

## ***Interim Ministries-ABC Code of Ethics***

Each interim pastor serving an *Interim Ministries-ABC* Program is required to affirm the Codes of Ethics as presented on each side of this page: (1) "The Covenant and Codes of Ethics for Professional Church Leaders of the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A." developed by the ABC Ministers Council and (2) the interim ministry addition to the Code of Ethics adopted by the *Interim Ministries-ABC* Board. Your signature below affirms your commitment to comply.

☐ **I accept the Covenant and Code of Ethics for Professional Church Leaders of the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.** (as it appears on the next page).

☐ **I accept the interim ministry addition to the Code of Ethics, as related to an assignment with *Interim Ministries-ABC*.**

✠ I will accept an assignment only if I am in accord with the policies and procedures of the Program.

✠ I will be impartial about the personality and ministry of the former pastor of the congregation I serve, while at the same time helping persons of the congregation to express, understand, and evaluate their feelings about their relationship with that pastoral leader.

✠ I will not consult with the Pastoral Search Committee or its members regarding potential pastoral candidates and will not promote any particular candidate for the position.

✠ I will maintain strong professional ties during the assignment with: (1) the staff of the *IM-ABC* Program, with which I have an employee-employer relationship; (2) the assigned church, with which I negotiate and fulfill specific interim pastoral duties; and (3) the regional Executive/Area Minister, who is a colleague in my interim ministry with the church.

✠ I will work as a team member and colleague with the Executive/Area Minister during the assignment, keeping in touch with that person, providing feedback on the interim ministry progress of the congregation, and consulting in relation to the significant emphases I anticipate in my ministry with the church.

✠ I will maintain a strong emphasis on ABC mission support and participation by the church in ABC life.

✠ I will not permit the church I serve as interim pastor to consider me as a pastoral candidate.

✠ Upon the completion of my assignment, I will sever my professional relations with the church and will abstain from professional contacts with the congregation without the request or consent of the current pastor.

✠ Because I am committed to the policies of the *IM-ABC* Program, I will not enter into private negotiations with the assigned church in relation to financial remuneration or other personal benefits.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# THE COVENANT AND CODE OF ETHICS

## FOR PROFESSIONAL CHURCH LEADERS OF THE AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE U.S.A.

*Having accepted God's call to leadership in Christ's Church, I covenant with God to serve Christ and the Church with God's help, to deepen my obedience to the Two Great Commandments: to love the Lord our God with all my heart, soul, mind and strength, and to love my neighbor as myself.*

*In affirmation of this commitment, I will abide by the Code of Ethics of the Ministers Council of the American Baptist Churches, and I will faithfully support its purposes and ideals. As further affirmation of my commitment, I covenant with my colleagues in ministry that we will hold one another accountable for fulfillment of all the public actions set forth in our Code of Ethics*

- † I will hold in trust the traditions and practices of our American Baptist Churches; I will not accept a position in the American Baptist family unless I am in accord with those traditions and practices nor will I use my influence to alienate my congregation/constituents or any part thereof from its relationship and support of the denomination. If my convictions change, I will resign my position.
- † I will respect and recognize the variety of calls to ministry among my American Baptist colleagues and other Christians.
- † I will seek to support all colleagues in ministry by building constructive relationships wherever I serve, both with the staff where I work and with colleagues in neighboring churches.
- † I will advocate adequate compensation for my profession. I will help lay persons and colleagues to understand that professional church leaders should not expect or require fees for pastoral services from constituents they serve when these constituents are helping pay their salaries.
- † I will not seek personal favors or discounts on the basis of my professional status.
- † I will maintain a disciplined ministry in such ways as keeping hours of prayer and devotion, endeavoring to maintain wholesome family relationships, sexual integrity, financial responsibility, regularly engaging in educational and recreational activities for professional and personal development. I will seek to maintain good health habits.
- † I will recognize my primary obligation to the church or employing group to which I have been called and will accept added responsibilities only if they do not interfere with the overall effectiveness of my ministry.
- † I will personally and publicly support my colleagues who experience discrimination on the basis of gender, race, age, marital status, national origin, physical impairment, or disability.
- † I will, upon my resignation or retirement, sever my professional church leadership relations with my former constituents and will not make professional contacts in the field of another professional church leader without his/her request and/or consent.
- † I will hold in confidence any privileged communication received by me during the conduct of my ministry. I will not disclose confidential communications in private or public except when in my practice of ministry I am convinced that the sanctity of confidentiality is outweighed by my well-founded belief that the parishioner/client will cause imminent, life-threatening, or substantial harm to self or others, or unless the privilege is waived by those giving the information.
- † I will not proselytize from other Christian churches.
- † I will show my personal love for God as revealed in Jesus Christ in my life and ministry as I strive together with my colleagues to preserve the dignity, maintain the discipline, and promote the integrity of the vocation to which we have been called.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_