



Healthy Practices for Ministry Policy

The call to authorized ministry is a privilege and a sacred trust between God, the authorized minister, and the denomination, the United Church of Christ.

As those called by God and authorized by the United Church of Christ, we engage in ongoing professional and spiritual development and are ever mindful of the Ministerial Code of Ethics which guide our professional and personal relationships within the church, the communities in which we serve and the families who partner with us, support and sustain us.

Authorized ministers, ordained, commissioned and licensed in active ministry whose standing is held in Living Water Association are required to complete Healthy Practices for Ministry every other year to maintain good standing. Authorized ministers who participate in a Community of Practice are NOT exempt. Authorized Ministers who do not comply may NOT serve on the Association's Council or Committees.

Healthy Practices are coordinated through our Committee on Ministry's Oversight Working Group and are offered several times a year.

The purpose of the Healthy Practices for Ministry as stated in the Manual on Ministry is "to provide support for the authorized minister, to encourage ministers' personal and vocational development, and to provide an occasion for reflection and feedback on the practice of ministry."

Healthy Practices although include elements of Continuing Education, offer opportunities to explore current issues in ministry, in the context of community of one's colleagues.

Continuing Education experiences include:

- Learning and study in the field of theology, Bible, Church, congregational life, worship, pastoral care, spiritual life, church music, holistic health
- Classes, retreats, conferences, events in accredited seminaries, online, denominational events, individual projects completed with supervision, mentoring

Healthy Practice experiences focus on:

- Current, practical issues in ministry
- The gathering of the community of authorized ministers
- Fostering vocational, personal and spiritual development
- Supporting authorized ministers as they gather with colleagues and partners in ministry
- Gatherings that offer opportunities for sharing, reflection and feedback

All authorized ministers are invited to participate in Healthy Practices whether or not it is required for good standing. We encourage participation as we believe it enhances one's ministry and collegiality among other authorized ministers within our association.

Retired ministers who no longer engage in active ministry will be exempt. Active ministry includes pulpit supply, any kind of interim leadership, officiating at wedding ceremonies, memorial services, and conducting baptisms and hosting the Lord's Table.