diligence in complying with the tax rules and if necessary is to seek professional financial or legal advice to insure compliance and avoid unnecessary liability.

Ministers are also expected to perform their personal due diligence in this area so as not to create situations that are, or appear to be, in violation of the law or create perceptions of unethical conduct.

### **DEFINITIONS**

Called Minister – A person serving in a position designated as a ministerial position by its Functional Job Description.

Functional Job Description – A written description of the job functions of a position that summarizes the major tasks and minimum qualifications required for that position.

Letter of Calling and Agreement – the contract of employment with a called minister.

Search and Call – the process developed to facilitate the employment of ordained and licensed ministers who hold standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Total Compensation Package – The total salary and allowance in dollars offered to a prospective employee in an employment contract. For Called Ministers the total compensation package is normally broken out into a salary amount, an amount for housing allowance, an amount for Social Security offset, and an amount for health insurance. The total compensation package represents the monthly or annual cash outlay by the church for the services of the Called Minister not including reimbursable expenses.

**AUTHORITY:** *“Policies and Criteria for the Order of Ministry”, Disciples Home Missions, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Section XII, Section XIII and Section XIV of the Bylaws of Round Rock Christian Church. The Guiding Board oversees the ministry of called ministers of the church and through the ministerial search committee determines the terms of employment. OPP 4.3, the Administrative Team, Personnel Committee, monitors and administers all employment practices of the Church.*

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

July 8, 2010

**LAST REVISION DATE**

July 8, 2010