



## IOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE INDEX OF STANDING ITEMS 2016 – FULL TEXT

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The Standing Items are actions of, or reports to, past annual conference sessions which have a continuing effect as *policy* for the Iowa Annual Conference, its agencies and/or its churches.

The 2014 Iowa Annual Conference voted to remove several outdated Standing Items from this section. For a complete list of those removed see the *2014 Iowa Conference Journal*, section on "Reports of Conference Action," Action Item #809. Also see section B. Plan of Organization and Rules of Order, 17. a.(7) c. for sunset rule.

- ~ IACJ is the abbreviation for Iowa Annual Conference Journal.
  - ~ Previous years' Standing Items indexes are in the *Iowa Annual Conference Journal* for each of those years.
  - ~ The full text of each Standing Item has been published on the *Iowa Annual Conference Journal* CD-ROM, beginning in 2003. Beginning in 2016, the full text of Standing Items can be found on the Conference's website [www.iaumc.org](http://www.iaumc.org).
1. [Advance Specials, Guidelines for Approving Conference](#), IACJ, 2006, Item 709, p. 345; IACJ, 2013, Item 540, p. 298.
  2. [Annual Conference Expense](#), IACJ, 2002, p. 272, VI.N.14; IACJ, 2003, Item 208, p.154, moved this from Rules of Order to Standing Items.
  3. [Appointment Transitioning Policy](#), IACJ 2015, Item 1002, p. 301.
  4. [Area Disaster Fund](#), IACJ, 2006, Item 711, p. 347.
  5. [Builder's Call](#), IACJ, 2008, Item 309, p. 293.
  6. [Clergy Leaves and Vacations](#), IACJ, 2002, pp. 264-7. The 2003 Annual Conference moved this from the Rules of Order to the Standing Items, IACJ, 2003, Item 208, p. 154; IACJ, 2010, Item 102, p. 293; IACJ, 2011, Item 320, p. 326; IACJ, 2016, Item 807, p. 288.
  7. [Code of Ethics for Ministry Professionals](#), **Our Covenant Relationship**, IACJ, 2006, Item 507, p. 328; IACJ, 2011 Item 403, p. 331.
  8. Covenant Relationships.
    - a. [Covenant Relationship with United Methodist-Related Colleges in Iowa](#), IACJ, 2001, Item 513, p. 148.
    - b. [Covenant Relationships with Organizations Related to the Iowa Annual Conference](#), IACJ, 2002, p. 149, Items 104 and 105.

9. Diaconal Ministers.
  - a. [Responsible Conditions for Employment of Diaconal Ministers](#), IACJ, 1988, Item 134, p. 174; IACJ, 2006, Item 508, p. 329.
  - b. [Responsible Conditions for Employment of Certified Personnel](#), IACJ, 2006, Item 508, p. 332.
  - c. [Guidelines for Employment of Non-Certified Persons in Diaconal Forms of Ministry](#), IACJ, 2006, Item 508, p. 333.
10. [Discontinuation and Abandonment of Local Churches](#), IACJ, 2010, Item 803, P. 359.
11. [Divorce: Iowa Annual Conference Guidelines Concerning Clergy-Spouse Divorce](#), IACJ, 2006, Item 503, p. 319.
12. [Episcopal Residence and District Parsonages, Authority to Modify, Repair, Sell, Purchase and Mortgage](#). IACJ, 2005, Item 111.2, p. 304.
13. [Matthew 25 Fund](#), IACJ, 2004, Item 303, p. 158.
14. [Mission Congregations](#), Bishop's Task Force on, IACJ, 2009, Item 304, p. 300.
15. [Moving Policy](#), IACJ, 2015, Item 1001, p. 299; IACJ, 2016, Item 806, p. 285.
16. [Neighbor Helping Neighbor](#), IACJ, 2007, Item 405, p. 306.
17. Parish Development:
  - a. [New Church Development and Parish Revitalization, Joint Strategy for](#); IACJ, 2008, Item 310, p. 294.
  - b. [Church Extension and Revitalization, Guidelines for](#), IACJ, 2008, Item 310, p. 297.
  - c. [Rotating Loan Fund Investment and Interest](#). IACJ, 2007, Item 413, p. 314.
18. [Parsonage Damage Policy](#), IACJ, 2006, Item 504, p. 325; IACJ, 2013, Item 538, p. 295.
19. [Parsonage Guidelines, Safety and Standards, \(Pastor's Housing Policy\)](#), IACJ, 2003, Item 806, p. 183; IACJ, 2013, Item 538, p. 287.
20. [Procedure for Compliance, by the Iowa Annual Conference, with Discipline paragraphs 806.9, 806.10, 612.18 and 19](#); IACJ, 2006, Item 303, p. 310.
21. [Rainbow Covenant Church](#), IACJ, 2000, Item 201, p. 140; IACJ, 2013, Item 539, p. 297.
22. [Worker's Compensation](#), IACJ, 2006, Item 205, p. 307.
1. **ADVANCE SPECIALS, GUIDELINES FOR APPROVING CONFERENCE**, IACJ, 2013, Item 540, p. 298.
- I. Definition

A Conference Advance Special is a project located within the Iowa Annual Conference, directly related to the Iowa Conference Board of Global Ministries. It shares values,

purposes and goals with the United Methodist Church and recognizes the worth of the individual and is committed to the well-being of persons.

## II. Guidelines for eligibility

A. Projects seeking approval as Conference Advance Specials shall be located within the bounds of the Iowa Annual Conference. The Iowa Nigeria Partnership is included in this category.

B. To be considered as a Conference Advance Special, the project shall establish a direct, on-going relationship with the Iowa Conference Board of Global Ministries. It will maintain at least two United Methodist representatives on its governing board, one of which is a member of the Iowa conference Board of Global Ministries or one of its standing committees.

C. If the project is in current Associate Covenant Relationship with the Iowa Annual Conference, it is eligible for Conference Advance Special status without direct, ongoing relationship with the Iowa Conference Board of Global Ministries.

## III. Criteria

A. Projects to be endorsed as Conference Advance Specials shall reflect the mission and ministry of the Iowa Annual Conference.

B. Projects shall:

1. Minister to specific needs.
2. Demonstrate growth in mission objectives.
3. Demonstrate viability in personnel, facility, planning and funding.
4. Be financially sound.
5. Maintain a direct representation with the Iowa Conference Board of Global Ministries or one of its standing committees.
6. Meet all procedural requirements.

C. Advance Special giving is voluntary in nature. It is expected that the project will have a reasonable amount of financial support from other sources. It is also expected that each project will promote its own program among churches in the Iowa Annual Conference.

## IV. Procedure

A. A completed application with all appropriate signatures is sent to the Conference Mission Secretary.

B. The application is recommended for approval or denial by the Mission Education Standing Committee and approved or denied by the Conference Board of Global Ministries.

C. The Mission Education Standing Committee will recruit the required Board of Global Ministries or Standing Committee member to serve on the governing board of the project unless the project chooses to do so.

D. Approved Conference Advance Special Projects will be properly identified by a code number assigned by the Conference Treasurer's office and included in the Rainbow Covenant book.

E. Approved projects must provide a report to the Conference Mission Secretary in July of alternating years. The report is to include significant activities, accomplishments, current budget, financial report from the last complete fiscal year and request to continue as a Conference Advance Special Project.

F. Evaluations shall be held annually at the fall meeting of the Conference Mission Education Standing Committee to assess continuation of Conference Advance Special status of projects.

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[To Index: Advance Specials](#)

2. **ANNUAL CONFERENCE EXPENSE.** IACJ, 2002, p. 272, VI.N.14; IACJ, 2003 Item 208, p. 154, moved this from Rules of Order to Standing Items. For update to “a. Equalization members from local churches”, see IACJ, 2012, p. 242, Item 506.

<u>DESIGNATION</u>	<u>LODGING</u>	<u>MEALS</u>
a. Equalization members from local churches	Local Church <i>(per AC 2012)</i>	Local Church <i>(per AC 2012)</i>
b. District lay leader	Annual conf. per diem	Annual conf. per diem
c. District chairperson C.O.M.	Dist. C.O.M.	Dist. C.O.M.
d. District U.M.W. president	Conf. U.M.W.	Conf. U.M.W.
e. District U.M.M. president	Conf. U.M.M.	Conf. U.M.M.
f. District at-large members	Annual conf. per diem	Annual conf. per diem
g. District additional youth members	CCYM	District C.O.M.
h. District young adult members	Annual conf. per diem	Annual conf. per diem
i. District Nominations Committee representative	Conf. Nominations Committee	Conf. Nominations Committee
j. Annual conf. secretary	Conf. sec. budget	Conf. sec. budget
k. Conference chancellor	Annual conf. per diem	Annual conf. per diem
l. Conference treasurer	Treasurer's fund	Treasurer's fund
m. Editor of conf. journal	Annual Conf. Session Planning Com	Annual Conf. Session Planning Com
n. Editorial staff	Annual Conf. Session Planning Com	Annual Conf. Session Planning Com
o. Conf. U.M.W. elected leadership	Conf. U.M.W.	Conf. U.M.W.
p. Conf. U.M.M. elected leadership	Conf. U.M.M.	Conf. U.M.M.
q. Conference coordinator of youth ministries	CCYM	CCYM
r. Conference youth ministry elected leadership	CCYM	CCYM
s. Chair, Iowa United Methodist Student Movement	IUMSM	IUMSM

t. Two Student rep. from each of the four U.M. colleges	Individual college student funds	Individual college student funds
u. Two student from each Wesley Foundation in Iowa	The individual foundations	The individual foundations
v. Conference agencies chairs	Agency	Agency
w. Elected leadership of conf. Board of Laity	Conf. Board of Laity	Conf. Board of Laity
x. Lay C.F.&A. Members	Conf. C.F.&A.	Conf. C.F.&A.
y. Conference Secretary of Global Ministries	Agency	Agency
z. Lay members of Annual Conf. Session Planning Committee	Annual Conf. Session Planning Com	Annual Conf. Session Planning Com
aa. Lay members of Conf. Resolutions Committee	Annual conf. per diem	Annual conf. per diem
bb. Lay members of Conf. Rules of Order Committee	Annual conf. per diem	Annual conf. per diem
cc. Diaconal Ministers	The employing agency	The employing agency
dd. Church and Community Workers	Employing agency	Employing agency
ee. Ministers from other conferences being appointed in Iowa	Annual conf. per diem	Annual conf. per diem
ff. Probationers not appointed to a local church or agency, whose attendance is required at the session	Annual conf. per diem	Annual conf. per diem
gg. Lay delegates to General and Jurisdictional Conf.	Annual conf. per diem	Annual conf. per diem
hh. Lay members of CCOM staff	CCOM	CCOM
ii. Members of General and Jurisdictional boards and agencies	Annual conf. per diem	Annual conf. per diem

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[To Index: Annual Conference Expense](#)

**3. APPOINTMENT TRANSITIONING POLICY** 2015, IACJ, Item 1002, p. 301

This policy provides pastors with the opportunity to make an optimally beneficial appointment change while caring for the necessary details of relocation.

The following expectations and procedures are provided.

The pastor will conclude the current appointment with their final Sunday. Immediately following their last Sunday, one week prior to the move date will be provided to prepare for the transition and move. No pastoral responsibilities will be expected during this week. The SPRC will arrange pulpit and pastoral care for the transition time. The move from the parsonage will be completed. The final parsonage inspection will be completed as directed by the 2013 Iowa Annual Conference Parsonage Policy.

The sending church will be responsible for paying pastoral support through the end of the month.

Upon arrival in the new community the pastor will be provided with one week to allow time to transition and settle into the parsonage and new community. No pastoral duties will be expected during this week. The receiving church SPRC will make arrangements for pulpit and pastoral care needs for this week.

The receiving church will be responsible for paying the full month of pastoral compensation to the newly appointed pastor.

The two weeks (one in each location) used in the transition process will be paid time and will not be counted against the pastors vacation benefit.

Pastors are discouraged from taking vacation time within the same month of the move or within the first month in the new place.

These expectations and procedures apply to both Part-time and Full-time clergy who are moving from one home to another.

This Policy will become effective on September 1, 2015.

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#### **4. AREA DISASTER FUND, IACJ, 2006 Item 711, Page 347.**

##### Area Disaster Fund Guidelines

- A. It shall be the role of the Area Disaster Committee to respond to the suffering of persons caused primarily by natural disaster. It shall complement, with personnel and financial resources, the responses of the American Red Cross, governmental and private agencies wherever disaster occurs.
- B. Response to human suffering would involve the following:
  1. Persons in Need
    - a. Those who have suffered severe loss without the prospect of federal, state or community aid;
    - b. Where there is severe community disruption, making provision for a feeding program, child care.
- C. The Committee shall meet at the request of the Area Bishop or the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator.
- D. The Conference Disaster Response Coordinator shall be expected to make the initial contact in response to a report of a disaster, and provide such additional information as needed by the Committee. The Disaster Response Coordinator shall keep the District Superintendent and Area Bishop apprised of the situation.
- E. When the Committee determines that a call shall be given to the Area members for financial aid, the Area Bishop shall issue such a call.
- F. A request for financial assistance shall be made to UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief), by the Area Bishop in consultation with the Conference

Disaster Response Coordinator. Any unused funds given to area by UMCOR shall be returned to UMCOR.

- G. All funds shall be sent to the Conference Treasurer and distributed by him or her as directed by the Conference Disaster Response Coordinator. Any unused funds shall be reserved in the Area Disaster Fund.

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[To Index: Area Disaster Fund](#)

## **5. BUILDER'S CALL, IACJ 2008, Item 309, p. 293**

### United Methodist Builders

**GOAL:** To promote enlistment in and support of United Methodist Builders and to establish and maintain guidelines for the program.

**STRATEGY:** The Standing Committee on Parish Development of the Conference Board of Global Ministries along with the Conference Board of Laity will continue to promote United Methodist Builders. The Standing Committee on Parish Development will work with Board of Laity to achieve the goal of 10,000 members. The following are reaffirmed as the Purposes and Priority Listing for a Call on United Methodist Builders and the Procedures and Guidelines for Securing Approval for a Call on United Methodist Builders—with the understanding that no more than two Calls will be issued in any one year.

Purposes and Priority Listing for a Call:

1. Establishment of new or strategically relocated congregations.
2. Establishment of new and unique ministries.
3. Funding of initial and exploratory steps in the establishment of new congregations and ministries.
4. Assimilation of one or more older congregations into a new situation or including the development of larger parishes and charge realignments.
5. Meeting of extreme emergency needs in congregations, including parsonages, not covered by other funding sources.

Procedures and Guidelines for Securing Approval for a Call:

1. A Congregation, District Superintendent, the District Board of Church Location and Building, District Council on Ministries (or alternative structure) or the Parish Development Standing Committee may initiate a proposal for the Call.
2. The proposal should be presented to the District Board of Church Location and Building for approval, or, if it has to do with program, the District Council on Ministries (or alternative structure).
3. Once the District has approved the proposal it is presented to the Standing Committee on Parish Development.
4. The Standing Committee will forward the proposal to the Extended Cabinet and the Conference Board of Global Ministries with recommendation for approval.
5. Once the Extended Cabinet and the Conference Board of Global Ministries have approved the proposal the Bishop will issue a Builders Call.

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[To Index: Builders Call](#)

6. **CLERGY LEAVES AND VACATIONS.** IACJ, 2002, pp. 264-7, V. I. The 2003 Annual Conference moved this from the Rules of Order to the Standing Items, IACJ, 2003, Item 208, p. 154. The 2010 Annual Conference adopted changes to this Standing Item and changed the title to Clergy Vacations, IACJ, 2010, pp. 293-294; IACJ, 2011, Item 320, p. 313; IACJ, 2016, Item 807, p. 288.

1. **Clergy Vacations.** This policy covers all clergy under appointment who serve churches in the Iowa Annual Conference and persons in extension ministry under ¶344.1(a)(1). Vacations may not accumulate from year to year.

a. **Vacations.**

i. The vacation year is from July 1 to June 30. The clergy and the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee or supervisor should discuss the vacation plans of the clergy early in the conference year.

ii. Clergy serving full-time or less-than-full-time shall be given a minimum annual vacation with pay based on total number of years under appointment in the United Methodist Church as follows:

- First year under appointment: two weeks of vacation, including two Sundays.
- Subsequent years under appointment: four weeks of vacation, including four Sundays.
- The charge shall make available as necessary the funds for pulpit supply while clergyperson is on vacation.

iii. Provision for a balance of time spent between serving the local church and for other professional opportunities and responsibilities as a connectional church shall be made, since part of the leadership responsibility for working in district and conference agencies, including the Iowa Conference camping program and other connectional tasks, must be filled by clergy and lay persons. Clergy will consult with their Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the District Superintendent regarding their connectional involvement and commitments. These connectional responsibilities shall not count as vacation time.

b. **Paid Holidays.**

i. New Year's Day

ii. Martin Luther King Jr. Day

iii. Memorial Day

iv. Independence Day

v. Labor Day

vi. Thanksgiving Day

vii. Friday following Thanksgiving Day

viii. Christmas Day

ix. When a holiday falls on a Sunday or the clergy's day off, it is to be observed on an alternate day within seven-days of the holiday.

x. Good Friday and Christmas Eve

- These days are part of the Church's sacred days, and most clergy have major responsibilities on these days.
- Clergy are to select another day within a seven-day period of these days for their observance.

c. **Continuing Education and Spiritual Growth ¶351.**



- i. The Iowa Conference requires that clergypersons earn two continuing education units each year, July 1 to June 30.
  - ii. Clergypersons shall be allowed two weeks each year (including two Sundays) and one month (including Sundays) each quadrennium for continuing education and spiritual growth, for a total of ten weeks per quadrennium.
  - iii. The education and spiritual growth opportunities need to be scheduled through consultation with the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee or agencies to which they are appointed.
- d. Maternity/Paternity Leave (§354).**
- i. Maternity or paternity leaves of up to one quarter of a year are available to clergy at the birth or adoption of a child. The status of the clergyperson's appointment is not affected during the leave.
  - ii. During the leave the charge and the clergyperson shall continue to pay their respective shares of health insurance. The conference shall continue to pay for Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP).
  - iii. At least the first eight weeks of the leave shall be at full pay. The remainder may be a paid leave, if this request is approved by the district superintendent, the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the church council(s), or it may be an unpaid leave. Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) contributions made by the charge will be adjusted if compensation is reduced. No MPP contributions can be made if no salary is paid.
  - iv. This leave is in lieu of a leave taken under the Extended Sick Leave policy (below).
  - v. The Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the district superintendent shall consult and determine in advance how pastoral responsibility for the church(es) will be handled during the leave. Compensating supply clergypersons shall be the responsibility of the charge, not the clergyperson.
- e. Sick Leave.**
- i. Clergy shall be granted up to two weeks, including two Sundays, of sick leave during the conference year (July 1 - June 30); this shall not accumulate from year to year.
  - ii. Sick leave is for periods of incapacity which are beyond the clergypersons' control and which are not work related. The leave should be taken in consultation with the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. If a clergyperson's illness extends beyond the allocated sick time, the pastor may take an Extended Sick Leave (see below).
  - iii. Sick leave also may be taken by the clergyperson to care for an immediate family member during an illness, upon approval of the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. Immediate family includes spouse, child, daughter/son-in-law, step-child, grandchild, parent, parent-in-law, and step-parent. In certain situations, a leave may be granted for the illness of another relative or a close friend.
- f. Extended Sick Leave.** *(Editor's Note: The original title of this paragraph in the 2015 Standing Items Text is "Family/Medical Leave". Only the title and location of the paragraph within the item have been changed. All content of the paragraph is the same as found in the 2015 text.)*
- i. Each clergyperson is eligible for extended sick leave, provided s/he has served under appointment in the Iowa Annual Conference at least one-half

time for the twelve months preceding the leave. The status of the clergy person's appointment is not affected during the leave.

- ii. A leave may be taken for the following reasons:
    - the placement of a child with the clergy person for foster care,
    - to care for the spouse, child, or parent of the clergy person who has a serious health condition, or
    - because of a serious health condition that makes the clergy person unable to perform the functions of his/her position. If a leave is taken because of a serious health condition, a doctor's certification must be provided if requested by the district superintendent or the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee.
  - iii. The leave shall be limited to twelve weeks in any conference year; however, the leave may immediately follow or precede vacation time. The leave may be taken
    - in a single block,
    - intermittently, or
    - by working a reduced number of hours.
  - iv. The leave may be a paid leave, if this request is approved by the district superintendent, the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the church council(s), or the leave may be an unpaid leave. However, if the leave is taken because of the clergy person's own serious health condition, at least the first month of the leave shall be at full pay. Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) contributions made by the charge will be adjusted if compensation is reduced. No MPP contributions can be made if no salary is paid.
  - v. If the clergy person's salary is reduced or eliminated during the leave, the clergy person may appeal to the Cabinet for assistance from the Sustentation Fund. The Cabinet will consider each request on a case by case basis.
  - vi. During the leave the charge and the clergy person shall continue to pay their respective shares of health insurance. The conference shall continue to pay for Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP).
  - vii. The Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the district superintendent shall consult and determine in advance how pastoral responsibility for the church(es) will be handled during the leave. Compensating supply clergy persons shall be the responsibility of the charge, not the clergy person.
- g. Bereavement Leave.**
- i. Clergy shall be granted up to five days of bereavement leave if there is a death in the immediate family. Immediate family includes spouse, child, daughter/son-in-law, step-child, grandchild, parent, parent-in-law, step-parent, grandparent, and sibling. In certain situations, bereavement leave may be granted for the death of another relative or close friend.
  - ii. The clergy person shall consult with the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee when taking bereavement leave. With the approval of the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, sick leave may be used to extend bereavement leave.

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[To Index: Clergy Leaves and Vacations](#)

7. **CODE OF ETHICS FOR MINISTRY PROFESSIONALS, OUR COVENANT RELATIONSHIP, IACJ, 2006, ITEM 507, P. 328; IACJ, 2011 ITEM 403, P. 331.**

**OUR COVENANT RELATIONSHIP**

We as Ministry Professionals\* recognize and affirm the covenantal relationship we have with each other in the Iowa Annual Conference, the obligations we have to God, the people we serve, the world at large, exemplifying and maintaining the highest standards of Christian conduct as set forth in the Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church. Within that covenant, we understand and agree that each of us shall have. . .

**Personal Responsibility to:**

- be conscious of the sacredness of one's high calling.
- abide by the covenant and The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church.
- continue to move onward toward perfection through personal and corporate discipline: prayer, study, contemplation, covenant group, and scripture reading.
- engage in continuing education for personal growth, spiritual formation and competence for ministry.
- maintain spiritual, intellectual, physical and emotional fitness.
- keep time commitments faithfully and use time responsibly.
- follow high moral standards in speech and conduct. Be above reproach in integrity, honesty, and faithfulness.
- take care that manners, attire and grooming do not detract from ministry effectiveness.
- be above reproach in all business transactions. Be sufficiently free from unnecessary financial debt and accept financial responsibility as to not burden one's congregation or the Annual Conference. Does not leave a community to accept a new appointment without arranging for payment of local obligations.
- maintain a healthy emotional and social balance and maintain boundaries between pastoral identity and self-identity; private and community life; self and others.
- keep faith with loved ones, giving the time and attention needed for a healthy marriage and family.

**Parish Responsibility to:**

- perform the responsibilities and duties outlined in the current Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church for ministry professionals.\*
- accept appointment and serve as pastor, preacher, teacher, and administrator, observing diligent and healthy work habits.
- be a spiritual leader of all members of the congregation and those within the community appointed that are unchurched and/or in need of pastoral care.
- be in ministry, with the understanding that service is primary and remuneration is secondary. Seek no gifts, bequests, or material benefits for self or family members from any organization or individual.
- affirm that "Full-time Service" means the pastor is not substantially supported in non-pastoral work (job or activities that would hinder the appointment to which they

are assigned) without the consent of the District Superintendent and the Staff-Parish Relations Committee.

- honor the confidentiality of all persons, unless otherwise required by law to reveal information.
- represent and support the policy, mission and program of the Annual Conference and The United Methodist Church fairly and appropriately.
- represent the itinerant and connectional process honestly and justly.
- be open to service in the community of the charge as opportunity provides in ways that grow the presence and spirit of Jesus Christ.
- leave church and parsonage property in good condition. Accept financial responsibilities for damage to the parsonage beyond normal wear and tear or age.
- maintain connectional responsibilities which include providing updated records for the next pastor and seeing that calendared appointments are current.

**Pastoral Responsibility to:**

- respect the parish of another pastor. Upon leaving the appointment, including retirement, sever pastoral relationships with the parish, recognizing that all future weddings, baptisms, communions, counseling, visitation, and funerals shall be performed by the current pastor, unless in an unusual circumstance, and then only by the initiation of the current pastor.
- seek to uphold, enhance, and support the work of other professionals in ministry, without undermining their efforts to serve.
- act with integrity in all matters of references to one's predecessor and one's successor.
- endorse programs, agencies, and persons that perform duties acceptable by the United Methodist *Book of Discipline* and within the United Methodist "Social Creed."
- promote United Methodist curriculum as basic to the educational program of the church.
- accept responsibilities in the greater community as long as they do not interfere with pastoral responsibilities of the charge at which one is appointed.
- honor the sacred trust between clergy/parishioner or those in pastoral care and not seek sexual, social, or business favors at any time. Refrain from all sexual involvement with those who have sought and/or received pastoral care at any time. Refrain from a dating relationship with any parishioner who has received direct/structured counseling by the pastor.
- maintain the highest standards regarding the use of modern technology, strictly avoiding even the perception of inappropriate use of the internet at work or at home, and understand that email, text, internet messages are not a private domain and should not be treated as such.
- recognize the need for open access of church staff to SPRC for consultation and evaluation. Be open to questions regarding one's leadership and administrative style by SPRC and Cabinet.

\*The term "ministry professionals" in this document shall include all those who maintain status of Full Member (Elder or Deacon), Provisional Member, Associate Member, Local Pastor, Diaconal, Ministerial Candidate, and others who are accountable to the Bishop and the Iowa Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.

With thanks to the following: Iowa Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, Ministerial Ethics Committee, Louisiana, Southwest Texas and West Ohio Conferences; and the task force members: Beverly Spencer, Brenda Hobson, Betty Stout and Charles Luers.

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[To Index: Code of Ethics](#)

## **8. COVENANT RELATIONSHIPS:**

a. Covenant Relationship with United Methodist-Related Colleges in Iowa, IACJ, 2001, Item 513, p. 148.

### **513. Covenant Relationship with United Methodist-Related Colleges in Iowa**

Prepared by the College Consultation which included the Episcopal office, the Cabinet, the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry, the Conference Council on Ministries, and the United Methodist-related colleges in Iowa. Approved for recommendation to the Annual Conference by the Conference Council on Ministries.

#### **A Celebration of Relationship and the Affirmation of Partnership: Iowa's United Methodist-Related Colleges and the Iowa Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church**

For United Methodists, "the heart of Christian ministry is Christ's ministry of outreaching love."<sup>(1)</sup> This love is made flesh as the church, its people, and its institutions engage in activities fostering the human fulfillment of all God's children. In all situations, the ministries leading to human fulfillment are understood to be diverse in locale, in interest, and in denominational accent, yet always catholic in spirit and outreach <sup>(2)</sup>.

The Iowa Annual Conference and its local churches are partners with the United Methodist-related colleges of Iowa in a mission to create a world characterized by justice, mercy, and love. Building on the Wesleyan understanding that human fulfillment and a humane society are furthered when hearts are warmed and minds are educated <sup>(3)</sup>, the annual conference, local churches, and related colleges fulfill this mission in distinctive ways. Cornell College, Iowa Wesleyan College, Morningside College, and Simpson College provide the church a unique mission to students.

Our partnership in mission is based on an understanding that the church and the colleges are partners, affirming a rich set of shared Wesleyan values: the church and the colleges provide ministries which uniquely contribute to the heart of Christian ministry. The relationship we affirm is not one of restraint; it is one celebrating a common commitment to the fulfillment of God's children, and the creation of a just society in which individuals use their knowledge and their faith to serve their fellow human beings through responsible citizenship.

In celebration and affirmation of the partnership, the United Methodist colleges related to the Iowa Annual Conference:

- acknowledge and affirm their relationship with the church, claiming that identity as part of their history as well as their current life;

- include Iowa United Methodist representation on their governing board;

- affirm their commitment to providing a quality student-centered educational experience;
- work to foster campus communities where learning, personal growth, and community relationships are central;
- foster a campus environment where religion can be studied in the classroom, and where spiritual growth is explored and supported outside the classroom;
- provide for the consideration of values and ethics in academe, professions, and personal living;
- affirm the central role of the chaplaincy and campus ministry for the care and spiritual growth of students and of the campus community;
- prepare students for service in the wider community through voluntary service programs, service learning, and servant leadership, making the campus community a laboratory for the practice of responsible citizenship;
- provide educational access to United Methodist-related colleges for students of Iowa and the world;
- offer students with leadership potential the opportunity to enhance that potential with a college education in an environment shaped by our common mission;
- offer leadership development programs for students, as well as for lay and clergy church people;
- offer in cooperation with the annual conference, continuing education programs for lay and clergy, as well as programs for youth;
- recognize the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church and seek to create communities of scholarship and learning which facilitate social justice; and
- participate in the regular reviews by the University Senate of the United Methodist Church and use the criteria of the Senate as benchmarks for the colleges' continued ministry and mission with the church.

In celebration and affirmation of the partnership, the Iowa Annual Conference:

- acknowledges and affirms the relationship with Cornell College, Iowa Wesleyan College, Morningside College, and Simpson College, claiming that relationship as part of its history as well as its current life;
- affirms the Iowa United Methodist-related colleges as a vital expression of the church's mission of outreaching love leading to human dignity;
- celebrates the unique focus of the colleges' work as it relates to the mission of the church;
- commits to interpret the colleges' mission within the context of the denomination and the annual conference;
- assists in identifying and recruiting United Methodists for the colleges;
- works to provide financial support for scholarships, religious life, and other activities of the college;
- promotes United Methodist Student Day and its related offerings as an opportunity to

highlight the colleges' unique missions;

- understand the colleges as resources for the continuing mission of the church;
- partners with the colleges in community service and missions projects to reach out to the community, the state and the world; and
- provides the colleges with access to communication channels of the conference.

In celebration and affirmation of the partnership, the Iowa Annual Conference and the United Methodist-related colleges will continue conversations among representatives of the colleges, the Bishop and the cabinet, the Conference Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry, and the Conference Council on Ministries to strengthen this partnership.

(1) Paragraph 125, *2000 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*.

(2) *Ibid.*

(3) Charles Wesley, "Come, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," in *The Methodist Hymnal* (Nashville: The Methodist Publishing House, 1964), No. 344.

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[To Index: Covenant relationship with colleges](#)

b. Covenant Relationships with Organizations Related to the Iowa Annual Conference, IACJ, 2002, p. 149, Items 104 and 105.

### **COVENANT RELATIONSHIPS OF THE IOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE Report of the Conference Institutional Covenants Task Force**

At the March, 1998, meeting of the Conference Council on Ministries the Rev. Bob Burkhart made the following motion: "That CCOM request the BOGM establish a Task Force with the Bishop's office and the Board of Trustees to review and revise institutional covenants. The motion passed.

The charge to this Institutional Covenants Task Force was to: "**Establish and implement a procedure to identify, review and revise covenants with all United Methodist institutions within the Iowa Annual Conference, ensuring legal immunity for all institutions involved; and, to recommend policy concerning the documentation of United Methodist institutions within the Iowa Annual Conference.**"

For a variety of reasons the calling of this task force was delayed, but in the summer of 1999 Bishop Charles Wesley Jordan asked David Stout to form and chair the task force.

The task force worked carefully with the counsel of Charles Smith (Director of Administrative Services) and Roger Witke (Conference Chancellor). The newly proposed Covenants resulted from a process which provided information to and sought response from the institutions with whom we have existing Covenants.

The Institutional Covenant Task Force, in keeping with the charge given it, summarizes its work and recommendations as follows:

- a. identified, and reviewed existing Covenants;
- b. in addition to the current category of Affiliated institutions, established a new category of institutions titled Associated institutions;
- c. developed, through extended consultation with the various institutions, new Covenants for both Affiliate and Associate Institutions for presentation to the CCOM;
- d. decided, in consultation with the office of the bishop, that the development of a new

Covenant with colleges affiliated with the Iowa Annual Conference should result from the Bishop's Consultation with Colleges and not from our task force;

e. concluded that the relationship of caucuses, advocacy groups, etc. to the annual conference is the responsibility of the CCOM and is not within the charge given our task force;

f. ascertained that the work of the task force would be complete upon the final approval of the Covenants by the CCOM;

g. Agreed that the implementation of these Covenants with the appropriate institutions is the responsibility of the Conference Council on Ministries following approval of these Covenants by the Iowa Annual Conference.

The Task Force thanks all those who have assisted us in the completion of the task given us.

The Annual Conference adopted the College Covenants Portion of the Task Force report, but did not deliberate or act on the affiliate group portion. The following two items represent the recommendations resulting from the work of the Task Force and the Conference Council on Ministries.

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[To Index: Covenant with Related Organizations](#)

## 9. DIACONAL MINISTERS

- a. [Responsible Conditions for Employment of Diaconal Ministers](#), IACJ, 1988, Item 134, p. 174.
- b. [Responsible Conditions for Employment of Certified Personnel](#), IACJ, 1988, Item 135, p. 177.
- c. [Guidelines for Employment of Non-Certified Persons in Diaconal Forms of Ministry](#), IACJ, 1988, Item 136, p. 179.

- a. **RESPONSIBLE CONDITIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT OF DIACONAL MINISTERS**, IACJ, 2006, Item 508, p. 329.

Responsible Conditions for Employment of Diaconal Ministers  
Prepared by  
The Iowa Conference Board of Diaconal Ministry

The words deacon, deaconess, diaconate, and diaconal all spring from a common Greek root—diakonia or 'service'. Very early in its history, the Church instituted an order of ordained ministers to personify or focus the servanthood to which all Christians are called. These people were named deacons. The *1996 Book of Discipline* created a new Order of Deacon in Full Connection.

Those who are called to this representative ministry of service in the Church and world were set apart to the office of Diaconal Minister. This ministry exemplifies the servanthood of every Christian is called to live in both church and world. Participating with the elder in the leadership of worship, working in a serving profession in the Church, and serving the needs of the poor, the sick, or oppressed, the Diaconal Minister embodies the unity of the congregation's worship with its life in the world. (Para. 302, *The Book of Discipline*.) Since 1996, persons can no longer begin the process to become diaconal ministers, according to the *Book of Discipline*. Some diaconal ministers transitioned to become Ordained Deacons. Other diaconal ministers continue to serve in the Iowa Annual Conference.

The role of the Diaconal Minister is that of a fully-qualified professional engaged in the ministry of the Church. These are persons who have completed a Bachelor's degree and a seminary degree or the equivalent through the Foundational Studies in Bible, Theology, Church History, United Methodist Doctrine and Polity, and the Mission of the Church to the



Contemporary World, at graduate level.

#### Salary (Para. 315.1 *The 1992 Book of Discipline*.)

The employing agency in which a full-time diaconal minister is serving shall provide:

1. “Adequate salaries, pension benefits, with an opportunity to participate in the United Methodist pension and benefit funds, healthcare insurance, and continuing education. It is expected that these will be guided by the Annual Conference standards for ordained elders.” (Para. 315, *The 1992 Book of Discipline*)

The Iowa Conference Board of Diaconal Ministry recommends the salary for a Diaconal Minister should be comparable to the salary for that community for a public school teacher with comparable education and experience. Adjustment should be made where the Diaconal Minister has had several years of professional experience prior to consecration. Salary should be reviewed annually.

#### Social Security (Para. 315.2, *The 1992 Book of Discipline*)

Social Security benefits as required by Federal legislation.

#### Insurance

Health and major medical insurance should be provided (with the option of including the family at the Diaconal Minister's expense) and is available through the Health Plan of the Iowa Annual Conference.

#### Pensions

The Diaconal Minister shall be enrolled in a pension plan. Nine percent of the Diaconal Minister's salary is the minimum amount required for enrollment in the pension plan. The employing agency may pay the entire 9%. The employing agency must pay, as a minimum, an amount equal to 6% of the Diaconal Minister's salary into the pension fund, with the Diaconal Minister paying an additional 3%.

Further information may be obtained by writing: General Board of Pensions of the United Methodist Church, 1200 Davis Street, Evanston, IL 60201. (Para. 315, *The 1992 Book of Discipline*)

#### Continuing Education — and Renewal Time

A program of continuing education throughout his/her career is required by the Iowa Conference Board of Diaconal Ministry of the person wishing to continue in the office of Diaconal Ministry. In most cases the Diaconal Minister's continuing education program should allow for leaves of absence for study at least one week each year and at least one month of each quadrennium. Such leaves shall not be considered as part of the minister's vacation. It is recommended that one day per month be used for a spiritual renewal day in addition to continuing education.

#### Job Description (Para. 316, *The 1992 Book of Discipline*)

A job description and conditions of employment are essential, should be in writing and agreed to by both employer and employee annually.

#### Auto Allowance

Provision of an auto allowance should depend on job description and should be part of the original agreement. If needed, auto allowance should be at the level paid by the Iowa Conference as a minimum.

#### Housing

For Diaconal Ministers, any allowance for housing must be reported salary by ruling of the Internal Revenue Service.

### Annual Appraisal (Para. 317, *The 1992 Book of Discipline*)

There shall be an annual appraisal of job performance and of conditions of employment. The Diaconal Minister shall be involved in the process of appraisal. Appraisal should be done by the Staff-Parish Relations Committee (or employing agency).

### Vacation

All Diaconal Ministers shall be given an annual vacation with pay in agreed increments of progression accumulative for years of service. The minimum shall be (a) one to three years of career service—two weeks' vacation, including two Sundays; (b) four to eleven years of service—three weeks' vacation, including three Sundays; (c) twelve or more years of service—four weeks' vacation, including four Sundays. Annual Conference, camp counseling, continuing education projects, and time used in connectional relationships with the larger church shall not be counted as vacation.

### Connectional Responsibilities

The privilege of working with the larger church in connectional relationship should be given as needed and requested. If the demand becomes exceptional, the Diaconal Minister should negotiate his/her connectional responsibilities on an annual basis and help the local church understand the need for such activities. Concern felt by the employing agency relative to time spent in connectional activities should be a part of discussion at the time of annual appraisal.

### Professional Development

Professional growth is an essential part of the life and work of the Diaconal Minister. Participation in professional organizations and groups is required.

### Maternity (Paternity) Leave

Four to six weeks' maternity leave and a minimum of one week paternity leave should be allowed, with more as needed, at the discretion of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee or employing agency.

### Sick Leave

Sick leave with salary should be allowed annually. Extended time needed should be at the discretion of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee or employing agency.

### Emergency Leave

Emergency leave should be at the discretion of the Pastor (supervisor). An extended leave should be approved by the Staff-Parish Relations Committee or employing agency, salary adjustments to be negotiated.

### Procedure for Termination

Since Diaconal Ministers are not guaranteed a place of employment in the Church, special attention shall be given to termination procedures which allow time for seeking another service appointment. Notification of dismissal shall provide a ninety (90) day period prior to final termination of employment. The date for termination of employment shall coincide with the contract, except for causes as listed in Para. 2621, *The 1992 Book of Discipline*.

In turn, the Diaconal Minister shall give the employing agency ninety (90) days notice regarding resignation unless the contract states otherwise.

The employing agency shall bear sole responsibility for meeting salary obligations and the Annual Conference shall not bear any fiscal responsibility for guaranteeing salary continuance.

Approved by Board of Diaconal Ministry of the Iowa Annual Conference, September 16, 1986. Approved as amended September 1987. Approved by Board of Ordained Ministry,

Iowa Annual Conference, January 26, 2006.

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[To Index: Employment of Diaconal Ministers](#)

**b. RESPONSIBLE CONDITIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT OF CERTIFIED PERSONNEL, IACJ, 2006, Item 508, p. 332.**

RESPONSIBLE CONDITIONS FOR EMPLOYMENT OF CERTIFIED PERSONNEL  
Iowa Annual Conference  
Prepared by  
The Iowa Conference Board of Ordained Ministry

I. Qualifications

- A. Qualifications as determined by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry.
- B. Certified as associate or director by the United Methodist Church in a Diaconal form of Ministry.

II. Basic Salary

- A. Base salary at least equal to salary of public school teachers in the community with comparable experience and education.
- B. Social Security (as required by Federal law.)

Facts to Consider

- Housing or housing allowance, if provided by the church, is taxable
- Average income of congregation
- Salaries of other professional staff members in the church
- Cost of living, educational progress toward consecration, and merit increases reviewed annually

III. Benefits for Persons Employed at Least 21 Hours per Week

- A. Mileage (if required by job description)
- B. Medical Insurance
- C. Pension or Retirement Plan
- D. Vacation based on cumulative years of service in a Diaconal form of ministry in local churches.
  - 1. 1-3 years of service — two weeks' vacation including two Sundays
  - 2. 4-11 years of service — three weeks' vacation including three Sundays
  - 3. 12 or more years of service — four weeks' vacation including four Sundays
- E. Maternity/Paternity leave
- F. Sick leave/personal time

IV. Connectional and Professional Relationship

- A. Participation in Annual Conference, camp counseling and time spent in connectional relationships with the district conference, general church shall be expected and is not counted as vacation.
- B. Membership and participation in appropriate professional organizations (e.g., CEF, The Fellowship of United Methodists in Worship, Music and Other Arts)
- C. Time for continuing education and study shall be provided annually. Such time shall be with pay and is in addition to, not in place of vacation. Funding shall be provided to help pay the expenses for such education.

Facts to Consider

- Money, time and funding needed for foundational studies or work toward Master's

- Degree for consecration.
- Needs of church requiring retooling or additional skills.

#### V. Position Description

A written position description shall be agreed upon by the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, the Pastor and the employee. It shall include:

- A. Conditions of Employment
  - 1. Job responsibilities and expectations
  - 2. Staff relationships and accountability
  - 3. A plan for continuing educational growth and/or consecration
- B. Congregation's Responsibilities
  - 1. Salary and benefits
  - 2. Continuing education and funds
  - 3. Days off and vacation
  - 4. Sick leave and procedure if there is a long term illness
  - 5. Secretarial assistance
- C. Congregational Expectations
  - 1. Established office hours
  - 2. Agree upon working schedule
  - 3. Professional expertise
- D. Evaluation and Review
  - 1. Staff-Parish Relations Committee is responsible for annual evaluation with the certified employee, which shall include dialogue concerning.
    - a. A review of the position description
    - b. An assessment of the working conditions
    - c. Performance evaluation including consultation with persons who work closely with the employee
    - d. Setting goals for the coming year
  - 2. Newly-employed persons should be evaluated quarterly during the first year to enhance growth and establish a mutual understanding of their ministry.
  - 3. Certified employees must have open access to the Staff-Parish Relations Committee.
  - 4. Certified employees may consult with the District Superintendent upon request.
  - 5. Services of the Office of Pastoral Care and Counseling are available to persons employed in Diaconal forms of ministry.

#### VI. Job Termination Policy

If difficulties develop from either the employee with the church or the church in its expectations of the employee, these specific steps should be followed:

- A. Designated person/s shall talk with employee, such as appropriate work area chairperson or SPRC member/s.
- B. Open access to the Staff-Parish Relations Committee
- C. Identify areas to be corrected or improved and set goals for change.
- D. Evaluate again in a specified time, for example, 30 to 60 days.
- E. If remediation is not satisfactory, termination procedures may be followed with the church recognizing a financial obligation 60 days. (Person may or may not be expected to continue working during this time.)

Approved by Board of Diaconal Ministry of the Iowa Annual Conference, September 16, 1986. Approved as amended, September, 1987. Approved by Board of Ordained Ministry of the Iowa Annual Conference, January 26, 2006.

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[To Index: Employment of Certified Personnel](#)

**c. GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYMENT OF NON-CERTIFIED PERSONS IN DIACONAL FORMS OF MINISTRY, IACJ, 2006, Item 508, p. 333.**

Guidelines for Employment  
of Non-Certified Persons in Diaconal Forms of Ministry  
Prepared by  
The Iowa Conference Board of Ordained Ministry

When a person is hired by a local church for a position as a lay ministry professional, it is important to establish guidelines and policies in order that the working relationship will be clearly defined for both the church and the employee.

I. Qualifications

- A. College education in related fields is preferred.
- B. Experience in local church.

II. Basic Salary

- A. A fair salary commensurate with job responsibilities and the employee's experience and education.
- B. Social Security (as required by Federal law).

Facts to Consider

- Housing or housing allowance, if provided by the church, is taxable.
- Average income of the congregation.
- Salaries of other comparable professionals in the area, such as local teachers or other Christian educators or musicians.
- Cost of living, education progress toward certification, and merit increases should be review annually.

III. Benefits for Persons Employed at Least 21 Hours Per Week

- A. Medical Insurance.
- B. Pension or retirement plan.
- C. Vacation based on cumulative years of service as church employees. (Minimum 2 weeks)
- D. Continuing education and/or study leave each year that will not be counted as vacation time.
- E. Time to be involved in the connectional church shall be included in job description.

Facts to Consider

- Time should be provided for connectional services, such as leadership in district, conference and national events.
- Compensatory time for night meetings and overtime due to church functions, such as retreats, trips.
- Maternity/paternity leave.
- Sick leave/personal time.

IV. Ministry Expense

- A. Travel (if required by job expectation).
- B. Continuing education funds for such events as National CEF Conferences, short term courses, Iowa CEF gatherings, Fellowship of United Methodists in Worship and Other Arts, etc.

Facts to Consider

- Financial assistance for employee to take courses toward certification.
- Professional membership dues for appropriate national and conference organizations.

#### V. Position Description

A position description should be agreed upon by the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, the Pastor and the professional educator. It should include:

- A. Conditions of Employment
  1. Job responsibilities and expectations.
  2. Staff relationships and meetings.
  3. A plan to work toward certification and/or consecration.
- B. Congregation's responsibilities
  1. Salary and benefits.
  2. Continuing education and funds.
  3. Time off and vacations.
  4. Sick leave and procedure if there is a long term illness.
  5. Office hours and working schedule.
  6. Secretarial assistance.
- C. Congregational Expectations
  1. Established office hours.
  2. Agreed upon working schedule.
  3. Professional expertise.
- D. Evaluation and Review
  1. For the first position of an employee, an evaluation is important after a three month, six month and twelve month period by the Staff-Parish Relations Committee and the employee, and should include a conference on job satisfaction and work performance. It is helpful that the committee consult persons directly working with employee.
  2. For an employee in a new position: a six month and an annual review of job satisfaction and work performance is important.
  3. Personnel with one or more years' experience: an annual review of salary, benefits and work performance is necessary.
  4. Certified employees may consult with the District Superintendent upon request.
  5. Services of the Office of Pastoral Care and Counseling are available to persons employed in Diaconal forms of ministry

#### VI. Job Termination Policy

If difficulties develop from either the employee with the church or the church in its expectations of the employee, these specific steps should be followed:

- A. Designated person/s shall talk with employee, such as appropriate work area chairpersons or SPRC member/s.
- B. Open access to Staff-Parish Relations Committee.
- C. Identify areas to be corrected or improved and set goals for change.
- D. Evaluate in a specified time, for example, 30 to 60 days.
- E. If remediation is not satisfactory, termination procedures may be followed with the church recognizing financial obligation of 60 days. (Person may or may not be expected to continue working during this time.)

Approved by Board of Diaconal Ministry of the Iowa Annual Conference, September 16, 1986. Approved as amended September, 1987. Approved by Board of Ordained Ministry of the Iowa Annual Conference, January 26, 2006.

**10. DISCONTINUATION OR ABANDONMENT OF LOCAL CHURCHES, IACJ, 2010, ITEM 803, P. 359.**

**Discontinuation or Abandonment Local Churches**

Discontinuation or Abandonment of Local Church Property shall proceed following these guidelines:

a. The *2008 Book of Discipline* ¶12548 outlines some of the procedures for discontinuation or abandonment. The district superintendent shall obtain and consider an opinion of legal counsel as to the existence of any reversion, possibility of reverter, right of reacquisition or similar restrictions to the benefit of any party.

- b. Consent for discontinuation or abandonment must be received from the following:
  - 1) Vote of local charge conference
  - 2) Consent of the presiding bishop
  - 3) Consent of the majority of the district superintendents
  - 4) Consent of the district board of church location and building
  - 5) Appropriate action by the Conference Board of Trustees
  - 6) Vote of the Annual Conference at its next regular session
- c. When a local church is discontinued, the district superintendent shall select another United Methodist Church and transfer its members thereto, or to such other churches the members may select.
- d. The Disposition of Property shall occur as follows:
  - 1) If the church is discontinued, a local board of trustees may transfer the property (real estate and all other assets) to another United Methodist Church or Ministry. Selling the property to other groups requires the approval of the District Superintendent, District Location and Building Committee, the Resident Bishop, the Cabinet, and the Conference Board of Trustees.
  - 2) If the church is abandoned, the Conference Board of Trustees becomes responsible for the property (real estate and all other assets including those of church related groups).
  - 3) It is recommended that proceeds from the sale of the property shall be disbursed in the following order of priority for areas with less than a 50,000 population:
    - a. Any outstanding local bills such as utility, telephone, salary etc.
    - b. Outstanding pension or health insurance direct bills
    - c. Any unpaid apportionments
    - d. Remaining amounts shall be disbursed at the discretion of the board of trustees which may include placing them in the Conference Legacy Fund. If a church is abandoned, the remaining amounts shall be placed in a "Legacy Fund", invested and managed by the Conference Board of Trustees, whose use will be determined by the Conference Board of Global Ministries upon recommendation of the Standing Committee for Parish Development working in consultation with district parish development committees, for the sole purpose of honoring the legacy and

heritage of the saints of that discontinued/abandoned church by starting new churches/new ministries within the Conference (as prescribed by the *2008 Book of Discipline* paragraph 2548)

- e. An amount will remain in the Conference Abandoned Church Fund to be disbursed by the Conference Board of Trustees for the purpose of paying the cost of selling, removing or other related costs of an abandoned church unless in conflict with compliance of provision from the *Book of Discipline*
- 4) When properties from the discontinuation of a congregation or abandonment are sold in urban centers with a population of more than 50,000, the proceeds of sale must be used for new and/or existing ministries within that urban center.
- 5) All deeds, records and other official and legal papers, including the contents of the cornerstone of the church, shall be collected by the district superintendent and deposited for permanent safekeeping with the Commission on Archives and History.
- 6) Any gift, legacy, bequest, devise, annuity or other benefit to a pastoral charge or local church that accrues shall become the property of the Conference Board of Trustees. The trustees shall, in so far as possible, honor the original intent of the gift, legacy, bequest, devise, annuity or other benefit. When that is not possible or the use of the asset is undesignated, these funds will also be placed into the "Legacy Fund", as prescribed in 3) e, above.
- 7) The district superintendent will be asked to present to the Annual Conference any resolution for a local church(es) to be declared abandoned and/or discontinued.

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## **11. IOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE GUIDELINES CONCERNING CLERGY-SPOUSE DIVORCE, IACJ, 2006, ITEM 503, P. 319.**

### **Iowa Annual Conference Guidelines Concerning Clergy-Spouse Divorce Areas of Concern**

The United Methodist Church is concerned for persons in marriage and in families.

"We believe the family to be the basic human community through which persons are nurtured and sustained in mutual love, responsibility, respect, and fidelity. We affirm the importance of both fathers and mothers for all children. We also understand the family is encompassing a wider range of options than that of the two-generational unit of parents and children (the nuclear family, including the extended family, families with adopted children, single parents, stepfamilies, and couples without children.) We affirm shared responsibility for parenting by men and women and encourage social, economic, and religious efforts to maintain and strengthen relationships within families in order that every member may be assisted toward complete personhood." (§161.A, *2004 The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*.)



This basic human community is an adventure in companionship and means commitment to a relationship in which people covenant to value, nurture, and appreciate each other through a process of growing and changing; the outcome of which they cannot foresee.

We need to offer growth opportunities which will help people prepare for marriage. And for those who are married we much emphasize their need for spiritual foundation and growth. When marriages are alive, the persons will nurture each other and their family. There is a need for all people to appreciate the power of our traditional Christian standard of permanence and fidelity and of the role of Christian faith and commitment as men and women attempt to achieve lasting love. Never before have so many men and women looked for so much from their marital relationships.

When a relationship comes to a point, however, where it is marked more by death than life, more by hurt than healing, and when genuine efforts to renew and revitalize it have failed, it is important to bring that relationship to as redemptive an end as possible.

The United Methodist Church does recognize the possibility of divorce as a legitimate option for a Christian.

God's plan is for lifelong, faithful marriage. The church must be on the forefront of premarital and post-marital counseling in order to create and preserve strong marriages. However, when a married couple is estranged beyond reconciliation, even after thoughtful consideration and counsel, divorce is a regrettable alternative in the midst of brokenness. We grieve over the devastating emotional, spiritual, and economic consequences of divorce for all involved and are concerned about high divorce rates. (§161.D. *2004 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*.)

The Church sees itself in cases of divorce—clergy or lay—as involved more in ministry than in judgment. The Church is not so much a court, attempting to clarify who has been at fault, as it is a hospital, saying to each member of the distressed family unit, “You hurt, and we care.” Any concerned person can do this kind of ministry.

Divorce among the clergy, while always present, appears to be more tolerated in the Church in this generation, and increasing. “To be sure, parsonage families are among the most stable in American society today. Exact figures are not available, but some observers estimate that not more than one in twenty-five clergy marriages end in divorce.” (*Handbook on Clergy Divorce*. Council of Bishops, The United Methodist Church, 1978, p. 1). There may be new and increasing areas of stress for parsonage families, and divorce may be more easily chosen in this generation as the solution to this stress than in earlier generations.

The Church is examining its ministries to the married and to the divorced. Guidelines are needed on how persons in the Church can be helped and how the Christian standards of permanency and fidelity in marriage can be upheld. There is also a need for guidelines for church administrators, pastors, and Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committees, as they minister to and relate to clergy, married and/or divorced. The traditional models of administrative-pastoral relationship to persons can be effective. Additional models which bring new days of ministering are also needed.

In case of divorce of clergy, there is a need on the part of Administrative Leaders—Bishops, District Superintendents, Boards of Ordained Ministry—for a pastoral style of administration. But it is frequently hard to reconcile the pastoral and the administrative roles. The authority and power of the appointment system is inevitably present. This does not mean that persons in positions of authority cannot be pastors, too. Many of them are seen as pastors by those who work under their supervision. Nevertheless, the officers of the Annual Conference might remember that there are other persons who also serve in the pastoral role for each of the clergy. Among them may be the Director of Pastoral Care and Counseling, other pastors,

and lay members of the Church.

Pastoral supervision on the part of Bishops and District Superintendents is not either wholly an administrative function nor wholly a pastoral function. "Shepherding (caring about the person) and overseeing (organizing, evaluation, calling to the task, confronting) cannot be separated in the ministry of Jesus Christ." (*Handbook on Clergy Divorce*, Council of Bishops, The United Methodist Church, 1978, page 5.)

One of the messages of the Bible is that people are always given a new opportunity. Out of difficulties of life—the tragic and all the hurt that comes—redemption and reconciliation through love can still heal. God can bring newness and hope, even in the aftermath of divorce. As seen earlier in this paper, divorce is "recognized" by the Church—that is, permitted. We need to consider how the Church can permit divorce without advocating it; how in a particular case it may be seen as the "circumstantial will of God," though not the "intentional will of God." (Leslie D. Weatherhead in *The Will of God*, distinguishes between 1) the intentional will of God, 2) the circumstantial will of God, and 3) the ultimate will of God.)

When a couple enters into the covenant relationship of marriage, it is God's will that they will grow together in mutual acceptance, love, and understanding. Surely this is God's intentional will for the relationship we call marriage. Within the dynamics of marriage, the love that exists is either growing and deepening or it begins to wither and may die. It does not stand still; either it is expanding or diminishing. Sometimes, in a marriage, something will happen to destroy this wonderful, but fragile, relationship we call marriage. After the couple has sought to be reconciled but that reconciliation does not come about, then the relationship is ruptured, and it may be that the legal contract is about the only factor that is keeping them together. In these kinds of human settings, it may be that divorce is "the circumstantial will of God," to use Weatherhead's phrase.

What is God's ultimate will for this couple whose marriage has been terminated by divorce? Divorce is probably the most powerful and shaking experience of personal change that persons can undergo. Drs. Thomas H. Holmes and Richard Rahe, who are psychiatrists on the faculty of the Washington University School of Medicine, have created a rating scale to determine the degree of stress that people experience in these life-changing events. Divorce and marital separation rank second and third after the death of one's spouse. Persons who are working through the experience of being divorced will likely know and feel grief, shame, guilt, and low self-esteem. If the experience of falling in love means experiencing one's self as chosen, then the trauma of divorce leaves one to experience what it means to be unchosen. Henry T. Close speaks of the process of creatively becoming unmarried, and the steps of the process may suggest something of God's ultimate will for these persons who have consciously decided to be unchosen. As they need to be able to forgive each other for the feelings of pain and resentment, so God would will that they might be able to free themselves from carrying about the destructive feelings of bitterness toward each other, and that they may know that God's mercy and forgiveness is offered to them. God wills that they might be able to forgive themselves (often times persons are able to forgive each other but find it exceedingly difficult to forgive themselves for their part in the death of the relationship); that they grieve the disruption and loss of the relationship and be able to accept the loss, to finish the work of grieving, and to face what lies ahead; that they learn from the death of the marriage that what persons expect from themselves, from each other, and from the marriage may be unattainable and beyond all rational expectation; and that they will be able to reach out and love again. There is a deep hunger within people to reach out to others, to touch and be touched, to love and to be loved.

What is God's ultimate will? That out of the pain of divorce, the shame and grief, the guilt and low self-esteem, there may be a re-birth. That out of death new life might emerge, and that love and healing and wholeness will be experienced by the "unchosen."

The Church can open her arms to lives hurt by the broken marriage relationship. It is

possible that the Church could bring loving healing to these persons. In fact, persons experiencing divorce may be unable to find full healing without that love. Divorced persons need the Church as a healing community. The community can be instrumental in helping the person realize his/her self worth. The people of God can be an instrument bringing God's forgiveness to bear in the lives of those who have been divorced. Strength may be found by the divorced in an intentional worship experience at some time in their journey. Such a worship experience might be in the privacy of a counselor-pastor's office, or it may be in a gathering with some close friends. In an empathetic understanding and caring way, a service can express the hurts of the person involved in divorce and invite hope into the drama of brokenness. It can celebrate forgiveness and the hope of a new beginning. The invitation to forgive one another, to forgive and affirm one's self, to grieve, to find one's self and to love again, is worthy of inclusion in guidelines for caring for the divorced person.

To show love, care, and concern for the divorced person in no way denies the Biblical teaching that marriage is a sacred, lifetime covenant. This call can be held up before the Church, without at the same time condemning or rejecting those who have not realized it in their marriage. The Christian faith has other ideals which many have failed to achieve! And they are still a part of the Church.

### **Recommendations Concerning Clergy-Spouse Marriage and Divorce**

After looking at ministry, the Church, marriage and divorce in general terms, we now turn specifically to the concern of this Task Force as far as divorce among clergy is concerned.

While the United Methodist Church sets no standard for clergy in the matter of divorce which is different from that set for all its members, it is to be hoped that covenant ministers do set high standards for themselves. Divorce among clergy and/or laity causes hurt, suffering, loneliness whenever it occurs. When clergy are divorced, the hurt is compounded because of their position of leadership in the community of faith. As leaders of the people of God, the clergy are rightfully expected to be in the vanguard in expressing a responsible Christian life style and in restoring broken relationships. Those who have the greater influence quite naturally bear the greater responsibility. Therefore, clergy need to be very careful that every possibility of reconciliation is tried before dissolution of the relationship is accepted.

Any recommendation concerning divorce needs to reflect two essential ingredients of our Christian faith. First, faithfulness to the Biblical concept of marriage, which emphasizes a lifelong commitment of fidelity, love, and mutual support between husband and wife, is important. Divorce, when granted at all, is viewed as a failure to fulfill that promised trust. We should carefully guard against diminishing the "sanctity of the marriage covenant." (§161.D. *The 2004 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church.*)

Second, there are marriages here "even after thoughtful consideration and counsel, divorce is a regrettable alternative in the midst of brokenness." (§161.D. *The 2004 Book of Discipline The United Methodist Church.*) There are instances in which dissolution of marriage is more Christian than the continued crushing tyranny of a dead relationship. Certainly God's grace and forgiveness offer such persons a new life.

These two foci will always be in tension within the Christian community, and they make it imperative that any conference recommendations be responsible, compassionate, and negotiable in the particular circumstances of each divorce situation.

It is expected that whenever symptoms of marital difficulties in the life of a clergy and his/her spouse are volunteered, or observed by other clergy, the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee, or the District Superintendent, the clergyperson will be expected (and spouses encouraged) to seek professional help before the marriage relationship is broken. How the clergy family might be contacted and by whom will depend on circumstances revolving

around each situation.

We expect counseling with a reputable marriage counselor who understands and appreciates the Christian faith and professional ministry. The counselor would meet with both partners in the marriage, but where that is impossible, with at least the clergyperson. One means of such counseling is the Iowa Annual Conference Office of Pastoral Care and Counseling. Counseling needs to be in sufficient depth that the responsible clergy member and spouse will try to resolve marriage problems in every way possible.

Pastors and spouses are also reminded that ministry is a covenant ministry. Other sources of concern, care, and support are clergy colleagues and “spouse colleagues.” Each is encouraged to offer their friendship and skills to hurting pastoral families.

### **The Process When Separation/Divorce is Chosen**

The dynamics surrounding each divorce and the impact on professional status will be evaluated case-by-case by the Cabinet and the Board of Ordained Ministry. To provide constancy and fairness, each person entering a period of separation/divorce will be expected to proceed according to the following steps:

1. The clergyperson will inform her/his own District Superintendent and, together they will determine the best way to share this information with the Bishop.
2. The District Superintendent will initiate contact with the non-clergy spouse, emphasizing pastoral care and indicating ongoing support and counsel.
3. Together, the clergyperson and the District Superintendent will contact the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee chairperson to discuss the clergyperson’s and spouse’s impending separation/divorce and the strategy for announcing this to the local congregation.
4. The clergyperson, District Superintendent, and chairperson of Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee will inform the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee, and establish ongoing support and counsel with the couple involved.
5. The clergyperson, with the support of the District Superintendent and the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee, will inform the local congregation with intent toward enabling all parties to begin to deal with grief, anger, hurt, and other feelings.
6. In a continuing consultation, the District Superintendent and clergyperson will discuss the clergyperson’s plan of action and consider options for the clergyperson’s appointive relationship to the Annual Conference. These options include: 1) Retaining the current appointment; 2) Appointment to another parish; 3) Appointment Beyond the Local Church; 4) Leave of Absence; 5) Sabbatical Leave; 6) Honorable Location; 7) Retirement; 8) Withdrawal; 9) Termination; 10) Transfer to another conference.

A report of these discussions shall be made a matter of consultation with the Appointive Cabinet and, when appropriate, with the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, who by the *Discipline*, have authority in matters of appointability (Cabinet) and conference relationship (Board of Ordained Ministry).

7. The District Superintendent shall continue to inquire into the needs of the clergy family, after determination and implementation of decisions on appointment and conference relationship have taken place. When it is necessary to relocate,

provisions should be made for loans or grants from available resources as needed. When the clergyperson moves to another charge and the spouse relocates in a separate community, the Cabinet should remain in contact with the family until they are settled and their basic needs are met, assisting with whatever resources are available.

In order to facilitate the process outlined above, a Consultation Team may be convened, at the request of the clergyperson or spouse, the Bishop and Cabinet, the Board of Ordained Ministry, or the local church. The team is in no way intended to function as a committee of investigation, but rather to express mutual care and concern for each other as members of the community of faith.

The team may serve any or all of the following purposes:

1. Provide understanding and support to the marriage partners in their crisis.
2. Seek to identify and clarify the basic issues that must be resolved.
3. Discover and explore the options available to the clergyperson, spouse, local church, Cabinet, and Board of Ordained Ministry.
4. Assure that all available channels of help are being used.
5. Ensure that all parties involved in the situation are acting on adequate and accurate information, and are in communication with one another.

The Consultation Team shall be composed as follows:

- One person chosen by the clergyperson.
- One person chosen by the spouse.
- One person representing the Cabinet.
- One person representing the Board of Ordained Ministry.
- The Bishop, or someone chosen by the Bishop, who will convene the Team.
- As an option, one person may be chosen to represent the local church.
- One divorced clergy member and one divorced spouse chosen by the Office of Pastoral Care and Counseling.

A further consideration has to do with the issue of remarriage. Any dating during a time of separation; during the formal filing of an intent to divorce and before the finalization of a divorce may place the clergyperson involved under the sanctions of ¶2702.1 (A) or (J) of *The 2004 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*. It is recommended that a divorced clergyperson should not remarry without adequate counsel of self and his/her prospective spouse either through the Office of Pastoral Care and Counseling or another counselor recommended by that office. In such counseling, it is hoped that the clergyperson may become aware of the factors leading to the failure of the previous marriage, and also allow sufficient time to elapse between the divorce and contemplated marriage for adequate preparation. We recommend a minimum time of two years be considered before a clergyperson would remarry. It is expected that early in the process of the consideration of remarriage that the clergyperson's own District Superintendent be informed.

### **Further Recommendations to the Annual Conference**

The Task Force further recommends to the Annual Conference the following:

1. The scheduling of workshops for clergy couples in which models of clergy marital and family growth shall be studied.

2. That the local Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee be diligent in urging the pastor to observe a "free day–day off" each week for his/her own personal pursuit of activities and family life.
3. That Saturday meetings, which both clergy and lay person find necessary to attend, be kept to a minimum so that time might be spent with one's family.
4. That the establishment of support groups for divorced persons be encouraged.
5. The continued support of legislation in the Church and in the civil government which will grant a clergyperson's divorced spouse a portion of that clergyperson's retirement benefits in proportion to the number of years spent as his/her spouse.
6. That its churches set higher standards of time and work in preparation for marriage. This could mean an intensive course of study before marriage, teaching a concept of Christian marriage, how to communicate, how to fight fair, how to share the body sexually, etc. We would urge that such an intensive course be led only by those who have been adequately trained.
7. That opportunities be provided for clergy to have training and retraining in how to help people prepare in their youth and in the pre-wedding period for marriage.
8. That additional funds to the budget of the Office of Pastoral Care and Counseling for mileage expenses be provided when needed for clergy and their spouses and families who come to the Office for counseling.
9. That Marriage Enrichment-Growth-Communication or some other programs for marriage and personal growth be offered each year for clergy persons and spouses and that attendance be encouraged.

We hope it is obvious that members of the Cabinet, Board of Ordained Ministry, other clergy, and all lay persons need to become sensitized to all that is involved in the process of divorce. The Church needs to help leaders realize that divorce is a devastatingly painful experience. When people are aware of this, they will seek ways to deal with each situation on an individual basis. Persons need to be helped to cope with a new way of life that has already begun with much pain and uneasiness. They need to hear a word of affirmation that they can love again.

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[To Index: Divorce Clergy/Spouse guidelines](#)

**12. EPISCOPAL RESIDENCE AND DISTRICT PARSONAGES, AUTHORITY TO MODIFY, REPAIR, SELL, PURCHASE AND MORTGAGE.** IACJ, 2005, Item 111.2, p. 304.

2. The Conference Board of Trustees takes very seriously the commitment to make the District and Episcopal residences compliant with the Conference standards for all congregation owned parsonages. (Parsonage Guidelines, Safety and Standards, IACJ, 2003, Item 806, p. 186) The Annual Conference authorizes the Conference Board of Trustees when there is a change in District Superintendents to modify, repair, sell, purchase and if necessary mortgage the property to allow the District Parsonages to meet the Conference approved standards for accessibility and function. The Annual Conference authorizes the Conference Board of Trustees to modify, repair, sell, purchase and, if necessary, mortgage the property during the remainder of this quadrennium to insure that the Episcopal Residence meets the Conference approved standards for accessibility and function and to have an appropriate residence available for the appointment of an Iowa Area Bishop at the 2008 Jurisdictional Conference.

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13. MATTHEW 25 FUND, IACJ, 2004, Item 303, p. 158.

### Action Item #303

#### Matthew 25 Fund

#### ***Recommendations of the Conference Connectional Ministries Council***

I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. The righteous will answer him, Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you? And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

Matthew 25:35-40 (NRSV)

On January 21-23, 2004, the Program Review Committee and representatives of the program ministry Boards, Commissions, and Councils engaged in an intense discussion of the purpose and potential contained in the ministry resources available to the Conference Connectional Ministries Council and its component parts. As a result of this discussion, the Program Review Committee recommended that the Conference Connectional Ministries Council adopt this plan and make the appropriate budget recommendations to the Conference Council on Finance and Administration. On February 7, 2004, the Conference Council on Connectional Ministries adopted this recommendation, with the additional provision that the Council would meet jointly with the Program Review Committee between that date and Annual Conference in order to describe a transition plan that will facilitate discussion of this approach during the District Conferences and Annual Conference. (NOTE: *That meeting is scheduled for April 17, 2004, roughly one month after this Pre-Conference manual goes to print.*)

This approach to Program Ministry implementation, facilitation, and funding uses three principles.

- I. The first principle is that ***those ministries which reflect the specific mission of Conference program ministries should be retained under the control of Conference agencies.*** The Program Review Committee identified, and the Connectional Ministries Council concurred, that the elements of this mission as:
  1. Leadership Development
  2. Claiming Shared Ministry
  3. Prophetic Ministry - Going Together Where We Would Not or Could Not Go Alone
- II. The second principle is that ***local churches, working through and with District structures should engage directly in the many hands-on ministries which propel us as the body of Christ toward the Kingdom of God.*** Furthermore, this is best supported by significantly sharing expertise and resources across the various Districts.
- III. The third principle is that ***the ministry of the church is to be about caring for the Matthew 25 Fund.***

In order to accomplish this, this approach embodies some dramatic changes in the way in

which programs and funding are managed.

**First**, many programs will be retained under the responsibility of the Conference. The following is a representative list of those programs, arranged under the categories listed in the first principle, with the responsible agency in parentheses. This list attempts to be comprehensive. However, it needs further examination, study, and development to ensure that it adequately reflects the programs that should be included in each category.

1. Leadership Development
  - a. School for Lay Ministry (Board of Laity)
  - b. Academy for New Ministry Development (Board of Global Ministry)
  - c. Academy for Spiritual Formation (Board of Discipleship)
  - d. Academy for Youth Ministry (Council on Youth Ministry)
  - e. Conference-wide and Regional Training Emphases (Board of Discipleship)
  - f. Instituto Latino (Board of Global Ministries)
2. Claiming Shared Ministry
  - a. Youth Strike for Christ (Council on Youth Ministries)
  - b. Campus Ministry and United Methodist College relationships (Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry)
  - c. Shared mission opportunities including Mission Education, Iowa-Nigeria Partnership, Volunteers in Mission, United Methodist Builders (Board of Global Ministry)
  - d. Camp & Retreat Ministries
  - e. Hispanic Ministry
  - f. Church Extension
3. Prophetic Ministries - Going Together Where We Would Not or Could Not Go Alone
  - a. Advocacy for Diversity in Ministry (Commissions on Religion and Race, Status and Role of Women, and Ministry with Persons with Disabilities, and Council on Age Level Ministries)
  - b. Justice and Social Witness Advocacy Ministries (Board of Church and Society)
  - c. Support for Hispanic, Immigration Justice, and Economic Justice missionaries (Board of Global Ministries)
  - d. Meskwaki Ministry of Presence (Board of Global Ministries)
  - e. Hawthorn Hill Ministries (Board of Global Ministries)
  - f. Urban Ministries (Board of Global Ministries)
  - g. Mobile United Methodist Missionaries (Board of Global Ministries)
  - h. Bidwell-Riverside Community Ministry (Board of Global Ministries)
  - i. Children and Families Urban Ministries (Board of Global Ministries)
  - j. Hillcrest Family Services (Board of Global Ministries)
  - k. Trinity Central City Congregation (Board of Global Ministries)
  - l. Restorative Justice Initiatives (Board of Church and Society)
  - m. Shesler Hall (Board of Global Ministries)

**Second**, Matthew 25 will be phased into a vision-driven process over the course of two years (2005-2006). The Coordinated Funding Grant Program will be eliminated, and the bulk of funds used for those grant programs will be pooled into the **Matthew 25 Fund**. These funds will be allocated to districts based on a formula that will be revisited (and perhaps changed) each year, and which will take into consideration a combination of factors including the following:

1. The number (or percentage) of persons living in (or projected to live in) poverty in the District.
2. The number (or percentage) of persons of non-European ancestry, non-English-speaking, or recent immigrants living in (or projected to live in) the District.
3. The number (or percentage) of elderly persons living in (or projected to live in) the District.



#### 4. Other demographic information specific to the district.

In addition, the annual allocations will need to care for multi-year new church start obligations and other multi-year obligations to local ministries. These allocations may also need to consider the number of churches or ministries ready to engage in "hands-on Matthew 25 ministries."

**Third**, the Districts would be able to draw funds from the **Matthew 25 Fund** based on their allocation. The funds would be drawn according to guidelines developed by the District for District-operated ministries, District-supported ministries, and/or District-approved local church ministries. The guidelines are to be grounded in vision and accountability and are to use a decision-making process designed and authorized by the District Council or analogous body. Any unspent allocations from the Fund would revert to the pool for re-allocation in the coming year.

**Fourth**, members of Conference program boards would cease to be grant-making bodies and would re-shape their responsibilities and activities to provide expertise, technical assistance, and consultation to Districts as they develop and implement program ministries designed to serve "the least of these."

**Fifth**, an Emerging Ministries Fund would be retained at the Conference level to address emerging needs and initiatives that are not anticipated by program boards, and are Conference-wide in their implementation and impact.

**Sixth**, during the two transition years (2005-2006), the Fund will be administered by a Transition Team composed of District Superintendents, District Council Chairs or their designees, District Lay leaders, with Connectional Field Ministers as consultants.

In 2005 and 2006, Hispanic Ministries and Church Extension will continue to be the responsibility of the Conference Board of Global Ministries. The apportionment requests related to the Matthew 25 Fund will be amended as follows: the Matthew 25 Fund will be reduced by \$299,304, in 2005 and \$302,297 in 2006. The same amounts will be added in each of those years, respectively, to the Board of Global Ministries for support of Hispanic Ministries and Church Extension.

During 2005 and 2006, the Transition Team, the Conference Connectional Ministries Council, the CCMC Program Review Committee, and appropriate groups from the various districts will continue to work with the concepts contained in this proposal and with the Bishop's Task Force on Leadership and Logistics on a detailed implementation plan for Matthew 25 fund.

The Transitional Team will also provide for a method of accountability of those organizations receiving funds.

*NOTE: Funding for the **Matthew 25 Fund** and the Conference Emerging Ministry Fund is shown with the District Ministry Funds following the District Council Ministry Plan.*

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## **14. MISSION CONGREGATIONS, BISHOP'S TASK FORCE ON, IACJ, 2009, ITEM 304, P. 300.**

### **Action Item #304 - Bishop's Task Group on Mission Congregations**

#### **1. Authorization and Purpose:**

The Cabinet and the Administrative Coordinating Council of the Iowa Annual Conference requested that the Bishop set up a short term task group whose purpose will be to give

definition to what the *2008 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* in paragraph 260 calls a "mission congregation."

This task group was also asked to recommend guidelines for establishing and maintaining mission congregations in Iowa, as well as identifying available resources.

This report is supplemental to Par. 260 of the *2008 Book of Discipline* and the Standing Item on Parish Development (Action item #712, *2006 Conference Journal*, pp. 347-354)

## **2. Theological Presuppositions:**

Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury Dr. Rowan Williams wrote, "It is not the church of God that has a mission, but rather the God of mission that has a church."

A Mission Congregation has a unique place in God's mission.

- Every congregation should be "in mission," but not every congregation is a Mission Congregation.
- Every congregation should be "mission-minded," but not every congregation is a Mission Congregation.
- Every congregation should be "missional" in attitude and outlook, but not every congregation is a Mission Congregation.
- Every congregation is self-sufficient (has the responsibility to support its program and connectional ministries), but a Mission Congregation is not self-supporting.

A Mission Congregation is expected to be "self-sufficient", but not necessarily "self-supporting"

- "Self supporting" means that a congregation is able to pay all expenses and apportionments through income from members and other local sources (fund raisers, endowment, etc.).
- "Self-sufficient" means that local church leaders accept responsibility for finding sufficient funding to support their ministry. The local congregation supports the ministry to the limits of their ability, and then seeks additional funds from other sources--partner churches, non-members, businesses, government grants, foundation support, district, conference, and general church funds, etc.

## **3. Definition of a Mission Congregation:**

(Revised from Standing Item #712)

A. A Mission Congregation (see *Discipline*, par. 260.1) is a congregation with a specific missional focus that is in partnership with the annual conference in order to reach the goal of the annual conference "to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world," and must be assisted by the resources of the annual conference to fulfill the shared vision for ministry.

B. They are designated annually by the Bishop and the Cabinet upon recommendation of the District Council on Ministries, Conference Standing Committee on Parish Development or Hispanic Ministries, and the Conference Board of Global Ministries.

C. A Mission Congregation will require subsidy from the annual conference for an extended period of time (three years or more) for any of the following reasons:

- serving a low-income population with an active program of community service and outreach.
- serving a low-income ethnic-minority community
- serving a special population or specific territory, or

where a continuing United Methodist presence is vital to the goals of the annual conference.

D. This definition of Mission Congregation is not intended to include

- a new church start that is stalled in its development.
- a congregation existing for the sake of existence with no clear mission that is related to the mission of the annual conference.
- a revitalization process, which is covered in Standing Item #174.
- social services ministries and social action programs that are not part of a worshipping congregation.

E. The Mission Congregation agrees to live out a Ministry Action Plan (M.A.P.) that expresses the importance of that congregation continuing as a disciple making congregation and presence and as a service based ministry to the surrounding community. The M.A.P. includes strategies, measureable goals, financial plans, organization structures with benchmarks for a period of 3 years.

- (1) The annual conference agrees to provide financial assistance, staff support, and other support, as agreed upon annually in the ministry action plan.
- (2) The M.A.P. would be monitored quarterly by a coach and evaluated annually by a Mission Support Team (M.S.T.) that includes the District Superintendent, Field Outreach Minister, Leadership Development Minister for Evangelism and New Ministries, and a representative from Conference Parish Development Committee.

#### **4. Leadership:**

A. Mission Congregations require specialized leadership (language skills, cross-cultural sensitivity, specialized training, "a real heart for people," missional affinity, etc.), may require non-typical patterns of leadership, (part-time, shared appointments, volunteers, etc.), and are likely to serve low income people and/or to be marginal financially. In short, they need stronger leadership than they can afford.

B. Because of their unique missional needs, leadership of Mission Congregations may require special attention and exceptions to be made by the Cabinet, Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, Commission on Equitable Compensation, and others.

#### **5. Organizing a Mission Congregation:**

A. A Mission Congregation may be initiated by a local church, district, conference agency, or the Ministry Cabinet.

B. They shall complete a M.A.P. in consultation with one or more of the following: Field Outreach Minister, Leadership Development Minister for Evangelism and New Ministries, District Parish Development Committee, Conference Standing Committee on Parish Development or Hispanic Ministries.

- (1) The consultation shall consider demographic, lifestyle and ethnographic information and any regional or conference strategy, and follow the appropriate national action plan (i.e. National Hispanic Ministry Plan).
- (2) The M.A.P. of a Mission Congregation shall be endorsed by the following: District Council on Ministries, Conference Standing Committee on Parish Development or Hispanic Ministries, Conference Board of Global Ministries, the Cabinet, and the Bishop.

C. The components of a M.A.P. shall include: a mission statement, financial plan, leadership plan, specific ministry goals (with benchmarks) for the ensuing year and projections for the following two years. Each Mission Congregation shall be assigned an experienced, trained coach by the Standing Committee on Parish Development and/or Hispanic Ministries. The coach is to guide, support, and resource the congregation to achieve their goals.

## **6. Funding:**

A. A Mission Congregation will require subsidy from the annual conference for an extended period of time (three years or more)

B. The annual conference agrees to provide financial assistance, staff support, and other support as agreed upon annually in the Ministry Action Plan.

C. The Mission Congregation's M.A.P. shall include a three-year budget, including projected expenses and income from all sources.

D. The budgets shall include full payment for pastor's pension and health insurance, and a negotiated amount for apportionments, based on income from within the congregation.

E. Salary support funds may come from:

- Missional Support Fund administered by the Cabinet
- Conference Board of Global Ministries
- Equitable Compensation funds that can go beyond minimum salary as outlined in *The Discipline* (par.624.6).

F. Program support funds may come from:

- Conference Board of Global Ministries
- Advance Specials
- District Askings
- Matthew 25
- Partner churches
- Other sources (i.e. United Way, government grants, foundation contracts, general church funds)

## **7. Property:**

A. A Mission Congregation may be located in facilities that are old-fashioned, poorly maintained and/or have high energy costs. For this reason the M.A.P. should include a needs assessment relating to the property, and address any deficiencies that are identified.

B. A Mission Congregation that is incorporated may own its property; however, the Annual Conference may need to provide funding for building maintenance, remodeling or relocation. If the deed to the property does not contain the "trust clause," (*Discipline*, Par. 2503) it must be added.

C. With the written consent of both parties, the Board of Trustees of a Mission Congregation may transfer ownership of its property to the Conference Board of Trustees. In order to continue the mission program, the property may then be leased back to the Mission Congregation for an annual lease amount to be negotiated by the two parties. The local trustees shall retain responsibility for the cost of utilities and routine upkeep. The Conference Board of Trustees shall assume responsibility for the maintenance and repair of the property.

D. In some instances a Mission Congregation may share space with another congregation, a conference outreach ministry, or community service organization. If this is the case, the Conference Board of Trustees may hold legal title to the property and a lease agreement would be negotiated with all parties.

E. A Mission Congregation may become linked to an established congregation. The established congregation may share its space with the mission group; however a covenant agreement between the congregations needs to be negotiated and then approved by the Administrative Cabinet in consultation with the Conference Standing Committee on Parish Development.

## **8. Conclusion:**

Mission Congregations play a vital role in reaching the mission goals of the annual conference. Every church may not be a Mission Congregation, but every congregation can be a partner with Mission Congregations and support them by their prayers, their presence (as volunteers), their gifts, and their witness.

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**15. MOVING POLICY**, 2015, IACJ, Item 1001, p. 299; IACJ, 2016, Item 806, p. 285.

## **Iowa Annual Conference Moving Policy**

1. Moving Expenses: Expenses for moving clergy and their families shall be administered under the following policies:
  - a. The moving fund shall assist in paying the moving expenses for household goods, office furniture, and equipment of itinerant clergy appointed to a pastoral charge, a conference staff position, or as district superintendent. Clergy included in this provision shall include full members, probationary provisional members, associate members, local pastors, seminary students appointed to a local charge, one move of a retiring clergy person to his/her retirement residence within two years of retirement, and those under disability leave. If a clergy person receives payment for a retirement move and later is appointed to serve a local charge, additional retirement moves will not be paid.
  - b. The moving expenses for the first move for divorced spouses from the parsonage shall be paid by the conference not to exceed the average of all moves from the previous year (excluding self-move) plus 5% or the actual cost of the move, whichever is less. The District Superintendent shall notify the Director of Administrative Services when this provision becomes applicable.
  - c. Surviving spouses and/or dependents of clergy who die while under appointment to a local charge, conference staff position, or a district superintendent may have their moving expenses paid by the conference within the provisions of this policy. The total amount paid shall be determined by the District Superintendent in consultation with the Director of Administrative Services.
  - d. Clergy under suspension or clergy leaving appointment in Iowa for leave of absence, honorable location, extension ministry, and transfer to another conference or denomination will not be eligible for moving expense payments.
  - e. The move shall be performed by regular licensed moving firms listed on the Conference website as a Conference Approved Mover. The person being moved

may contact the moving firm listed if contact has not already been initiated by the mover.

- f. The Director of Administrative Services will follow the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) regulations in issuing the proper tax forms to those whose move does not meet tax exempt requirements.
  - g. Clergy couples being moved shall be given an additional moving expense allowance up to \$500 as well as an additional 2,000 pounds for weight. The allowance may be used for additional costs related to moving a clergy couple. The Conference will also pay for the cost of stops at either an additional residence and/or church office required to move a clergy couple.
  - h. Clergy moving to Iowa from the 48 contiguous states are eligible to receive a maximum moving cost as designated within our current guidelines.
  - i. Clergy moving to Iowa from outside the 48 contiguous states will have a moving company assigned by the Director of Administrative Services to arrange for the move. The moving company is Hawkeye Moving Services, Inc.
  - j. Retiring pastors moving out of Iowa are eligible to receive a maximum moving expense allowance not to exceed the average of all moves from the previous year plus 5% (excluding self-moves and out-of-state moves) or the actual cost of the move whichever is less.
  - k. The IAC contract with the mover states that if a residence is found unsatisfactory, the mover will contact the Conference and the move is subject to cancellation until it is corrected. If the move is delayed or canceled, the pastor will be responsible for all additional charges incurred. Residence must be free of insects and animal waste. Loading and unloading cannot take place if floors are wet. No garbage bags will be accepted as packed items.
2. Conference Approved Movers: The 2015 Conference Approved Mover is Hawkeye Moving Services, Inc. Conference moves may be made only by the Conference Approved Mover unless the move is a pre-authorized self-move. Moving expense payments will only be made to the Conference Approved Mover. To qualify as a Conference Approved Mover, our mover has met the following criteria:
- a. Is licensed by the State of Iowa under applicable laws.
  - b. Has signed a contract with the Iowa Annual Conference and agrees to abide by the policies established by the Iowa Annual Conference.
  - c. Will submit weight tickets for a move before payment is made.
  - d. Will give a minimum bottom line discount on all Conference moves (discount to be established by the Conference Council on Finance and Administration).
3. Expense Payment Parameters: The following parameters shall apply to the payment of moving expenses:
- a. The total move weight shall be 14,000 pounds or less.
  - b. The total packing and unpacking or crating cost shall be \$750 or less. (For clergy couples see item 1.g.)
  - c. The total insured cost shall be full replacement value at \$5.00 per pound with the Conference paying for 14,000 pounds and/or \$100,000 maximum valuation whichever is less. There will be a \$500 deductible. If the goods being moved are greater than 14,000 pounds, the clergy may buy more insurance.
  - d. Charges for only one piano and/or organ and/or other large musical instrument or packing and crating a large appliance shall be paid.
  - e. The limitations listed in 3.a., b., c., and d. may be exceeded in the move; however, the person being moved shall pay the mover upon completion of the move.

- f. The Director of Administrative Services shall remit to the mover the amount due for the move within the parameters described herein and upon receipt of the following:
    - i. A detailed invoice with line items to be charged
    - ii. Weight tickets
    - iii. A bill of lading signed by the person being moved or an authorized family member
    - iv. A Move Authorization Form signed by the person being moved
  - g. The cost of appliance hook-ups or third party services shall be the responsibility of the clergy.
  - h. The Conference shall not pay for "extra carry" charges, storage or delays unless approved before the move.
  - i. Vehicles, motorcycles, canoes, firewood, lumber, rocks, wood, dirt, potters clay, kilns and other oversize or overweight items shall be the responsibility of the person being moved.
  - j. An extra expense allowance not to exceed \$300 shall be made available to graduating seminary students from outside Iowa or to persons transferring from another conference accepting appointment in the Iowa Conference. This amount will be set by the receiving District Superintendent after determining financial need and after consultation with the Director of Administrative Services.
  - k. Reimbursement of the cost of motel, meals and mileage during the actual days of the move is to be negotiated between the local charge, the District Superintendent and the person being moved. Any reimbursement may be taxable.
4. Self-Moves: Self moves must be authorized in advance of the move by the Director of Administrative Services.
- a. Covered expenses for a self-move include equipment and packing materials only. Personnel, lodging, gas for personal vehicles, and/or meals would not be covered.
  - b. The Iowa Annual Conference is not liable for personal injury incurred during the course of relocation.
  - c. The Iowa Annual Conference is not liable for property damage incurred during the course of relocation.
  - d. If a self-move is not approved by the Director of Administrative Services, the mover shall be paid directly by the person being moved.
5. Exceptions: Exceptions to any of the above may be approved or denied by the Director of Administrative Services after consultation with the District Superintendent, if appropriate. Appeals of any decision by the Director of Administrative Services may be directed to the Conference Council on Finance and Administration (CFA). CFA shall have the final authority to interpret the moving policy and make decisions regarding its implementation.
6. Procedures: The Director of Administrative Services shall establish and administer all procedures for implementing the moving policy contained herein. The Director of Administrative Services shall be the only person to authorize a move with a Conference Approved Mover.

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[To Index: Moving Policy](#)

**16. NEIGHBOR HELPING NEIGHBOR, IACJ, 2007, Item 405, p. 306.**

**Reauthorizaton of the “Neighbor Helping Neighbor” Program**

Purpose of Neighbor Helping Neighbor: To meet some of the emergency needs of people caught in the on-going Iowa rural/far/business/job crisis.

- A. NEIGHBOR HELPING NEIGHBOR Iowa Advance Special Project
  - 1. One-half of the contributions will be used in the district in which the money was raised.
    - a. The district superintendent and the executive committee of the district council are charged with the responsibility for making the allocation.
    - b. This authority may be designated to an individual who would be accountable to the district superintendent.
    - c. Funds will be used for direct assistance to persons who are victims of the on-going Iowa rural/far/business/job crisis.
    - d. Applications will come from pastors and/or churches.
  - 2. One-half of the contributions will be available for any district to request when they have used up their allocation. The same guidelines for application apply.
  
- B. The priority use of the Neighbor Helping Neighbor funds is for direct assistance to persons who are victims of the on-going Iowa rural/farm/business/job crisis which began in the 1980's. This is emergency assistance money which will be provided in small grants. It can be used to help persons who are suffering loss of livelihood from farm, small business, or job.
  
- C. Encouragement will be given to churches and communities working ecumenically and with other organizations.
  
- D. Churches applying for grants should write a clearly-worded statement including family's name and description of need, the name and address of the business to be paid, and the amount needed. Checks will be written to the business or church, not the individual. Some examples for uses include utilities, retraining, medicine, and medical care. Confidentiality shall be maintained.

Each year, up-to-date information about how to apply will be available from the conference office, district offices, and websites.

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## **17. PARISH DEVELOPMENT:**

- a. Developed and Approved By Parish Development Standing Committee. January 1994. Revised 1996. Revised 1998. Revised 2006. Revised 2008

**I. Joint Strategy for New Church Development and Parish Revitalization.** IACJ, 2008, Item 310, p. 294.

### **INTRODUCTION**

A new direction regarding the birth and revitalization of congregations within the Iowa Annual Conference has begun to emerge, with numerous participants involved. This includes a new "Comprehensive Process" and "Ministry Covenant" benchmarks for starting healthy new congregations, as well as for revitalizing established churches with an emphasis on "Disciple Making Churches".

This document outlines that emerging strategy and sets it in a missional context.

From 1989 to 2005, we celebrate starting 28 new congregations, new merged congregations, and new ethnic ministries of presence, as well as supporting dozens of revitalization programs. The new congregations have 3,900 members and a combined average worship attendance of 2,300+. The combined value of their land, buildings, parsonages, and other equipment is over \$18,000,000. Their grand total giving last year



exceeded \$9,000,000. The majority of those participating were previously unchurched/dechurched. Through the addition of new programs, new staff and new facilities, similar results are being realized through our revitalization efforts. In 1990, for the first time in 20 years or more, two of our districts showed a new increase in membership. In 1996, the Iowa Conference had a net increase of membership, the only conference in our jurisdiction to demonstrate membership growth. Throughout the Iowa Conference, persons are coming to Christ and being challenged to become responsible disciples through new faith communities. The reality is, however, in the past few years we have failed to sustain this forward momentum. Now is the time to renew our emphasis on answering Christ's call to "go and make disciples" (Matthew 28:19), welcoming people to a life with God, through Jesus Christ.

## **DEFINITIONS**

The vision of Parish Development is for every congregation to develop as a missional church, where people are transformed into a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. This includes the planting of new churches, faith communities or ministries, and the revitalization of existing congregations. In all cases, the emphasis is on strengthening congregations and the gathering of previously unchurched/dechurched people for the purpose of worship, Christian formation and mission.

The birth of a new faith community begins with the identification of potential leaders (planters), who are gifted with a call and passion for bringing people to faith in God through Jesus Christ. Through the oversight and support of local churches, districts and the Annual Conference, these planters are matched through affinity factors with "like" unchurched/dechurched people in a given area; and if possible supported by a "mother" church/churches. ("Healthy churches birth healthy churches.") This can be done in a variety of ways (satellite, multi-site, circuit ministry, "mother-daughter", "aunts-niece" (more than one church starts a new church), adoption of declining existing church, "restart", ...), while at the same time new models are continually being identified. However it is done, the birth process should enable a new faith community to claim its foundation in Jesus Christ, develop a missional outreach design, implement corresponding supportive ministries, and participate in the world-wide mission of the church.

Strong support for the development of new faith communities needs to come from the Bishop, the Cabinet, the districts and district committees, local churches and the District Parish Development Committee. Everyone needs to be "on board", clearly understanding their part in helping a new start take root and grow.

An accountability structure is a must, starting from the beginning.

Should a new faith community have a difficult beginning and/or need to renew its identity, it may again be classified as a new faith community (instead of labeling it a 'restart').

The revitalization of existing faith communities results from the renewal of spiritual vitality, clarity of purpose, and missional outreach. Many of our faith communities, old and relatively new, need to be relocated, merged, realigned, repaired, and redeveloped, both spiritually and physically. Our purpose is to assure maximum spiritual growth, adequate stewardship resources, and effective pastoral leadership for every local congregation. Revitalization will result in more effective faith communities strategically located where population shifts have occurred or where ministry opportunity exists, and makes us better stewards of funds, existing facilities, and human resources. Revitalization opportunities exist in rural and inner-city churches in transition, areas experiencing emerging populations (including ethnic communities), as well as churches facing unusual opportunities for mission, relocations, struggling faith communities, and other experimental ministries.

## **OUR VISION**

A vision is ultimately a gift from God, discerned by the Body of Christ. It is prophetic, life-changing, and impossible to accomplish without God's leading.

United Methodists in Iowa are immersed in an increasingly secular culture. People in our communities no longer can be expected to have even a most basic knowledge of the Bible or of our worship. Based on Bishop Palmer's Vision for Audacious Christian Communities, our past experiences, and grounded in the current missional opportunity, we offer the following specific "pictures" of our future to the broader Annual Conference community. As an Annual Conference, we would:

1. Plant at least one new faith community per year within the Iowa Annual Conference. We need to discern and target growth areas and new un/underserved populations of opportunity, including ethnic communities,
2. Initiate new satellite/multi-site faith communities in each district, with particular attention to small towns, churches in transition/decline, emerging populations, and un/underserved areas/people; and
3. As a whole Church with all its resources, encourage every existing congregation to become mission centers through revitalized worship, relevant outreach and radical hospitality to and with the un/dechurched.

## **STRATEGIES**

It is impossible to translate a vision into current reality without specific planning, funding and implementations strategies. Our specific recommendations include:

- A. The Chair of Conference Parish Development Standing Committee and one other member, two District Superintendents, Chp. of Planning and Research, and the Leadership Development Minister for Evangelism and New Ministry (LDM) will convene a work group to coordinate a conference-wide demographic study, for the purpose of (1) identifying potential sites for new congregations/ministries and (2) providing existing congregations with data on the internet to enable their revitalization and outreach.
- B. District leadership, including the district superintendent and the district parish development chairperson, develops a district strategy outlining new congregation/ministry and revitalization opportunities for the next five years. The plans would be shared and discussed with the entire Cabinet, LDM, and Parish Development Committee in an annual retreat designated for this purpose. The district strategy would be updated annually. The Parish Development Committee would assist in the coordination of district plans, especially as they relate to the findings of the demographic study and conference funding capabilities.
- C. Working with the Cabinet, the Parish Development committee develops an ongoing process for identifying and assessing, training, appointing, and supporting new church start (known as the "Comprehensive Process") and revitalization pastors (ordained and local pastors, full-time and less than full-time). (The Academy for New Ministry Development will be one of the places for identifying potential new church start pastors and revitalization pastors.)
- D. Once potential leaders are identified, they will go through several steps of assessment and training, including participation in the School for Congregational Development and new church start "boot camp", and develop their own "Ministry Action Plan" (MAP) for their new start. (See "New Church Starts—Flow Chart" for details{\*)} A similar process for those pastors identified as "revitalization pastors" will take place, with a focus on becoming a "Disciple Making Church" (See "Disciple-Making Churches" plan.{\*}). ({\*} For details, contact the Leadership Development Minister for evangelism and new ministry.) Furthermore, District Superintendents have committed to participate in the new church start track of the School for Congregational Development Parish in order to help equip them to focus on congregational development and revitalization. In addition it is urged that selection of new district superintendents be made according to those who will give leadership to new congregation development and revitalization.

- E. Districts are encouraged to raise funds for congregational development and revitalization projects. This can be accomplished in several ways. First, district askings can be designated for new congregational development and ethnic congregations. Second, develop a district fundraising strategy such as a Church Planters network in consultation with Conference Council on Finance and Administration. Third, ¶657.4 of the 2004 Book of Discipline gives permission to district conferences to incorporate as a District Union, "under the laws of the state in which it is licensed to hold and administer real and personal property, receive and administer church extension funds for use within the district..." The specific need, methodologies and timing will vary from district to district.
- F. Each new church start will receive a flexible cap of funding according to their missional design and potential size from the church extension fund for start-up costs for salary, benefits, and program over a 3-5 year period. Suggested grant caps range from \$100,000 to \$500,000. The exact total allotted will be determined according to the vision and mission of the new church. Technical support for program and administration will be provided. No parsonages or first building units will be purchased with start-up funds. Start-up funds could include housing allowances. This would not preclude additional assistance for the purchase of land, parsonages or church facilities from UM Builders calls or other sources.
- G. The Parish Development Standing Committee, in conjunction with the Iowa United Methodist Communications office, will develop a plan to share the story of church revitalization and new church starts with the United Methodists of Iowa. Ideas for this process of communication include a highlight on the Conference web page and other forms of Conference communication, occasional news articles for District Newsletters, mission interpreters telling the faith story, and a brochure sharing what our apportionment dollars are doing in this area. The goal of this communication plan would be to share how our partnership is moving us towards our vision.

## **CONCLUSION**

The *2004 Book of Discipline* specifies in paragraph ¶260.1 that a new local church shall be established only with the consent of the Bishop in charge and the Cabinet, and with due consideration of the conference entity assigned the responsibility for congregational development. However, this cannot be accomplished without a strong partnership with the Conference Board of Global Ministries. This partnership is outlined in paragraphs ¶260 and ¶632.14. Our Conference Rules of Order provide for a Parish Development Standing Committee of the Conference Board of Global Ministries. The Parish Development Committee is the primary avenue through which the conference coordinates and funds our new church extension efforts and revitalization projects.

Our past experience and our current missional opportunity are teaching us that the most effective evangelistic strategy today to reach the unchurched is by planting new churches and developing new ministries of outreach. We further believe that existing congregations need to catch a new vision for birthing new faith communities for their own growth and revitalization. Our belief is not simply a conviction or a neatly packaged vision, but a determination to collectively fulfill our vision and make it a living reality.

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**b. Church Extension and Revitalization, Guidelines, IACJ, 2008, Item 310, p. 297.**

## **II. Guidelines for Church Extension and Revitalization.**

### **A. From the 2004 Book of Discipline.**

¶260.1 "A new local church or mission congregation shall be established only with the consent of the bishop in charge and the cabinet and with due consideration of the conference entity assigned the responsibility for congregational development. The bishop shall designate the district within whose bounds the church or mission congregation shall be organized. The district superintendent of that district or his or her designee, shall be the agent in charge of the project and shall recommend to the district Board of Church Location and Building (¶2518) the method of organization, and whether a specific site shall be selected or an area of organization be designated. The district superintendent shall avail him/herself of existing demographic, lifestyle and ethnographic information in the process of establishing a new congregation, or shall recommend to the board of trustees of a selected church that they share their facility with the proposed congregation. If there is a city or district missionary organization or if funds for the project are anticipated from a conference organization, those bodies shall also be asked to approve the method of organization and location for a new congregation."

B. A Mission Church (see (¶260.1a of the 2004 BOD) is a congregation with a specific missional focus for reaching community persons that no other ministry can reach. They are designated annually by the Board of Global Ministries and the Cabinet as a congregation that for missional purposes may be assisted by resources of the Annual Conference to fulfill their vision for ministry. A Mission Church could be:

1. An ethnic congregation or faith community that needs ongoing support, or
2. A church or ministry experiencing unusual missional opportunities.

The Mission Churches shall be reviewed annually by the Parish Development Standing Committee and the Cabinet to monitor progress toward reaching their vision/mission. The general goal, where possible, is for each mission church to become financially self-supporting. We recognize that ethnic mission churches may require a longer term financial commitment. These churches will need to apply annually through the District Matthew 25 Funding process.

All Mission Churches, except new congregations, will be apportioned each year at the full 100% fair share level, while grant monies will not be counted in the expenses of the apportionment formula. Every Mission Church is expected to develop as a mission-sending church even while it is identified as a mission-receiving church.

A Mission Church may request to be designated as a Conference Advance Special. This begins with an application to the Mission Education Standing Committee and must be approved by the Conference Board of Global Ministries.

C. The following will be the general guidelines for Church Extension and Revitalization:

1. Each District Superintendent, in consultation with his/her district Parish Development Committee and district Board of Church Location and Building, shall project all needs relating to developing new congregations and revitalizing congregations in his/her district for a period of not less than five years which is reviewed and updated annually. The District Superintendent's other responsibilities in developing new congregations are defined in *The 2004 Book of Discipline*, ¶260. We recommend forming a working group consisting of two Parish Development people, two District Superintendents, and the LDM. This team will work with District

Superintendents and district Parish Development Committees to identify potential "hot spot" locations for new faith communities. The chair of the Parish Development committee will convene this working group as needed. The Conference Planning and Research Committee will assist this team with geographical presentations of demographic data.

2. No new congregation shall be funded and no new church building or site shall receive support from the Conference, district(s), or any of their parties until everyone has signed the "Ministry Covenant" Pre-launch Strategies and Benchmark planning document. The "Ministry Covenant" includes a clear statement of the missional design and vision of each new start, along with supportive budget and funding statements, for up to four years, with "benchmarks" that will be achieved in order to help make the new start self-sustaining and vital in its ministry.
3. The Conference Board of Global Ministries, upon recommendation of the Cabinet and Parish Development Committee, may provide grant support to a new congregation or a revitalized congregation for capital investment in land or building by a United Methodist Builders Call.
4. When funds are available, the Rotating Loan Fund administered by the Conference Board of Global Ministries Parish Development Committee, may be used to supplement Church Extension grants. For new congregations, the loan shall be interest free for the three years, and then assessing one-half the going rate in the fourth year and advancing 1% per year until the current rate is reached. For established congregations, the interest on the loan shall be the regular rate established by the conference Board of Global Ministries unless other provisions are approved by the Parish Development Committee and Board of Global Ministries. The Parish Development Committee has worked with the United Methodist Foundation Church Loan trust to lower interest rates for new church starts. Parish Development has invested escrow funds for this purpose.
5. The Iowa Annual Conference will follow the guidelines established in ¶260 from the *2004 Discipline*. It is recommended that new congregations be constituted when their mission design potential is reached as defined in the "Ministry Covenant", in consultation with the District Superintendent/cabinet and Leadership Development Minister, and not before. After a new congregation is constituted by an initial Charge Conference, the congregation shall submit the required reports for the "Statistical Record and Summaries" printed in the *Journal* of the Iowa Annual Conference. Until the new congregation or ministry of presence is constituted and no longer receiving grant funds, they shall submit monthly reports of agreed upon indicators of vision and vitality to the Conference Parish Development Standing Committee via the Leadership Development Ministry for evangelism and new ministry.
6. The formula for determining apportionments payments will begin after a congregation is constituted with zero amounts for years in the four year average before chartering. All grants, loans, and advance special income given to mission congregations will be exempt from determining their fair share apportionment.
7. A new church will pay with the initial appointment 100% of direct billing for pensions and health insurance.
8. If the Conference Parish Development Committee, District Parish Development Committee and District Committee of Church Location and Building agree that the purchase of land is advisable before a new congregation is established, the land

may be purchased and held for future development. The Conference Board of Trustees shall hold title to the property until such time as a new congregation is constituted/ chartered for that site. The new congregation shall purchase the land on contract from the Annual Conference with the value of the land being that at the time the land was purchased by the Conference. The new congregation shall negotiate the amount of the down payment with the Parish Development Committee.

9. Insofar as the Conference's financial resources allow, funding for a new church development shall be as follows:
  - a. Each new church start will receive a flexible cap of \$100,000 to \$500,000 total for start-up costs for salary, benefits, and program over a 3-5 year period. The exact total allotted will be determined according to the vision and mission of the new church. No parsonages or first units will be purchased with start-up funds. Start-up funds may include housing allowances. This would not preclude additional assistance for the purchase of land, parsonages or church facilities from other grant or loan sources or UM Builders calls.
  - b. Proposed building unit must have the approval of the district Board of Church Location and Building and the Conference Parish Development Standing Committee. (A good guideline to use in determining a building's feasibility is the 4/3 plan: the cost of the building is divided by 1/3 cash available, 1/3 pledges already in hand, and 1/3 assumed as a loan. The fourth 1/3 is that annual debt payment must not be larger than 1/3 of the church's total annual income.)
  - c. Volunteer labor may be available through the Volunteer In Mission Work Team program. New congregations are encouraged to seek this service for their building projects.
  - d. The decision to end funding of church extension funds for a struggling new faith community will be made jointly by the Cabinet, the Parish Development Standing Committee and the Leadership Development Minister (LDM) for evangelism and new ministry if the benchmarks of the "Ministry Covenant" are not being met, including: 1) there is an inability to build on the initial group of people in order to reach critical mass, 2) there is marginal in-roads to reaching the intended mission field, 3) there is limited financial ownership, 4) essential ministries are not taking off, 5) the new faith community seems permanently stalled, 6) there is a constant change of rules, strategies and direction, leadership, and/or 7) evidence of inappropriate or disabling behavior is pervasive. On-going coaching with the pastor and key lay leadership team will occur by the LDM, in consultation with Parish Development, as part of the "Ministry Covenant". A decision to end funding will occur only after all parties who signed the "Ministry Covenant" are well aware of the situation and the inability to turn it around (typically but not limited to six months).
10. Revitalization is defined as the process of an existing church becoming a fully developed and intentionally missional congregation. A revitalization process enables a congregation to recognize its foundation in Jesus Christ, develop a missional design, implement appropriate ministries within the church and community, participate in the worldwide mission of the Church in order to bear fruit (multiply – John 15:8). This process of rediscovery may lead to relocation, merger, new ministries, facility repairs or additions, renewed spiritual vitality, stewardship growth, and/or leadership development.

The Parish Development Committee shall evaluate congregational revitalization projects using the definition of revitalization along with the congregation's demonstrated commitment to church growth. The church growth may be in membership, spiritual development and outreach to the community. The congregation through supporting data and a written design must show potential for church growth and define how resources from the Conference can enhance that growth. A congregation seeking revitalization support from the Conference must develop specific goals and strategies to realize revitalization and must have an identifiable target audience that will benefit from the proposed program or project.

- a. Funding for capital improvements can come from Builders Call, Volunteer In Mission Work Teams, Rotating Loan Fund, and Legacy Fund.
- b. If the revitalization project includes new church staff, a grant may include complete support for the first year with the congregation assuming a larger share of the cost each succeeding year as negotiated. Funding for new church staff can come from a variety of sources; however, the primary funding source for new staff will be District Matthew 25 funds.
- c. If the revitalization project is a new program or a new parish ministry model, a grant may include complete support for the first year with the congregation assuming a larger share of the cost each succeeding year as negotiated. Funding for program development can come from a variety of sources; however, Matthew 25 funds, and/or Institutional Ministries are the primary funding sources for new parish ministry models.
- d. The Board of Global Ministries financial secretary will receive and direct applications for grants or loans from funds administered by the various conference agencies, the General Board of Global Ministries, and the United Methodist Development Fund. Consultation with appropriate leadership on the local, Conference, and national levels will occur. The financial secretary will refer inquiries about other fund sources to the appropriate agency.
  1. Some sources of grants, donations or gifts:
    - a. Conference Accessibility Grant Fund
    - b. Conference Advance Specials
    - c. Conference Board of Trustees Abandoned Church Fund
    - d. Conference Board of Trustees Priscilla Fund
    - e. Conference BOGM Great Commission Fund
    - f. Conference BOGM Ethnic Minority Local Church Grant Fund
    - g. Conference Equitable Compensation Fund
    - h. Conference BOGM Church Extension Fund
    - i. Legacy Fund
    - j. District apportionments and goals or askings
    - k. Institutional Ministries grant funds
    - l. Local church foundations/bequests/investment funds
    - m. Local churches and their organizations, classes, groups
    - n. General Board of Global Ministries Church Extension Funds
    - o. UMVIM work teams
    - p. United Methodist Builders
    - q. Endowment funds allocated by Parish Development.
  2. Some sources of loans:
    - a. UM Foundation Church Loan Trust
    - b. Conference Board of Trustees Priscilla Fund
    - c. Rotating Loan Fund
    - d. Legacy Fund
    - e. Local church foundations/investment funds
    - f. General Board of Global Ministries Loan Fund
    - g. National Division United Methodist Development Fund
    - h. United Methodist Ministers' Service Credit Union

i. Commercial financial institutions

11. The Board of Global Ministries financial secretary will continue to update and monitor priority project lists and seek to relate projects to funds available from these sources.

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**c. Rotating Loan Fund Investment and Interest.** IACJ, 2007, Item 413, p. 314

The Parish Development Committee requests authority from the Iowa Annual Conference to invest funds from the Parish Development's Rotating Loan Fund into the United Methodist Foundation's Church Building Fund with the resulting interest to be paid to Parish Development for church extension.

The Rotating Loan Fund was created by the 1969 Uniting Annual Conference from funds of the three merging conferences. The reasons for this request are twofold. First, since the U.M. Foundation began loaning money to churches the Parish Development's Loan Fund has been accumulating a growing balance. We currently have \$1,001,941.92 in the Rotting Loan Fund; \$500,970 is currently loaned to local churches; and \$187,523.41 is held as allowance for uncollectible loans; and \$150,000 is being held in escrow for four years by the Foundation to lower the interest payment for Centerville Faith. The Parish Development Loan Fund is receiving 5% interest on these funds. We have a remaining balance of \$163,447.55 which is growing.

Secondly, apportionment dollars for church extension are shrinking. If we are to continue to aid in the funding of new congregations we must look for other available funds. Parish Development and the Board of Global Ministries unanimously support this proposal.

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**18. PARSONAGE DAMAGE POLICY,** IACJ, 2013, Item 538, p. 295.

**PARSONAGE DAMAGE POLICY (Revised 2013)**

¶258.2g(16) of *The 2012 The Book of Discipline* details the responsibility of the local church board of trustees to care for all church property. The clergy family also has a responsibility within the connectional covenant to treat the parsonage with respect. To this end the board of trustees shall ensure that there is an annual inspection of the parsonage for proper maintenance. In the event an inspection reveals damage in excess of normal wear and tear, which is attributable to clergy's willful or intentional disregard of the church's interest, the following policies shall govern future clergy use of parsonages:

1. Clergy who have damaged a parsonage in excess of normal wear and tear shall thereafter pay a \$500 damage deposit per year until such deposit totals \$2,000. This will be deducted by the local church treasurer from the pastor's salary\* on a monthly basis and sent to the Iowa Conference Treasurer to be accounted for and deposited in a Parsonage Damage Fund consisting of all the parsonage damage deposit money paid by clergy in the IAC. Upon proper application to the Conference Treasurer, the deposited funds will be paid out to a local church from a pastor's damage account where the pastor has caused damage to the local church parsonage in excess of normal wear and tear. The pastor shall then replenish his/her \$2000 damage account by paying \$500 per year until the \$2000 is fully replenished.



2. If the parsonage damage exceeds \$2000 the local church will withhold the pastor's final pay check to cover the balance of the repair costs. If the repair costs exceed the \$2000 damage deposit plus the pastor's final pay check, the balance will be paid from the Parsonage Damage Fund. Such amount paid from the Parsonage Damage Fund will be considered a loan to the pastor who will sign a note with the IAC. The treasurer of the church or charge where the pastor is next appointed will deduct monthly from the pastor's salary\* an amount agreed upon by the Conference Treasurer, the District Superintendent and the pastor until the loan is repaid and the pastor's \$2000 damage deposit is replenished.
3. At such time as the pastor leaves ministry, retires or leaves the Iowa Conference the balance of the \$2000 damage deposit held on account for the pastor shall be returned to him/her if there is no damage to the parsonage most recently vacated, there is no balance for damage to any other parsonage, or the damage to such parsonage(s) is less than \$2000. In the event such damage exceeds \$2000 when the pastor leaves or retires, the same policy repayment as stated above in paragraph 2 shall apply.

Parsonage Damage Procedures:

A representative from the S/PPRC and trustees shall tour the parsonage sometime within the first three weeks after the announcement of the pastor's new appointment to determine what needs to be done in preparation for new clergy family and if there is any damage.

If it appears there is damage that exceeds normal wear and tear, the District Superintendent shall be notified immediately in order that s/he and the District Board of Church Location and Building can make a further inspection before any repairs are begun. The S/PPRC, local church trustees, District Board of Church Location and Building and the District Superintendent will determine whether or not excessive damage has occurred. The pastor shall be entitled to be present during all inspections. Pictures shall be taken of the damaged areas. Assuming there is damage for which the pastor is liable under this policy, the local church trustees will obtain two bids to repair the damage.

The pastor and the chairperson of the S/PPRC and trustees will make a final inspection of the parsonage on the day of the move once the furniture is removed. This allows for them to verify the house is in good repair, or to assess if there is still damage to be taken care of. The pastor's final pay check will be withheld\* until this final inspection is conducted to determine if there is any further damage and to confirm the parsonage has been appropriately cleaned by the departing pastor.

When a pastor has damaged a parsonage the documentation of such damage (including written description of damage and photographs) will be placed in the pastor's permanent file. A pastor's appointability may be affected if he or she has two documented incidents of parsonage damage. If this occurs the pastor may be required to provide his or her own housing if he or she wants another appointment or to continue in his or her current appointment.

*\* Each clergy person in the Iowa Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church shall sign an authorization with each local church to which he/she is appointed authorizing the local church under the Iowa Wage Payment Collection Law, Iowa Code Chapter 91A, to deduct any amounts owing under this Parsonage Damage Policy from clergy salary and further authorizing the Conference Treasurer to disburse such amounts.*

**19. PARSONAGE GUIDELINES, SAFETY AND STANDARDS, IACJ, 2013, Item 538, p. 287.**

**[Editor's Notes: 2003 IACJ, P. 183, Action Item #806 - Pastors' Housing Policy**

The Iowa Annual Conference adopts the Recommendation of the Cabinet to adopt the Pastors' Housing Policy as a Standing Item of the Annual Conference. In 2013 the Housing Policy was revised and adopted. It is as follows:]

**Introduction**

In the fall of 2012, a Parsonage Study Task Force was formed at the request of the Conference Board of Trustees to review and update the Conference Parsonage Standards adopted by the 2003 Annual Conference. Parsonage Study Task Force members are : Martha Ward, chairperson, Bob Burkhart, staff, Chuck Gardner, Lilian Gallo Seagren, Gary Hoyt, Heecheon Jeon, Cathy Webb. In addition to updating the parsonage standards, areas which the Trustees suggested addressing included the challenges of making existing parsonages accessible, parsonage damage, and the growing movement toward housing allowances in lieu of parsonages. While housing allowances are an option for providing clergy housing, they are not addressed in this report. Rather, a process for helping congregations determine whether to provide a parsonage or a housing allowance will be provided at a later date. In addressing these issues of clergy housing, the Task Force studied current Iowa policy and practice, the [2012 Clergy Housing Handbook](#) prepared by the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women, Parsonage Guidelines of the North Carolina Annual Conference, and "Parsonage or Housing Allowance", a document by the Florida Conference Cabinet.

**The Parsonage System:** Compensation for full-time clergy appointments (3/4 time or more) in The United Methodist Church includes cash salary, benefits and housing provision of either a parsonage or a housing allowance. Itinerancy is at the heart of the deployment of United Methodist clergy in full time ministry. Historically this mode of pastoral assignment has benefited from the use of the parsonage system, and it has been the expectation that pastors shall reside in a parsonage provided by the local charge. If an exception to living in a parsonage is considered, approval for such must be given by the local charge conference and the cabinet.

According to *The 2012 The Book of Discipline*, "*The parsonage is to be mutually respected by the pastor's family as the property of the church and by the church as a place of privacy for the pastor's family ¶258.2g(16)*) While parsonage families are expected to abide by parsonage inspection procedures and the Safe Sanctuary Policy, they maintain the authority to determine who may have access to their parsonage and at what times.

A parsonage or housing allowance is not compensation for the work of the pastor, but it is compensation to provide for the housing needs of clergy family. Where there are two clergy in one family (i.e. a clergy couple), they are not to receive both a parsonage and a housing allowance, unless unique circumstances, such as distance between appointments, require two residences.

Each parsonage should meet the standards of the conference and in cases where these standards are not met, it is the responsibility of the pastor, the charge, and the district

superintendent to work together to move toward these standards. *“There shall be elected annually by the charge conference in each local church a committee on pastor-parish relations....To consult on matters pertaining to....housing (which may be a church-owned parsonage or housing allowance in lieu of parsonage if in compliance with the policy of the annual conference),...”* (§258.2, 258.2g (16) of *The 2012 The Book of Discipline*)

This report has the following sections:

1. Parsonage and Study/Office Standards
2. When a Move is Made
3. Parsonage Damage Policy and Procedures (See Standing Item “Parsonage Damage Report” prior to this section.)

## **PARSONAGE AND STUDY/OFFICE STANDARDS 2013**

### **1. Annual Parsonage Review**

*The 2012 The Book of Discipline, ¶ 258.2g(16) states: “The chairperson of the Committee on Pastor-Parish Relations, the chairperson of the Board of Trustees, and the pastor shall make an annual review of the church-owned parsonage to assure proper maintenance and to give immediate resolution to parsonage issues affecting the family’s health and well-being.”*

The parsonage and study/office shall be inspected annually and at the time a pastoral change is announced. Forms are provided for the Annual Review and Parsonage Inspection When a Pastor Moves. A report shall be made to the Church Council of any deviations from the standards as set forth below. The trustees within the following three months shall bring a recommendation to the Church Council regarding ways the deviations found in the parsonage and study/office will be brought up to standard and have regular maintenance and safety items cared for. A reasonable time table shall be established for such change or correction as must be made, and reported back to the next Charge Conference. If it is not resolved, the District Superintendent may be consulted. The parsonage family shall be encouraged to make a list of things needing attention.

If the annual tour reveals excessive wear or damage, the S/PPRC shall visit with the pastor regarding these matters. If it is not resolved, the District Superintendent shall be consulted. Any damage to the parsonage or grounds caused by any household pet shall be repaired or replaced at the expense of the parsonage occupants. Excessive damage, beyond normal wear, to the parsonage caused by the parsonage family shall be repaired, replaced, and/or paid for by the pastor. This valuation shall be done by the District Board of Church Location and Building. (See Parsonage Damage Procedures)

The trustees shall keep a record of the date of purchase and repair of all appliances including the heating and cooling system; and of all painting and decorating, inside and out. The District Superintendent shall ask for the Parsonage Report at the annual Charge Conference meeting. The PARSONAGE INSPECTION FORM must be included in the Charge Conference Reports. Failure to return this form may result in not being able to claim damage.

In light of parsonages generally being tax exempt, this status shall be carefully guarded. Parsonage families are cautioned against using parsonage property for any kind of private commercial use.

## **2. Pastor's Study/Office and Church Office**

The church should provide study/office space for the pastor in the church building wherever feasible. The office should be no less than 150 square feet of floor space and should be as easily accessible as possible to an outside entrance. It should contain adequate office furnishings and equipment including phone, computer and internet access. Additional space (preferably a separate room) should be provided for the administrative work of the church, whether done by paid staff or volunteers, with appropriate equipment provided. Adequate heating and cooling should be provided, as well as security and safety measures (door bell, emergency exits and lights, etc.). In multiple point charges, the churches may wish to designate one church in the charge as the location for the pastor's office and church office. A detailed checklist of recommended equipment and furnishings for these areas can be provided by the District Superintendent.

The pastor may also choose to have a study at the parsonage. If, in select cases, this home study also functions as the pastor's only primary office, it should be removed as far as possible from the rooms most used by the family and be easily accessible to an outside entrance.

## **3. Parsonage - General Standards**

In the Iowa Conference, the following division of parsonage responsibilities between the local church/charge and the pastor is generally observed: The local church/charge is responsible for health and safety features, overall upkeep and large repairs of the parsonage and lot. From the church operating budget, it is recommended that 2% of the replacement value of the parsonage be maintained in a parsonage repair reserve account to deal with both anticipated and unexpected repairs. The pastor is responsible for routine maintenance and cleaning, and the parsonage family is expected to keep the parsonage clean and attractive. In terms of furnishings, the local church provides light fixtures, floor and window coverings and major appliances, while the pastor provides the furniture. The church is responsible for landscaping, tree and bush trimming, while the pastor is responsible for lawn care and snow removal. While the church provides access to all utilities and updates for energy efficiency, the pastor pays for the utilities.

A. Accessibility. For all newly constructed or newly purchased parsonages, the following guidelines shall apply. The first three are mandated in *The Book of Discipline*: ¶ 2544.3(b) (d)), while the last two are recommended by the Iowa Conference.

1. At least one fully accessible bathroom on the ground floor.
2. At least one fully accessible bedroom on the ground floor.
3. Fully Accessible laundry facilities located on the ground floor.
4. Doorways at least 32 inches in width to the above three items.
5. At least one entry to the ground floor from outside which is level with no steps, ramped or able to be ramped.

While the first three standards will be mandatory for new construction or purchase, the trustees of each Charge are urged to take steps to bring all existing parsonages into compliance with these standards as much as possible. Routine maintenance and upkeep should continue to be done while moving toward accessibility one room or step at a time as feasible. Should a pastor and family require accessibility features not available in the current

parsonage, it shall be the responsibility of the local church working with the pastor and the District Superintendent to provide appropriate housing or housing allowance alternative.

B. Structurally Sound. Foundation, roof, and walls in good condition. No evidence of major cracks or water damage. No evidence of termite damage or activity.

C. Yard. Appropriate drainage, landscaping, sidewalks in good repair (where available) must be provided. Space for gardening is also recommended. It is the responsibility of the church to care for major landscape maintenance such as tree trimming or removal. It is the responsibility of the pastor to be sure regular mowing and snow removal is taken care of.

D. Plumbing. All plumbing must be in good condition. There must be adequate water pressure and a safe drinking water supply. A sump pump and water softener should be provided when needed.

E. Electrical System. Wiring must be in safe condition with adequate grounding and sufficient circuits for handling air conditioning and heavy duty appliances. Circuit breakers replacing fuse boxes are recommended. Switches and outlets should be conveniently located in every room.

F. Heating and Cooling Systems. A thermostatically controlled central heating and cooling system should be provided with ducts for every room in the house (also, provision to shut off ducts to unused rooms). If central cooling is not possible, at least one individual wall/window unit should be provided. Gas water heater and furnace must be properly vented. Systems should be serviced each year by qualified person.

G. Health and Safety. (2012 *The Book of Discipline* ¶258.2(g)(16)) The Committee on Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations “will follow up to assure timely resolution of parsonage problems affecting health of the pastor or the pastor’s family.” ¶ 2544.4(c)(1). “...comply with the local building, fire, and accessibility codes;”

We recommend the following items will be included in the parsonages and maintained:

1. Smoke, fire and carbon monoxide detectors should be installed in appropriate locations.
2. A Parsonage Radon Report should be completed as outlined in the 2009 Iowa Annual Conference Book of Resolutions, Item #9711, and reported each year on the Charge Conference Report of the board of trustees.
3. A dry chemical fire extinguisher (Underwriter’s Laboratory approved - five pound ABC type) should be installed and tested according to manufacturer’s recommendations.
4. There should be a safe exit from each sleeping room; outside steps safe and well lighted, with motion sensitive lights; all outside doors, including garage, equipped with keyed locks and dead bolts that work. Locks should be re-keyed with each pastoral change. Keys shall be distributed at the discretion of the pastor.
5. Railings provided on all indoor and outdoor stairways.
6. Windows shall be securable and equipped with locks if possible.
7. Between each pastoral move professional services should be used to check for, and if necessary, to remove all molds, pest related allergens, and/or other toxic compounds in all areas of the parsonage – including vents and ducts.

H. Telephone/Internet/Television. Communication capability access will be made available. At minimum, one private telephone line and one telephone with one extension outlet, and internet access is required. Pastors will decide whether to use the provided land line or personal cellular phones. Access for television reception must be provided (Ex: antenna, cable, or satellite dependent upon location and needs of church/pastor). Pastors are responsible for paying for chosen services.

I. Furnishings. Appropriate floor coverings in good condition must be provided. Shades, curtains, or drapes providing privacy must be provided. Painting and redecorating is required as needed.

J. Insurance. Adequate coverage on the house and church-owned building/furnishings is required. Renters insurance for the personal furnishings of the pastor is the pastor's responsibility and encouraged.

K. Energy Conservation. An energy audit is recommended every five years, with a detailed plan for bringing the house up to the current energy efficiency standards. If efficiency needs are neglected or not attended to, and if the pastor incurs unreasonable utility bills as a result, the pastor may go to the District Superintendent who will work with the local church toward correcting or helping subsidize the utility bills.

L. Shared Living and Dining Space. It should be large enough to be used for entertaining small groups.

M. Kitchen. The kitchen or adjacent dining room should have adequate eating space, adequate counter top space and easily-cleaned floor covering. Required energy-efficient appliances in good working condition include: a range; a refrigerator with a freezer compartment; adequate appliance outlets. Recommended energy efficient items include: dishwasher, garbage disposal, exhaust fan, and microwave oven.

N. Laundry. Complete automatic laundry facilities conveniently located shall be provided in each parsonage having both washer and dryer as energy efficient as possible. (See Accessibility Guidelines) Provisions for water softening shall be provided as needed.

O. Bathrooms. One bathroom with both tub and shower including medicine cabinet and adequate storage space for linens, plus an additional half-bath, shall be provided. At least one bathroom will be available on the main level. (See Accessibility Guidelines)

P. Bedrooms. A minimum of three bedrooms, all with adequate closet space, with at least one bedroom located on the main floor shall be provided. (See Accessibility Guidelines)

Q. Storage. Space in dry basement, attic or other room for storage of seasonal clothing, Christmas decorations, etc. shall be provided.

R. Pest Control. Each parsonage should be regularly checked for household pests and necessary control measures adopted.

S. Garage. If possible, a garage shall be provided with sufficient space for two cars. The garage shall have an automatic door opener, adequate lights and electrical outlets, and additional space for gardening and lawn equipment, bicycles, etc. Bins for garbage and recycling provided.

T. Pets. If the parsonage family has a pet or pets, the family is responsible for any property damage caused by the pet(s). The pet owner must conform to all state and local ordinances. The pet owner is responsible for liability for any injury caused by the pet(s). The pet owner is responsible for professional pest extermination and any additional cleaning costs of the parsonage when moving.

*This document in checklist form, and a document regarding suggested steps for considering a housing allowance, will be available at a later date to the Cabinet and local church.*

### **When a Move is Made**

At the time of a pastoral change, a tour will be done within two or three weeks of the announcement to evaluate what items need to be corrected before the new pastor arrives. The Trustees and S/PPRC will use the Annual Review Form (in the yearly Charge Conference packet) as a point of reference as well as the "Parsonage Inspection Form Upon A Move" as they prepare for the change in pastoral families. Repairs that were needed on the Charge Conference Report shall be prepared for and damage if there is any, will be addressed. The "Parsonage Inspection Form Upon A Move" will be sent to the District Superintendent.

It is the responsibility of the parsonage family to leave the parsonage clean and in good condition when they move to another charge. Any damage beyond normal wear and tear is to be repaired at the expense of the parsonage family. A written report of such damage shall be signed by the members of the parsonage committee and the pastor. A copy of this report shall be sent to the District Superintendent, a copy to the parsonage family and a copy kept in the church files. In the case of damage, a second tour will be conducted PRIOR to the move out date. (See Parsonage Damage Policy)

When a move is made, the church will clean all carpets, drapes, windows and duct work. (Refer to Parsonage Standards and Moving checklists for other items to be completed.) Pastors will be certain to have all utility bills paid up to date with forwarding address provided to utility companies for final bills.

On the day of the move, when all furniture is removed, there will be a final walk through of the parsonage and the "Parsonage Inspection Form Upon A Move" is once again completed. This second parsonage tour protects the church and the pastor by noting any damages/repairs that were made. This form is filled out, signed by pastor and S/PPRC chairperson or chair of trustees, and returned to the District Superintendent.

### **Parsonage Inspection Form Upon a Move**

Charge \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor \_\_\_\_\_

Date of 1st Inspection \_\_\_\_\_  
(Within 2 – 3 Weeks of Move Announcement)

Date of 2nd Inspection \_\_\_\_\_  
(On Day of Pastoral Move)

Names of people present for inspection:

Please check one of the following as to the condition of the parsonage:

We found the parsonage to be in good condition.

We found normal wear and are planning the improvements described below:

We found damage beyond normal wear and are planning the improvements described below:

Please check one of the following if damage beyond normal wear was found:

The S/PPRC and Trustees chairpersons have met with the pastor, and the issue has been settled as follows:

We request assistance in resolving the issue.

Please list below other concerns about the condition of the parsonage which may need to be addressed with the pastor.

Signed at 1st Inspection:

S/PPRC Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor \_\_\_\_\_

Signed at 2nd Inspection:

S/PPRC Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor \_\_\_\_\_

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[To Index: Parsonage Guidelines](#)

**20. PROCEDURE FOR COMPLIANCE, BY THE IOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE, WITH DISCIPLINE PARAGRAPHS 806.9, 806.10, 612.18 AND 19;** IACJ, 2006, Item 303, p. 310.

The Book of Discipline in paragraph #806.9 and paragraph 612.19 prohibits any board, agency, committee, commission, or council from giving United Methodist funds to any gay caucus or group, or otherwise using such funds to promote the acceptance of homosexuality. Paragraph #806.10 and 612.18 requires the Councils to ensure that no apportioned funds are expended for the use of alcoholic beverages.

When a request is received by any Conference office asking for clarification of an action of an entity receiving funds from the Annual Conference that is thought to be out of compliance with 806.9, 806.10, 612.18 and 612.9, the Iowa Conference Council on Finance and



Administration will convene an independent committee to investigate.

The Independent Committee will consist of three members. One member each shall be appointed to this Committee by the President of the Council on Finance and Administration, the Chairperson of the Conference Connectional Ministry Council and the Episcopal Office.

No Committee member may be an employed staff of the Annual Conference or a member of either the Council on Finance and Administration or the Connectional Ministry Council.

The Committee shall request from the entity asking for a clarification all relevant material regarding the reasons for the request. The Committee shall also ask for all relevant information from the entity in receipt of the funds. Following its inquiry and deliberations, the Committee will make its findings and recommendations to the Conference Council on Finance and Administration. The Council makes the final determination and the opinion is shared with all interested parties.

There are basically only two possible outcomes from the inquiry, (1) determination that funds were not used in violation of the *Discipline* or, (2) determination that funds were used in violation of *Discipline*, which then requires a return of the amount received.

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[To Index: Procedure for Compliance, by the Iowa Annual Conference, with Discipline paragraphs 806.9, 806.10, 612.18 and 19](#)

## 21. RAINBOW COVENANT CHURCH, IACJ, 2013, Item 539, p. 297.

### **Guidelines for Rainbow Covenant**

The purpose of the Rainbow Covenant program is to educate and motivate local churches in supporting United Methodist General Board of Global Ministries projects and missionaries as well as supporting Conference and local mission projects. The first step is to realize apportionment giving is mission giving. An increased number of churches becoming Second Mile, Honorable Mention and Third Mile Rainbow Covenant churches would indicate churches are striving for a higher level of mission giving.

A. **First Mile Giving:** Church pays Conference Apportionments in full in January by the date specified by the Conference Treasurer for having receipts credited to the report year.

B. **Second Mile Giving:** Meeting all seven challenges indicated by colors and totals \$12.00 per member.

PURPLE, SPECIAL OFFERINGS: Church gives \$1.00 per member to any combination of the twelve special offerings. They are World Communion, United Methodist Student Day, Human Relations Day, Christian Education, Native American Awareness, Peace with Justice, Golden Cross, One Great Hour of Sharing, Disability Awareness, Hispanic/Latino Ministries, Neighbor Helping Neighbor, and Rural Life. The amount given for One Great Hour of Sharing can be credited to the UMCOR, Yellow, category rather than Special Offerings. The amount given for Neighbor Helping Neighbor can be credited to the Iowa Advance, Blue, category rather than Special Offerings.

INDIGO, PARISH DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS: Church gives \$1.00 per member to Iowa Conference Parish Development Projects listed in the Rainbow Covenant Book.

BLUE, IOWA CONFERENCE ADVANCE SPECIAL PROJECTS: Church gives \$1.00 per member to Iowa Conference Advance Special projects listed in the Rainbow Covenant Book.

GREEN, WORLD HUNGER/POVERTY: Church gives \$6.00 per member to World, United States, Conference or local hunger/poverty programs. This includes kits and most cash gifts given to the Thanksgiving Ingathering, items given at Annual Conference for the UMCOR Depot or Midwest Mission Distribution Center, cash and food given to local food pantries or feeding programs. CROP Walk cash and UNICEF donations can also be included.

YELLOW, UMCOR: Church gives \$1.00 per member to United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) projects. This can include the One Great Hour of Sharing special offering if not included in the Special Offerings, Purple category.

ORANGE, UNITED STATES: Church gives \$1.00 per member to General Board of Global Ministries projects or missionary support within the United States.

RED, WORLD: Church gives \$1.00 per member to General Board of Global Ministries projects or missionary support outside the United States. This may also include cash gifts to Iowa Nigeria Partnership, Self Help International and PET-IA Hawarden that are not included for credit in the Iowa Advance category.

C. **Honorable Mention:** Church pays apportionments in full and gives \$12 per member to the seven color challenges, but not distributed as designated.

D. **Third Mile Giving:** Church pays apportionments in full, gives \$12 per member to the seven color challenges and gives a total of \$3.00 per member in the following two areas.

MISSIONARY SUPPORT: Church gives \$2.00 per member toward support of a General Board of Global Ministries missionary. This can also include the Mission Personnel Categories: Church and Community Ministry #982147, Young Adult Mission Serve Programs #13105Z or Missionaries Around the World # 00779Z.

[Click here to see the missionaries supported by the Iowa Conference](#)

LOCAL AND INSTITUTIONAL GIVING: Church gives \$1.00 per member to local projects; projects that are not Iowa Conference or General Board of Global Ministries; institutions such as United Methodist camps, colleges, seminaries, hospitals, Wesley Foundations and retirement homes.

Submitted by: Board of Global Ministries Standing Committee on Mission Education

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[To Index: Rainbow Covenant Church](#)

## 22. WORKER'S COMPENSATION. IACJ, 2006, Item #205, p. 307.

With the recognition that there is a statutory requirement in the State of Iowa that every local church, as an employer, carry Workmen's Compensation insurance; and, because of our connectional relationship, the Iowa Annual Conference could become ultimately liable for such coverage:

The Board of Trustees of The Iowa Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church recommends that the Iowa Annual Conference, through its Board of Trustees, enter into the Workmen's Compensation insurance program of the denominational insurance program, whereby each local congregation and other eligible Conference agencies will be covered by Workmen's Compensation Insurance through a single policy.

It is further recommended that each unit insured be assessed its pro rata share of such insurance with the understanding that each unit will be assessed less than the current cost for Workmen's Compensation Insurance.

It is further recommended that said coverage begin as of January 1, 1975, or as soon after that date as is possible for such policy to become effective.

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