

**Florida Conference, United Church of Christ
2017 Compensation Guidelines
for Called and Interim Clergy**

The following chart summarizes salary and housing guidelines for employment in churches of the Florida Conference in 2017.

Full Time Authorized Minister
Salary and Housing (Excluding the Cost of Benefits)

Size of Congregation	Average Salary	Median Salary
1-100	\$37,174.31	\$47,750.42
102-200	\$56,698.97	\$57,409.22
201-350	\$69,342.68	\$71,842.02
351-600	\$86,298.64	\$84,277.63
601+	\$91,929.92	\$71,908.29

The Committee on Church and Ministry recommends churches pay a minimum of \$46,000. **plus benefits as described below**. Without question, some congregations, because of their smaller membership and/or financial constraints, are not able to provide an adequate compensation package for full-time pastoral service. They are encouraged to consider creative options, such as part-time, bi-vocational pastors or sharing a pastor with another congregation in the area in order to combine resources to offer adequate compensation.

The Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ, concerned with the growth of its churches and the compensation of its ordained leaders, commends the efforts of local congregations in endeavoring to reach the goals recommended throughout this booklet. These guidelines apply to all full-time pastors, associates and assistants.

The work schedules and compensation packages of local pastors should be healthy for the pastor and for the church. That would require a *balance of time* spent in the church's ministry and time spent with family and friends-a *balance of work and recreation*, a *balance of exercising the body and the mind*, a *balance of care of others and care for self*.

The Committee on Church and Ministry recommends that:

- churches pay a **minimum** cash salary and housing of **\$46,000 plus benefits** as described in items 3, 4 (as applicable), 5, and 6 below for a full-time pastor;
- congregations not at the minimum salary and benefits work toward the minimum and also work at improving their support;
- churches fully reimburse all professional expenses through an IRS approved accountable reimbursement plan;¹
- congregations already at or above the minimum give at least a cost of living increase and consider a merit increase also.
- the work schedule of local pastors be a maximum average of 40-50 hours per week, with no more than three evenings in any given week; in addition, pastors take at least one and one-half days off per week.

Considerations for Determining Clergy Compensation

1. While ministry is a unique vocation, requiring special patterns of financial compensation, several overall factors can be considered in determining the level of support for clergy. The total compensation package justly could be considered comparable to the median income of the parish and perhaps on a par with that of the local high school principal showing consideration for years of service, special skills and training, and including annual cost-of-living increases. The federal tax structure is unique for clergy, and the compensation package can be designed in such a way as to maximize the pastor's income.

2. The Salary and Housing levels suggested (consider inflation since 2013 when developing 2017 salary and housing) in the Florida Conference.

3. Social Security Allowance

The church should provide an amount equal to at least one-half the effective self-employment Social Security tax liability of each clergy person (7.65% of salary + housing). This allowance is taxable income, but it will ease the burden of the large Social Security tax paid by ordained persons.

4. Housing That Provides:

(a) furnishings allowance, all utilities and an equity development plan for those provided a parsonage; OR

(b) a housing allowance, including furnishing and utilities, for those who own or rent their homes.

5. Benefits That Provide: (based on UCC Pension Board plans, which are *urged*)

- a pension plan to which the church contributes a figure of 14% of salary basis (which is (a) at least 130% the sum of salary + furnishings allowance for those in a parsonage, OR (b) cash salary + housing allowance for those with such an allowance);
- the Life Insurance and Disability Benefit Plan (formerly Family Protection Plan), which is an additional 1.5% of the base used for annuity;
- medical, health and dental insurance;
- continuing education time and funds;
- sabbatical education funds;
- holiday and vacation time (4 weeks per year);
- maternity/paternity leave, including for adoption.

6. All Professional Expenses

The tax law allows deduction of business expenses on Schedule A only after he/she has spent more than 2% of family adjusted gross income on such expenses. THEREFORE, it is important that churches reimburse or pay directly all costs which the pastor incurs for "doing business" for the church, so that the pastor is not paying income tax for church expense. Including but not limited to:

- Books and professional subscriptions
- Professional memberships
- Travel expenses and auto (church-owned vehicle or travel reimbursement)
- Any other expenses incurred by the pastor and directly attributable to the exercise of ministry

For reference, the following is an illustration of a minimum salary, housing and benefit package:

Salary and Housing	\$46,000
Annuity (salary + housing x 14%)	6,440
Life Insurance & Disability Benefit Plan (salary + housing x 1.5%)	690
Medical/Dental Insurance (rates offered by PBUCC)	TBD
Professional Expenses	1,500
Continuing Education	750
Auto Reimbursement (6,000 miles/year @ \$.54 (2016 tax year)	3,240
<u>Social Security offset (7.65% salary + housing)</u>	<u>3,519</u>
TOTAL COMPENSATION PACKAGE	\$62,139
+Health Coverage per PBUCC Rates	

Additionally, the congregation needs to consider establishing a church savings plan to provide for pastoral services during the pastor's sabbatical leave.

Endnote

1. *Additional information may be found in: Tax Guide For Ministers. Order by calling UCC Resources 800 537 3394.*

Supporting Material

The work of the church of Jesus Christ is a holy and wholesome vocation. The cooperative ministry of laity and clergy is greatly enhanced by responsible and sensitive compensation policies for all that serve in the local church. This booklet, prepared by the Committee on Church and Ministry (hereafter, C&M), focuses on full-time ordained pastors and associate pastors.

Each local church in the Florida Conference sets personnel policies and salary levels. Usually, the pastor's compensation package is based on a budget developed by the appropriate church board in cooperation with a pastoral relations committee.

C&M strongly recommends that each church have an active Pastoral Relations Committee to facilitate communication between pastor and parish. The functions and makeup of such a committee is well described in a booklet published by the UCC Parish Life and Leadership, "The Pastoral Relations Committee" which is available from UCC Resources, 1-800-537-3394.

Personnel policies and salary levels should be reviewed annually. We further recommend that the local church have a public policy of being an equal opportunity employer.

Faith Foundations for Compensation

1. **Covenant Relationship:** We are a church based in covenant. When a church calls a pastor, it covenants to compensate fairly, and the pastor covenants to serve faithfully. The annual consideration of remuneration is a "covenant renewal" and should be entered into from this perspective.
2. **Stewardship:** We are accountable for the use of resources of the church, both human and material. A local church should be concerned over the responsible raising of receipts along with the responsible use of its funds. Accordingly, there must be a stewardship of love and support for the clergy and other church workers. Once the pastors and other

church workers realize that there is an undergirding of stewardship for them and their families, they are set free to love and serve.

3. **Spiritual Obligations:** The apostle Paul often quoted Scripture in relation to salary considerations (cf. I Corinthians 9:9-14; I Timothy 5: 17-18; Romans 4: 1-4; Galatians 6:6). There is a scriptural mandate, and therefore, a spiritual obligation to provide a just and fair salary to all who labor in the local church. The compensation should be sufficient to ensure that all church workers are spared the extraordinary stress of living on an inadequate salary.

4. **Christian Love and Candor:** The connection between pastor and people is a sacred trust. An open, caring, healthy relationship is important for the well being of the local church. Unfortunately, the question of the pastor's compensation is often passed over quickly and unfeelingly. Sometimes salary issues can become the focal point for unresolved tensions and misunderstandings. **C&M strongly recommends that annual salary negotiations be carried out with candor, clarity and a loving supportive spirit of mutual respect.** Christian love further requires that individuals not be compensated at lower levels because of age, sex, race or marital status.

Compensation

1. **Salary:** The current minimum cash salary suggested by C&M is printed at the beginning of this booklet. This C&M salary update sheet includes a grid, so as to help churches determine a fair cash salary, allowing for years of experience and size of church.

2. **Housing:** A second, major portion of a pastor's compensation is housing, which is provided either in the form of a housing allowance or the rent-free use of a church-owned house.
 - (a.) **Use of a church-owned house (Parsonage):** When the use of a parsonage is provided, the house should be on a par with the average housing in the community; it should be attractive, conveniently arranged and well maintained. The church customarily pays for all parsonage utilities (heat/AC, light, water, refuse service, local phone calls, etc.). Pastors who live in parsonages have the benefit of being able to tax exempt their furnishings costs through a budgeted "furnishings allowance." The church's Board of Trustees (or appropriate board) should vote (in consultation with the pastor) annually, before the ensuing year begins, what part of the pastor's salary is to be treated as a furnishings allowance, and include this figure in the trustee's

records. An annual furnishings allowance (not to exceed the fair rental value of just the furnishings) could save the pastor in income tax. Any unused allowance is always taxable income. Any over expenditure of the allowance is never deductible. The burden of documenting expenditures to the IRS is the pastor's.

- (b.) **When a pastor owns her or his own home:** Home ownership is still considered advantageous by many clergy because it allows a pastor to build equity in real property and to gain annual appreciation. This equity is then available for the pastor to use as collateral for an education loan or as payment toward retirement housing. Also, home ownership ensures that a pastor's spouse and family will have a home and a community in the event of a pastor's untimely death.

Many churches have found that with the capital realized from the sale of an existing parsonage, or that with the help of the income from the rental of an existing parsonage, they can provide their pastor with a housing allowance.

There is a recurring question about whether or not a congregation can loan their pastor money to purchase a home. Florida Law prohibits loans to officers of non-profit institutions by the institution. Legal counsel should be consulted before negotiating any such arrangement.

If a housing allowance is provided, several factors must be taken into consideration, both by pastor and congregation:

- The recently enacted Clergy Housing Clarification Act of 2002 states that the maximum amount of housing which clergy may receive and exclude is the "fair rental value" (defined as the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances such as a garage, plus the cost of utilities). Then to the extent that such an allowance is spent, it is excluded from taxable income.
- Such an allowance is for all expenses, as well as utilities and amortization, and, depending upon local circumstances, will generally range from \$10,000 to \$35,000 annually.
- For the actual amount of the housing allowance to qualify by IRS standards, as tax-free income, it must be clearly designated in the church budget as housing allowance, be formally approved by the appropriate church board, annually and prior to the beginning of payments. This approval must be recorded in official minutes and retained in the church files. Also, a pastor must keep records such

that she or he can show that the actual housing costs do in fact equal the entire housing allowance. Any amount of the allowance that is not actually spent on housing is taxable to the pastor

- It must be kept in mind that a housing allowance is fully taxable for social security tax purposes.
- As of the date of printing of this booklet, it appears that a housing allowance can be spent on any items required to provide a home, such as the monthly mortgage payment (interest and principal), taxes, insurance, furniture, furnishings, repairs to the house or furniture, new appliances, yard care, mowing, pool cleaning, all utilities, even the cost of pots, pans, silverware, and household cleaning materials. The only stated exceptions are food and maid service. The clergy person should check with a qualified tax attorney.

Equity Allowance: An equity allowance is not a housing allowance. The two different types of allowances should not be confused. For a pastor living in a parsonage, an equity allowance is part of basic compensation, and is only fair and just.

In fairness, there is a need to enable parsonage dwellers to accumulate some equity that can eventually be used to provide housing, either owned or rented. After a lifetime spent in parsonages, the family may have no assets with which to provide housing. In other words, at death, disability, or retirement, the pastor's family is on its own.

The mechanics for funding an equity allowance should be as simple as possible. A written statement outlining a plan, the funding and specific procedure is crucial. (We strongly suggest that this be done in consultation with a qualified tax attorney or certified financial planner to assure that the plan conforms to the requirements of the IRS.)

How much? Some congregations figure out how much the parsonage has increased in value during the past year, and pay that annually to the pastor. (A 2% increase in value on a \$125,000 parsonage would be a \$2,500 equity allowance payment.) Other churches estimate the typical payments on mortgage principal, and pay that. Still others pay a percentage of salary, say 7.5% as an equity allowance.

The important consideration is that the pastor be allowed what most parishioners have: a build-up of equity.

It must be remembered that an equity allowance is additional compensation (deferred income), and eventually will be taxable. Of course, the tax, also, may be deferred. Generally, a separate fund is set aside and is not available to the pastor until retirement. It becomes taxable when it is used. If a pastor moves, it will be desirable to agree further that the depository of such set-aside funds will be changed upon the pastor's relocation, but that the fund and the restrictions on its use be continued.

Benefits In Addition to Salary and Housing Allowance

- 1. Annuity:** Quarterly contributions to the Annuity Fund are a standard part of the supplementary compensation package for UCC clergy. The local church makes the annuity payments directly to the UCC Pension Boards. The Annuity Fund is an IRS 403(b) tax-sheltered annuity, which means payments to the fund are not taxable until the benefits are received after retirement. Local churches pay an amount equal to 14% of the sum of cash salary plus housing allowance. If a parsonage is provided, the annuity fund payment is 14% of 130%. A percentage higher than 14% may be agreed upon by the church, the pastor, and The Pension Boards.
- 2. Health Insurance:** Health Insurance rates for the UCC's self-insured programs are determined yearly by the Pension Boards. C&M recommends that the pastor participates in the denomination's health insurance plan that the church pays the full cost of health insurance premiums. Having the denomination's health insurance plan assures that coverage will continue to be available throughout a pastor's ministry in the United Church of Christ, and increases her or his security.
- 3. Disability Income and Term Life Insurance Plan:** This Plan of the United Church of Christ provides disability income insurance equal to a portion of the base salary. It provides declining term life insurance and is also based on the salary. Because this plan does not take effect for 90 days, churches may wish to purchase short-term disability insurance elsewhere to cover this period or be prepared to cover this out of church funds. The Disability Income and Term Life Insurance Plan costs 1.5% of the salary basis (cash salary plus housing).
- 4. Physical Examination:** C&M urges churches to guard the health of their pastors by paying the cost of periodic physical examinations. After the age of 40, their examinations should be done on an annual basis.
- 5. Medicare:** C&M recommends that when a pastor reaches the age of 65 and goes under Medicare, her or his church pick up the cost of The Medicare Supplement Plan. (This cost would be more than offset by the sharply lower premium required.)
- 6. Social Security:** Clergy are treated as self-employed for social security purposes. Pastors must pay the current 15.3% (Schedule SE) on the cash salary plus housing allowance or fair market rental value of the parsonage. Because this is not matched by any employer contribution, C&M urges churches to pay 7.65% of the pastor's salary plus housing allowance (or 7.65% of 130% of base salary if parsonage is provided) for social security, as it must do for regular FICA employees. The difference is that this is paid directly to the pastor and listed as a Social Security Allowance or Offset. It is taxable income. IRS regulations constantly change; pastors should apprise themselves of the most recent IRS regulations.
- 7. Worker's Compensation:** Churches are required by law to provide worker's compensation insurance coverage to all employees, including clergy.
- 8. Malpractice Insurance:** Each church should consider purchasing malpractice insurance. (This insurance is included in the Conferences of the UCC Insurance Program.)
- 9. Flexible Spending Account Plan:** Through the Pension Boards, local churches participating in the UCC Health Benefit Plans may establish a Flexible Spending Account for clergy. Aside from a modest initial set-up fee making this Account available does not have a cost to the local church as it is funded by the clergy person's voluntary salary redirection into the Account. The Account

provides participants with tax-savings related to medical deductibles, copays and dependent care expenses and is an attractive addition to a compensation arrangement.

Vacations and Leaves of Absence

1. **Vacations:** It is recommended that pastors be given at least one month paid vacation each year, with complete freedom from all parish responsibility during that time.
2. **Days Off:** C&M urges churches to grant, and pastors to take, at least one and one-half days off each week.
3. **Study Leave:** C&M urges churches to grant their pastors two weeks study leave each year for continuing education. We also urge an allowance for continuing education, which would cover costs of books and magazines, of between \$500 and \$750 a year. Pastors should share the results of any study leaves with their pastoral relations committee. Study leave time should never be equated with vacation time.
4. **Sabbatical Leave:** Sabbatical Leave is an important part of a pastor's development. The sabbatical concept is rooted in Scripture, and is a set time for study, travel, or personal renewal for the pastor. Sabbaticals are most often granted every five to seven years, and are normally three months, exclusive of vacations. Many churches offer their pastors three months at full pay, or six months at half- pay. Churches are cautioned to appropriately plan for a sabbatical every 5-7 years, by earmarking part of the expense to be set aside each year, in their annual budget. The largest cost will be pastoral coverage, and your Conference Minister can be helpful in providing more information and possible names of those who could appropriately provide pastoral coverage at the time. It would be hard to overstate the value of a sabbatical, both to pastor and to congregation. A pastor can easily become tired or stale in what is one of the most demanding professions in modern society, in terms of time and emotional involvement. A congregation helps itself, as well as its pastor, by seeing that she or he has time for enrichment and renewal.
5. **Parental Leave:** Provisions should be made, at the birth of a child, for a female pastor to be granted 2-3 months maternity leave, at full salary and benefits. A male pastor should be allowed at least 2 weeks paternity leave, at full salary and benefits. Both should be allowed certain flexibility for up to 6 months, during this important time of family adjustment and change.
6. **Adoption:** Recognizing that adoption has an impact on a family similar to that of a birth, but that each adoption has unique characteristics, a pastor should be allowed at least 2 weeks leave, at full salary and benefits, at the time of an adoption, and should be allowed a certain flexibility in scheduling during this important time of family adjustment.
7. **Personal/Compassionate Leave:** Allowance must be made for the pastor to be with his other immediate family at times of special celebration such as weddings or graduations and at times of personal emergency or unusual family responsibility. Paid personal leaves would normally be limited to a period of 5-7 days per year, except where compassion dictates further extension.
8. **Sick Leave:** C&M recommends that churches give their pastor(s) sick leave accumulated at the rate of one day per month, up to thirty days. In cases of prolonged illness or disability, churches should continue to provide clergy compensation and all benefits, except travel, for

ninety days, when the Disability Income Plan takes effect. Travel expenses should be paid for the first month. Parsonage use or housing allowance should be continued for the three-month period, and thereafter be negotiated month-by-month.

- 9. Death:** In cases of clergy death, churches should provide salary, housing and all benefits, to the spouse and/or family for three months. Continued use of the parsonage, and other expenses, such as moving, should be considered on an individual basis, in close consultation with the Conference Minister.

Professional Expenses

C&M strongly urges churches to adopt an "Accountable Reimbursement Policy" (acceptable to the IRS) as a means for repaying ministers for professional expenses they incur on behalf of the congregation. These expenses may be for transportation, overnight travel (including lodging and meals), entertainment, books, subscriptions, education, vestments and professional dues. The adoption of such a plan greatly relieves the minister of complicated tax reporting of such payments from a non-accountable plan.

- 1. Travel:** Reimbursement for travel should be at the allowable rate by the IRS. For 2016, the standard mileage rate was **54 cents a mile** (*plus tolls and parking*) for all business miles. It is necessary that the minister provide to the church a daily record of trips taken, briefly noting the purpose of such trips, the distance traveled, and the expenses incurred including tolls and parking fees. Expense vouchers should be submitted regularly on a weekly or monthly basis.

An alternative to this method might be for the church to provide the minister with an automobile for which the church pays all expenses and for which the minister would then record and compensate the church for personal miles traveled.

- 2. Ecclesiastical Meetings:** The church should pay for its pastor(s) to attend the meetings, conferences and assemblies of the Deans' groups, conference and wider church. In addition, some allowance should be made for the pastor's expenses while participating in ecumenical activities on the local or state level. Also, attendance at such functions, or work within the wider church such as camps and conferences, or committee work should not be considered vacation or "days off."
- 3. Other Business Expenses:** The costs of subscriptions to religious journals, the costs of entertaining guests of the church, the cleaning or procuring of vestments to be worn in service, professional dues and the expenses of "in service training" all are legitimate professional expenses and should NOT be taken from salary compensation. Upon written and timely account of these expenditures, they should be reimbursed by the church. C&M urges each church to keep in mind the principle of fairness:

all business expenses of the pastor should be covered by the church.

Additional Terms of Employment

- 1. Childcare Costs:** Business and industry are increasingly helping their employees with childcare costs. Each church and pastor should negotiate a reasonable level of financial

support for this expense, in the local area, based on the prevailing policies of other institutions, such as hospitals, colleges and schools, as well as business and industry.

2. **Working Conditions:** Pastors have a right to expect the church will provide them with adequate support staff, such as a competent secretary. They also have a right to expect suitable office space, in which special attention is given to the pastor's need for study, administration and counseling. Pastors often spend many hours in their office or study and need appropriate office equipment, as well as well-lighted, congenial surroundings. It is expected that each local church will do all it can to see that the pastor's office is easily accessible to people with disabilities or physical challenges.
3. **Job Description:** It is to the mutual advantage of both pastor and congregation to have a position description or a written contract between pastor and people. This will not only clarify mutual expectations, but also become a large part of the annual review and evaluation C&M recommends.
4. **Evaluation:** Appropriate documents for evaluation are available on the Conference website.. **Please keep in mind that the Florida Conference, evaluation of ministry is a mutual process, involving the "performance" of both pastor and congregation.**

Loans to Clergy

The staff of the Florida Conference has been asked for guidance regarding loans to clergy persons by their employers. If the congregation is incorporated, most are, and if the clergy person's position is named in the constitution or bylaws as an officer of the corporation, then it is likely that the following excerpt from the State of Florida Statutes regarding Not For Profit Corporations apply to your situation. Obviously, you will want to consult your own legal counsel regarding this issue. **"Loans to directors or officers,-** Loans, other than through the purchase of bonds, debentures, or similar obligations of the type customarily sold in public offerings, or through ordinary deposit of funds in a bank, may not be made by a corporation to its directors or officers or holds a substantial financial interest, except a loan by one corporation which is exempt from federal income taxation under s. 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended. A loan made in violation of this section is a violation of the duty to the corporation of the directors or officers authorizing it or participating in it, but the obligation of the borrower with respect to the loan shall not be affected thereby."¹

Associate Pastors

The minimum cash salary guidelines apply to any pastor engaged in full-time work.

All the other guidelines in this booklet should apply to the associate pastor(s), with only those adjustments that fairly reflect differing expectations from the senior pastor.

Presenting a Pastoral Compensation Package in an Annual Report Booklet

Given the fact that church members inevitably make comparisons between their own earnings and those of their pastor, thought needs to be given to the way this information is presented in the church's Annual Reports/Budget.

C&M strongly urges local churches to use a budget format that clearly distinguished among line items. A breakdown such as occurs in this booklet might be reasonable. In that case, the pastor's "earnings" would be categorized by:

Compensation (Salary... Housing/Equity)
Benefits (Annuity, insurance, Social Security, etc.)
Study/Sabbatical/Other Leaves
Professional Expenses (Travel, Meeting/Business) **Additional Costs**
(Childcare, Allowances)

In this way, congregations can help to ensure that their members have full (and fair) information as to the contents of their pastor's total compensation package.

Where Can You Get More Assistance

C&M wants to remind/inform the churches and pastors of the Florida Conference that we are available for consultation, as are the Conference Minister, Regional Conference Ministers on matters pertaining to pastoral compensation, benefits, leaves, expenses, and other terms of employment.

Lastly, we are providing, additional resources which churches/pastors might find beneficial.

Useful Phone Numbers/Addresses/Information

Florida Conference Office **407-835-7501**

The Pension Boards, UCC **800-642-6543**

Federal Income Tax Information **800-829-1040**

Social Security Information, call your district office listed in the White pages

Additional Resources:

Internal Revenue Service, Publication 517, "Social Security for Clergy and Religious Workers"

Alban Institute

Sabbatical Planning This booklet is based upon that created by the Massachusetts Conference, United Church of Christ.

Sample Call for Clergy Agreement

For a sample Call for Clergy agreement (employment contract) refer to A Local Church Seeks A Pastor, tab 5. If one is not readily available contact the Conference Office.

Sample of a proposed Covenant Between Pastor and Congregation

(This could also be used as a position description with minimum rewording. Again, keep in mind that in the Florida Conference, allowance should be made for mutual expectations and evaluation, pastor and congregation.)

Pastor and Teacher

Our Pastor is responsible, in cooperation with the Church Council (or other appropriate body) for the total policy and program of the work of Christ within this congregation of the United Church of Christ.

Our Congregation is responsible to give you all proper attention, respect love and support in your Pastoral/Teaching ministry on behalf of Christ Jesus within this congregation.

In order that mutual expectations might be clarified and evaluation possible, fair, just and mutual, these Principal duties are envisioned:

1. Our Pastor shall oversee the worship and work of the congregation. He/she shall provide direction and evaluation for all aspects of the church's ministry.

We (the congregation) shall support his/her oversight by our worship attendance and by our willingness to receive guidance, and example from our Pastor.

2. Our Pastor shall celebrate all the Rites and Sacraments appropriate to a United Church of Christ including, but not limited to: Baptism, Holy Communion, Confirmation, ordination and installation of lay persons, marriage and burial. He/she shall also provide adequate training and counseling to all that are touched by the Rites and Sacraments of the Church.

We shall support and encourage his/her sacramental leadership among us, and receive, in a spirit of mutual need, his/her counseling and training relating to the Rites and Sacraments of the Church.

3. Our Pastor shall plan and conduct services of worship each Sunday while on duty, and at such other times as may be appropriate. He/she shall be expected to research, preach and teach God's Word.

We shall be a congregation committed to being teachable and reachable in Worship, and to receiving, in all honor, our Pastor's sharing relating to God's Word.

4. Our Pastor shall visit and give comfort to the hospitalized, sick and shut-in members of our congregation, on an appropriate and continuing basis. He/she shall also seek out, and provide adequate instruction to those with sincere desire to unite with our congregation.

We, as a congregation, shall provide our Pastor with the assistance of Deacons and others that may, at his/her request, engage in this ministry.

5. Our Pastor shall act as the primary Counselor of those within the congregation who need guidance and assistance.

We shall see that he/she has adequate time for such duties and we commit that he/she shall not be expected to bear a counseling load beyond responsible expectations, or the limits of his/her skills.

6. Our Pastor, as Teacher, shall be accountable for a strong program of Christian Education (in conjunction with the Director of Christian Education and/or Religious Education Committee), oversee the preparation of those preparing to be Confirmed, and provide leadership and/or encouragement for an active youth program.

We shall assist him/her with the recruitment and training of a responsible Christian Education Committee members and Church school teachers. We also shall work with him/her to secure adequate lay or professional assistance needed to carry out an active youth program.

7. Our Pastor shall direct the on-going administrative matters of the congregation, and supervise all church staff. He/she shall have the right and duty to make recommendations to the Board of Trustees (or appropriate committee) regarding the employment, termination and salary reviews of all church staff.

We shall provide our Pastor with adequate support staff for the size and program of the congregation. We commit to receive his/her oversight, evaluation and input in all matters of administration, operation and personnel.

8. Our Pastor shall ensure that church records are properly maintained, including records of membership, birth, marriage, baptism confirmation, communion and death. He/she shall ensure that all office functions are effectively handled.

We shall provide our Pastor with appropriate office space, equipment and staff. We shall provide him/her with lay/professional assistance in the handling of all records and papers.

9. Our Pastor shall take part in appropriate community activities, and ensure that our congregation takes its responsibility to engage in mission work beyond the local church. We expect our Pastor to be ecumenical in his/her outlook, and contribute to the needs of the community as he/she feels is appropriate, as a representative of our congregation.

We shall support our Pastor's involvement in the community, and ecumenical church and allow adequate and appropriate time for these activities and involvement.

10. Our Pastor shall be expected to represent the congregation at, and where appropriate serve on, [Mission Council] Koinonia, Conference and denominational boards, committees, and related activities.

We shall support and encourage our Pastor's participation in the wider work and witness of the United Church of Christ, and provide lay delegates and workers for same, at his/her direction and/or suggestion. We agree that work for the United Church of Christ beyond our congregation shall not be counted as vacation time, study leave or day(s) off.

11. Our Pastor shall act as an ex-officio member of all organizations, committees and functions of the congregation. He/she shall endeavor to assure that all members of such groups

thoroughly understand their purpose, objectives and reason for being. He/she shall attend activities, meetings, and other gatherings as appropriate, and where time permits.

We shall not expect that our Pastor can do everything. We shall endeavor on our part not to place undo demands on his/her time relating to these organizations, committees and functions. We shall not expect our Pastor consistently to be out more than three evenings in any one week, or that he/she becomes too involved that the needs of his/her family are neglected.

12. Our Pastor shall endeavor to assure sound communications between him/herself and the congregation, and two-way communication between the congregation and the wider church.

We commit ourselves to open, honest and loving communications with and about our Pastor, and to the receipt of his/her leadership when it comes to matters relating our congregation to the wider church.

13. Our Pastor shall have full authority granted to him/her by the United Church of Christ, and by the Constitution and by-laws of our congregation. He/she shall always have freedom of the pulpit, and the right to be consulted in any matters decided by the congregation and any of its organizations, boards, officers and committees.

We shall respond appropriately at all times to his/her authority, and shall have the right of conference with him/her at all times.

14. Our Pastor shall be expected to develop professionally through continued study, reading, conferences and seminars. He/she shall share this knowledge where appropriate, and encourage our congregation to develop in their secular and spiritual growth.

We shall support and encourage our Pastor in these endeavors, and provide adequate time and assistance, so that he/she can fully benefit from continual development.

15. Our Pastor shall be expected to perform those other duties that may be mutually assigned or developed by Pastor and Congregation.

We shall assist our Pastor at all times in the discharge of his/her duties, and we accept that our ministry is a mutual one, as Pastor and Congregation.

(Note: This covenant/position description may be used in a public ceremony. If used as the official covenant, it should be co-signed by the Pastor and at least 3 appropriate church officers, and all parties should keep copies, and one copy should be forwarded to your Conference Office at <lmcaffrey@uccfla.org>)

Endnote

1. *Florida Statutes, 1997*