

Syllabus for United Church of Christ Covenant and Polity As of August 2019, we are in year 2 in the 4-year cycle



I would like to say, “This is my final answer”, but with the ever changing UCC, new issues evolve and I become aware of the new needs of the students. Any changes in the syllabus will be made available in a timely manner to the students. Also, I do not claim to be the all-knowing all-seeing mind of the United Church of Christ and this is the reason for bringing in guests. Meredith Hutchison

*If you have any questions, my home phone is 724-468-0430. Cell is 724-689-6726
My e-mail is mercomp@aol.com*

Resources: You will need Internet access for this course www.ucc.org, www.pennwest.org, **Manual on Ministry** and you may want to purchase *Journaling the Journey* and *The Marks Rubric*, (All available from United Church of Christ Resources). **Please bring the Manual on Ministry to October 12 class.**

Course Purpose: The purpose of this course is to prepare the students for ministry with an understanding of the governance structures of the United Church of Christ in all of its settings and to have a working knowledge of the covenantal relationships within the structure of our denomination. Additionally, the students will have background in the history of the United Church of Christ and its ministry now and in the future.

Goals:

1. To help the students prepare for ecclesiastical authorization through the discernment process.
2. To understand the polity of the United Church of Christ and how the various structures operate in all its settings.
(Goals continued next page)
3. To meet people in our conference who have been active in the church in various settings beyond the local church and hear their stories.

4. To understand how covenant is essential in allowing the United Church of Christ to be and do church.
5. To have a working knowledge of the history of the United Church of Christ and how it is making history now.
6. To be able to teach others about how we do church in the United Church of Christ.

The course will address the following Marks for Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministry as its objectives:

Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice

- Being called to authorized ministry in the United Church of Christ.
- Continuing discernment of one's call in community.
- Exhibiting a commitment to lifelong spiritual development and faithful personal stewardship.

Nurturing UCC Identity

- Acknowledging Jesus Christ as the sole Head of the Church.
- Communicating passion for the oneness of the Body of Christ.
- Holding active membership in a Local Church of the United Church of Christ
- Participating in the various settings of the United Church of Christ
- Knowing and appreciating UCC history, polity and theology.
- Exhibiting a commitment to the core values of the United Church of Christ

Building Transformational Leadership Skills

- Empowering the Church to be faithful to God's call, reflective of Christ's mission, and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit.
- Strategically creating the future of God's Church.
- Witnessing in the public square God's redeeming power.
- Working collaboratively with intercultural awareness and sensitivity.
- Encouraging leadership development of self and others through continuing education and lifelong learning.

Caring For all Christian

- Stewarding the resources of the church.

Participating in Theological Praxis

- Practicing theological reflection and engagement as part of one's sense of ministerial identity.
- Integrating theological reflection in teaching, preaching and ecclesial and community leadership.
- Articulating a theology and practice of ministry consistent with the UCC Manual on Ministry.
- Demonstrating an appreciation for and participation in the ecumenical and interfaith partnerships of the United Church of Christ.
- Embodying the UCC Ministerial Code.

Strengthening inter and intra-personal assets

- Developing and maintaining a healthy sense of self as shaped by God, community and life experiences.
- Living in relationships of covenantal accountability with God and the Church.

Demonstrating excellent communication skills.

Session 1

Marks:

Nurturing UCC Identity

- Acknowledging Jesus Christ as the sole Head of the Church.
- Communicating passion for the oneness of the Body of Christ.
- Holding active membership in a Local Church of the United Church of Christ
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What is Polity? Use Channing Bete Books-History and Organization of United Church of Christ

Covenant: Biblical foundations for covenant. Salem Church Covenant. Local church autonomy and covenant. Signs of the covenant in the UCC (OCWM, participation in annual meeting, service in the wider church, etc.). Three and four-way covenants in the United Church of Christ. Ordained Minister's Code.

All-Report paper for March: 3-5 pages on a "Hidden History" as assigned (<http://www.ucc.org/about-us/hidden-histories/>) . Everyone is to read the Introduction to Volume 1, "Beyond Historical Orthodoxy" as well as the Introduction to Volume 2, "Unity and Diversity".

Choose one of these hidden histories to read and report on:

Volume 1:

- **"American Indians, Missions and The United Church of Christ."**
- **"The Afro Christian Connection" and "Blacks and the American Missionary Association"**
- **"The Ursinus School and the Reaction against Evangelical Catholicism" (If no one chooses this, we will all read it)**

- **“Armenian Congregationalists flee from genocide and find a home in the US”**
- **“The Deaconess Movement in 19th Century America: Pioneer and Professional Women”**
- **“Women’s Work and Women’s Boards”**
- **“Sho-Chiku-Bai: Japanese-American Congregationalists**

Volume 2:

- **“The Union Church: A Case of Lutheran and Reformed Congregations”**
- **“Origins of the Christian Denomination in New England”**
- **“Women’s Mission Structure and The American Board”**
- **“Religious Journalism: A Legacy from the Christian Church”**
- **“The Congregational Training School for Women”**
- **“Chinese Congregationalism”**

Session 2

Nurturing UCC Identity

- Acknowledging Jesus Christ as the sole Head of the Church.
- Communicating passion for the oneness of the Body of Christ.
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- Exhibiting a commitment to the core values of the United Church of Christ

Building Transformational Leadership Skills

- Empowering the Church to be faithful to God's call, reflective of Christ's mission, and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit.
- Strategically creating the future of God's Church.

Participating in Theological Praxis

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- Articulating a theology and practice of ministry consistent with the UCC Manual on Ministry.

Class:

Guest Speaker-The Rev. June Boutwell. Highlights of the Manual on Ministry. Students will need the Manual.

Session 3

Marks:

Nurturing UCC Identity

- Communicating passion for the oneness of the Body of Christ.
- Knowing and appreciating UCC history, polity and theology.

Class: Hidden Histories of the UCC. Summarize your report by naming three things that surprised you about your “Hidden History”. Where is the church where you serve or are a member in the Ursinus debate?

Paper for next session: “My Experience in the Wider Church” and a 1 minute or less “elevator speech”. An elevator speech is what you might say to someone about the United Church of Christ in the time that it takes to travel no more than 2 floors in an elevator.

Students finishing the course may want to begin working on their final paper. Meredith will give an outline of what this is to include.

Session 4

Marks:

Exhibiting a Spiritual Foundation and Ongoing Spiritual Practice

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Strengthening inter and intra-personal assets

- Living in relationships of covenantal accountability with God and the Church.

- Demonstrating excellent communication skills

Class: Reflections on Papers.

“My Experience in the Wider Church” and a 1 minute or less “elevator speech”.

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Graduates: Excerpts from final paper.

2Session 2

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Class: The Rev. June Boutwell. Highlights of the 2018 Manual on Ministry.
Students will need the Manual on Ministry for this class.