



Regional Commission on the Order of the Ministry (RCOM)

Approved by the Regional Board meeting on September 21, 2020

Rationale

Disciples in several Regions are working to align their policies, procedures and practices with those of the [General Commission on the Order of the Ministry](#). They are guided by [the Design of the Christian Church \(Disciples of Christ\)](#), and [Theological Foundations and Principles for the Ordering of the Ministry in the Christian Church Disciples of Christ](#).

Merging our two existing commissions in the Ministry of Clergy oversight and adopting language consistent with that used in other Regions is helpful to our clergy who may be called to serve in other contexts. Consistent practices in clergy formation and ministerial standing from Region to Region strengthens the whole Church while still allowing for adaptations for local contingencies and our ever-changing cultural context.

Regional Commission on the Order of the Ministry:

- Develops and recommends policies concerning the order of ministry in harmony with:
 - [the Design of the Christian Church \(Disciples of Christ\)](#)
 - [General Commission on the Order of the Ministry](#)
 - [Theological Foundations and Principles for the Ordering of the Ministry in the Christian Church Disciples of Christ](#)
- Considers and oversees matters related to ministerial concerns such as standing, ordination and commissioning of clergy serving within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Greater Kansas City (CCDOCGKC)
- Recommends and assists with initiatives to support clergy in:
 - Promoting spiritual health and wellness
 - Facilitating the formation of clergy peer support groups
 - Continuing education opportunities
 - Encouraging vocations to the ministry
 - Strengthening the covenantal bonds among the clergy of the CCDOCGKC
- Oversees and recommends approval for use of funds held by the CCDOCGKC designated for clergy retreats/renewal etc.
- Gives counsel to and, with the support of our Regional staff, coordinates various ministerial services in regional and institutional ministries
- Is responsible for working in concert with the other RCOMs, the General Commission on the Order of the Ministry, College of Regional Ministries and the Search and Call Office of the

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the U.S. and Canada and ecumenical partnerships in matters of clergy wellness

- Example: promoting participation in programs offered by the Pension Fund of the Christian Church
- Updating RCOM policies as needed upon recommendation from the General Commission on the Order of the Ministry

ROLES WITHIN THE REGIONAL COMMISSION ON THE ORDER OF THE MINISTRY

- Ordination Committee – works primarily with ordination candidates
- Commissioning Committee – works primarily with candidates for commissioning
- Standing Committee – works on the administrative processes regarding recognition of ordination from another denomination with advice and consent of the Ordination Committee)/oversees standing renewal processes and requirements and makes recommendations to the RCOM
- DMA – (or its successor name) and focus on clergy peer gatherings/assimilating new clergy/chaplains/annual clergy retreat
- Council on Pastoral Ethics
- Scholarship Committee
- Seven at-large-lay members

MEMBERSHIP

The Commission is comprised of no fewer than seven and no more than thirteen voting members who:

- Serve five-year* terms, renewable once **(five is used as an example in this draft)*
- Are members of classes whose terms begin on January 1 in either odd or even numbered years
 - A member elected in 2020 serves until December 31, 2024
 - A member elected in 2021 serves until December 31, 2025
- Represent the rich diversity of the clergy and lay leadership in our Region
- May be clergy in good standing or laity in good standing in a recognized congregation
- May be a member of a denomination in full communion with the Christian Church
 - United Church of Christ or United Church of Canada

From time to time, additional members may be asked to serve with voice but not vote when:

- There is a matter pertaining to a minister with an ethnic background that would benefit from having a member from the same or similar background, speaking the same native language, to assist the Commission in its work with that minister. Preference is given to staff members of the National Convocation, Obra Hispana, and, North American Pacific Asian Disciples

As the Chair begins exploratory conversations with potential members, we look for five types of participants that, together, often make for a well-functioning group:

- Someone with strengths for leading and inspiring follow-through
- A person whose gifts include casting vision, telling a compelling story
- Analysts who enjoy researching and organizing information to undergird planning
- People who like taking clear direction and accomplishing tasks
- Prayerful people who help us ground and connect all our work with the concurrent work of the Holy Spirit

The Regional Minister is a member, ex-officio with voice but not vote and serves as a liaison with the General Commission on the Order of the Ministry and the College of Regional Ministers.

The chair of the Commission is appointed by the Regional Moderator with the advice of the current RCOM for a term of 3 years, renewable once. The RCOM chair, once appointed, will recruit leaders for

- Ordination Committee – works primarily with ordination candidates, oversees their preparation and assures the RCOM when candidates are ready for Ordination
- Commissioning Committee – works primarily with candidates for commissioning
- Standing Committee – works on the administrative processes regarding recognition of ordination from another denomination with advice and consent of the Ordination Committee)/oversees standing renewal processes and requirements and makes recommendations to the RCOM which has the final say on all matters regarding standing
- DMA – (or its successor name) and focus on clergy peer gatherings/assimilating new clergy/chaplains/annual clergy retreat
- Council on Pastoral Ethics (see description below)
- Scholarship Committee – oversees the process for applying for scholarships for ministerial formation and/or continuing education from funds held by our Region
- Six at-large-lay members

When leaders and lay members are recruited they will be presented to our Regional Executive Committee for approval

Members agree to participate in a minimum of 75% of regularly scheduled meetings of the Commission.

The RCOM Chair (who has voice and vote-in-the-event-of-a tie) will preside at all meetings of the RCOM. On the occasion when the Chair is unable to be present, the Chair of the Ordination Committee will preside.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

From time to time, the RCOM may convene meetings with other ministry colleagues and lay leaders to advise the Commission on specific matters and/or to assist in evaluating the work of the Commission.

COUNCIL ON PASTORAL ETHICS

A group of no fewer than five and no more than seven, including a minimum of three current members of the RCOM and the Regional Minister and President may be called to convene in the event that a written complaint alleging a serious breach of pastoral ethics is received by the Regional Minister concerning a member of the clergy with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Greater Kansas City (CCDOCGKC).

- This Council shall be chaired by a member of the RCOM with board certification as a chaplain.
- The Council will operate in accordance with the latest revision of the Council guidelines.
- The Council will be called together at least annually (whether in person or via video conference) to receive updates on best practices and to recertify members willingness to continue serving in this important capacity.

MEETINGS

The RCOM meets at at least three times a year with one day being an all-day retreat of the RCOM where we invite a member from GCOM to take part in the conversations that day.

Meetings can be in hybrid form, making use of audio and video technology for some or all members.

Additional meetings can be called by the RCOM Chair with seven days' notice for special occasions – such as acting on a recommendation for ordination or commissioning between regularly scheduled meetings.