

A COVENANT FOR A TIME OF DISCERNMENT IN MINISTRY

between \_\_\_\_\_

and the

Northern California Nevada Conference, United Church of Christ  
(represented by the Committee on Ministry, Section A (COM-A))

Your discernment period will be at least one year in length. During this time that you are formally recognized as a Member In Discernment for Ordained or Commissioned Ministry, a special covenantal relationship exists between you and the wider church. Both you and the church are prayerfully seeking clarity. The church is discerning your gifts and graces for ministry, just as you are integrating study and life experiences, and discerning and articulating your call to serve. While this time will be as free-form and as long as the Holy Spirit requires of both of us, there is a process which we respect, and expectations to be fulfilled. The process exists for the benefit of you as the Member In Discernment, for all the other Members In Discernment, and for the Conference which embraces all of you.

We, the Conference (represented by the Committee on Ministry, Section A), promise to:

1. Hold you regularly in prayer.
2. Be available to you for counsel and questions pertaining to the authorization process, through your assigned Committee liaison, and the Conference staff person for authorization for ministry, and to keep you fully informed of any changes in process.
3. Locate for you a clergy advisor whom we feel will challenge and encourage your growth and discernment process, and to make the connection for you with that person.
4. Read carefully all materials you provide for us, lifting thoughtful questions, appropriate challenges, and joyful affirmations.
5. Schedule regular appointments for you to meet with us (at one year intervals, or less in certain instances by mutual agreement) and be fully present for you in those gatherings.
6. Hold the personal details of your life and journey in confidence.
7. Respect deeply the call which has brought you here, and always tell you the truth in love.

We expect you to:

1. Meet with your assigned clergy advisor a minimum of 4 times/year, certainly more often if you desire.
2. **Schedule your vocational/psychological assessment during the first year you are in discernment. This report is REQUIRED, and must be received by COM-A before your second appointment.**
3. Be very attentive to the scheduling of your appointments with the Committee, and keep those appointments as set. The COM-A calendar is full, and changes affect our ability to meet our commitments to all Persons in Discernment.
4. Insure that the requirements for your next appointment (see posted checklist) are fulfilled in advance, and that any documents are sent to the Conference office 4 weeks before that date.
5. ASK QUESTIONS if you do not understand something regarding checklists, scheduling, educational requirements, or the processes of authorization. Speak with your clergy advisor, COM-A liaison, or the staff Associate Conference Minister. DO NOT DELAY OR MAKE ASSUMPTIONS.
6. Bring one or more supporters with you to your appointments. They may be colleagues, church members, your pastor, a fellow student – but most especially your assigned advisor.
7. Keep an open mind and a prayerful heart for the journey.

It is truly our privilege to walk with you. Let us covenant to do so, understanding that together we are creating the future of the United Church of Christ.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Person in Discernment

\_\_\_\_\_  
for NCNC Committee on Ministry, Section A

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE