

**CALL AGREEMENT**  
between an Authorized Minister and a Local Church  
of the United Church of Christ

*The call to Kiah Baxter, extended by the Bar Harbor Congregational Church UCC:*

Having sought the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and believing that God has called us to share in the mutual ministry of Christ, the members of the Bar Harbor Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, at 29 Mount Desert Street, Bar Harbor, Maine, at a regularly called meeting of this congregation held on October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023, voted to enter into covenant with you to become a minister of this church as our **Minister of Faith Formation** pending your ordination. All parties execute the following agreement in good faith.

**OUR FAITH FOUNDATION IS GROUNDED IN COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIPS**

The covenantal relationships between parts of the Body of Christ are characterized by mutuality, transparency, accountability, and a desire to represent Christ together for the glory of God. We covenant to care for one another and offer compassion in thought, word, and deed. We will listen to learn, inquire to understand, and speak for hope and not harm. In both similarities and differences, we will ask for God's grace and offer it freely to one another. Above all else, we will love and respect one another. (Adopted March 2022 by The Maine Conference UCC & The Sunrise Association UCC October 2022)

**Our Church's Mission Statement:**

"Jesus tells us 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" In response, our mission is to be a Christ-centered community of prayer and worship, welcome and care, learning and growing, witness and service. We endeavor to embody God's love for *all* people.

**Covenant.** We are a church based in covenant. When a church calls a pastor, it covenants to compensate fairly, and the pastor covenants to serve faithfully.

**Stewardship.** We are accountable for the wise use of the church's resources, both human and material, therefore the church should be an intentional steward in the raising and the expenditure of funds, and the pastor should be an intentional steward in the use and renewal of his/her life in ministry.

**Christian Love.** Because the connection between pastor and people is a sacred trust, open, caring, healthy relationships are essential for the wellbeing of the local church. It is our expectation that you will prioritize your own faith formation and self-care. Salary and benefits negotiations, new and annual, should be carried out with candor and clarity, and with loving, supportive, mutual respect. As Christians, we are called to compensate all persons fairly, regardless of age, gender, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, disabilities, marital or family status.

## **Scope of work for $\frac{3}{4}$ time Minister of Faith Formation Position (30 hrs. weekly)**

The ***Minister of Faith Formation***, while primarily building and maintaining relationships, as well as teaching both implicitly and explicitly, and facilitating the faith formation of all ages in the church, both in age-specific groupings and through a robust intergenerational ministry, shall:

- Mentor others on their faith journey through teaching, preaching, and counseling;
- Collaborate with others (pastor, Learning and Growing Ministry Team, The Leadership Council (TLC), other staff members and volunteers) to create a unified vision for ministry;
- Participate in worship design, preparation, and leadership including preaching at least 4-6 times a year, as well as administering the Sacraments, when called upon;
- Develop worship experiences for elementary children and their families;
- Plan and facilitate learning opportunities, programs, and activities that promote spiritual growth and development that may include Bible study, Sunday School, Sunday nursery, Liturgical season study series, Confirmation, retreats, youth and family programming, etc.;
- Facilitate Learning & Growing Ministry Team meetings and other related working groups, as needed;
- Develop the Faith Formation budget, in collaboration with the Learning and Growing Ministry Team;
- Facilitate activities effectively in a variety of presentation modes, including, but not limited to in-person, online, and hybrid models;
- Collaborate with community-based partners to provide meaningful learning opportunities;
- Identify, share, provide resources and/or serve as a resource herself to support individuals on their faith journey;
- Seek, make known, support opportunities, and equip others for service and learning experiences including, but not limited to Outdoor Ministries and Outreach;
- Welcome families and inform new and prospective members of family, adult, children, & youth activities; and
- Support communication efforts to promote programs and activities on a variety of platforms (church newsletter, webpage, Facebook, newspaper, etc.).

## **REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS**

The ***Minister of Faith Formation*** will:

- Report to the Senior Minister;
- Participate in an annual staff evaluation;
- Attend staff meetings and TLC meetings;
- Attend Learning & Growing Ministry Team meetings and other related working groups;
- Administer the volunteer/participant - child/youth protection policy & practices (as outlined in our church's Safe Church policy); and
- Participate in wider church activities such as conference and association meetings as time permits.

## TERMS OF CALL AGREEMENT

### SALARY AND HOUSING

- Salary - \$34740 (increase of 4.4%)
- Housing Allowance - \$12000

### FINANCIAL BENEFITS

- Annuity (pension - \$5124/year)
- Health and Dental Insurance, Life Insurance, and Disability Income plan (\$14868/year)
- Social Security and Medicare Offset (\$2658 - offset) SS is 15.3 of her salary—1/2 of that amount is the 'offset'

### TIME BENEFITS

**WEEKLY HOURS:** We recognize that the demands of church life come at all hours of the day and night, and that the covenant with our church sometimes requires your attention to matters beyond your control. We expect that your work schedule will average 30 hours weekly ( $\frac{3}{4}$  time), understanding that additional hours may be required but will be examined if the hours habitually exceed the 30 hours per week for you or for us. Therefore, we wholeheartedly support your need to take time for self-care on a regular basis, and we encourage your faithful management of days off for rest and rejuvenation. We anticipate that we will honor your limited time best if we agree in advance as to the days when you are available, allowing for the occasional emergency.

**VACATION:** Our church provides you 4 weeks of vacation time during each 12 months of service, including 4 Sundays. The congregation is responsible for our programs, worship life and each other during your vacation. Service to the wider church (e.g. summer camp leadership, mission trips, and national/conference/association meetings) is not construed as vacation time. Vacation time does not roll over from year to year; vacation time that is unused at the end of a year is forfeited. Vacation pay will be prorated upon termination.

**PAID HOLIDAYS:** Our church staff receives these days as paid holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents' Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Indigenous Peoples' Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

When these holidays are work days for the Authorized Minister or Monday holidays that fall on one of the minister's usual days off, they may be converted to "floating holidays".

Our church grants the Sunday after Christmas and Easter as paid holiday time in addition to the vacation benefit.

**PARENTAL LEAVE:** Parental leave is extended if you and your family experience the birth or adoption of a child or placement of a foster child. You will receive 12 weeks of paid parental leave so that you can care for self and family. Unused parental leave is forfeited (not accrued).

**SICK LEAVE:** Our church realizes that life is rarely predictable or easy; therefore, leave time is available to you for special circumstances. We expect that you will communicate promptly with The Leadership Council (TLC) should these circumstances arise and leave time be needed. In the event of your illness, we provide up to 12 days of sick leave per 12 months of service; sick leave can accumulate up to 120 days across the years of your ministry with us, though accumulated sick leave is not payable upon termination. (For extended illness, see “Short-Term Disability.”)

**EMERGENCY OR PERSONAL LEAVE:** In the event of circumstances such as but not limited to the illness of a dependent, the death of a family member, or a personal crisis, we provide up to 5 days of personal leave per incident, not to exceed 10 days per 12 months of service. Personal leave does not accumulate. Sick time and personal leave are not meant to be utilized as additional vacation time.

**SABBATICAL LEAVE:** Our church will provide you with a sabbatical leave of 2 months after 7 years of part-time ministry with our church. During your sabbatical, we will pay your full salary and benefits. We expect you to share with The Leadership Council, at least one year before beginning the sabbatical, the developing plans for time away. In your absence, we covenant to care for our church, our programs, our worship life, and each other. Further, we covenant not to use this time to accomplish or decide alone what we have not been willing or able to do together. We will, and we expect you will also, use the time to reflect on our mutual ministry in Christ and how we can live more fully into our call as Christ’s church. Upon your return, we invite you to share with us an overview of activities and learnings from your sabbatical. Unless otherwise agreed before the sabbatical, we expect that you will continue as our Minister of Faith Formation for at least 1 year after your return.

## **DISABILITY AND DEATH**

**SHORT-TERM DISABILITY:** If you become disabled or experience an extended illness and you are unable to meet your ministerial responsibilities during the time of this call agreement, we expect that you will use all available sick and vacation time as well as the annual allowance of personal leave during the waiting period of the Short Term Disability plan of the Pension Boards (approximately 30 days). Thereafter, we will pay only benefits (annuity and insurance premiums) until the expiration of Short Term Disability benefits. Disability, health benefits and leave time are provided in lieu of benevolence offerings, in the best financial interests of both you and the church.

**WORKERS COMPENSATION:** You are obligated to report a workplace injury to the Moderator/Senior Pastor of the church as soon as is practicable. In the event that an injury or illness is compensable under workers compensation law, workers compensation shall be the primary benefit. Short-Term and Long-Term Disability benefits, when eligibility is established, will be adjusted in accordance with Pension Board Health and Disability Plan documents. As with Short-Term Disability, we will pay only benefits (annuity and insurance premiums) for a total of six months from the date of injury or illness.

**DEATH:** In the event of your death while we are in this covenant, we will provide your immediate family – in addition to salary earned but not yet paid – full cash salary, housing, health and dental benefits, and Social Security and Medicare offset for 90 days from the date of death. Further

provisions may be considered and will be discussed with your family by our Church Council, our Conference or Association Minister, and, as appropriate, the Association Committee on Ministry.

## **COPYRIGHT AGREEMENT**

- The church and minister acknowledge that sermons and other original written and spoken theological reflections authored by minister (collectively, “the works”) are ecclesiastical events and moments which are the product of deeply personal spiritual reflection, prayer and discernment by minister.
- It is agreed that regardless of when and where such reflection, prayer, discernment and preparation of the works, occurs, whether or not on church premises or using church facilities and whether or not during regular church hours of operation, the content of such works remain personal to the minister, who retains all ownership, copyright, and other legal interests in such works and having unfettered discretion to reprise or republish such works for other purposes and at other times, and to alone have claim to any financial benefits that may attend thereto.
- It is not intended for this acknowledgment and agreement to constitute the conveyance by the church to the minister of either a taxable or tax-free excess benefit, but rather to reflect the ecclesiastical reality of the formation and ownership of these works.
- In consideration of minister’s employment by church, the minister hereby grants to church an irrevocable, non-exclusive, worldwide, sub-licensable, transferable and royalty-free license to use, reproduce, distribute, create derivative works of, publicly perform and publicly display such works (whether solely or jointly with others) in any media now known or hereafter known.
- Such license shall continue in effect (I) while minister is employed by church and (II) thereafter, with the consent of minister, which consent of minister will not be unreasonably withheld or delayed.
- In no event shall use of such works by church be for purposes of its commercial gain; provided, that any such use in the ordinary course of church’s stewardship campaign shall not be considered a prohibited use for commercial gain.
- Church and minister agree at this time to amend the terms of the agreement regarding such works at any time and in any manner as minister in her sole discretion deems advisable to better and more fully reflect the intent of the parties expressed herein.

## **PROFESSIONAL MINISTRY EXPENSES**

**MINISTRY EXPENSES:** Our church will reimburse you for ministry expenses up to \$500 annually. Ministry expenses include such items as journal subscriptions, hosting expenses for church guests, professional dues, vestments, and other legitimate costs incurred as a result of your service to this church. You may submit expense items monthly for reimbursement.

**CONFERENCE, ASSOCIATION AND WIDER CHURCH MEETINGS:** Our church values and expects your participation in *UCC Wider Church and Outdoor Ministry Events, i.e.*

- Attendance at Association and Conference meetings
- Time to serve in Association, Conference, or national settings of the UCC.
- Participation in 1 week of participation in or service to outdoor ministry opportunities.

If the pastor’s expenses for participation in a wider church or outdoor ministry event are not reimbursed by the wider ministry setting, they will be reimbursed by the congregation.

**CONTINUING EDUCATION:** Our church encourages and supports your ongoing professional growth through participation in collegial learning groups: clergy gatherings; communities of practice, New England Association of United Church Educators and in continuing education programs to strengthen your ministry among us. Therefore we budget \$1,000 and 1 week paid leave (including two Sundays) for those opportunities and expenses. We expect you to discuss with The Leadership Council and Senior Pastor, in advance, the nature and timing of these opportunities so that we can negotiate with you the dates and types of events that best support our church's ministries and your needs for ongoing development.

If expenses for Continuing Education exceed the budgeted amount, the pastor can request additional funds from the church Leadership Council and/or apply for a scholarship from The Sunrise Association or a Resourcing the Local Church Individual Grant from the Maine Conference UCC.

**SELF-CARE:** Your well-being and vibrancy in your ministry will be strengthened by the support provided by professional coaching, counseling, and spiritual direction. The church will reimburse \$50 monthly to cover these costs. You may submit expense items monthly for reimbursement.

**MILEAGE:** Our church will reimburse you, at the Internal Revenue Service mileage rate established each year, for using your automobile in fulfilling the duties of the pastoral office. It is your responsibility to keep a log of mileage for accountability to the church and to the IRS. We have established up to \$250 to cover annual mileage expenses.

#### **WE FURTHER COVENANT:**

**FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PULPIT:** Notwithstanding any of the other pastoral responsibilities outlined in our church bylaws, in the United Church of Christ Constitution and Bylaws and Manual on Ministry (noting the *Minister Codes* and *The Church in Relation to Its Pastor* in Section 1 of MOM), and in the Three-Way Covenant we establish together with the Association/Conference, in accepting pastoral leadership we also accept your freedom of expression in the pulpit as it pertains to matters of faith and faithfulness, trusting you to be responsible to the insight of scripture, the work of the Holy Spirit, the traditions of the United Church of Christ, and the contexts in which we live our lives.

**REVIEW OF MINISTRY:** The church will examine the priorities, visions, stresses, and effectiveness of our congregation's ministries and of your ministry among us every three years at minimum. As an ongoing part of this review, we will negotiate annually with you through the TLC to update this call agreement, keeping in mind increases in the cost-of-living, possible merit increases in salary, and consequent increases in benefits based on salary and housing.

**MEDIATION PROCEDURES:** Our church acknowledges that, even as we pledge our faithfulness to God, to one another and to you, there may be times when difficulties within our relationship begin to overwhelm us. In those instances, we covenant with you to seek the support, advice and wisdom of our Association or Conference Minister and our Association Committee on Ministry in order to restore the goodness of our relationship and the goodness that God has placed within it. Either you or the The Leadership Council (TLC), representing our congregation, can request a Situational Support Consultation if, in the opinion of either, our ecclesiastical relationships are becoming ineffective or unhealthy.

**TERMINATION OF PASTORAL CALL:** Our church recognizes that relationships are always changing and that many reasons can lead to a separation. If you desire to terminate this call agreement, you are expected to give 60 days notice to the Church Council as a professional courtesy and to continue to perform your duties during that time. The Church Council may vote to excuse you by written resolution from further performance of your duties once you have given notice. You will be paid only for the period of time you perform duties. The church may choose to terminate this agreement by a 2/3 quorum vote of the congregation. Such a termination would not be made lightly or secretly, and we promise to consult with Association/Conference staff and/or to seek outside wisdom and assistance before such a vote.

**In mutual witness and agreement, we sign our names on this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_:**

Moderator/President: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Clerk/Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Minister: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Copies of this call agreement are made and distributed to the Authorized Minister and Local Church, and to the Association, Conference, or related Committee on Ministry for keeping with the minister's file.*

**Proposed Compensation Package for Kiah Baxter**

	Employee (budgeted 2023)	Actual 2023	Called as ordained minister
Salary	\$33,280.00	\$33,280.00	\$34,740.00
Health, dental, life and disability insurance	\$13,094.00	\$14,868.00	\$14,868.00
Annuity	\$4,160.00	\$5,124.00	\$5,350.00
Social Security (offset)	\$2,546.00	\$2,546.00	\$2,658.00
Pastoral Expenses (incl travel)			\$ \$2,250.00
Housing Allowance		\$9000.00 housing stipend (discount on parsonage rental)	\$12,000.00
Total Ministerial Expenses		\$64,818.00	\$71,866.00

**Notes**

Budgeted 2023 salary reflects a 4% increase from 2022

In 101-200 congregation range, mid-range is \$46319. 75% of that is \$34740.00 which is \$1460.00 more than current salary (before benefits)

Our church will compensate Kiah for the portion of Social Security and Medicare that we would pay if she were an employee of the church; the Social Security Administration designates ordained ministers as self-employed persons. This offset will be paid to Kiah on a quarterly basis and the offset is taxable income to her.

Pastoral **Reimbursable** Expenses include 500 (ministry expenses) + 1000 (continuing education) + 600 (professional mentoring/spiritual direction) + 250 (mileage)

Housing Allowance - Current Housing **stipend** is 9000.00 annually (taken as a reduced rental of \$750/mo which is 50% of what the previous tenant was paying). We propose an annual \$12000.00 housing **allowance (IRS language)** now that Kiah will be an ordained pastor. **Kiah will pay \$1500/month rent at the parsonage.**

The annual rental income from the parsonage will increase from \$9000 to \$18000.