

**Retired Licensed Ministers Status**  
**Living Waters Association, Nebraska Conference of the United Church of Christ**

This document is based on the draft submitted to the Church and Ministry Committee on March 14, 2015 by:

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The Council of the Living Waters Association adopted these guidelines at its meeting on May 9, 2015.

**Statement on Licensed Minister Status**

Introduction

The term Retired Licensed Minister is used by a local church in the Living Waters Association of the Nebraska Conference of the United Church of Christ to honor a person whose lengthy or effective ministry in the local church has been one of distinguished service. The designation recognizes an individual's retirement from active licensed ministry. Conferring this status is an act of the association and is an honor that the association may wish to consider following the licensed ministers' retirement or if a licensed minister becomes disabled and is no longer able to serve. Conferring of this title entitles the retired licensed ministerial delegate voting delegate rights and privileges at the Nebraska or future successor's conferences /conventions.

Considerations for Conferring

It is important to know what the title confers being retired from active service while retaining one's title as an honor. The retaining of title is offered because of merit earned during the time of active service. The honor is never an automatic one but rather is recognition of exceptional service or contribution to a community. Conferring of this title entitles the honorably retired licensed minister voting delegate rights and privileges at the Nebraska or future successor's conferences /conventions.

First, the person is receiving this very special honor because of the merit of service rendered. The previous ministry distinguished itself over a long period of time, usually a minimum of five to ten years. However, the time is considered only a guideline if service is unable to be served due to the health status of an individual, closure of a local church, or events that are not controllable.

Both the person honored, the association and their local church need to have a sense of the specifics of the service that warrants the awarding of this honor.

Second, the person, and the local church, need to know that the person has retired from active ministry and is no longer an active licensed minister or pastor of a specific local church.

The following are responsibilities of both the Association and the Retired Licensed Minister involved in this status:

#### Association

1. The Association may wish to include the name of the Retired Licensed Minister on the Association website, and other settings where such listing is appropriate.
2. The Association may call upon or invite the Retired Licensed Minister to play specific roles, in particular in celebrations such as gatherings, anniversaries, etc.
3. The Association will seek to inquire about and be concerned for the ongoing health and happiness of the Retired Licensed Minister and will attempt to maintain contact to ensure ongoing concern and support.
4. The Registrar of the Association will maintain a current roll of all Retired Licensed Ministers.
5. The Association may revoke or place on hold the status of the Retired Licensed Minister, if there is found to be an abuse of the rights and privileges, or the Retired Licensed Minister has returned to an extended period of Active Licensed Ministry.

#### Retired Licensed Minister

1. The Retired Licensed Minister will continue to support the efforts of the United Church of Christ, through ongoing prayer, time, talent, treasure and, if able, attend association or conference gatherings.
2. The Retired Licensed Minister may administer the sacraments and rites of the church, including the service of Marriage. The Retired Licensed Minister shall continue to be in covenant with the association and, if performing these sacraments and rites, shall report his/her activities to the association on an annual basis.
3. Any Retired Licensed Minister who provides pulpit supply, sacraments, rites, or pastoral care, must continue to participate in an Ethics and/or Boundaries review/course every three years and provide documentation to the association.
4. The Retired Licensed Minister must read, review and sign the Licensed Minister Code and be held to the Ethics of Ministry at all times as outlined specifically:

- The Retired Licensed Minister shall not perform pastoral services within a parish<sup>1</sup> or for a member of a parish without the consent of the pastor of that parish.
- The Retired Licensed Minister will deal honorably with the record of their predecessor and successor.
- The Retired Licensed Minister shall not, upon termination and departure from a ministry position, interfere with nor intrude upon the ministry of their successor.

#### Process for this Designation

The initiative for conferring this honor begins with any member of the association or a local church by submitting a written request to the association to honor a Licensed Minister who is about to retire, or a previously Licensed Minister of the association. The request should include:

- The years of services provided
- Why they feel the individual should be honored with this title

The request is then submitted to the association for its approval. (The Church and Ministry Committee, is also encouraged to submit the names of individuals who are retiring to be considered for this honor.)

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<sup>1</sup> The use of the word "parish" in this document shall be synonymous with the word "congregation."



