

## Policies of the Annual Conference

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### SCHOLARSHIP POLICIES BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY OREGON-IDAHO ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Limited scholarship aid is available from the Ministerial Fund to qualified persons who submit a letter to the Scholarship Officer of the Board of Ordained Ministry stating the course to be taken, goal or other purpose being sought, the tuition costs, plans for financing, and dates of the event. The Scholarship Officer will act on your request if it is within the guidelines listed below. A report will be made to the Board at each meeting concerning the scholarships that have been granted since the last meeting. The Scholarship Officer may, at any time, pass a scholarship request on to either the Executive Committee of the Board, or to the entire Board for action.

#### Scholarship Officer:

Sydney W. Bell  
1115 SW 7<sup>th</sup> Street  
Hermiston, Oregon 97838  
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I. Members in full connection, on probation, Diaconal Ministers, or associate members of the Oregon- Idaho Annual Conference and under appointment, may apply for financial assistance for continuing education, or study /travel leave.

#### A. Continuing Education

1. Scholarship aid for short-term programs (3-5 day duration) will be limited to \$225 per event. Longer programs (6-10 days) will receive \$475. If lengthy travel is involved, an additional \$200 may be granted.
2. Scholarship aid for more intensive course work, equivalent to a six-week credit course, will be given. Aid may range from \$650-\$750.
3. Scholarship aid for advanced degree programs beyond the basic seminary degree will be granted on a once only basis. Aid may range from \$800-\$1000.
4. Scholarship aid for multiple years Academies may be granted on a one-time only basis. Maximum grant: \$1,250

*Maximum Funding for the above four categories over a five-year period is based on the applicant's base salary in the year of the application. The average conference salary for that year shall be that computed by the Conference Board of Pensions.*

#### 5 year Maximum Funding:

Salary is less than average conference salary (ACS)	\$2,500
Salary not more than \$3,000 over ACS	\$2,000
Salary is more than \$3,000 over ACS	\$1500

*Seminars and other group educational events, such as Pastor's School, are very helpful in providing quality continuing education for clergy in our conference. Consequently groups which are hosting seminars or other group educational events for pastors may apply for grants for as much as 50% of the cost of the event, with the maximum grant not to exceed \$1,000 for anyone event.*

5. Scholarship assistance is available to those from outside our denomination who must complete the "Methodist Requirements" prior to joining our conference

## **B. Study /Travel Leave**

Ordained clergy who have been serving a full time appointment for six consecutive years from being received in full connection, or for eight years from the time of their reception into associate membership, are eligible to apply for a study /travel leave, not to exceed three months, one of which shall be considered the clergyperson's vacation. The purpose of the study/travel leave is to benefit the clergyperson's ministry. Permanent Deacons who meet the above criteria will be eligible for study /travel leave. (Mission trips to third world countries for immersion experiences may qualify under this category).

The full salary of the candidate for the three-month period shall be paid by the local church or institution being served. MEF funds shall provide the candidate a stipend for tuition or travel in the amount of \$1,000. MEF funds may also pay the cost of supplying an interim minister in the clergyperson's absence, up to a maximum of \$1000 per month for two months, based on the local need. The third month is considered vacation and the responsibility of the local church. The selection of an interim minister and housing is the responsibility of the clergyperson, local congregation and the District Superintendent. (The Board of Ordained Ministry has guidelines for the use of the parsonage or the pastor's own home.)

### To Apply:

1. Make written application to BOM through its Scholarship Officer, which includes a description of the study or travel program and your goals. Grants will be made on a first come first served basis.
2. Obtain written approval of the Cabinet through the candidate's Superintendent. Also obtain written approval of the local church through action by the Church Council.
3. The education and renewal value of the programs and years of service in the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference will be considered in approving applications. Higher priority will be given to applicants who have not previously received MEF assistance.

## **II. Theological Students**

### **A. Seminary Scholarships**

#### **1. For Full Time Study**

Certified candidates for ministry who have been accepted by a University Senate approved seminary for work toward an M.Div., or other equivalent seminary degree, or who are currently enrolled in such a program, or who are completing requirements for ordination may apply for MEF aid. This aid shall not exceed a maximum of \$4500 or more than \$1500 in one academic year. It may be granted in one, two or three academic year increments. Grants are not made for study beyond the basic seminary degree. These studies are considered continuing education and are found above under that heading.

#### **2. For Less than Full Time Study**

Certified candidates for ministry who have been accepted by a University Senate approved seminary, but are/will be engaged in study less than full time may apply for MEF aid. Aid shall be pro-rated with up to \$500 available for each nine semester units taken. Total scholarship eligibility during less than full time study shall be \$3000.

For both full time and less than full time study the applicant shall

1. Be a certified candidate for ministry of the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference.
2. Complete and submit an application form and personal financial statement provided by the BOM through its scholarship officer.
3. Provide a written recommendation from the superintendent of the district where the candidate resides/is licensed/is serving a charge.
4. Arrange for three completed recommendation forms to be submitted. At least one shall be from a college/university/seminary faculty person knowledgeable about the applicant's academic performance and at least one shall be from an individual with knowledge of the applicant's leadership experience in the local church. These evaluation forms are to be sent directly to the Scholarship Officer.

If a scholarship is granted, the recipient agrees to the following:

1. A full-time academic load as defined by the seminary shall be carried while in a traditional seminary setting.
2. No less than 3 units per year shall be completed while taking courses in a less than full time program.
3. Upon completion of the academic training, the recipient shall serve under appointment in some annual conference of The United Methodist Church for a minimum of two years.
4. If the candidate fails to meet either or both of these conditions, any amount advanced shall be considered a loan, unless repaid within five years. It shall be repayable with an interest rate and on such terms as the conference BOM shall determine.
5. Scholarship grants shall be paid directly to the seminary.

## **B. Candidates for Deacon in Full Connection**

Certified Candidates for Deacon, who do not pursue full-time theological study, will be eligible for assistance in completing Foundational Studies with grant being prorated on the basis of a \$1,000 grant depending on the course load taken (e.g. \$500 per semester, \$340 per quarter). Total grant eligibility shall be \$3,000.

To be eligible for a grant, Deacon candidates must be certified as a candidate through the appropriate District Committee on Ordained Ministry.

## **C. Special Scholarship Awards**

### **1. Edward Coe Memorial Scholarship**

Annually, the Board of Ordained Ministry may award to an outstanding candidate for ordained ministry the Edward Coe Memorial Ministerial Scholarship. Those eligible for the award shall be enrolled in seminary and shall have demonstrated outstanding competence in seminary and show unusual promise for the ministry. The award is made on the basis of nominations submitted by the clergy members of the Annual Conference. If an insufficient number of nominations are made, the Board of Ordained Ministry will select a recipient. The amount of the scholarship varies according to the number of recipients chosen and the Coe Scholarship account balance.

A candidate shall be eligible for the award only once and will be asked to repay it without

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interest should the candidate fail to complete seminary and not enter the ministry. Nominations for the award shall be submitted to the Scholarship Officer of the Board by April 1<sup>st</sup>, and the award will be announced at Annual Conference.

This scholarship has been established by monies from the former Idaho Conference designated for scholarship aid in memory of Edward Coe. The trust fund is administered by the Conference Board of Trustees pursuant to para. 2512.3 of *The Book of Discipline, 1996*.

### 2. Jasa Scholarship Awards

Two or more Jasa awards may be presented each year. Applications are available through the Board of Ordained Ministry's Registrar for MEF Scholarships. Unlike the Coe Scholarship, certified candidates for Deacon in Full Connection are encouraged to apply for Jasa awards.

### 3. Luella M. Odell Memorial Scholarship

A \$1,000 award granted annually to a seminary student who is a candidate for ordained ministry of the United Methodist Church. For information contact:

The Luella M. Odell Memorial Scholarship c/ o Wesley United Methodist Church 1385 Oakway Road Eugene, OR 97401

*Each year, unused earnings for Coe/Jasa Funds will be reinvested in the principle of the respective fund, and/ or set aside to be used for scholarships in the coming years. How much is carried over as scholarship money and how much is reinvested each year is at the discretion of the Board at the recommendation of the Scholarship Officer.*

## III. Local Pastors

A. Certified licensing school candidates and Local Pastors enrolled in the Ministerial Course of Study shall be eligible to receive board and tuition for licensing school and for the five years of the course of study.

B. Local Pastors who have completed the required course of study may apply for assistance for advanced studies. After the "Course of Study and Licensing School Registration Form" has been shared with the District Committee on Ministry and signed by the District Superintendent, send the form to the Local Pastor Registrar for her/his signature and funding.

*Updated: June 2004*

## DEFINITIONS AND POLICIES

### CLERGY SEXUAL MISCONDUCT IN THE MINISTERIAL ROLE

### OREGON IDAHO ANNUAL CONFERENCE

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The pastoral office and related church vocations are positions of sacred trust. Relationships clergy and church workers have with parishioners and others entrusted to their care are often intimate, making persons in those relationships particularly vulnerable. While such relationships offer opportunity for ministry, they also open the door for abuse. This document addresses potential violations of the sacred trust in the form of sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, and sexual abuse. In addition to these offences, the *Book of Discipline* clearly states that sexual immorality including adultery is also a chargeable offense.

The Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church seeks to prevent sexual misconduct through policy development, screening of candidates for church vocations and employment, education of clergy and laity, and establishment of effective response procedures.

The Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church recognizes that sexual misconduct by clergy and church workers can have devastating consequences for a victim and his or her family, for the church community at large, and for all individuals involved. The Conference therefore will not tolerate sexual misconduct by clergy or church workers accountable to the Conference. The Conference encourages clergy, parishioners, constituents and visitors to promptly report incidents of sexual misconduct. The Conference shall:

- Treat all allegations of sexual misconduct seriously;
- Educate clergy, church workers, and the church community, as appropriate, about the issue of sexual misconduct, and shall set in place reasonable screening procedures and policies relating to this subject for those training for the ordained ministry and church vocations and those already ordained or serving in church vocations;
- Cooperate fully with applicable civil authority, subject to *The Discipline of the United Methodist Church* and in accordance with the Church's constitutionally protected rights;
- Provide training and educational resources for congregations and encourage local congregations to develop their own policies with regard to sexual misconduct with the aim of making every local church a sexually safe place for all.

The Conference Director of Connectional Ministries shall distribute this policy each year to all conference personnel and personnel committees. Further, each District Superintendent shall distribute this policy each year to the PPR/SPR chairs within his or her district, with the request that the policy be shared with each congregation, and to all clergy related to the charge conferences of his or her district and to all those assigned by the bishop or cabinet. An accompanying form will be signed by each clergy person and by SPRC chair and returned to the District Office. The signature indicates that the policy has been received and read.

#### II. DEFINITIONS OF MISCONDUCT BY CLERGY AND CHURCH WORKERS

Term "clergy" is used in this policy to include all ordained, licensed, consecrated, appointed or assigned persons serving in the Oregon/Idaho Annual Conference, including those ministers appointed to extension ministries, those on leaves, those who have honorably located, and those who are retired. Church workers may be those who are paid employees or serving as volunteers. They may hold responsible positions in the local congregations, camps, or retreat centers.

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Misconduct of a sexual nature within positions of trust is defined as an abuse of power of the clergy/ church worker role. Such misconduct may include sexual abuse, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment and oral or written sexual comments.

Sexual abuse may be either physical or verbal, includes inappropriate touching, horseplay, physical contact, written or spoken words, and demeanor such as gestures or facial expressions.

Sexual assault is generally of a very forceful nature where someone seeks to use his/her physical power to overcome the reluctance of another person to have a sexual relationship with the perpetrator. Such actions are both immoral and illegal.

Sexual exploitation takes place when a person in a place of power uses his/her position to gain sexual favors from another person by using overt or implied threats about that person's security in his/her employment or position or uses the subordinate's misplaced trust in his/her respected superior in order to gain sexual favors.

Sexual harassment is any continual unwanted sexual attention from a co-worker or someone in a superior position. Such attention includes but is not limited to sexual comments, advances, or demands, which are either verbal or physical, and that are reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive. Sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a relationship rather than as an exclusively sexual issue. Sexual harassment also includes the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender or personal sexual orientation.

Verbal sexual misconduct may include inappropriate language, story telling, references to the other person's appearance, and demeaning ways of addressing another person, whether or not anyone makes any objections and whether or not comments are meant to be in a good natured way rather than to cause another person discomfort.

Misconduct of a sexual nature within positions of trust occurs when a person within a role of leadership engages in inappropriate sexual contact, or inappropriate sexualized behavior with a congregant, client, employee, student, staff member, co-worker, colleague, or volunteer. Any such misconduct of a sexual nature is a violation by the clergy person or church worker who then bears the responsibility for his/her behavior.

Clergy or church worker misconduct of a sexual nature may also include some relationships between so-called consenting adults when they occur in the context of a clergy person's professional role, such as between a senior minister and a subordinate or congregant.

### III. PROCEDURAL RESPONSE

The Oregon/Idaho Annual Conference commits itself to fast and expedient investigation of any charge of misconduct of a sexual nature within the church and will take the action deemed appropriate in compliance with the current *Book of Discipline*.

Knowledge or information about clergy sexual abuse or harassment should be reported to a district superintendent or the bishop. Clergy persons should know the disciplinary procedures to assist laity in making such a report. Clergy are to support the aggrieved persons and to encourage them to report the abuse to the bishop or district superintendent. In no case is the clergy person to judge the validity of the reported grievance.

When allegations of clergy/ church worker sexual misconduct are made, every attempt is made to have two District Superintendents (one male, one female) investigate the matter by meeting first

with the accusing party, then with the accused. Where required, further information is gathered and a full report is then made to the Cabinet. The Bishop and the Cabinet determine appropriate next steps toward resolving the complaint.

#### IV. THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING

*The 2004 Book of Discipline* states in paragraph 161(G) the following. “We recognize that sexuality is God’s good gift to all persons. We believe persons may be fully human only when that gift is acknowledged and affirmed by themselves, the church, and society. We call all persons to the disciplined, responsible fulfillment of themselves, others, and society in the stewardship of this gift. We reject all sexual expressions that damage or destroy the humanity God has given us as birthright, and we affirm only that sexual expression that enhances that same humanity. We believe that sexual relations where one or both partners are exploitive, abusive, or promiscuous are beyond the parameters of acceptable Christian behavior and are ultimately destructive to individuals, families, and the social order.”

Sexual misconduct involves a misuse of the gift of sexuality. Acts that should signify the intimacy of a committed relationship between equal partners instead are tainted with ambivalence, confusion, guilt and sometimes fear. Secrecy, which often accompanies such acts, only reinforces these feelings and further signals that there is something “wrong” with the relationship. Sexual misconduct within a ministerial relationship leaves the victim bearing a burden of trauma attached to their expression of sexuality. Victims are thus robbed of the joyous celebration of the sacredness and dignity of their sexuality.

God entrusts the workers in the church with the responsibilities of sharing both Holy love and the Divine Word. Our sexual behavior, like any of our behaviors, must comply with the highest standards of a Christlike life. We in the church are expected to live in covenant with each other and hold each other to those standards. By being speakers of the Truth, persons are offered freedom and redemption and God’s Grace can be employed for restoration of right relationships and alternative paths.

*adopted by Clergy Session, June 2006*