

## **Regional Policy Regarding CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS TO MAINTAIN MINISTERIAL STANDING**

This policy establishes the requirement for continuing education by all clergy seeking "active clergy standing," in the Christian Church in Oklahoma (Disciples of Christ). Realizing that ministry takes place in a rapidly changing world, the purpose of continuing education is to strengthen ministerial leadership in both familiar and challenging new ways. So that it may be genuinely helpful, "continuing education" is to be interpreted broadly. Effective August 1, 2011, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) approved a document entitled, "Theological Foundations and Policies and Criteria for the Ordering of Ministry in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). This document describes the following 16 competencies for ministry:

- Biblical Knowledge
- Church Administration and Planning
- Communication
- Cross-cultural and Anti-Racism Experiences
- Ecumenism
- Education and Leader Development
- Ethics
- Evangelism
- Mission of the Church in the World
- Pastoral Care
- Proclamation of the Word
- Spiritual Development
- Stewardship
- Theology
- Understanding of Heritage
- Worship

Choices for continuing education should match at least one of these competencies.

- I. In a calendar year, the requirement is for 16 clock hours of continuing education.
- II. Continuing education requirements may be fulfilled by the following:
  - A. Events awarding formal Continuing Education Units (CEUs)
  - B. Degree and audit courses offered through an institution of higher education
  - C. Other seminars, workshops, and events of an educational nature (see more information and examples in section IV)
  - D. **Up to 8 of the 16 required hours may consist of self-directed studies** (see examples in section IV).

III. It is the minister's responsibility to take initiative and seek out appropriate continuing education for him/herself. If there are questions about whether a particular event qualifies, ask the following questions. "Yes" answers mean "probably so."

- A. Is the event offered by a recognized school, institution, or organization?
- B. Will this event/topic help me fulfill my ministry?
- C. Is it compatible with the 16 competencies?

The Commission on Clergy will be responsible for interpreting this policy, and assuring compliance.

IV. Examples of qualifying educational opportunities:

- A. Educational offerings of the Regional Church, such as boundaries training, annual leadership training, ministers' week, and diversity training
- B. Continuing education events from educational institutions, such as a major university, seminary, or institute
- C. Workshops or seminars of other recognized institutions, or organizations such as hospitals, hospices, prison systems, or the Oklahoma Conference of Churches
- D. Courses at educational institutions, including graduate schools and seminaries
- E. Language study, study tours, and/or work trips with an educational component
- F. Self-directed study such as professional reading (books, journals, etc.), correspondence courses, study or discussion groups, and online internet education

V. Time line:

- A. It is anticipated that congregations will expect and enable their pastors to seek continuing education annually
- B. Continuing education will be reported on the annual Application for Standing Form

VI. Suggestions:

- A. Plan continuing education early in the year
- B. Maintain a continuing education file