
REPORT OF THE BISHOP'S TASK FORCE ON SUPERINTENDING to the

Wisconsin Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church

June 16, 2003

MEMBERS OF THE BISHOP'S TASK FORCE ON SUPERINTENDENCY: Bishop Sharon Zimmerman Rader, Chair; Rev. Phil Airhart; Rev. Bruce Bartel; Ms. Cec Holder; Rev. Steve Polster; Mr. Edgar Russell; Rev. Amber Wolover

Consultants: Mr. John Lyche; Rev. Art Gafke; Andy Oren; Sheri Graeber

INTRODUCTION

Jesus' words in Matthew 28:19-20 provide the Church with its mission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you."

Our United Methodist *Book of Discipline* states, "The mission of the Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ. Local churches provide the most significant arena through which disciple-making occurs." Para. 120

The Wisconsin Conference has declared that we are a " People who in the name of Jesus Christ are seeking to share God's love with God's people, God's world and God's creation." We long to be a mature conference full of congregations that are audacious, yearning into the future and always living gratefully. We desire nothing more than that more and more people in this state and beyond will know of God's love. That love overflows and gives to those who know the Giver courage, wisdom and a compelling desire that even more might know of God's marvelous love, grace and forgiveness.

When we are honest we know that while we long for God's realm to be ever more fully realized in our midst, we have fallen short. We expend more time and energy on strawberry festivals, anniversary celebrations, carpet colors, committee meetings and worries about financial stability than we do on sharing the Gospel of Jesus, Christian education, stewardship and outreaching ministries.

While we have heard and affirmed our founder John Wesley's hope that we live as though the whole world might be our parish, too often we have settled with making the parish of which we are a part the only world with which we want to engage. We are willing to care for those who are already in our midst. We are less eager to reach out, change, and risk ourselves in love, compassion and Christian witness to those we do not know.

Paragraph 104 of the *Book of Discipline* reminds us that "Evangelism, nurture, and mission require a constant effort to integrate authentic experience, rational thought, and purposeful action with theological integrity.

"A convincing witness to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ can contribute to the renewal of our faith, bring persons to that faith, and strengthen the Church as an agent of healing and reconciliation."

The following proposal has arisen from the 2002 Annual Conference session which requested the Vision/Quality Improvement Team to consider what is most needed to assist the conference in its vision and the mission of the church. The Vision/Quality Improvement Team asked the bishop to establish a task force to answer the question posed by the Annual Conference.

The Task Force on Superintendency decided at its first meeting the task was not to "save the con-

ference money.” Rather, the desire of the task force was to offer to the annual conference a new possibility for strengthening the ministry of congregations and their leaders. This is not a new discussion for the Wisconsin Annual Conference. Leaders, including clergy, laity and superintendents have made the establishing of more faithful and effective ministry an ongoing priority conversation.

The proposal takes seriously the expectation that each clergy member is “bound in special covenant” with all other clergy members. Together clergy are to live “in mutual trust and concern and seek with them the sanctification of the fellowship.” (Para. 324)

Paragraph 331 outlines the responsibilities and duties of a pastor:

- 1 Overseeing the total ministry of the local church.
- 2 Giving pastoral support, guidance, and training to the lay leadership.
- 3 Providing ministry with the congregation and to the world.
- 4 Ensuring faithful transmission of the Christian faith.
- 5 Administering the temporal affairs of the congregation in order that Christ’s name and mission might be proclaimed to a hurting and sinful world.

The proposal seeks to strengthen the common “binding” of all clergy and expects that all clergy will participate in a geographical ministry team of 8 to 10 people who will meet on a regular basis to strengthen the ministry of the congregations they serve through disciplined study, sharing of expertise, and encouragement of growth.

The Task Force foresees a time when there will be not only greater connection among clergy members, but between congregations as well. The ministry of inclusive, outreaching love, which we desire to manifest is a mutual ministry of lay and clergy together.

The Gospel calls us to changed lives. Change is a sign of life and an indication of how deeply concerned we are about our faith. The unrest of the Holy Spirit is moving in our midst. May we open ourselves to discerning God’s direction for the Wisconsin Annual Conference.

The Report of the Task Force is now before you. In summary, the Task Force is proposing that the climate of superintending the mission and ministry of the United Methodist Church in the Wisconsin Annual Conference be significantly changed in the following manner:

- The reduction of the present number of district superintendents from eight to four, with each district superintendent having responsibility for the leadership of two districts.
- The creation of “circuits” consisting of “clergy circuit teams,” each team comprised of eight to ten clergy appointed to serve local charges/churches in a discrete geographical area. Members of the circuit teams will meet regularly for the purposes of training, accountability, and increased ministry effectiveness. Each team member will contribute to the work required to lead congregations in making of disciples of Jesus Christ throughout the circuit. (No changes to existing district boundaries are seen as being necessary at this time)
- The establishment and training, within each clergy circuit team, of a “circuit leader” who will be responsible for giving leadership to the circuit clergy team as it works to achieve its ministry goals. Circuit Leaders will be elders in full connection, chosen, among their other qualities, for demonstrated leadership and team-building skills, and a proven ability to understand and articulate the mission and ministry vision of the Annual Conference.
- The addition of an Assistant to the Bishop.

A more detailed discussion of these recommendations will be found later in this report.

To enable discussion by this Annual Conference of this report, Bruce Bartel, on behalf of the Task Force, is prepared to offer the following motion:

Whereas the Wisconsin Annual Conference at its 2002 session adopted a motion to refer to the Vision/Quality Improvement Team for its consideration the matter of reducing the number of districts in this Annual Conference, and

Whereas the Vision/Quality Improvement Team was also instructed to “research and present plans for alternative systems of supervision employed in the superintendency,” and

Whereas the Vision/Quality Improvement Team subsequently requested the Bishop to convene a Task Force, consisting of one former and one current district superintendent, two clergy persons, and two laypersons to assist in accomplishing the aforementioned tasks, and

Whereas the Task Force was appointed by the Bishop in January of this year, and has since produced its report with recommendations for action by the Annual Conference

Now therefore be it resolved, that the Annual Conference give approval to begin the implementation, in the 2003-2004 conference year, of the Task Force recommendations for superintending the mission and ministry of the Wisconsin Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church by reducing the number of district superintendents to four, the creation of Circuits, and creating the position of Assistant to the Bishop. This plan will take effect July 1, 2004.

Initial Stages for Implementation of the Plan

Purpose:

To better fulfill the stated mission of the Wisconsin Annual Conference “to make disciples of Jesus Christ” by:

- Providing an organizational structure that will more effectively support the creation of new faith communities within the Wisconsin Annual Conference, and the growth and strengthening of those that currently exist.
- Training for increased effectiveness of clergy leaders who will help move congregations in the Wisconsin Annual Conference from a culture of decline to a culture of hope.
- Shared leadership of clergy and lay people in the Wisconsin Annual Conference closer to the place where ministry happens.

Impact

- Clergy (elders, local pastors, and deacons) appointed to congregations in the Wisconsin Annual Conference will be organized into Circuits comprised of 8-10 clergy and the congregations those clergy are appointed to lead.
- Appointments in the Wisconsin Annual Conference, once the new structure is implemented, will be to both a Circuit and to a Charge within that Circuit.
- Circuits led by a Circuit Leader (see the proposed Position Description for a Circuit Leader for more detail).
- Circuits will organize themselves in such a manner so as to provide the greatest opportunity to fulfill the mission of “making disciples of Jesus Christ” within their ministry area.
- Four (instead of the current eight) District Superintendents will lead the current districts (two each). District boundaries will not change, but in some cases it may be practical to have Circuits cross over district boundaries.
- The role of the District Superintendent will radically change from primarily a maintenance

and managerial expectation to one of training and coaching for change.

- An Assistant to the Bishop will be appointed to give oversight to this strategic plan (approx. 75% of the time for the first two years), assist in the transition between bishops, serve as part of the appointive cabinet and administratively support the district superintendents.

Anticipated Results

- Congregations moving from decline to new life with clarity of vision and purpose
- Growth in numbers of new people involved in a life giving relationship with Jesus Christ and increase in members joining by affirmation of faith.
- New focus from maintaining what we have to seeking to engage people currently outside the congregations.
- Spiritual growth of current disciples.
- Cooperative training and planning for ministry by congregations, both individually and collectively, including the continuous development of new options for ministry that might not be feasible for one congregation alone to undertake, but readily achievable by a team of congregations.
- Mutual team support for the clergy working in a geographic area will replace the present sense of isolation and “competition.”

Projected timeline:

- By November 1, 2003, the Cabinet completes plan for organizing circuits. Bishop and Cabinet announce appointments of district superintendents and Assistant to the Bishop, with appointments to become effective in July of 2004. Training begins.
- By January 15, 2004, Cabinet and Bishop announce appointment of Circuit Leaders, with appointments effective July of 2004. Training begins.
- By July 1, 2004 Circuits begin their work. Training continues.
- By July 1, 2004 a plan for continuous evaluation and plan modification is presented to the Wisconsin Annual Conference.
- June 2005 report to the Wisconsin Annual Conference on progress made and evaluation of circuit model.

Training

- Leaders within Circuits will be provided with the best training available in team building, new faith development, leadership development, becoming change agents, and congregational systems for the 21st Century.
- Investment for training in all the above categories, and for other needs as we identify them, will take place at all levels (congregations, circuits, cabinet), and will remain a constant priority.

Financial Impact

- The Wisconsin Annual Conference budget in 2004, and beyond, will be affected by the reduction of four cabinet level (District Superintendent) positions.
- The addition of an “Assistant to the Bishop” will require funding at cabinet level position costs.

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- Training and circuit expenses will require financial resources approximately equivalent to one cabinet level position. The training component will continue to be an important part of the plan, including the provision of training for individual congregations, clergy and laity in the circuits beyond the first two years.
 - It is anticipated that we will see a net budget reduction of the equivalent of two cabinet level positions, to be realized in part in the 2004 budget. However, no change in the 2004 budget has been requested at this time. It is expected that the District Superintendent's budget will be under-spent by approximately \$80,000 in 2004, and the elimination of the equivalent of two full-time cabinet level positions in 2005 will result in a savings of approximately \$175,000.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why change what we are doing?

As Bishop Rader points out in the foreword to this report, the Vision/Quality Improvement Team requested that a Task Force be appointed to examine an alternate means of more effectively carrying out the work of superintending in the Wisconsin Annual Conference, and that recommendations for change be presented to this session of the Wisconsin Annual Conference.

Since the Wisconsin Conference of the United Methodist Church was formed in 1969, our local churches have declined overall in numbers of members, worship attendance, and Sunday school participation, while at the same time the population of Wisconsin has grown. Many of our local congregations are struggling to simply maintain the status quo and are not effectively reaching the community in which they live in efforts to make new disciples of Jesus Christ. Many of our clergy are working harder than ever, but don't often enjoy the fruit of their labor – people saying “yes” to a living relationship with Jesus Christ, and walking the path of faithful discipleship.

Although there is no guarantee that a new system of connecting our local congregations and clergy leadership will result in growth, the new system will have as its primary focus training clergy and lay leadership teams for developing new faith communities, and revitalizing existing congregations as they develop skills to fulfill the church's mission to invite, nurture and send disciples into the world. The old expectation that local churches receive appointed clergy to take care of the people and the administrative responsibilities of each congregation will give way to a new expectation that clergy are being appointed to lead the congregation in doing whatever it takes to engage with people not now in the Church.

What is a Circuit?

A Circuit is the name given to a team of clergy and congregations joined for mutual ministry and support.

What is the purpose of the Circuit team?

The purpose of the team is to build an environment of connection that will enhance the ability of both the clergy and the congregations involved in each team to grow in numbers, effectiveness in ministry, and faithful stewardship. To put it another way, the Circuit team, through a system of shared accountability, will assist both clergy and congregations to keep true to the vision of making disciples of Jesus Christ. The team will help each individual member set priorities for use of time ministry gifts, and will ensure that education and training is available to enhance the skills necessary to produce new and more effective results.

Will district boundaries change?

No. District boundaries will remain as they have since 1997. However, teams will likely be formed across district and regional boundaries where it makes sense to do so. United Methodist Women and Men, District Committees on Ministry, District Leadership committees, Location and

Building Committees, etc. will continue as presently configured. However, there will be need for only one Committee on Superintendency per region.

Why not just eliminate one or two districts?

Simply eliminating a district or two will result in more clergy and churches supervised by fewer superintendents and will merely continue the same process, only less effectively. The members of the task force unanimously agree that a major change is required in the system in order to accomplish the mission of the Wisconsin Annual Conference.

How many fewer Superintendents will there be?

The plan proposed by the task force would result in the elimination of four Cabinet level positions. However, with the addition of an Assistant to the Bishop, and taking into consideration the funds required for the educational training this report envisions, the net impact on Wisconsin Annual Conference operating expenses will equate financially to the reduction of approximately two Cabinet level positions.

Why not keep eight superintendents and implement the Circuit Team plan?

Keeping eight superintendents runs contrary to the essential elements of the plan for two basic reasons:

First, we are not seeking a mere modification of the current model, but rather the development of a new model that emphasizes a team approach to ministry rather than a hierarchical approach.

Second, the plan calls for the net financial reduction of two Cabinet level positions because there will need to be significant funds available in the years to come to provide for the intense educational training required to bring about increased clergy effectiveness and significant change in our congregations as well as funding for the Assistant to the Bishop.

Will ethnic minority pastors and congregations be included?

Pastors, charges and congregations whose membership is primarily made up of minority populations will be full partners in the Circuit model.

How much might the education and training cost?

It is estimated that the training envisioned for 2004 will require a budget of \$50,000. Extensive training will be required in the first two years of the plan with continued training to follow in subsequent years. Even after the first phase of intensive educational training, funds will be needed to provide ongoing education and training for local church lay and clergy leadership.

What other costs are involved?

There will also be modest expenses incurred as the circuits meet. These expenses are estimated to be approximately \$15,000 in 2004 and \$30,000 in 2005.

Where will this money come from?

The plan calls for using the funds saved by the elimination of one Cabinet level position to cover the costs of training and circuit expenses beginning in 2004.

Why is education so important?

Training leadership and providing education for congregations in how to move from decline to new life is a key element of this proposal. This educational training will focus on issues like how to provide spiritual formation in congregations, how to equip disciples for service and faithful living, and how to reach out to the people in our local communities to fulfill our vision of making disciples of Jesus Christ.

How much education and training will be required?

It is estimated that, for individual team members, up to thirty hours of training and continuing education will be required between October 2003 and July 2004 with some additional training required for Circuit Leaders. Again, educational training is essential in acquiring the skills needed to work as a team and in facilitating the profound changes necessary for our congregations to move from decline to new life.

When will we see financial fruits?

It is estimated that for the first two years the Wisconsin Annual Conference will see an operating cost reduction of about \$200,000 per year, or approximately two Cabinet level positions (compensation, benefits, expenses). While there is no discrete budget change requested for 2004 in the plan, it is expected that a portion of the 2004 budget for District Superintendents will not be spent.

Fruit will come, not from recruiting new people to support our budgets, but from growing disciples of Jesus Christ.

What is the role of the District Superintendent in this plan?

In the proposed plan, the focus of the superintendent's time and energy is as follows:

- The establishment, implementation, and monitoring of plans for the ongoing education and training of leaders so as to increase overall individual and team effectiveness.
- The development of partnering ministries within each district intended to maximize the ministry gifts and potential of individual clergy and lay leadership, rather than to merely maintain the status quo.

In addition, the District Superintendent serves as a consultant resource for leaders in the Wisconsin Annual Conference and in the districts over which the superintendent is assigned jurisdiction. A complete position description is included in the plan.

Will the District Superintendent still preside at individual Church Conferences every year?

No. A Circuit Church Conference will be held for the purpose of training and celebration and the District Superintendent will most often preside. Circuit team members will preside over individual Church Conferences as needed.

What is the role of the Circuit Leader?

The primary focus of the Circuit Leader in this plan is team facilitation, coordination and oversight, for the purpose of developing spiritual formation and outreach plans for the ministry of individual congregations and for the congregations linked together in the team, including coordinating the team in developing and implementing plans for generating new faith communities. A complete position description for Circuit Leaders is also in the plan.

Why now, why not wait until a new bishop is assigned?

A new bishop will be assigned to Wisconsin at the North Central Jurisdictional Conference in July of 2004. The new bishop will begin his or her ministry in Wisconsin in September of 2004. While it will be important for the bishop assigned to Wisconsin to understand the new system of superintending (and the Jurisdictional Committee on the Episcopacy will want to take our system into account when assignments are made), it is vital to implement this new system now while we can take advantage of Bishop Rader's knowledge of the Wisconsin Annual Conference and the clergy in the Conference.

Is this proposal consistent with the Book of Discipline?

The Counsel for the General church has advised the task force that this plan does not appear to be in conflict with the Discipline.

Will all clergy be appointed to a team? Why?

Every clergy appointed to a local church in Wisconsin will be appointed to a team and will be expected to participate in the training and education required for team ministry, as well as the ongoing development and implementation of ministry plans created by the team. For the team concept to be effective in each geographic area, full participation will be required.

How will team composition be determined?

Between July and October 2003 the Cabinet will work with Bishop Rader in the development of Circuits. Care will be taken in forming Circuits that fit together in a geographic area and share common constituencies.

How will the plan affect existing relationships between clergy and PPRC?

Clergy will continue to work with the total leadership team of the charge to which they are appointed, including the PPRC, in developing strategies for moving toward growth.

How often will the clergy teams meet?

Each team will develop its own meeting schedule. The general expectation is that, at least for the first year, the teams will meet once every other month for a minimum of approximately three hours per meeting.

What will the teams do?

The expectation is that the teams will help each individual pastor and congregation be better equipped and supported in order to be more fruitful in ministry results.

Time will be spent in education, training and development of Circuit and individual charge plans for growth.

Teams will meet for mutual accountability, planning, education, and training, *not for the sake of meeting*.

How often will the District Superintendent meet with the clergy?

The District Superintendent will meet 3-4 times per year with teams and will be available as a consultant as required.

How will this change appointment making?

Appointments will continue to be made consistent with the provisions of the Discipline. However, the number of individuals directly involved in advising the bishop on appointments will be reduced from 8 to 5. The plan recognizes the need to make appointments in a manner that will further the mission of the Church – making disciples of Jesus Christ. Therefore, as is the case now, written consultation materials will be provided to the District Superintendent by the Pastor Parish Relations Committee of each congregation. Preparation of profiles for congregations and clergy will rely on information provided by Circuit teams. The consultation process will include consultation by the District Superintendent with those teams. Appointments made by the Bishop will be to both parish and Circuit team. Team Leaders or team members may be involved in introductory meetings between the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee of the local congregation(s) of each team and the clergy being introduced.

How do we expect to get different results from the same people?

First, by focusing on an education and training program that will offer skill development for clergy to work as a team, thereby developing skills for creating team ministry within congregations. Also, by focusing on training clergy and laity to enhance the skills needed to reach people for Christ in each community throughout Wisconsin. And additionally, by changing the system of accountability and the working environment for the clergy leadership

The District Superintendent has often been seen as being the primary connection to the Wisconsin Annual Conference. What happens to this role?

Under the new plan, a web of connection is formed that connects all disciples and leaders, instead of the current single strand from one person to 50-80 congregations.

How will the laity know that their local church is cared about by “the Conference”?

The role of the Conference Staff is not addressed directly in this plan. However, the staff will adjust and adapt to meet the needs of teams, clergy and congregations. Teams are invited to develop a variety of connections with the superintendent and conference staff that might include team workshops or training events for clergy, laity, Circuits, districts and regions.

How does this proposal benefit the local church?

A few of the benefits include:

- Trained, motivated and productive clergy leadership.
- A new plan for moving from decline, or status quo, to growth in every congregation in the Wisconsin Annual Conference.
- Synergy. As clergy and congregations work as a team, the resulting effect is greater than the sum of the individual efforts.

How does this benefit the clergy?

In addition to the benefits to the local church, the plan will benefit the clergy by reducing isolation and increasing productivity and development of new skills for effective ministry in the 21st Century.

What are the education and training components?

Although no specifics have been developed yet, the training and education components will include team formation, working as a team and team leadership, how to become a change agent, how to move a congregation from decline to hope, how to develop spiritual formation, how to reach out to the community, etc.

Do we stay connected to each other in the Wisconsin Annual Conference?

Yes! The movement that has become the United Methodist Church was built on the concept of shared ministry and a common vision. Wesley likened our connection to “Watching over one another in love.”

The Circuits in this plan provide for a connection that strengthens the whole and connects us in ways beyond merely sharing the same name and logo.

Is anybody else doing anything like this in any other Wisconsin Annual Conference?

While no other Annual Conference we know of is considering a plan of this scale, a few other Annual Conferences such as the Dakotas, Minnesota, and Arkansas have begun to explore similar ideas. Leaders from Wisconsin will learn from those in other places, and the Wisconsin plan has potential to serve as a model for other Wisconsin Annual Conferences.

How and where do laypersons fit in this plan?

Full partnership with lay leadership will be required in order for our congregations to move from decline to growth. The plan will result in training, skill development, spiritual formation, inspiration and development of lay ministry teams within individual congregations and Circuits.

What will the Assistant to the Bishop do?

The Assistant to the Bishop will serve as a part of the appointive Cabinet, and will provide over-

sight to the education, training and implementation of the plan. The Assistant to the Bishop will give administrative support to the bishop and cabinet in responsibility areas now handled by superintendents (i.e. working with those seeking to serve from outside the Wisconsin Annual Conference, Board of Ordained Ministry, budget, appointments beyond the local church, recruiting, etc.), thus freeing up the District Superintendents to work with the Circuit teams. The individual appointed to this new position will serve as a key link in the transition when a new bishop is assigned to Wisconsin in 2004.

Why is the Circuit Leader an elder?

Paragraph 325 of the Discipline is titled, "Ministry, Authority and Responsibility of an Elder in Full Connection."

Section 2(e) of that paragraph reads, "Willingness to assume supervisory and mentoring responsibilities within the connection." While not becoming supervisors, from the perspective of both United Methodist polity and scriptural authority, it is fitting and appropriate that the individual designated as a Circuit Leader be an elder.

How will we know if this plan is working?

We will know if the plan is working by asking ourselves these questions, among others:

- Are there more groups/teams for spiritual formation and outreach formed in congregations and circuits?
- Have we established connections with our communities? How?
- Are the congregations showing signs of new life? How?
- Have new faith communities been formed within existing congregations and in the communities served by the Circuit?
- Are there more new disciples of Jesus Christ?
- Are there more opportunities for growth?
- Are there more entry points into local congregations?
- Is our stewardship increasing?

Formal evaluation is built into the process and evaluation tools will be developed.

WISCONSIN CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Job Title: District Superintendent

Reports to: Resident Bishop

Effective Date: July 1, 2004

Salary & Housing Allowance: Set by Wisconsin Annual Conference annually; currently approx. \$70,000 cash plus pension/health care contributions

Job Summary

The district superintendent is an extension of the general superintending of the bishop.

Primary Duties and Responsibilities

- Responsibilities are outlined in The Book of Discipline ¶¶ 419-425. Additional responsibilities are found in several other Discipline paragraphs.
- Each district superintendent will have oversight of two districts.
- Establish, implement, and monitor plans for ongoing training of clergy leaders in efforts to

increase individual and team overall effectiveness.

- Development of new faith communities.
- Develop partnering ministries within each district with the intent of maximizing the gifts and potential of individual clergy and lay leadership.
- Serve as a consultant resource for leaders in the Wisconsin Annual Conference and in the assigned districts.

Supervision Received

- Monthly supervisory sessions in person or by phone with resident bishop.

Supervision of Others

- Primary contact for each elder appointed as “Circuit Leader” of a Circuit (approx. 6 per District). Regular contact is expected by phone or in person.
- Oversight of churches linked through the clergy covenant community teams.
- Primary supervisor for administrative assistant and other district staff.

Contact with others

- In consultation with the bishop and assistant to the bishop, provide training for Circuit Leaders and establish a plan for ongoing training of clergy resulting in increased worship attendance, increase in individual stewardship of the members of local churches, an increasing number of new faith communities, and an overall heightened sense of calling and commitment among clergy appointed to parish ministry in the Wisconsin Annual Conference.
- Meet as part of the Cabinet on average 4 days per month, usually but not always, in the Conference Center in Sun Prairie and in conference calls as needed.
- Minimum of quarterly contact with Circuit teams.
- Available for phone and electronic communications as needed.
- Lead Circuit conferences.
- Available as scheduled to participate in Sunday morning worship or other special events in the life of congregations linked in covenant community or individual parishes.

Judgment/Initiative

- Provides general oversight to the districts to which assigned and shares in the corporate decision making of the Cabinet and Resident Bishop.
- Expected to take initiative in the development of programs and relationships that will support the mission of the Wisconsin Annual Conference, the districts served and the congregations and clergy supervised.

Working Environment

- Approximately, on average, three (3) days a week will be spent in the work of supervision and contact with clergy and laity in local churches and circuits.
- Traveling throughout the Wisconsin Annual Conference as representative of the connection.
- The District Superintendent will attend to ongoing spiritual formation through the practice of personal prayer, study, communal worship, service and frequent participation in the Sacraments of the Church.

Preferred Education and Experience

- By Discipline, District Superintendents must be Elders in full connection in the Wisconsin

Annual Conference and are appointed annually by the resident bishop.

- In addition to the training provided by the General Church, Wisconsin Conference Superintendents will be trained in small group (team) development, best supervisory practices, new faith development, stewardship development, crisis management and time management.

This position description provides an overview of this position in the Wisconsin Conference United Methodist Church. It is not intended, however, to be an exhaustive listing of all the requirements, duties, or responsibilities of the position. The General Conference, Wisconsin Annual Conference or resident bishop may make additional assignments that the superintendent will be expected to perform.

WISCONSIN CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Job Title: **Circuit Leader**
Reports to: District Superintendent

Effective Date: July 1, 2004

Job Summary

The primary focus of the Circuit Leader is team facilitation, coordination and oversight for the purpose of developing spiritual formation and outreach plans. The Circuit Leaders will continue to be appointed to a particular Charge within a Circuit.

Primary Duties and Responsibilities

- Lead a group of eight to ten clergy in an ongoing small group setting for the purpose of prayer, growth in ministry effectiveness, study, accountability and support.
- Participate, on an ongoing basis, in specialized training provided by or through the Wisconsin Annual Conference in the areas of team building, small group dynamics, vision casting, communication skills, etc.
- Assist the district superintendent in the establishment, implementation, and monitoring of plans for ongoing training of clergy in the Circuit Team in efforts to increase team effectiveness.
- Develop partnering ministries among the clergy team members and the parishes they represent, with the intent of maximizing the gifts and synergistic potential of individual clergy and lay leadership.

Supervision Received

- Monthly consultation sessions in person or by phone with the district superintendent.

Contact with others

- Assist the district superintendent in providing needed training for members of the Circuit Team to enhance both individual and team ministry effectiveness, resulting in increased worship attendance, increase in individual stewardship of the members of local churches, an increasing number of new faith communities, and an overall heightened sense of calling and commitment among clergy appointed to parish ministry in the Wisconsin Annual Conference.
- Keep regular contact with district superintendent.
- Conduct regularly scheduled meeting with Circuit Team.
- Available for phone and electronic communications as needed.

Judgment/Initiative

- Demonstrate commitment to UMC connectionalism.
- Demonstrated leadership and team-building abilities.
- Demonstrated relational/people and communication skills.
- Recommended by a District Superintendent and peers.
- Active in the Wisconsin Conference beyond the local church.

Working Environment

- Approximately one day a month will be spent in the work of Circuit Leader.
- Expectation is that twice-yearly Circuit Leaders will meet together to share experiences and obtain training.
- The Circuit Leader will attend to ongoing personal spiritual formation.

Preferred Education and Experience

- As provided in the Discipline, (see description of the responsibilities of an elder), Circuit Leaders will be elders in full connection in the Wisconsin Annual Conference.
- Training will be provided by the Wisconsin Annual Conference in appropriate areas such as small group (team) development, peer review, new faith development, stewardship development, crisis management and time management.

This position description provides an overview of this position in the Wisconsin Conference United Methodist Church. It is not intended, however, to be an exhaustive listing of all the requirements, duties, or responsibilities of the position. The General Conference, Wisconsin Annual Conference or resident bishop may make additional assignments that the superintendent will be expected to perform.

ITEMS REQUIRING ACTION BY THE 2003 SESSION OF THE WISCONSIN ANNUAL CONFERENCE THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Action Item 1: Resolution on Local Church Camping Coordinator
Submitted By: Board of Camp and Retreat Ministries

Each local church in the Wisconsin Annual Conference is urged to name one layperson to be responsible for promotion of the Conference Camps in that local church. The Camping Coordinator's task will be to help the congregation understand the importance and value of the Conference camping program. The Coordinator will not only highlight the summer camp program but will also help the congregation be aware of retreat possibilities. Each local church shall send the name and address of its Camping Coordinator to the Camping Office in Sun Prairie as part of its yearly charge conference report.

Conference Action: Approved

Action Item 2: Resolution on Camp and Retreat Emphasis Sunday
Submitted By: Board of Camp and Retreat Ministries

We recommend that every local church in the Wisconsin Annual Conference observe a Camp and Retreat Emphasis Sunday in the spring of 2004 for the purpose of interpreting the Conference camping program and for promoting the 2004 camps.

Conference Action: Approved

Action Item 3 Designation of Earnings from the "New Ministries Fund"
Submitted By: Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

We recommend that the Annual Conference designate the earnings from the undesignated "New Ministries Fund," as stewardship programming and resources to be directed through the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation.

Conference Action: Approved

Action Item 4: Resolution on United Methodist Women's Sunday
Submitted By: United Methodist Women

WHEREAS the United Methodist Women is an organization for many women, organized for over a hundred years and spanning the nation with local units and,

WHEREAS the organization provides opportunities for spiritual growth, emphasizing prayer and in-depth Bible study, offering Christian friendship, affirming the potential of every woman, developing a creative supportive fellowship, and

WHEREAS United Methodist Women expand concepts of Mission through participation in the global ministries of the church, and

WHEREAS Wisconsin Conference United Methodist Women has a membership of about 8,000 in 350 local units actively serving the local church, and participating in mission locally, nationally and globally,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that there shall be a United Methodist Women's Sunday in every local church. RECOMMENDED date, September 28, 2003 or any other date to be determined by each local church.

Conference Action: Approved

Action Item 5: Resolution on Housing Allowance for Retired and Disabled Clergy Submitted By: Joint Board of Pensions, Insurance & Equitable Compensation

WHEREAS the religious denomination known as The United Methodist Church has and functions through Ministers of the Gospel who are duly ordained or licensed;

WHEREAS the practice of The United Methodist Church is to provide a parsonage or a rental allowance as part of the gross compensation for each of its ordained or licensed ministers;

WHEREAS pensions paid to retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers of The United Methodist Church are considered deferred compensation and paid to said retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers in consideration of previous, active service; and

WHEREAS the Internal Revenue Service acknowledges the Wisconsin Annual Conference as the appropriate organization to designate a housing allowance for retired and disabled ordained and licensed ministers who are members of this Conference;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED an amount equal to 100% of the pension payments received during 2004 is designated as a housing allowance for each ordained or licensed minister who has been granted the retired relation or placed on disability leave by the Wisconsin Annual Conference and whose name and relationship is recorded in the Yearbook and Journal and other records;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the pension payment to which this housing allowance applies shall be the pension payment resulting from all service of such retired or disabled ordained or licensed minister from all employment by any local church, Annual Conference, or institution of The United Methodist Church or of any former denomination that is now a part of The United Methodist Church, or from any other employer who employed the minister to perform services related to the ministry and who elected to make contributions to the pension funds of The United Methodist Church for such retired or disabled minister's pension.

Conference Action: Approved

Action Item 6: Resolution on Past Service Annuity Rate Submitted By: Joint Board of Pensions, Insurance & Equitable Compensation

BE IT RESOLVED the Past Service Annuity Rate for 2004 shall be \$ 540.

Conference Action: Approved

Action Item 7: Resolution on Minimum Compensation Submitted By: Joint Board Of Pensions, Insurance & Equitable Compensation

WHEREAS the formula for establishing the minimum compensation for ordained clergy, local pastors, and student pastors appointed to charges in the Wisconsin Annual Conference is: The minimum compensation for the previous year for each category, plus the cost of living factor established by the U.S. Government for Social Security purposes, plus 1%,

AND WHEREAS this formula was approved by the 1996 session of the Wisconsin Annual Conference for implementation starting in January 1998 and has not since been changed,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Minimum Compensation for Conference members serving full time for 2004 shall be \$28,830, the Minimum Compensation for Local Pastors serving full time shall be \$25,375; the Minimum Compensation for student pastors serving at least 27 hours per week plus 3 months of full time service during the summer, shall be \$21,622.

Conference Action: Approved

Action Item 8: Resolution on Formal Funding Plan for Pre-1982 Pension Liability Submitted By: Joint Board of Pensions, Insurance & Equitable Compensation

Letter of Introduction To Members of the Wisconsin Annual Conference:

The following funding plan is in the format recommended by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. This plan begins by discussing the Wisconsin Conference Past Service Rate (PSR) philosophy. The PSR is the dollar amount that is multiplied by years of Pre-1982 service to determine the annual pension benefit paid to a pastor for Pre-1982 service. The PSR for the coming year is set by Annual Conference, based on the recommendation made by the Joint Board.

In the past, the Wisconsin Conference set a goal for the PSR to reach 1% of the Conference Average Compensation (CAC). That goal was reached in 1998, and for the year 2003 the PSR is 1.16% of CAC. For the future, the Joint Board recommends that the PSR keep pace with inflation by using the index that the U.S. Government uses for Social Security payments. We do not think it is appropriate any longer for it to be linked with CAC. We will, of course, meet the minimum requirement in the Discipline that states that the PSR stay at .9% of the CAC or higher.

Also in the past, the PSR increased at a faster rate than the CAC, but those increases were necessary due to the initial lower levels of PSR (PSR was .80% of CAC in 1982). Consequently, we expect the PSR to increase at a slower rate in the future (though we will keep up with inflation).

The plan then goes on to list a number of factors:

Present Value of Expected Future Benefits (PVB) - this is an estimate of our Pre-1982 pension liability. The GBOPHB calculates this amount based on a series of assumptions:

- Mortality – how long retirees and their spouses are expected to live (based on standard industry tables)
- Cost of Living – rate at which the PSR is expected to increase in the future (influenced by the conference PSR philosophy, discussed above)
- Investment earnings – rate of return expected from our assets, including interest, dividends, and capital growth (GBOPHB uses 7.5% as a long term value).

Current Plan assets – this is the current value of the money that has been invested with the GBOPHB to provide for payment of Pre-1982 pension obligations.

Un-funded Liability – this is the amount that our expected liability for Pre-1982 pension exceeds our current plan assets. This liability needs to be paid off by 2021. The value of the liability will fluctuate from year to year depending on what actually happens (vs. what is predicted) to our plan assets and the PVB. This is affected by changes in the PSR, rates of retirement, mortality rates, etc.

Non-Plan Assets available for Retiree Benefits:

- Deposit Account – money held by the GBOPHB that came from the earnings on the other funds listed below. Currently, we are not making contributions to this fund; instead, for the last four years, these earnings have been used to off-set the apportionment funding for retiree health insurance premiums.
- Permanent Pension Fund (PPF) and Ministerial Pension Memorial Fund (MPMF) are permanent endowment funds established on behalf of Wisconsin Conference retirees. The earnings from these funds are available to help fund pension and retiree medical

benefits for retired ministers and surviving spouses of the Wisconsin Conference. Contributions to these funds are made by individuals and estates. The principal of these funds are not to be used.

The Wisconsin Conference presently has adequate money in the Deposit Account to cover the unfunded liability. In addition, earnings from the PPR and MPMF are available if it becomes necessary.

Amortization Period – it is reasonable to pay off the unfunded liability over a 19 year period, because of the fluctuation of the liability from year to year. We do not want to overpay this liability.

RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS at General Conference 2000 legislation was approved that requires each conference to annually adopt and publish a formal funding plan addressing its obligation for the pension plan that applies to years of service prior to 1982, and

WHEREAS all conferences are required to fully fund their Pre-1982 pension obligation by the year 2021, and

WHEREAS the intent of this legislation is to help the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits (GBOPHB) determine that all conferences are satisfactorily addressing the funding of this liability,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the following Formal Funding Plan, with the letter of introduction, be adopted as the 2003 Formal Funding Plan and be published in the 2003 Conference Yearbook and Journal:

**WISCONSIN ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Formal Funding Plan – Pre-1982 Pensions**

2003 Past Service Rate (PSR) - \$532.00

PSR Philosophy – Increase PSR for inflation as of December of each year. Target for same Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase that is used for Social Security purposes.

The current PSR is at 1.23% of the Conference Average Compensation (CAC). This percentage is above the original Wisconsin Annual Conference goal of 1.0% of the CAC, as set by the 1969 merging conference. The PSR will no longer be tied to the CAC (other than the various minimum requirements) since we are well above our 1.0% goal and apportionment money is no longer being used to pay for these costs.

Present value of expected future benefits	\$65,642,756
Current plan assets	<u>\$62,392,542</u>
Unfunded Liability	\$ 3,250,214

Non-plan assets available for retiree benefits: The funds that may be available to supplement pension/retirement funds for the Wisconsin Annual Conference are (values at 1/1/03):

- 1 Deposit Account at General Board of Pensions: \$2,539,044
- 2 Other Funds –
 - o The Wisconsin Annual Conference established the Permanent Pension Fund in 1969. The Permanent Pension Fund has a balance of \$2,352,199.19.
 - o The Wisconsin Annual Conference also established the Ministerial Pension Memorial Fund in 1983. The Ministerial Pension Memorial Fund has a balance of \$1,008,021.55.
 - o The earnings from these funds are available to provide pension and retiree medical benefits to retired ministers of the Wisconsin Annual Conference. The principal of these funds is not available.

Amortization Period – We intend to amortize the unfunded liability over 19 years, reaching full funding in 2021.

Additional Contributions– We do not anticipate that any special deposits will be needed, since the Deposit Account appears adequate to fund the Pre-1982 unfunded liability.

The contributions to the Ministerial Pension Memorial Fund and the Permanent Pension Fund come from individuals in the Conference. The contributions come from gifts, primarily from estates. The size and frequency of future contributions is uncertain. The Wisconsin Annual Conference intends to continue to solicit additional contributions to each Fund. The investment return on the Funds is uncertain.

Contingency plans for PSR increases – Any faster increases in the PSR due to higher inflation are expected to be counter-balanced by slower increases at later (or prior) times, due to lower inflation. We use 3.0% as our long-term inflation assumption.

*As provided by the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits January 1, 2003 Actuarial Valuation.

Conference Action: Approved

Action Item 9: Resolution on United Methodist Youth Sunday
Submitted By: Conference Council on Youth Ministries

Whereas the youth of our churches represent not only the future of the church, but a very present strength and reality in our congregations around the Annual Conference;

Whereas the strength and vitality of the Conference Council on Youth Ministry is a vital witness to youth around this Conference and a source of encouragement and training for the local church youth groups of our Conference;

Whereas youth in our local congregations around this Annual Conference are engaged in mission, evangelism, spiritual growth and leadership development;

Whereas the local church can gain a wealth of leadership potential and energy by tapping into the resource youth offer to local congregations;

Therefore Be It Resolved that there shall be a United Methodist Youth Sunday in every local church to recognize the role and commitment of United Methodist Youth. It is recommended that this Sunday be held in the fall of every year.

Conference Action: Approved

Action Item 10: Resolution in Opposition to “Star Wars”
Submitted By: Everett Refior, Whitewater

WHEREAS the “missile shield” planned by our government violates the ABM and Outer Space treaties, and might precipitate an arms race in space;

WHEREAS such a defense system has never been proven effective for stopping a large share of incoming missiles, but could be readily and effectively turned to offensive uses;

WHEREAS, according to the Global Network against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space, such use for world domination is considered in current Pentagon planning;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Wisconsin Conference of The United Methodist Church urges reinstatement of the ABM Treaty, cessation of all theater defense and national defense missile projects, and “saving space for peace.”

Conference Action: Defeated

Action Item 11: Resolution to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

Submitted By: Everett Refior, Whitewater

WHEREAS nuclear weapons pose a grave threat to all life,

WHEREAS the International Court of Justice has condemned their use or threat of use; as has the United Methodist Church in its 2000 Book of Resolutions;

WHEREAS President Bush has threatened their use in a preemptive first strike;

WHEREAS more nations are acquiring them, and terrorist groups may do so;

WHEREAS the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty obligates us to phase out our arsenal;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Wisconsin Conference of The United Methodist Church calls upon the United States to cease producing nuclear weapons, renounce their first use, ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and seriously negotiate for the worldwide elimination of such weapons by agreed stages, verified by inspection.

Conference Action: Approved

Action Item 12: Resolution in Support of the International Criminal Court

Submitted By: Everett Refior, Whitewater

WHEREAS the International Criminal Court provides for punishment of individuals, rather than whole nations, for genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity;

WHEREAS it is permanent, can act promptly, and may deter criminal actions, such as terrorism;

WHEREAS special ad hoc courts (such as for Bosnia and Rwanda) are uncertain to be created, lack deterrent effect, and take time to create, during which more atrocities occur;

WHEREAS Americans are adequately protected by provisions included at our request, including jurisdiction only where national courts are unable or unwilling to act, and no jurisdiction over acts committed before July 1, 2002;

WHEREAS the 2000 United Methodist Book of Resolutions argues for its ratification;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Wisconsin Conference of The United Methodist Church urges the United States to ratify the Rome Treaty and actively support the International Criminal Court.

Conference Action: Approved

Action Item 13: Resolution On The Discontinuance Of Christ United Methodist Church, Cameron, Wisconsin

Submitted By: Cabinet

WHEREAS the Christ United Methodist Church, Cameron, Wisconsin, located in Barron County has had a long and proud history of being in ministry for 119 years; and

WHEREAS the charge conference of the Christ United Methodist Church voted on April 28, 2002, to discontinue the church; and

WHEREAS the District Superintendent has recommended discontinuance of Christ United Methodist Church and transfer of membership to the United Methodist Churches in Chetek, Rice Lake, Canton, and Barron; and Faith Lutheran Church, and Red Cedar Community Church; and

WHEREAS the Superintendent has recommended that the property be sold and the proceeds of the sale be held in the Wisconsin United Foundation account and to be administered by the Board of Congregation and Parish Development for the development of a new church/faith community in the Cameron area; and

WHEREAS the consent to discontinue has been granted by the presiding Bishop, Sharon Zimmerman Rader, a majority of the District Superintendents, and the District Board of Church Location and Building and all proper Disciplinary requirements have been complied with;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Wisconsin Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church meeting in the 34th session, June 15-18, 2003, at Middleton, Wisconsin, declares Christ United Methodist Church of Cameron, Wisconsin, discontinued as of October 31, 2002;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the people of the Cameron (Christ) United Methodist Church designate all their remaining assets be invested in the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation, Inc. and to be administered by the Board of Congregation and Parish Development for the development of a new church/faith community in the Cameron area; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that if there is not a new church/faith community started in the Cameron area within ten years, all designated funds will be released to the Board of Congregation and Parish Development for utilization within the Wisconsin Conference.

Conference Action: Approved

Action Item 14: Resolution On The Discontinuance Of Big Creek United Methodist Church, Big Creek Valley, Wisconsin

Submitted By: Cabinet

Whereas, Big Creek United Methodist Church has been a faithful, life-giving Church for over 125 years in the Big Creek Valley of west central Wisconsin; and,

Whereas, people have come to know and experience God through the ministries of worship, mission, study, and fellowship in the Big Creek United Methodist Church; and,

Whereas, Big Creek United Methodist Church has always been faithful in the 100% payment of apportionments which has reached thousands of people around the world; and,

Whereas, the sociology and culture of the area has changed, along with the mobility of people, and the aging of the Church community; and,

Whereas, at a Church Conference held Wednesday, October 7, 2002, the members present voted unanimously to discontinue; and

Whereas, the Heartland District Committee on Church Location and Building have approved the discontinuance; and,

Whereas, the chairperson of the Conference Board of Trustees and the Conference Parish and Congregational Development Committee have been consulted and informed; and,

Whereas, the area presiding Bishop, Sharon Zimmerman Rader, and the District Superintendents have consented to the discontinuance of Big Creek United Methodist Church, near Rockland, Wisconsin; and

Whereas, proper care has been given to records and other legal and official documents; and,

Whereas, pastoral care has been given to the members of Big Creek United Methodist Church and effort has been made to transfer membership to area United Methodist churches;

Whereas, the property of Big Creek United Methodist Church has been deeded to the Monroe County Historical Society, Inc., and,

Whereas, the monies remaining have been given to the Rockland United Methodist Church for its ministry and mission,

Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Wisconsin Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church meeting in the 34th session, June 15-18, 2003, at Madison, Wisconsin, declares Big Creek United Methodist Church of rural Monroe county in Big Creek Valley, Wisconsin, discontinued as of December 31, 2002, and direct the Heartland District Superintendent to be the officer of the Conference to implement this action.

Conference Action: Approved

Action Item 15: Proposed Rules Changes

Submitted By: Conference Rules Committee

The Rules Committee is responsible for reviewing and processing proposed changes in the Wisconsin Rules and Policies, and forwarding such proposals to the Annual Conference. The following are respectfully submitted for consideration at the 2003 session.

Steve Zekoff, Chairperson

KEY: UNDERLINE DENOTES DELETIONS. **BOLD** DENOTES ADDITIONS.

#1 REVISION:

2.3.2 The Workbook and the Conference *Yearbook and Journal* are official publications of the Annual Conference. Pre-Conference reports materials, whether distributed electronically, posted on the conference web site, or printed in the **Annual Conference** Workbook **or members' information packet**, are not to be used for publication, press or news releases.

Rationale: Pre-conference informational reports are now distributed via the Conference web site. Rule 2.3.2 needs revision to clarify that all pre-conference reports, regardless of how they are made available for annual conference members, are not for publication.

Conference Action: Approved

2 NEW RULE:

3.3.24 Conference Secretary Compensation (§603.7)

The Director of Finance and Administration shall provide supervision, and recommend compensation for the Conference Secretary, or any clerical assistance for the Secretary's office, to the Conference Council on Finance and Administration.

*Rationale: An addition is needed to the Conference Rules specifying supervisory and compensation recommendation responsibility for the Conference Secretary. This position is an annual conference officer, elected by the annual conference under the provisions of §603.7 of *The Book of Discipline*.*

Conference Action: Approved

3 REVISION:

10.2.0 Travel and Per-diem Reimbursement

10.2.1 Reimbursement at the current volunteer mileage rate established by the Internal Revenue Service is to be paid for authorized travel to all members of Conference agencies, said mileage reimbursement to be paid to drivers only.

10.2.2 Review and the establishment of rates shall take place at the Conference session in the last year of the quadrennium for the next quadrennium.

10.2.3 Mileage reimbursement for employees of the Conference shall be at the standard mileage rate established by the Internal Revenue Service.

Rationale: The 2002 Annual Conference session revised 10.1.1 and 10.2.3 to the current language. Section 10.2.2 is no longer applicable.

Conference Action: Approved

#4 NEW POLICY:

10.10.5 Apportionment Adjustment

- A. New funds expended for all parent church(es) budget line items directly pertaining to new faith development, including staff salaries, will be recognized in the conference apportionment formula calculations over the first eight years.
- B. Staff salaries affecting apportionment adjustments will be calculated on the percentage of time spent with the new faith start-up.
- C. New members electing to join the parent church(es) while fully and directly participating and leading in the new faith start-up, will not be calculated into the parent church's membership for apportionment calculation.
- D. *Eligibility:* All established local churches that have approved an intentional new faith start-up plan through their Church Conference, the Wisconsin Cabinet, and the Board of Congregation and Parish Development are eligible.
- E. *Evaluation:* Apportionment adjustment requests, based upon parent church(es) new faith community start-ups, will be evaluated and approved annually by the Board of Congregation and Parish Development.
- F. *Graduated Formula After Chartering:* When a parented new faith community is chartered as a local church, its apportionments will be graduated over the first eight years as 1/8, 2/8, 3/8, 4/8, 5/8, 6/8, 7/8, 8/8 of its regularly calculated apportionment. The parenting church will exclude, proportionately as 7/8, 6/8, 5/8, 4/8, 3/8, 2/8, 1/8 and 0/8 over the first eight years, the recognized budget line items as included above in paragraph A.
- G. *Graduated Formula As A Fully Formed Second Site:* When a new faith community is recognized by the parenting Church Conference(s), Wisconsin Cabinet, and Board of Congregation and Parish Development as a fully formed second site ministry and not a stand-alone new church start, the parent church's apportionments, relative to all second site ministries budget line items, will be included in and graduated over the following eight years as 1/8, 2/8, 3/8, 4/8, 5/8, 6/8, 7/8, 8/8 of its regularly calculated apportionment.

Rationale: "Churches Starting Churches" is a new faith development approach that is being redefined across the global church as well as within the Wisconsin Annual Conference. There is a need to find ways to encourage and support established local churches as they risk their resources in starting new faith communities. Funding from the one or more parent church(es) for the development of a second site or stand-alone new faith community is essential. One source of support, for churches that are being highly impacted by short-term ministry needs and shared among all the Wisconsin Conference local churches, is through apportionment adjustments as stated in Conference Policy 10.10.0. The Board of Congregation and Parish Development initiated this proposed policy change as a means to recognize the financial investment made by established churches starting new faith communities. The proposal was reviewed and supported by the Cabinet, then the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, prior to consideration by the Rules Committee.

Conference Action: Approved

#5 REVISION:

10.7.0 District Superintendents' Compensation

- 10.7.1 District Superintendents' salaries shall be set at 126% of the Conference Average Compensation, rounded upward to the next \$100.

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- 10.7.2 The Housing Allowance, which is to be paid in addition to salary, is \$14,000 per annum unless otherwise provided.
- 10.7.3 The net sale proceeds and future income from the sale of district parsonages sold July 1, 1997 and after will be held in escrow for use in providing District Superintendents' housing allowances.
- 10.7.4 The annual conference contribution to the health insurance premium costs for district superintendents will be provided at the same percentage as that established by the Conference Personnel Committee for the annual conference staff.**

Rationale: An addition to 10.7.0 District Superintendents' Compensation is needed, specifying the process for establishing the annual conference contribution towards the health insurance premium cost for the superintendents.

Conference Action: Approved

6 REVISION:

50.0.0 Standards of Pastoral Support

- A. Salary Termination - June 30 shall be the concluding date for the pastor's salary in the church presently being served, and it shall be the responsibility of the charge to pay the salary of the returning or in-coming pastor beginning July 1 of each year. **Effective 2004, the last Sunday in June will be the final Sunday served by a pastor in his/her current appointment. June 30 shall be the concluding date for the pastor's salary in the charge currently being served. The first Sunday in July shall be a "Sabbatical Sunday" for all pastors and charges in transition. The affected congregations shall be responsible for securing pulpit supply for that day. The second Sunday in July shall be the first Sunday in the pulpit for incoming pastors. It shall be the responsibility of the charge to pay the salary of the returning or in-coming pastor beginning July 1 of each year.** The District Superintendent in consultation with the pastor and the charge involved shall determine termination date for payment of salaries of pastors moving into or out of the Conference.

In the event of a mid-year appointment, one Sunday between termination and commencement of the appointment shall be considered a "sabbatical Sunday."

"Sabbatical Sunday" shall not be counted as part of the pastor's vacation.

Rationale: This policy change would broaden the scope of the current policy to include not only salary termination, but also moving time-line changes. The Program and Arrangements Committee initiated it because the Wisconsin State Legislature changed the beginning of schools in Wisconsin to September 1 or later. It is the desire of the Wisconsin Annual Conference to keep youth actively involved in the Annual Conference session. Since most schools are starting after Labor Day and Labor Day is "late" in 2004, the only time when we can hold Annual Conference in June of 2005 and retain youth participation will be on the third Sunday, traditionally the last Sunday in a pastor's appointment. The change in the time-line for pastoral changes would keep the youth involved, and reduce the stress for pastors and charges in transition.

The "Sabbatical Sunday" will give pastors and congregations breathing time between appointment changes, as well as avoiding conflicts with 4th of July events, family gatherings, etc.

Conference Action: Approved

7 REVISION:

80.0.0 Policy for Clergy Time Away

- 80.1.1 All persons under appointment to local churches and agencies of the Conference are to have a minimum of one-month (**28 days, which includes 4 Sundays**) vacation, including those in part-time appointments.
- 80.1.2 All clergy are to have at least one full day (24 hours) a week for time off.
- 80.1.3 The time which the clergyperson spends in continuing education, the conference camping program, mission projects or youth/young adult ministry programs shall not be counted against vacation time.

RATIONALE: The meaning of "one-month" vacation in 80.0.0 Policy for Clergy Time Away would be clarified by defining it as 28 days, including the minimum 4 vacation Sundays provided Wisconsin Conference pastors.

Conference Action: Withdrawn by Rules Committee

8 REVISION:

- 120.1.5 The Wisconsin Annual Conference will fund retiree health insurance premiums for participating pastors and laity who are formally retiring after December 31, 1998, based on years of participation in any conference or Methodist denomination group health insurance plan, as outlined below:

(See charts, p. 243, 2002 Yearbook and Journal, Vol. I)

- a. Beginning January 1, 2003 the Conference will subsidize 72% of the Medicare Supplement premium for eligible retirees and their spouses who are 65 years of age and older and entered the retired relationship with at least 25 years of participation.
- b. Beginning January 1, 2003 the Wisconsin Conference will subsidize 22% of the active premium for eligible retirees and their spouses who are less than 65 years of age and who entered the retired relationship prior to January 1, 2002 with at least 25 years of participation.
- c. For eligible retirees with fewer than 25 years of participation, the percentage subsidized by the Wisconsin Conference for eligible retirees and their spouses will be 3% less than the percentage as presented in the tables adopted at the 1998 session of Annual Conference "Resolution on Retiree Health Premium Funding" (above).
- d. **Retirees must have a minimum 5 years of qualified participation with the Conference group health insurance plan immediately prior to retirement to be eligible for retiree coverage.**

Rationale: New section 120.1.5d reflects the requirements and application of the current group health insurance plan design.

Conference Action: Approved

Action Item 16: Procedures for Election of Delegates to the 2004 General and/or Jurisdictional Conferences

Submitted By: Conference Secretary

Balloting:

1. Ballots may be taken any time the Conference is in session. Before each ballot after the first ballot, the Bishop shall read the name and vote count of each person who received 10 or more votes on the prior ballot, the names of persons previously elected, and the number of persons to be elected on the present ballot.

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2. When sufficient time has elapsed to mark the ballots, the Bishop shall call upon all those voting to stand and remain standing until their ballots have been collected.

Valid Ballots:

1. A ballot, to be valid, must include votes for the exact number of eligible individuals that are to be elected on that ballot. If it contains votes for more or fewer persons than are to be elected on that ballot, it shall be an invalid ballot.
2. Ballots will be scanned electronically, and must be marked with a Number 2 pencil. Ballots marked in ink, which cannot be scanned, will be invalid.
3. Columns on ballots must be filled in from left to right, up to the number of persons to be elected on that ballot. Ballots which do not start in column 1, or skip a column, will be invalid. For example: if the conference is voting for two persons, the ballot must be marked in candidate columns 1 and 2. A ballot with votes in columns one and three, or two and three, would be invalid.
4. Ballots that contain votes for someone who is not eligible for election will be invalid.
5. Ballots that contain more than one vote for the same candidate will be invalid.
6. Ballots that the scanner does not read will be checked for accuracy. If those counting ballots can readily discern the proper number, the ballot will be corrected, and providing that all other conditions are correct, it will be counted as valid. The number in the grid shall be considered the actual vote; in other words, if the number listed above the grid and the number in the grid itself are different, the number in the grid will be used. (This is necessary for consistency, since ballots that are properly read by the scanner will read the number in the grid.)
7. If a ballot contains a number above the grid, and makes no markings in the grid itself, that ballot will be invalid.

Election:

For each of the first six ballots cast, a majority of all the valid ballots shall be necessary for election. On the seventh ballot the persons receiving the highest number of votes will be elected, up to the number needed to complete the General Conference delegation. The same procedure using not more than seven additional ballots will be employed for the election of Jurisdictional Conference delegates.

Reserve Delegates:

The Reserve Delegates to General Conference shall consist of the delegates elected to Jurisdictional Conference, in the order of their election. If the Jurisdictional Conference Delegates are elected in six or fewer ballots, then one additional ballot shall be cast to elect two Reserve Delegates to the Jurisdictional Conference. Only those candidates who received 10 or more votes on the prior ballot shall be eligible for election as reserve delegates. The two persons receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected. If a seventh ballot is necessary to elect the Jurisdictional Conference delegates, the number of persons to be voted for on the seventh ballot shall be the number of Jurisdictional Conference Delegates to be elected plus two. Only those candidates who received 10 or more votes on the sixth ballot shall be eligible for election. The persons receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected as delegates to the Jurisdictional Conference, up to the number of persons to be elected. The two persons receiving the next highest number of votes shall be Reserve Delegates to the Jurisdictional Conference.

Conference Action: Approved

Action Item 17: Petitions to General Conference

Submitted By: Petitions Committee

PETITION #1

Subject: ¶255.4 - United Methodist Women

WHEREAS United Methodist Women is an organization for women, evolving through over 100 years of church history, spanning the nation with local units, and

WHEREAS the organization provides opportunities for spiritual growth, with emphasis on Prayer and in-depth Bible study, offers Christian friendship, affirms the potential of every Woman, nurtures creative supportive fellowship, and develops leadership qualities, and

Whereas United Methodist Women expands concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church, and

WHEREAS Wisconsin Conference United Methodist Women has met its 2001 Pledge to Mission by giving \$398,000.00 in addition to monies given to specific mission projects and fund used in local communities and churches, and

WHEREAS United Methodist Women plays a major role in the support of the United Methodist Church's global mission,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Wisconsin Conference United Methodist Women hereby petitions the 2004 General Conference of the United Methodist Church to Retain ¶255.4 of the Book of Discipline.

Submitted by Diane B. Quade, President, WI Conference UMW; Cargill UMC

Action of Petitions Committee: no action

Conference Action: Yes 180; No 521; Abstain 90;

PETITION #2

Subject: ¶1323 - Women's Division Financial Accountability

Amend ¶1323 by ADDING the following phrase "and the General Council on Finance and Administration" and the sentence "All funds received by the United Methodist Women's Division shall be appropriated and disbursed subject to the provisions of the *Discipline* and the receipt, appropriation, disbursement, and reporting of all Women's Division administered funds and assets shall be subject to fiscal review by the General Council on Finance and Administration."

The entire paragraph would read:

¶1323. *Financial Relationship to the General Board of Global Ministries and the General Council on Finance and Administration* -- The funds for the fulfillment of the responsibilities of the Women's Division shall be derived from annual voluntary pledges, offerings, gifts, devises, bequests, annuities, or money received through special emphases and meetings held in the interest of the division. All funds except those designated for local purposes, shall be forwarded through the channels of finance of United Methodist Women to the treasurer of the division. **All funds received by the United Methodist Women's Division shall be appropriated and disbursed subject to the provisions of the Discipline and the receipt, appropriation, disbursement, and reporting of all Women's Division administered funds and assets shall be subject to fiscal review by the General Council on Finance and Administration.** Undesignated funds received by the Women's Division shall be allocated by the division, on recommendation of the appropriate section or committee, for the work of the several sections of the Women's Division and to such other units of the General Board of Global Ministries as the division shall determine for the fulfillment of the responsibilities of the division. Funds appropriated for the work of the other units of the board may be given with specific designations and time limits, after which unspent funds are to be returned to the division.

Rationale

The General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) has stated “The United Methodist Women’s Division does not receive any general Church funds, so we do not approve its financing plans for its events” (this statement was made by GCFA following questions regarding accountability for funds spent by the Women’s Division for a closed national gathering in December, 2000 -- see ¶721 -- *Restrictions on Closed Meetings*). It is outside the spirit and tradition of the Church to have no inherent financial accountability for any United Methodist board or agency, or any part of any board or agency, such as the Women’s Division, which has full authority to receive, appropriate, and disburse funds in the name of United Methodism (¶¶1318.4, 1319.1, 1319.4c, 1323).

The Women’s Division is treated differently from other units of the Church’s structure. The United Methodist Women’s Division and United Methodist Women share in the overall mission of the United Methodist Church (¶¶120-124, 1317) and the Women’s Division is integrated into the structure of the Church subordinate to the General Board of Global Ministries (¶¶1301-1325). However, the Women’s Division is accountable only to the General Conference while the General Board of Global Ministries is accountable to the General Council on Finance and Administration as well. The Women’s Division should have the same fiscal accountability relationship to GCFA as all the other general agencies of the church.

Submitted by Rev. Thomas Lambrecht

Action of Petitions Committee: non-concurrence by consensus

Conference Action: Yes 167; No 601; Abstain 22

PETITION #3

Subject: ¶247 - Church Conference Absentee Voting

We petition ¶247 of the 2004 *Book of Discipline* be amended by addition to read as follows:

To encourage broader participation by members of the church, the charge conference may be convened as the church conference, extending the vote to all local church members present at such meetings. **In consultation with the pastor, the Church Council may approve absentee ballots for members who cannot attend due to an unavoidable circumstance such as an employment obligation, school, a medical or physical condition, or a restricted living situation. The Church Council shall be responsible for determining who is eligible, and the process and guidelines for distributing and collection the ballots.** The church conference shall be authorized by the district superintendent. It may be called at the discretion of the district superintendent by one of the following: the pastor, the church council, or 10 percent of the membership of the local church... (to continue as written)

Rationale

1. The Social Principles, specifically in statements on pages 106 and 107 of the 2004 *Book of Discipline*, urge and support the inclusion of all people in the full life of the community and church. To exclude someone from voting on issues that affect the local church they support because of circumstances beyond their control is contrary to the spirit of our Social Principles.
2. We live in a global society that is highly mobile and doesn’t always permit people to be available at important times in the life of their local church. We need to recognize the limitations social and personal responsibilities place on individuals and not penalize them or the church because of these limitations.

Submitted by Michael C. Rankin, Salem UMC, Fond du Lac

Action of Petitions Committee: non-concurrence by consensus

Conference Action: Yes 237; No 535; Abstain 19

PETITION #4

Subject: ¶161.ii - Abortion Amendment

This petition calls for the amending of *The Book of Discipline*: Part IV, SOCIAL PRINCIPLES ¶161.ii. The Nurturing Community, J) Abortion.

WHEREAS the paragraph on abortion as written uses vague language and refers to unidentifiable Christian doctrine;

WHEREAS the statement on dilation and extraction lists as exceptions the only known reasons for the use of the procedure (e.g., when the physical life of the mother is in danger and no other medical procedure is available, or in the case of severe fetal anomalies incompatible with life);

WHEREAS the paragraph on abortion as written distorts the priorities of Christians (i.e., it should not be the self-appointed responsibility of Christians to determine “the sorts of conditions that may warrant abortions.” That is a very personal determination which belongs to the parties involved);

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that J) Abortion be amended as follows:

The beginning of life and the ending of life are the God-given boundaries of human existence. While individuals have always had some degree of control over when they would die, they now have the awesome power to determine when and even whether new individuals will be born. Our belief in the sanctity of unborn life makes us reluctant to approve abortion. But we are equally bound to respect the sacredness of life and well-being of the mother, for whom devastating damage may result from a n unacceptable pregnancy. In continuity with past Christian teaching (W)e recognize tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion, and in such cases we support the legal option of abortion under proper medical procedures. We cannot affirm abortion as a n acceptable means of birth control, and we unconditionally reject it as a means of gender selection. We oppose the use of late-term abortion known as dilation and extraction (partial-birth abortion) and call for the end of this practice except when the physical life of the mother is in danger and no other medical procedure is available, or in the case of severe fetal anomalies incompatible with life. We call all Christians to a searching and prayerful inquiry into the sorts of conditions that may warrant abortions. We commit our Church to continue to provide nurturing ministries to those who terminate a pregnancy, to those in the midst of a crisis pregnancy, and to those who give birth. Governmental laws and regulations do not provide all the guidance required by the informed Christian conscience. Therefore, a decision concerning abortion should be made only after thoughtful and prayerful consideration by the parties involved, with medical, pastoral, and other appropriate counsel.

Submitted by Kairos Comotion

Action of the Petitions Committee: non-concurrence by consensus

Conference Action: Yes 252; No 479, Abstain 57

PETITION #5

Subject: ¶356.1 - Mandatory Retirement of the Clergy

Mandatory Retirement - Every clergy member of an annual conference who will have attained age seventy on or before July 1 in the year in which the conference is held shall be automatically retired.

Rationale

By 2030, older adults will outnumber young people in the population. Ours is a society, which is increasingly dependent upon the resources older adults have to offer. Life expectancy is on the rise, because of better health care and nutrition. Requiring mandatory retirement at any age causes the church to lose valuable and exceptional clergy, who have brought years of experience and wisdom to our congregations. Many of the clergy enjoy preaching the word of our Lord, which is reflected in their effect on their congregations. Sadly, the mandatory age requirement causes many well-qualified and dedicated individuals to give up a way of life that they are accus-

tomed to. In addition, it causes many congregations to lose valuable leadership and spiritual well being.

Since there is an increasing shortage in clergy, which is only likely to rise to even higher numbers with older adults outnumbering young people, the mandatory age requirement should be abolished. Currently, there are procedures in place that can be relied upon to remove clergy for cause or ineffectiveness.

Therefore, I petition the 2004 General Conference of the United Methodist Church to delete ¶356.1, which deals with mandatory age requirements of the clergy.

Submitted by Denise L. Harris, Mattoon UMC

Action of the Petitions Committee: concurrence by consensus

Conference Action: Yes 691; No 91; Abstain 9 (Petition #5 will be forwarded to General Conference)

PETITION #6

Subject ¶1414.2 - Membership in the University Senate

Amend ¶by DELETING the entire paragraph and ADDING the following new paragraph in its place:

The senate shall be composed of twenty-five voting members who, at the time of their election, shall be members of the United Methodist Church and who, by reason of professional background or education, are qualified for the work of evaluating educational institutions. Election is for the quadrennium. Of the twenty-five members, nine shall be nominated by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, eight shall be nominated by the Council of Bishops, and eight shall be nominated by the National Association of Schools and Colleges of the United Methodist Church. At the same daily session at which the above nominations are announced, additional nominations may be made from the floor, but at no other time. The members shall be elected by the General Conference and by plurality vote, with any replacement members made necessary by death or resignation being elected by the Council of Bishops. Of the members nominated by each group, and of the total elected by the General Conference, no more than one-third shall be professionally affiliated with a United Methodist related educational institution. The general secretary of the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry shall serve as an ex officio member of the senate with voice but without vote. The associate general secretaries of the Divisions of Higher Education and Ministry and one representative of the General Board of Global Ministries appointed by that Board's General Secretary may attend meetings with voice but without vote. The senate, at its originating meeting each quadrennium, shall elect as its president a member not professionally affiliated with a United Methodist related educational institution.

This legislation is to be effective at the close of the 2004 General Conference.

Rationale

The University Senate is currently composed in such a way that at least a majority of the voting members are chief executives of United Methodist related educational institutions. One of the purposes of the University Senate is to review educational institutions on behalf of the United Methodist Church. The present composition of the Senate presents an institutionally sanctioned conflict of interest, reducing its ability to objectively evaluate United Methodist related educational institutions. This petition was approved by the 1999 Wisconsin Annual Conference.

Submitted by: Rev. Thomas Lambrecht

Action of the Petitions Committee: non-concurrence by vote

Conference Action: Yes 270; No 468; Abstain 49

PETITION #7

Subject: Probationary Local Pastor Status

Amend ¶343.1a by adding new subsection *a* as follows:

Probationary Local Pastors: Those who are pursuing completion of the Course of Study and are annually interviewed by the District Committee on Ordained Ministry. The clergy members in full connection of the annual conference may approve continuance of a local pastor after reference to and recommendation by its Board of Ordained Ministry. They have the right to vote on all matters except constitutional amendments, elections of delegates to General, Jurisdictional or Central conferences.

Rationale

It is proposed that there be a Probationary Local Pastor status while pastors are in Licensing School, Course of Study and are undergoing evaluation by the District Committee on Ministry during their candidacy and one year after finishing the Course of Study:

- A. Because the Gospel places value on all persons in all places, the church recognizes a great need of trained clergy in all our local churches.
- B. Because the United Methodist church has a strong commitment to quality education and evaluation for fitness, readiness and effectiveness of all clergy.
- C. Because Local Pastors have increased in number from 25% of our clergy in 1996 to 33% in 2000 and the percentage is expected to increase.
- D. Because the Course of Study is an accepted route to completion of pastoral education and involves study, papers, and class instruction while the local pastor is serving a local congregation.
- E. Because Course of Study requires a minimum of five years and maximum of twelve years to complete.
- F. Because Local pastors are willing to serve or not serve at the will of the Bishop and the Cabinet.

Submitted by Gary Swanson on behalf of United Methodist Rural Fellowship

Action of Petitions Committee: concurrence by consensus

Conference Action: Yes 702; No 69; Abstain 18 (Petition #7 will be forwarded to General Conference.)

PETITION #8

Subject: ¶341.6 - Local Pastor Voting Rights

The membership of local pastors under full-time and part-time appointment is in the annual conference where they shall have the right to vote on all matters except constitutional amendments, election of delegates to general, jurisdictional, or central conferences, and matters of ordination, character, and conference relations of clergy.

Rationale

The changes give Local Pastors, who have completed the Course of Study and evaluation, the right to vote on all matters.

- A. Local Pastors are defined as those who have completed the course of study and the evaluation process of the Annual Conference.
- B. With 1/3 of the clergy being local pastors, those who have completed the study and evaluation should be able to represent the churches and charges where they serve in all matters of the *Discipline*.

-
- C. This would be appropriate if Constitutional paragraph 33, Article IV, were amended by vote of the General and Annual Conferences.

Submitted by Gary Swanson on behalf of United Methodist Rural Fellowship

Action of the Petitions Committee: concurrence by consensus

Conference Action: Yes 682; No 81; Abstain 21 (Petition #8 will be forwarded to General Conference.)

PETITION #9

Subject: ¶33, Article IV - Clergy Voting Rights - Constitutional Change

The ordained ministerial clergy delegates to the General Conference and to the jurisdictional or central conference shall be elected by and from the ministerial members in full connection clergy members with of the annual conference or provisional annual conference.

Rationale

Preferred Legislation to give all clergy the privilege of voting for General and Jurisdictional Conference members from the clergy:

- A. Because each pastor of a local church/charge represents the equitable vote of that charge.
- B. Because all pastors who have completed the basic education and evaluation requirements have the experience to understand the issues at stake at General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference.
- C. Because Local Pastors have increased in number from 25% of our clergy in 1996 to 33% in 2000 and the percentage is expected to increase.
- D. Because trained clergy and churches deserve the full benefit of representation at General Conference and Jurisdictional Conference.
- E. Local pastors along with ordained clergy count it as a privilege to vote and serve the church in all ways.

Submitted by Gary Swanson on behalf of United Methodist Rural Fellowship

Action of the Petitions Committee: concurrence by consensus

Conference Action: Yes 680; No 79; Abstain 24 (Petition #9 will be forwarded to General Conference.)

PETITION #10

Subject: ¶2712.3 - Naming the Jurisdictional Jury Pool

Amend ¶2712.3 by deleting the words, "College of Bishops" and replacing them with "jurisdictional episcopacy committee."

The amended paragraph would then read:

¶2712.3 The trial shall be convened as provided in ¶2709 with the pool of thirty-five or more persons to consist of clergy in full connection named by the College of Bishops jurisdictional episcopacy committee in approximately equal numbers from each episcopal area within the jurisdictional or central conference. Special consideration should be given so that the pool includes persons representative of racial, ethnic, and gender diversity.

Rationale

Under the current system, the bishops are naming those who would eventually sit as the jury in any trial under which they are being held accountable. To ensure the proper separation of judicial and presidential responsibilities within the church, this function needs to be shifted to another group. The jurisdictional episcopacy committee would be the logical body to appoint the jury, since it contains representatives from every annual conference who are knowledgeable about the members who would make good jury candidates.

Submitted by Rev. Thomas Lambrecht

Action of the Petitions Committee: non-concurrence by consensus

Conference Action: Yes 251; No 356; Abstain 16

PETITION #11

Subject: ¶2703.1 - Electing the Jurisdictional Committee on Investigation

Amend ¶2703.1 by deleting the words “on nomination of the College of Bishops in consultation with the jurisdictional episcopacy committee.”

The amended paragraph would then read:

¶2703.1 *When respondent is a bishop* - There shall be a committee on investigation elected by each jurisdictional or central conference on nomination of the College of Bishops in consultation with the jurisdictional episcopacy committee. The committee shall consist of seven clergy in full connection...

Rationale

Under the current system, the bishops are nominating those who could be responsible for holding them accountable, which would be a conflict of interest. By electing the committee on investigation through the regular jurisdictional nomination and election process, the committee can be more independently and impartially chosen.

Submitted by Rev. Thomas Lambrecht

Action of the Petitions Committee: non-concurrence by consensus

Conference Action: Yes 231; No 383; Abstain 19

PETITION #12

Subject: ¶161.II - Human Sexuality

This petition calls for the amending of The *Book of Discipline*, Part IV, SOCIAL PRINCIPLES, ¶161.II. THE NURTURING COMMUNITY, G) Human Sexuality, the last paragraph.

WHEREAS Holy Spirit continues to prompt the Christian Church to grow toward the inclusiveness of God’s love and move away from intolerance and subjugation (e.g., slavery, witch-hunts, inquisition, inaccessible churches, fully ordaining only men);

WHEREAS Jesus Christ, as recorded in the New Testament, was silent on the issue of homosexuality, but spoke clearly and consistently about the inclusion of all people;

WHEREAS the scriptural passages in Paul’s writings which have been interpreted to condemn homosexuality in general, in fact were written to condemn pederasty (i.e., the exploitation and abuse of a boy by a man);

WHEREAS the inclusion of the phrase, “Although we do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching...” (¶161.II G) has resulted in local churches denying homosexual persons access to the sacraments of the church, lay leadership positions, voice and vote in church decisions and even the opportunity to safely worship safely;

WHEREAS the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church call for equal rights for people of different races, religious preferences, age, genders, abilities, sexual orientation. [SOCIAL PRINCIPLES, ¶162.III. A), B), C), D), E), F), G), and H)];

Therefore, be it resolved that ¶161.II The Nurturing Community, G) Human Sexuality, the last paragraph, be amended as follows:

Homosexual persons no less than heterosexual persons are individuals of sacred worth. All persons need the ministry and guidance of the church in their struggles for human fulfillment, as well as the spiritual and emotional care of a fellowship that enables reconciling relationships with God, with others, and with self. Although we do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching, (W)e affirm that God’s grace is available

to all. We implore families and churches not to reject or condemn their lesbian and gay members and friends. We commit ourselves to be in ministry for and with all persons.

Submitted by Kairos Comotion

Action of the Petitions Committee: concurrence by vote

Conference Action: Yes 377; No 283; Abstain 12 (Petition #12 will be forwarded to General Conference.)

PETITION #13

Subject: ¶332.6 - Holy Union Ceremonies

This petition calls for the amending of *The Book of Discipline* ¶332.6.

WHEREAS “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28, NIV) expresses the ancient Christian ideal of inclusiveness, and

WHEREAS ¶161.G is our modern expression of inclusiveness specifically extended to homosexual persons;

WHEREAS “We affirm the sanctity of the marriage covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity between a man and a woman” (¶161.C);

WHEREAS simple justice and compassion demands that a comparable ceremony for homosexual couples be available;

WHEREAS “The decision to perform the (marriage) ceremony shall be the right and responsibility of the pastor” (¶331.1.i) the right and responsibility to perform ceremonies for same-sex unions should also belong to the pastor;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that ¶332.6 be amended to read “Ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions may be conducted by our ministers and may be conducted in our churches.”

Submitted by Lloyd Shepherd, Lake Street UMC Eau Claire

Action of the Petitions Committee: non-concurrence by vote

Conference Action: Yes 288; No 373; Abstain 13

PETITION #14

Subject: ¶332.6 - Holy Union Ceremonies

WHEREAS ¶161 claims the Church’s responsibility to innovate, sponsor and evaluate new forms of community that will encourage development of the fullest potential in individuals;

WHEREAS ¶161 supports the role of human communities for maintaining and strengthening the growth of all persons as created by God and loved by and through Jesus Christ;

WHEREAS the fundamental value of faithful, ethical human relationship as a sacred gift of God merits and calls for the nurture and affirmation of a faith community;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that ¶332.6 be deleted.

Ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches.

Submitted by Kairos Comotion

Action of the Petitions Committee: non-concurrence by vote

Conference Action: Yes 310; No 350; Abstain 14

PETITION #15

Subject: ¶331.1.i - Duties of the Pastor

This petition calls for the amending of The Book of Discipline ¶331.1.i) (Ministering Within the Congregation and the World)

WHEREAS ¶161 claims the church's responsibility to innovate, sponsor and evaluate new forms of community that will encourage development of the fullest potential in individuals and their relationships;

WHEREAS ¶161 supports the role of human communities for maintaining and strengthening the growth of all persons as created by God and loved by and through Jesus Christ;

WHEREAS the fundamental value of faithful, ethical human relationship as a sacred gift of God merits and calls for the nurture and affirmation of a faith community;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that ¶331.1.i be amended as follows: **To counsel and guide faith communities in affirming the sacredness of human relationships. Pastors shall encourage faithful commitments in all relationships. Worship that celebrates these relationships shall be conducted at the discretion of the pastor. To perform the marriage ceremony after due counsel with the parties involved. The decision to perform the ceremony shall be the right and responsibility of the pastor. Qualifications for performing marriage shall be Weddings shall be conducted** in accordance with the laws of the state and The United Methodist Church.

Submitted by Kairos Comotion

Action of the Petitions Committee: Non-concurrence by vote

Conference Action: Yes 214; No 430; Abstain 25

PETITION #16

Subject: ¶359.1 - Resolution of Complaints

Amend ¶359.1d as follows:

- 1 By inserting the words "to the satisfaction of the person making the complaint, the person who is the subject of the complaint, and the bishop (who represents the church)"
- 2 By replacing the word "may" with the word "shall" in ¶359.1d, 359.1d1, and 359.1d2

So that the paragraphs in question would read as follows:

¶359.1d) *Referral of a Complaint* - If the supervisory response does not achieve a resolution **to the satisfaction of the person making the complaint, the person who is the subject of the complaint, and the bishop (who represents the church)**, the bishop may **shall** refer the complaint as judicial or administrative based on the following criteria:

1. *Judicial Complaint* - If the bishop determines that the complaint is based on allegations of one or more offenses listed in ¶2702.1, the bishop may **shall** refer the complaint to the counsel for the Church, who shall be appointed by the bishop...
2. *Administrative Complaint* - If the bishop determines that the complaint is based on allegations of incompetence, ineffectiveness, or unwillingness or inability to perform ministerial duties, he or she may **shall** refer the complaint as an administrative complaint to the board of ordained ministry...

Rationale

The complaint process in the Discipline has as its primary purpose "a just resolution of any violations of this sacred trust, in the hope that God's work of justice, reconciliation and healing may be realized in the body of Christ." (¶359.1) The supervisory response does not always achieve "a just resolution among all parties" (¶359.1b) yet the referral of a complaint remains merely an option at the discretion of the bishop. The tendency in the supervisory process is to protect the institutional church at the expense of achieving resolution among the parties involved, a tendency that sometimes victimizes the person bringing the complaint and other times victimizes the person respond-

ing to the complaint. These changes assure that resolution takes place by empowering any of the parties who are not satisfied to press the process to the next level.

Submitted by Rev. Thomas Lambrecht

Action of the Petitions Committee: non-concurrence by consensus

Conference Action: Yes 202; No 464; Abstain 7

PETITION #17

Subject: ¶359.1 - Timelines for the Complaint Process

Amend ¶359.1 by adding a new subsection *d* and re-lettering the following subsections. The new subsection *d* would read as follows:

- d) *Timelines for the Complaint Process* - When a complaint is received by a district superintendent or bishop, the bishop shall have forty-five (45) days to initiate the supervisory response. If the supervisory response does not achieve resolution and/or reconciliation within one hundred and twenty (120) days of the date the supervisory response was initiated, the bishop shall refer the complaint under ¶359.1e. Either or both of the above deadlines may be extended by thirty (30) days with the mutual written consent of both the person filing the complaint and the clergy person who is the subject of the complaint.**

Rationale

The review of a person's ministerial office is a serious matter that puts that person's life and ministry "on hold" until the review is completed. The church (both at the congregational and denominational levels) suffers when the review process is unduly prolonged. There have been instances of complaints not being acted upon by bishops and review processes that stretched out for more than six months, delaying and sometimes thwarting a just resolution of the issues raised.

Submitted by Rev. Thomas Lambrecht

Action of the Petitions Committee: non-concurrence by consensus

Conference Action: Yes 293; No 374; Abstain 5

PETITION #18

Subject: ¶413 - Timelines for the Complaint Process for Bishops

Amend ¶413 by adding a new subsection 4 and renumbering the following subsections. The new subsection 4 would read as follows:

- 4. When a complaint is received by a College of Bishops, the president or secretary of the College shall have forty-five (45) days to initiate the supervisory response as provided in ¶413.3. If the supervisory response does not achieve resolution and/or reconciliation within one hundred and twenty (120) days of the date the supervisory response was initiated, the president or secretary of the College of Bishops shall refer the complaint under ¶413.5. Either or both of the above deadlines may be extended by thirty (30) days with the mutual written consent of both the person filing the complaint and the bishop who is the subject of the complaint.**

Rationale

The review of a bishop's episcopal office is a serious matter that puts that bishop's life and ministry "on hold" until the review is completed. The annual conference and General Church both suffer when the review process is unduly prolonged, placing the bishop's leadership in the church in jeopardy. There have been instances of complaints not being acted upon and review processes that stretched out for more than six months, delaying and sometimes thwarting a just resolution of the issues raised.

Submitted by Rev. Thomas Lambrecht

Action of Petitions Committee: non-concurrence by consensus

Conference Action: Yes 286; No 377; Abstain 5

PETITION #19

Subject: ¶413.2 - Responsibility for Complaints Against Bishops

Amend ¶413.2-3 by substituting the words “chair of the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy” whenever the “president and secretary of the College of Bishops” appears, and editing the paragraph for clarity.

The new sections would read as follows:

¶413.2 Any complaint concerning the effectiveness, competence, or one or more of the offenses listed in ¶2702 shall be submitted to the president of the College of Bishops in that jurisdictional or central conference. If the complaint concerns the president, it shall be submitted to the secretary of the College of Bishops **chair of the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy**. A complaint is a written statement claiming misconduct, unsatisfactory performance of ministerial duties, or one or more of the offenses listed in ¶2702. For the purposes of this paragraph, the United Methodist bishops of the central conferences shall constitute one college of bishops.

3. After receiving a complaint as provided in §1, the president and the secretary of the College of Bishops, or the secretary and another member of the college if the complaint concerns the president (or the president and another member of the college if the complaint concerns the secretary), in consultation with a lay and clergy member of the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy appointed by the chair of the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy, **along with two other members of the committee appointed by the chair (including a member from that bishop’s annual conference),** shall make a supervisory response. This response shall be directed toward a just resolution among all parties and may include consultation with the **entire** jurisdictional committee on episcopacy or voluntary mediation in which the parties are assisted in reaching a settlement or agreement satisfactory to all parties by a trained neutral third party mediator or mediation team. When deemed appropriate to protect the well-being of the complainant, the Church and/or bishop, the College of Bishops, in consultation with upon the recommendation of the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy, may suspend the bishop from all episcopal responsibilities for a period not to exceed sixty days. During the suspension... At the determination of the president (secretary) chair, persons with qualifications and experience in assessment, intervention, or healing may be selected to assist in the supervisory responses... If the supervisory response does not result in resolution of the matter, the president or secretary of the College of Bishops **jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy** may refer the matter as follows:

- a) *Judicial Complaint* - If a complaint is based on allegations of one or more offenses listed in ¶2702, the president and secretary of the College of Bishops (or the two members of the College who are handling the complaint) **jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy** may refer the complaint to a bishop from another jurisdictional or central conference, or to an elder in full connection within the same jurisdictional or central conference, who shall serve as counsel for the Church...
- b) *Administrative complaint* - If the complaint is based on allegations of incompetence, ineffectiveness, or unwillingness or inability to perform episcopal duties, the president and secretary of the College of bishops (or the two members of the college who are handling the complaint) **jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy** may refer itself address the complaint to the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy. The committee may recommend involuntary retirement... In rare instances when the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy deems the matter serious enough and when one or more offenses listed in ¶2702 are involved, the committee may refer the complaint back to the president and secretary of the college of Bishops (or the two members of the college who are handling the complaint) for referral as a judicial complaint to the jurisdictional or central conference committee on investigation under the provisions of ¶413.3a. The provisions of

¶358.2 for fair process in administrative hearings shall apply to this administrative process.

Rationale

The Judicial Council ruled in 1980 that bishops were not subject to the evaluation of other bishops regarding the matter of accountability (see JCD 475). Making bishops accountable for supervising another bishop in the complaint process creates a conflict of roles, since the Council of Bishops places a high priority on collegiality and mutual support. ¶413 makes the president and secretary of the college of Bishops responsible for receiving complaints, making a supervisory response, and referring complaints for judicial or administrative action, creating an untenable situation where bishops are to be collegial and also to supervise one another. The jurisdictional episcopacy committee already has an accountability function toward bishops (see ¶522.3a). These changes merely extend that existing responsibility.

Submitted by Rev. Thomas Lambrecht

Action of the Petitions Committee: non-concurrence by consensus

Conference Action: Yes 213; No 450; Abstain 11

PETITION #20

Subject: ¶413 - Resolution of Complaints Against Bishops

Amend ¶413 as follows:

- 1 By taking the last sentence of ¶413.3 and creating a new subparagraph 4, which would include the following sections a and b, and renumbering following sections
- 2 By inserting the words “to the satisfaction of the person making the complaint, the bishop who is the subject of the complaint, and the president or secretary (who represents the church)”
- 3 By replacing the word “may” with the word “shall” in the new ¶413.4, 413.4a, and 413.4b

So that the paragraphs in question would read as follows:

¶After receiving a complaint as provided in §1, the president and the secretary... The supervisory response also may include mediation, in which the parties are assisted in reaching an agreement satisfactory to all parties by a trained, neutral third-party mediator or mediation team.

4. If the supervisory response does not result in resolution **to the satisfaction of the person making the complaint, the bishop who is the subject of the complaint, and the president or secretary (who represents the church) of the matter**, the president or secretary of the College of Bishops may shall refer the matter as follows:
 - a) *Judicial Complaint* - If the complaint is based on allegations of one or more offenses listed in ¶2702, the president and secretary of the College of Bishops (or the two members of the College who are handling the complaint) may shall refer the complaint to a bishop from another jurisdictional or central conference, or to an elder in full connection within the same jurisdictional or central conference, who shall serve as counsel...
 - b) *Administrative Complaint* - If the complaint is based on allegations of incompetence, ineffectiveness, or unwillingness or inability to perform Episcopal duties, the president and secretary of the College of Bishops (or the two members of the college who are handling the complaint) may shall refer the complaint to the jurisdictional or central conference committee on episcopacy...

Rationale

The complaint process in the *Discipline* has as its primary purpose “a just resolution of any violations of this sacred trust, in the hope that God’s work of justice, reconciliation and healing may be realized.” (§413.1) The supervisory response does not always achieve “a just resolution among all parties” (§413.3), yet the referral of a complaint remains merely an option at the discretion of the president or secretary of the College of Bishops. The tendency in the supervisory process is to protect the institutional church at the expense of achieving resolution among the parties involved, a tendency that sometimes victimizes the person bringing the complaint and other times victimizes the bishop responding to the complaint. These changes assure that resolution takes place by empowering any of the parties who are not satisfied to press the process to the next level. For clarity’s sake, the section on referral of complaints should be set off from the section on the supervisory response, as it is in ¶359.

Submitted by Rev. Thomas Lambrecht

Action of the Petitions Committee: non-concurrence by consensus

Conference Action: Yes 177; No 477; Abstain 12

PETITION #21

Subject: Resolution #215 - Tithing

This petition is to amend the Book of Resolutions, ¶215. Tithing.

WHEREAS Jesus did not make a promise that God will bestow specific blessings in return for specific behavior (Biblical scholars attribute Luke 6:38 to Luke and not Jesus);

WHEREAS it is inappropriate for the modern church to make such promises;

WHEREAS John Wesley, in his sermon on the use of money (#50 III.6) specifically rejects the giving a fixed proportion of one’s income;

WHEREAS tithing is to be recommended primarily as a spiritual discipline;

WHEREAS ¶214, Stewardship Emphasis, adequately deals with the stewardship aspect of tithing.

WHEREAS the appeal for additional funds by congregations, annual conferences and general boards at the national level should be based on the principles of planning, transparency and accountability;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that ¶215. Tithing be rescinded; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Discipleship be directed to develop for consideration by the 2008 General Conference a resolution on Tithing that is theologically sound, realistic in scope and focused on the spiritual needs of the individual rather than the perceived need for more funds for the Church.

Submitted by Lloyd Shepherd, Lake St. UMC Eau Claire

Action of Petitions Committee: non-concurrence by consensus

Conference Action: Yes 87; No 560; Abstain 11

Action Item 18: Conference Budget

Submitted By: Council on Finance and Administration