

Policies of the Annual Conference

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:

Thom Larson
680 NW Bond
Bend, Oregon 97701
thom@bendumc.org

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 \$275 per event. Longer programs (6-10 days) will receive \$525. If lengthy travel is involved, an additional \$250 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 yearly basis. Aid may range from \$1000-1500.
4. Scholarship aid for multiple years Academies may be granted on a yearly basis. Maximum grant: \$1500 per year.

Maximum Funding for the above four categories over each quadrennium 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.

Maximum Funding per Quadrennium:

<i>Salary is less than average conference salary (ACS)</i>	<i>\$2,800</i>
<i>Salary not more than \$3,000 over ACS</i>	<i>\$2,400</i>
<i>Salary is more than \$3,000 over ACS</i>	<i>\$2,000</i>

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 \$1,500 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. Deacons in Full Connection 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 \$1,250. MEF funds may also pay the cost of supplying an interim minister in the clergyperson's absence, up to a maximum of \$1250 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 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 1st, 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: January 2008

SAFE SANCTUARIES ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY For Conference & District Events of the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church

INTRODUCTION

Our hope and belief today is that the church is a place where all people will find the unconditional love and care they so desperately need to grow and thrive. But, we know that abuse occurs in churches, large and small, urban and rural. It is a problem, which cuts across all economic, cultural, and racial lines. In April 1996, the General Conference of The United Methodist Church adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of abuse of children, youth, and vulnerable adults in the church. It was renewed by the 2004 General Conference (Resolution 65, “Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in Churches, pg. 201, 2004 [Book of Resolutions](#)). As Christians we must take our responsibilities to our children, youth, and vulnerable adults very seriously. While we may not be able to completely prevent abuse in every situation, it is possible for us to greatly reduce the risk by following a policy of prevention. We are responsible to create an environment of safe sanctuary for children, youth and vulnerable adults, and those who work with them. Thus we establish this Abuse Prevention Policy to demonstrate our absolute and unwavering commitment to the safety of all our children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this policy to 1) protect from abuse the children, youth, and vulnerable adults that participate in church activities, and 2) protect our staff, both paid and volunteer, from unfounded and/or malicious allegations of abuse through a comprehensive plan that includes: screening, training, supervision, reporting procedures, and a response plan.

SCOPE

This policy shall be applicable to all Conference and District activities or events involving children, youth, and vulnerable adults within ministry settings of the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference.

DEFINITIONS

- **Abuse:** Intentional negligent or reckless treatment by a volunteer or staff person that is harmful, injurious, or offensive.
 - Child Abuse – an act committed by a parent, care giver or person in a position of trust which is not accidental and which harms or threatens a child’s physical or mental health or a child’s welfare.
 - Physical Abuse – When an adult injures a child other by accident, including, assault, shaking, slapping, burning, scalding, kicking, and strangling.
 - Sexual Abuse – Sexual contact between an adult or other significantly older, more powerful person and a child, youth, and vulnerable adult. Includes behavior such as inappropriate verbal stimulation, taking or showing sexually explicit photos of or to a child, or exposing a child to pornography or adult sexual activity.
 - Emotional Abuse – verbal assault or emotional cruelty that effects a child’s self esteem.
- **Adult:** a person 18 years old or older.
- **Activities:** any activity or programs in which children, youth, or vulnerable adults are under supervision of staff persons or volunteers.
- **Background Checks:** Researching references and records for indications of past or potential abusive and/or criminal activity.
- **Child:** person from birth until they turn 12 years old.
- **Conference:** The Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.
- **District:** The level of church organization between the Conference and the local church. There are five Districts in the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference; Central, Eastern, Metropolitan, Southern, and Western.
- **Ministry setting:** (To be defined)
- **Person-in-Charge (PIC):** Staff person or volunteer who is the person responsible for the event or activity.
- **Staff person:** any person employed by the Conference or District that is responsible for activities involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
- **Volunteer:** a person who assists in conducting activities under the supervision of person(s) in charge.
- **Vulnerable Adults:** any person 18 years of age or older with diminished physical, mental, or emotional capacities.
- **We:** The Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference.
- **Youth:** any person 12 years old to his/her 18th birthday.

SCREENING PROCEDURES

Careful screening can be important to the prevention of abuse. It provides some assurance that the most reliable, committed and experienced staff and volunteers are in place for every program that involves children, youth, and vulnerable adults. The following are the MINIMUM standards:

1. All adults, volunteer or staff persons, who have regular and direct contact with children, youth, and vulnerable adults shall be required to complete the “Voluntary Disclosure” form.
2. Minimum background screenings shall include:
 - a) Reference checks from Voluntary Disclosure form.
 - b) Review of the Oregon and Idaho lists of sexual offenders or State or National criminal background checks.
3. The policy shall be implemented in the following manner:
 - a) All staff persons and volunteers, who have regular and direct contact with children, youth,

- and vulnerable adults will submit to the screening procedures.
- b) The screening procedure shall be repeated every five years.
- c) The person in charge of the event and/or their designee is responsible for review and approving each application before a person's service begins.
- d) All records are confidential and will be maintained for a period of at least five years.

SUPERVISION

Competent and trained staff and volunteers are important to any event. The procedures described below are designed to reduce the possibility of abuse to children, youth and vulnerable adults, and to protect staff persons and volunteers from unfounded accusations.

The following are MINIMUM standards and each event may adopt more stringent requirements if necessary.

1. Training is required for all persons having direct contact with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Training shall include an annual orientation that includes information about this Policy, supervision of children, youth, and vulnerable adults, and identification and reporting of abuse.
2. All children, youth, and vulnerable adults will be supervised by adults. No adult will be alone with any one child, youth or vulnerable adult out of sight of others.
3. No person shall supervise any group of children or youth unless he/she is AT LEAST 5 years older than the children or youth.

REPORTING

Once an incident of abuse is recognized, it is crucial that it be dealt with speedily and in a clearly outlined manner. The adult who observes or hears of an alleged abuse shall:

1. Assure the safety of the victim. Take whatever the victim says very seriously. Make sure that the victim is in a safe place and watched over. Do not confront the accused abuser with anger or hostility but immediately remove him/ her from further involvement with children and youth until the matter can be investigated. Notify the proper authorities.
2. If there is a situation of immediate risk call the police at 911, otherwise follow the procedure as listed below:
 - a) Report the incident immediately to the Person-in-Charge (PIC) of the event or activity in which the incident occurred.
 - b) The PIC shall:
 - i) Ascertain the details needed to make an accurate report. This report must be made within 24 hours. The report should include the following information if obtainable:
 - The name, address, age and sex of the alleged victim;
 - The name and address of the alleged victim's parents or other person responsible for his/her care;
 - The nature and extent of the alleged abuse or neglect;
 - Any evidence of previously known or suspected abuse or neglect of the alleged victim or their siblings;
 - The name, address and relationship, if known, of the person who is alleged to have perpetrated the abuse or neglect; and
 - Any other information known to the person making the report that would be helpful to the investigation of the alleged abuse.
 - ii) Contact the appropriate State or law enforcement agency as soon as possible to file the abuse report and provide the aforementioned information and follow the instructions of the agency.
 - iii) Notify one of those trained and designated by the Conference to respond to reports of abuse as listed in the Crisis Communications Plan.

The alleged perpetrators of the abuse will be required to refrain from all events involving children, youth and vulnerable adults until the incident report is resolved. In any removal of a person from any activities, care must be taken to handle this in a discreet manner, recognizing that an investigation is being conducted.

RESPONSE PLAN

- A quick, compassionate and unified response to an alleged incident of abuse is expected. All allegations will be taken seriously. In all cases of reported or observed abuse in an activity, the entire staff of that activity shall be at the service of all official investigating agencies.
- Follow the procedures outlined in the Crisis Communications Plan, *When a Crisis Strikes...Are You Ready?*
- Pastoral support shall be available and offered to all persons involved with the incident.

TRAINING

The Conference shall develop and implement training and orientation procedures for persons in leadership who work with children, youth, and vulnerable adults in local ministry settings within the Annual Conference. Training shall include but is not limited to this policy and its related procedures.

POLICY REVIEW

All abuse prevention policies will be reviewed annually.

CONCLUSION

In all of our ministries we are committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each child, youth, and vulnerable adult is “surrounded by steadfast love...established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal” (Baptismal Covenant II, *United Methodist Hymnal*, pg 44). This policy and associated procedures are effective as of July 1, 2008. The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis in a manner determined by the Conference Leadership Team. Modifications will be made subject to the approval of the Conference Leadership Team. All such modifications will be promptly conveyed in writing to all persons affected by the modification.

Adopted June 2008

SAFE SANCTUARIES ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

Minimum Standards for Abuse Prevention Policies of Local Ministry Settings

INTRODUCTION

Our hope and belief today is that the church is a place where all people will find the unconditional love and care they so desperately need to grow and thrive. But, we know that abuse occurs in churches, large and small, urban and rural. It is a problem, which cuts across all economic, cultural, and racial lines. In April 1996, the General Conference of The United Methodist Church adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of abuse of children, youth, and vulnerable adults in the church. It was renewed by the 2004 General Conference (Resolution 65, “Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in Churches, pg. 201, 2004 *Book of Resolutions*). As Christians we must take our responsibilities to our children, youth, and vulnerable adults very seriously. While we may not be able to completely prevent abuse in every situation, it is possible for us to greatly reduce the risk by following a policy of prevention. We are responsible to create an environment of safe sanctuary for children, youth and vulnerable adults, and those who work with them. Thus the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference has established for its local ministry settings these minimum standards for abuse prevention to demonstrate our concern for and commitment to the safety of all our children, youth, and vulnerable adults..

POLICY

All local ministry settings of the annual conference need to have an Abuse Prevention (aka “Safe Sanctuaries”) Policy. All employees and volunteers covered by the policy are to be trained on the policy. The policy shall be reviewed annually by the appropriate body and revised as necessary. Update trainings are necessary for all employees and volunteers following any revisions to the policy.

PURPOSE

The purpose of these minimum standards is to establish a basic level of abuse prevention in ministry-settings across the annual conference, regardless of size, location, or average age of membership. In many cases, higher standards for abuse prevention can be instituted and should be. But these minimum standards are expected of all local ministry settings as they develop their own abuse prevention policies that will: 1) protect from abuse the children, youth, and vulnerable adults that participate in church activities, and 2) protect staff, both paid and volunteer, from unfounded and/or malicious allegations of abuse through a comprehensive plan that includes: screening, training, supervision, reporting procedures, and a response plan.

SCOPE

These minimum standards for abuse prevention shall be applicable to all ministry-settings within the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference that involve children, youth, and vulnerable adults. In general, the term “ministry settings” refers to chartered local churches, unchartered fellowships, cooperative parishes, campus ministries and camp sites.

DEFINITIONS

- **Abuse:** Intentional negligent or reckless treatment by a volunteer or staff person that is harmful, injurious, or offensive.
 - Child Abuse – an act committed by a parent, care giver or person in a position of trust which is not accidental and which harms or threatens a child’s physical or mental health or a child’s welfare.
 - Physical Abuse – When an adult injures a child other by accident, including, assault, shaking, slapping, burning, scalding, kicking, and strangling.
 - Sexual Abuse – Sexual contact between an adult or other significantly older, more powerful person and a child, youth, and vulnerable adult. Includes behavior such as inappropriate verbal stimulation, taking or showing sexually explicit photos of or to a child, or exposing a child to pornography or adult sexual activity.
 - Emotional Abuse – verbal assault or emotional cruelty that effects a child’s self esteem.
- **Adult:** a person 18 years old or older.
- **Activities:** any activity or programs in which children, youth, or vulnerable adults are under supervision of staff persons or volunteers.
- **Background Checks:** Researching references and records for indications of past or potential abusive and/or criminal activity.
- **Child:** person from birth until they turn 12 years old.
- **Conference:** The Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.
- **District:** The level of church organization between the Conference and the local church. There are five Districts in the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference; Central, Eastern, Metropolitan, Southern, and Western.
- **Ministry setting:** (To be defined)
- **Person-in-Charge (PIC):** Staff person or volunteer who is the person responsible for the event or activity.
- **Staff person:** any person employed by the Conference or District that is responsible for activities involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
- **Volunteer:** a person who assists in conducting activities under the supervision of person(s) in charge.

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- **Vulnerable Adults:** any person 18 years of age or older with diminished physical, mental, or emotional capacities.
- **We:** The Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference.
- **Youth:** any person 12 years old to his/her 18th birthday.

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR SCREENING PROCEDURES

Careful screening can be important to the prevention of abuse. It provides some assurance that the most reliable, committed and experienced staff and volunteers are in place for every program that involves children, youth, and vulnerable adults. The following are the MINIMUM standards for screening procedures to be incorporated into ministry setting abuse prevention policies:

1. All adults, volunteer or staff persons, who have regular and direct contact with children, youth, and vulnerable adults shall be required to complete an application including voluntary disclosure of information including legal name and other names previously used, date of birth, and voluntary disclosure of any convictions of abusive behavior.
2. Minimum background screenings shall include:
 - a) Reference checks from application form.
 - b) Review of the Oregon and Idaho lists of sexual offenders or State or National criminal background checks.
3. At minimum, ministry setting abuse prevention policies shall incorporate the following:
 - a) All staff persons and volunteers, who have regular and direct contact with children, youth, and vulnerable adults will submit to the screening procedures.
 - b) Reviewing bodies shall be established (ex: Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee, Education or Nurture Committee, or other organized body).
 - c) The reviewing body is responsible for review and approval of each application before a person's service begins.
 - d) The screening procedure for each individual shall be repeated every five years.
 - e) All records are confidential and will be maintained for a period of at least five years.
 - f) The ministry setting will not knowingly hire anyone with a history of committing sexual abuse on any child, youth or vulnerable adult.

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR SUPERVISION

Competent and trained staff and volunteers are important to any activity or program in the local church or ministry setting. The procedures described below are designed to reduce the possibility of abuse to children, youth and vulnerable adults, and to protect staff persons and volunteers from unfounded accusations.

The following are MINIMUM standards for supervision to be incorporated into ministry setting policies:

1. Required training for all persons having direct contact with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Training shall include an annual orientation that includes information about the local ministry setting abuse prevention policy
2. Our standard practice is that all children, youth, and vulnerable adults will be supervised by adults. Our standard practice is that no adult will be alone with any one child, youth or vulnerable adult out of sight of others. The minimum standard is an open space (open door, window, etc) such that activities can be observed. In addition, an adult is assigned to periodically observe the activities.
3. No person shall supervise an age group a group of children or youth unless he/she is AT LEAST 5 years older than the children or youth.

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR REPORTING AND RESPONSE

Once an incident of abuse is recognized, it is crucial that it be dealt with speedily and in a clearly outlined manner. A quick, compassionate and unified response to an alleged incident of abuse is expected. All

allegations will be taken seriously. In all cases of reported or observed abuse in a program or activity, all persons involved in the program or activity shall be at the service of all official investigating agencies. Pastoral support shall be available and offered to persons involved in the incident.

The following are the MINIMUM standards for reporting and responding to potential abuse to be incorporated into ministry setting policies:

1. The adult who observes or hears of an alleged abuse shall:
 - a. Assure the safety of the victim.
 - i) Whatever the victim says is to be taken very seriously.
 - ii) Make sure that the victim is in a safe place and watched over.
 - iii) Do not confront the accused abuser with anger or hostility but immediately remove him/ her from further involvement with children and youth until the matter can be investigated.
 - b. If there is a situation of immediate risk, call the police at 911. Otherwise report the incident immediately to the pastor and/or other persons designated by the ministry setting.
2. The pastor or designee shall:
 - a. Ascertain the details needed to make an accurate report.
 - b. Within 24 hours, write an incident report. The report should include the following information, if obtainable:
 - (1) The name, address, age and sex of the alleged victim;
 - (2) The name and address of the alleged victim's parents or other person responsible for his/her care;
 - (3) The nature and extent of the alleged abuse or neglect;
 - (4) Any evidence of previously known or suspected abuse or neglect of the alleged victim or their siblings;
 - (5) The name, address and relationship, if known, of the person who is alleged to have perpetrated the abuse or neglect; and
 - (6) Any other information known to the person making the report that would be helpful to the investigation of the alleged abuse.
 - c. Contact the appropriate State or law enforcement agency as soon as possible to file the abuse report and provide the aforementioned information and follow the instructions of the agency.
 - d. Report the suspected child abuse to the child's family and any agencies required by law.
3. The alleged perpetrators of the abuse are to be excluded from future events involving children, youth and vulnerable adults until the incident report is resolved. In any removal of a person from any activities, care must be taken to handle this in a discreet manner, recognizing that an investigation is being conducted.

MINIMUM STANDARD FOR TRAINING

The MINIMUM standard for training to be incorporated into ministry setting policies is that each local church or ministry setting shall implement or participate in training and orientation procedures for persons in leadership who work with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Training shall include but is not limited to the local ministry setting's abuse prevention policy and its related procedures.

MINIMUM STANDARD FOR POLICY REVIEW

The MINIMUM standard for policy review to be incorporated into ministry-setting policies is that the abuse prevention policy in each ministry setting shall be reviewed annually.

CONCLUSION

In all of our ministries we are committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each child, youth, and vulnerable adult is "surrounded by steadfast love...established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal" (Baptismal Covenant II, United Methodist Hymnal, pg

44). The minimum standards for abuse prevention policies of ministry settings are effective as of July 1, 2008. They will be reviewed on an annual basis in a manner determined by the Conference Leadership Team. Modifications will be made subject to the approval of the Conference Leadership Team. All such modifications will be promptly conveyed in writing to all persons affected by the modification.

Adopted June 2008

Sexual Ethics Policy For Clergy¹ of the Oregon Idaho Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church.

Statement of Policy:

Clergy and employees of the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church shall not engage in sexual misconduct, sexual abuse, or sexual harassment.

Theological Foundation²

The 2004 Book of Discipline states in ¶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 Christ-like 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.

Definitions

Clergy: Clergy membership of the Oregon Idaho Annual Conference consists of Deacons and Elders in full connection, probationary members, associate members, affiliate members, local pastors and retired members within the meaning of ¶602.1 of the *2004 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*.

Clergy Relationship - A clergy relationship exists between a clergy person and any other person

- (i) when the other person is a parishioner of a congregation to which that clergy person was previously or is currently appointed,
- (ii) when the other person is supervised by, is a colleague with or receives ministry from a clergy person serving in any function for which he or she was ordained, licensed, hired or approved by the Annual Conference or its representatives,
- (iii) when a clergy person uses the authority of the clergy office or role in establishing a relationship with the other person, and
- (iv) when the other person is a member of a community which recognizes the authority of the clergy person as a person in ministry (i.e. appointments beyond the local church and honorable location, retirement, leaves of absence and other situations in which a clergy person serves a community other than a local congregation).

Clergy Sexual Misconduct: Clergy sexual misconduct occurs whenever a clergy person initiates or allows any sexual contact or behavior with a person with whom he or she has a clergy relationship and includes, but is not limited to, sexual abuse and sexual harassment. This includes the chargeable offenses listed in ¶2702 of the *2004 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*.

Clergy sexual misconduct must be understood primarily as an issue of the abuse of the power, trust, and status inherently present in any clergy relationship rather than an issue of the sexual morality of an individual clergy person. An inherent imbalance of power exists in any clergy relationship simply through the clergy role and totally separate from the clergy person's character, personality and style of ministry. A similar imbalance of power can also exist when one clergy supervises another clergy. The same sacred trust inherent in ordination, consecration and licensing that makes effective ministry possible leaves persons in clergy relationships open and vulnerable. This predisposes those persons to believe that clergy shall act only in ways that will contribute to their well-being. The only appropriate and acceptable clergy response to the trust and power given to clergy through their role is ministry to the emotional, spiritual and temporal needs of those who come to them for help.

A single clergy person may be involved in a romantic relationship within the parameters discussed in the following section.

Clergy Sexual Misconduct In Context of Single Clergy Romantic Relationship- A single clergy person engaging in a romantic relationship with a single person with whom he or she has a clergy relationship does not necessarily commit sexual misconduct. The clergy person must be aware of the inherent imbalance of power that he or she has in this type of clergy relationship and take full responsibility for the related potential for harm. A single clergy person entering into this type of relationship bears the burden of demonstrating that there has been no exploitation in the relationship, in light of all relevant factors, including the personal history and mental status of the other person and the likelihood of an adverse impact on the person or on others. A clergy person should refrain from entering into a romantic relationship with a person with whom he or she currently has a pastoral counseling relationship. Should a pastoral counseling need arise for a person with whom the clergy person is romantically involved, that clergy person would make recommendations of two or three choices for pastoral or other professional counselors. Neither shall a single clergy person enter into a romantic relationship with a person whom he or she has had a pastoral counseling relationship for at least two years after cessation or termination of the pastoral counseling (consistent with the American Psychological Association Code of Ethics of 1992). The clergy person who engages in such activity after the two years following cessation or termination of the pastoral counseling relationship bears the burden of demonstration that there has been no exploitation, in light of all relevant factors, including the amount of time that has passed since the pastoral counseling relationship terminated, the nature and duration of the pastoral counseling, the circumstances of termination, the personal history of the counselee and others and any statements or actions made by the clergy person during the course of the pastoral counseling suggesting or inviting the possibility of a post-termination romantic relationship with the counselee.

Sexual Abuse: The laws of both the States of Idaho and Oregon contain definitions of Sexual Abuse. These legal descriptions constitute the primary definitions of Sexual Abuse used in this policy. (See ORS 163 & Idaho Statutes 18-1506). In Summary, Sexual Abuse is an actual or attempted sexual invasion of the body by force and without full consent. Sexual abuse is any of, but not limited to, the following: rape, sexual assault (a forced sexual act against one's will), incest, indecent exposure, statutory rape, involuntary, voluntary, or deviant sexual intercourse with a child, promotion of prostitution, pornography with children, indecent assault, and aggravated indecent assault. "Sexual abuse" as used in this policy is not limited to those matters that are defined as crimes by the states of Idaho and Oregon, nor are any of the specific elements that make certain activities crimes under the criminal codes of the states of Idaho and Oregon necessary to prove sexual abuse for the purposes of this policy.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment is any sexually related behavior that is unwanted, offensive or which fails to respect the rights of others. This behavior includes any unwelcome sexual

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advance, request for sexual favor or relationship and other verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment and/or which is based on gender discrimination and/or perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating or coercive.

Sexual harassment can consist of a single intense or severe act or of multiple persistent or pervasive acts. There are many possible scenarios in sexual harassment situations. Each situation must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Types of unwanted conduct that constitute sexual harassment as listed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission include (but are not limited to):

1. Unsolicited and unnecessary touching, pinching, patting or closeness.
2. Sexist remarks about a person's body or clothing.
3. Sexually degrading words to describe a person.
4. Repeated propositions or explicit demands for sexual activity.
5. Sexually suggestive pictures or objects in the work place or gathering place for the group or activity.
6. Judging a person by looks or body instead of ability.
7. Unsolicited suggestive looks or leers.
8. Unsolicited attempt to fondle or kiss.
9. Unsolicited sexual comments, teasing or telling of jokes with sexual context.
10. Unsolicited letters, calls or materials of a sexual nature.
11. Offer to use influence in return for sexual favor.

Pastoral Counseling - Pastoral counseling is the special dimension of ministry in which a clergy person utilizes a variety of counseling perspectives and techniques to help people handle their problems and crises and thus work toward healing. A pastoral counseling relationship begins at the point that the clergy person and the person or persons seeking pastoral counseling explicitly agree to enter into a relationship wherein is understood that the clergy person shall apply special skills to assist the other person or persons in resolution of problems or crises.

NOTE:

The above definitions are provided solely for the purpose of this **Sexual Ethics Policy**. The definitions do not create any chargeable offenses pursuant to *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*. This policy does not sanction any conduct, which may constitute a chargeable offense pursuant to *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*.

Implementation Of Policy

The Oregon/Idaho Annual Conference commits itself to fast and expedient investigation of any charge of sexual misconduct within its churches and acting in compliance with the current *Book of Discipline*.

Responsibility for the implementation of this policy resides jointly with the Office of the Bishop and the Board of Ordained Ministry. This policy shall be available to all Clergy, church employees, and local churches of the Oregon Idaho Annual Conference by annual publication as part of the *Oregon Idaho Annual Conference Journal*. Workshops/continuing education events reviewing this Clergy Sexual Ethics policy shall be provided annually by the Board of Ordained Ministry. Attending at least one event annually shall be mandatory for all Clergy, church employees and employees of the Annual Conference. Exception may be made by special permission from a District Superintendent. Application for exemption shall be made in writing and shall be kept on file in the Bishop's office. Attendance shall be considered part of the regular working hours of non-clergy employees and they shall be compensated accordingly.

The office of the Bishop, through the District Superintendents, shall provide annual training events in these policies for laity, with particular attention to including Pastor/Staff Relation Committee members from each congregation and members of conference personnel committees.

Knowledge or information about clergy sexual misconduct should be reported to a district superintendent or the bishop. When allegations of clergy/ church worker sexual misconduct are made, every attempt

shall be 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 shall be gathered and a full report then made to the Cabinet. The Bishop and the Cabinet shall make every effort to resolve allegations, complaints or charges in a timely manner and within the requirements of the current *Book of Discipline*. Further procedural recommendations are found in the appendix of this policy.

Making a Complaint

A complaint about any clergy person in violation of this policy may be made to any District Superintendent, or the Bishop. A complaint against a clergy person that involves a child may also need to be reported to the proper authorities, but there are also laws that may prevent disclosure of information obtained during a confidential discussion between a clergy person and another person seeking spiritual guidance from the clergy person. All complaints shall be dealt with promptly and in confidence according to ¶362 of the *2004 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*. Persons who report misconduct or file a complaint must not be subject to retaliation. Persons who have knowledge of alleged misconduct are expected to come forward. Persons who knowingly give false information or reports shall be disciplined. All investigations of clergy shall be conducted according to ¶¶2701-2706 of the *2004 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*.

APPENDICES TO SEXUAL ETHICS POLICY FOR CLERGY of the Oregon Idaho Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church

Suggested Methods of Dealing with Allegations of a Clergy Sexual Misconduct

I. Incidents Involving Children under 18 Years Old

(For the purposes of this section, sexual misconduct includes all forms of sexual misconduct except sexual harassment.)

- A. If any incident of sexual misconduct is known or suspected to have occurred involving clergy and a person under the age of 18, the nearest agency or authority charged with child protection must be contacted immediately and a report given. This report is mandatory as outlined by the Idaho Code § 16-1619(a), (c) (Supp. 1998) and Or. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 419B.010(1) & Or. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 419B.005(3)(h). However, there are also laws that may prevent disclosure of information obtained during a confidential discussion between a clergy person and another person seeking spiritual guidance from the clergy person.
- B. Do not confront or discuss the incident with the alleged perpetrator.
- C. Contact the District Superintendent or other church authority to inform them of the report that you have made.

II. Clergy Sexual Misconduct Against Persons 18 Years Old or Older

(For purposes of this section, sexual misconduct includes all forms of sexual misconduct except sexual harassment.)

- A. If a clergy commits an act of sexual misconduct against you:
 1. Contact the Bishop or a district superintendent who shall act according to his/her responsibility as outlined in ¶362.1 of the *2004 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*. In addition, the bishop or district superintendent may include third parties for mediation and consultation.
 2. It is advisable to keep a journal which documents all incidents in question, including conversation and contacts with the person, dates, times, witnesses and descriptions of the incidents.
 3. When the alleged conduct constitutes a criminal act, report it to the police.
- B. If you are accused of sexual misconduct:
 1. Listen objectively when confronted with behaviors that have caused discomfort or harm to another, whether intended or not, and be open to ways that your behavior can change.

2. It is advisable to keep a journal which documents all incidents in question, including conversations and contacts with the person, dates, times, witnesses and descriptions of all incidents.

C. If sexual misconduct is reported by complainant to you as Clergy, Deacon, Christian Education Director, Diaconal Minister, Staff-Parish Relations Committee Chairperson:

1. Listen objectively and take it seriously with due consideration and sensitivity given to the safety and emotional needs of the complainant.

2. Make certain the complainant is aware of the Oregon Idaho Annual Conference's Sexual Ethics Policy and his or her option to report the incident. Affirm with the complainant the decision to participate in reporting the incident(s) is in the hands of the complainant. The person hearing the report should resist making decisions for or attempting to influence the complainant.

3. Alleged sexual misconduct is reported to the district superintendent. If the alleged perpetrator is the district superintendent, contact the bishop. If it is the bishop, contact the Council of Bishops.

III. Sexual Harassment

A. If you are sexually harassed by a clergy:

1. It is advisable to keep a journal which documents all incidents of sexual or gender harassment including dates, times, witnesses and descriptions of the incidents. If you receive any written letters, cards, or memos of a suggestive nature from the harasser, it is advisable to keep them, noting the date received and how received (mailed to your home, left on your desk, etc.)

2. If you choose, confront the alleged harasser before taking official action.

a. Tell the alleged harasser firmly and clearly what behavior is not acceptable to you. If you choose, take another person with you for support. Be as specific as possible. This action, in many cases, will be sufficient or

b. Contact the alleged harasser in writing. Clearly state what behavior(s) and action(s) are not acceptable to you, or

c. Contact another pastor or supervisor and ask them to talk with the alleged harasser. Clearly state what behavior(s) and action(s) are not acceptable to you.

3. If you choose not to confront the alleged harasser, contact a district superintendent.

B. If you are accused of sexual harassment:

1. Listen objectively when confronted with behaviors that have caused discomfort or harm to another, whether intended or not, and be open to ways your behavior can change.

2. It is advisable to keep a journal which documents all incidents in question, including conversations and contacts with the person who confronts your behavior, dates, times, witnesses and descriptions of the incidents.

3. If there is no one-on-one resolution you may contact a district superintendent.

C. If acts of sexual harassment are reported by complainant to you as Pastor, Deacon, Christian Education Director, Diaconal Minister, Staff-Parish Relations Committee Chairperson:

1. Listen objectively and take it seriously with due consideration given to the safety and emotional needs of the complainant.

2. Give complainant the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference's Sexual Ethics Policy and review with her or him the option to report the incident to the district superintendent.

Statute of Limitations

Limitations of claims for sexual misconduct apply only to the extent that the behavior in question was one listed in *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* in effect at the time the behavior took place. A person may be charged with an offense only if it was a chargeable offense in *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* in effect at the time the action was committed. The applicable limitation periods for sexual misconduct and sexual or gender harassment may be found in ¶¶ 362.1.d, 2702.4, and 2704 of the *2004 Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*.

Endnotes:

¹ The basic format of this document, along with portions of the content, was originally developed by the East Ohio Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church

² This Theological Reflection is found in the 2006 Sexual Misconduct Policy presented by the Board of Ordained Ministry of the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

