

## Theological and Biblical Foundations

- We believe in the triune God who creates all that lives and who passionately desires to rejoice in our worship and in our love for God and others. God’s general call is extended to all humans in every time and place. We confess that sin mars the relationship with God and with one another. Yet, in Jesus Christ, through the continuing power of the Holy Spirit, we are saved to new life as whole persons in communion with the triune God, and with all others in the body of Christ.
- We as ministers acknowledge both God’s specific call on our lives extended to us in Jesus Christ and the church’s call affirming God’s anointing on our lives. We are “shepherds of God’s flock” (1 Peter 5:2-4) and are committed to the unity of all believers (John 17:20-23). We do not exist simply for ourselves but as Jesus taught his disciples, that they are to serve as he served: giving his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:42-45).
- We, therefore, understand that no minister can do the work of the kingdom alone, without the community of others. We further acknowledge the necessity of being in communion with all our brothers and sisters, but particularly with our colleagues in ministry, knowing that what one does to promote God’s kingdom encourages all of us, and what one does that brings dishonor to the body of Christ harms all of us.
- Hence, we seek to surrender our lives daily to the authority of the triune God, and through him, we also will seek to honor others in service to God’s kingdom by how we live our lives consistent with the journey of faith to which God has called us all.

### RACE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY AND THE CHURCH OF GOD

- I will affirm the Church of God’s theological position of being a racially, ethnically diverse, and united family of God in my preaching, teaching, counseling, and personal conversations. Our heritage and clear teaching of Scripture compels us to condemn racism in any form. I recognize that this is part of my covenantal accountability as an ordained minister of the Church of God.
- I will affirm the Church of God’s theological position that women may hold full and equal ministry roles within the church in my preaching, teaching, counseling, and personal conversations. I recognize this is part of my covenantal accountability as an ordained minister of the Church of God.
- I will affirm the Church of God’s theological position that God’s intent for marriage is a faithful, exclusive, lifelong commitment between a man and a woman, reflecting God’s design that recognizes the intrinsic difference between male and female. Therefore, I will honor the Church of God General Assembly’s resolutions on same-sex marriage by refraining from performing or participating in the leadership of same-sex marriage ceremonies. I will not promulgate or espouse any teachings or practices that contradict the Word of God as commonly understood by the Church of God. I recognize this is part of my covenantal accountability as an ordained minister of the Church of God.

PREAMBLE

This Ministerial Code of Ethics establishes expectations of **moral and ethical standards of behavior** to be adhered to by all persons licensed or credentialed by Indiana Ministries of the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana). This code applies primarily to pastors and ministers serving in congregations. Professionally trained pastoral counselors, family and marriage counselors, chaplains of the Armed Forces, and other institutional chaplains should conform – in addition to appropriate sections of this Code – to the covenants and codes of ethics appropriate to these specialized ministries. Although it is generally assumed that ministers will behave ethically, church groups often also assume that all persons will agree on what constitutes ethical behavior. However, reality indicates that such assumptions are occasionally incorrect. Therefore, although the following is not a legal document and cannot alone create an ethical person, we attempt here to establish in writing our expectations for professional conduct for all persons who engage in ministry on behalf of Indiana Ministries of the Church of God.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

1. I will act in ways that uphold and enhance the honor, integrity, morality, and dignity of the profession.
2. I will limit my activities to positions and responsibilities for which I am qualified.
3. I will maintain confidentiality in all my relationships (including my family), recognizing, however, the limitations placed on confidentiality with regard to the safety and well-being of all persons.
4. I will maintain honesty in all communication and refrain from gossip.
5. I will give due credit when I utilize materials created by another.
6. I will give accurate information regarding my education, credentials, and/or qualifications for service.
7. I will avoid seeking personal favors, advantages, or discounts based on my professional status or exploiting others for my benefit.
8. I will respect and work cooperatively with all members of Indiana Ministries of the Church of God.
9. I will enter into the pastoral relationship to benefit those I serve, not myself. This means that I will faithfully teach the Word of God, protect the vulnerable, and offer pastoral care to all regardless of race, gender, creed, ethnic origin, socio-economic status, or sexual orientation.
10. I will speak kindly and respectfully about colleagues in ministry, including predecessors and successors.
11. I will avoid administering the corporate finances of the church, but if required to do so, I will do it with openness and personal integrity; and I will submit the accounts to audit or other independent review.
12. I will seek and be open to the counsel of the state minister, should divisive tensions develop that threaten my relationship with those I serve. I will maintain appropriate boundaries between myself and parishioners, recognizing the danger inherent in dual personal and vocational relationships.
13. I will take care to avoid any impropriety in pastoral counseling relationships. I affirm the value of pastoral counseling; however, realizing that I am a spiritual counselor, I will refer parishioners to an appropriately trained counselor in cases beyond my expertise.
14. I will abstain from interfering directly or indirectly with the work and ministry of another. If asked to perform a wedding, funeral, or other service in a congregation I formerly served, I will seek the approval of the current pastor.

- 15. I will seek to practice Matthew 18, Galatians 6, and other biblical mandates if I experience a problem with a colleague. If such an attempt fails, I will then discuss the problem with Indiana Ministries.
- 16. I will protect the integrity of staff relationships by avoiding behavior that undermines them. If I have personal differences with a staff member, I will address them directly and seek a peaceful resolution, following the Matthew 18 approach.
- 17. I will give myself to serving the wider church as I am able and lead my congregation to be a valuable partner in the work of the Church of God in Indiana as well as Kingdom work in my community.

PERSONAL CONDUCT

- 1. I will demonstrate my personal love for God as revealed in Jesus Christ in my life and ministry.
- 2. I will commit myself to biblical standards of holiness [as understood by the Church of God].
- 3. I will cultivate a consistent devotional life, practicing spiritual disciplines of study, prayer, spiritual direction, and meditation.
- 4. I will seek to maintain good health and refrain from abuse of medications and other substances.
- 5. I will not engage in sexual misconduct, whether in person, by reading material, telephone, computer, or any other means.
- 6. If unmarried, I will exercise wisdom in dating or forming a romantic relationship with a congregant.
- 7. I will manage my personal finances wisely and honestly, accepting responsibility for all debts I incur, and will adhere to the biblical model of generosity.
- 8. If for any reason my level of functioning is impaired because of declining emotional or spiritual well-being, I will seek the counsel of a trusted colleague or support group or obtain professional help. After such counsel, if I (come to) believe my ministerial effectiveness is severely compromised; I will seek guidance from the state minister.
- 9. I will honor my family in all ways, maintaining biblical standards of chastity in singleness and fidelity in marriage. I will hold marriage as a sacred and holy union ordained by God. I recognize that divorce would require a reevaluation of my credentials.
- 10. I will strive to live a life that honors my commitments to my family, providing for sufficient privacy and quality time together.

## STATEMENT OF CONCURRENCE

As a licensed or credentialed minister of the Church of God, I will partner with Indiana Ministries and the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana) to lead and serve with integrity and humility. I have read the Ministerial Code of Ethics and affirm that I will conduct myself in accordance with it in its entirety.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name