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# **NEW ENGLAND ANNUAL CONFERENCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **I. CONFERENCE PROCEDURES**

### **A. Conference Secretary**

1. The Conference Secretary shall be the Editor of the Conference Journal.
2. The Conference Secretary shall be authorized to edit for accuracy and brevity the Preliminary Reports for each session of the Annual Conference.
3. The Conference Secretary shall be authorized to print or reproduce the Daily Journal, reports and resolutions from standing committees. In addition, she/he may print or reproduce only such resolutions and reports which are the property of the Annual Conference or whose reproduction may be authorized by the Annual Conference.
4. The Conference Secretary shall be instructed to include in the Annual Conference Journal next following a Judicial Council session the text of any decision which originated in a New England Conference session, either as a question of law responded to by the President or by Annual Conference action.

### **B. Conference Statistician**

1. The Conference Statistician shall gather data from the churches, boards, councils, committees, and agencies of the Annual Conference and prepare statistical reports and analyses for publication in the Journal or, at the request of such boards and agencies, in cooperation with the Cabinet and the Conference Treasurer.

## **II. PRE-CONFERENCE SESSIONS REQUIREMENTS**

### **A. Election of Members and Observers**

1. Churches/Charges shall be entitled to one lay member for each pastor appointed by the Bishop.
2. To reach the required number of Lay Members in equalizing membership (lay and clergy) for the Annual Conference, the following formula shall be implemented.
  - a. Each District shall elect, annually at a District Conference, thirty (30) lay members to the Annual Conference, two of whom shall be of high school age (18 or younger) and nominated by the District youth organization, and two of whom shall be young adults (under age 31) who shall be nominated by the District young adult organization, except that on districts where such organizations do not exist, the members shall be selected by a method to be determined by the District. Certification of their election shall be through a manner similar to the certification of other Lay Members of the Conference, except that it shall be through the office of the District Superintendent rather than a local church (including those specified by the current Book of Discipline). The results of these elections shall be communicated by the District Superintendents to the Conference Secretary no later than January 1. The two youth and the two young adults so elected shall become equalization members. The additional members shall be prioritized in the election and used by the Conference Secretary to fill the remaining equalization positions after items b. through f. below have been counted. The Conference Secretary shall include an equal number of laity so elected by each district whenever possible.

- b. Conference Officers (if they are laity): Secretary, Treasurer, Statistician, Director of Connectional Ministries, organization elected for Conference Program leadership, Conference Pensions Officer and the Conference Chancellor.
  - c. Lay chairpersons of all Conference Boards and Agencies and Vice-chairperson(s) of the Conference Resource Team
  - d. Lay members of General Boards and Agencies
  - e. Presidents of District United Methodist Men
  - f. Presidents of District United Methodist Women
  - g. Associate Conference Lay Leader(s)
3. The Secretary of the Annual Conference shall use as the basis for the clergy membership of the Annual Conference the number of clergy members as of December 31. The Conference Secretary and/or the Conference Statistician shall be responsible for providing the necessary information to the District Superintendents and all others who are eligible to elect lay members.
  4. Each District Superintendent shall provide the Conference Secretary, at least fourteen (14) weeks previous to the opening session of the Annual Conference, a correct list of all lay members and their alternates.
  5. Lay Observers: at all sessions of the New England Annual Conference there shall be a maximum of two (2) Youth Observers and two (2) Young Adult Observers from each District with the privilege of being seated and the right to speak from the floor but without vote. The Youth Observers shall be elected by their District Youth organization and the Young Adult Observers by their District Young Adult organization, except that, on Districts where such organizations do not exist, the observers shall be selected by a method to be determined by the District. Each Observer shall be a member of the United Methodist Church in this Conference with not more than one (1) youth or one (1) young adult Observer from the same Church. The Observers shall reflect the ethnic and racial makeup of the District from which they come.
- B. Reports:** A Statement of Accomplishments shall constitute a report from each council, board, commission, committee or agency, as an expression of its accountability to the Annual Conference.
1. This statement may include Objectives and Goals, Scope of Charge, Approach and Accomplishments, Budget Reports, Problems Encountered, and Recommendations and/or Resolutions.
  2. All reports from councils, boards, commissions, committees or agencies shall be in the hands of the Conference Secretary not later than March 1 of each year in order to be included in the Pre-Conference Reports.
  3. Each report shall include the number on the council, board, commission, committee or agency.
  4. Where reports contain recommendations to be placed before the Conference for action, those recommendations must be acted upon by a majority of the members of the Conference agency, and the report shall indicate the number voting for and against the recommendation, or abstaining. Such a vote may be taken by mail.
  5. Any reports too late for inclusion in the Pre-Conference Reports shall be printed and distributed at the opening business session of the Conference for study and evaluation only, and then presented on a later day for Conference action.
  6. All reports presented to the Annual Conference for its action shall be prepared in duplicate and, unless printed, shall be typewritten using only one side of an 8 1/2" x 11" paper, the copy being double spaced.

7. Reports for publication, excepting the composite report of the District Superintendents and the report of the organization elected for Conference Program leadership, shall not exceed 700 words, except as the Annual Conference may authorize otherwise.
8. In all Pre-Conference Reports and in the Minutes of the daily proceedings of the Conference, the names of clergy members shall appear without specific designation, i. e., Reverend, Doctor, etc.
9. In reports where reference is made to councils, boards, commissions, or committees, authors of such reports are directed to use the term "General" or "Conference" in order to distinguish local from General Conference organizations.
10. Pre-Conference Reports, as well as supplemental reports, shall be considered preliminary in nature. Local churches are at liberty to discuss the contents; however, Judicial Council Ruling No. 11 prohibits any official body of the local church from ordering or instructing lay or reserve members to vote in any prescribed manner on issues expected to come before the Annual Conference.

### **III. THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSION**

#### **A. Opening Session**

1. The Memorial Service shall be held for clergy members, spouses, and widows and widowers of clergy members who have died since the last Annual Conference Session. The Memorial Service shall be held also for persons who served as lay members and who have died since the latest Annual Conference Session, whose names have been submitted by a conference member to the Conference Biographer.
2. The official Roll Call shall be taken annually by registration with the Bureau of Conference Sessions at the seat of the Conference. Alternate Lay Members serving in the absence of recorded Lay Members shall notify the Secretary of the Conference of their presence.
3. No clergy member shall absent herself/himself from the sessions of the Conference without permission, except in cases of sickness or other physical disability, or unavoidable emergency. Petitions for excuse from attendance must be written and submitted to the Secretary of the Conference.
4. No material will be distributed within the Area of the Annual Conference, while in session, without permission of the Conference Choreographer in consultation with the Conference Secretary.

### **IV. POLICIES GOVERNING ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSIONS**

#### **A. Visitors Addressing the Conference**

1. Visitors presenting denominational interests at a business session of the Conference shall be limited to five minutes.
2. Visitors presenting non-denominational interests at a business session of the Conference shall be limited to three (3) minutes and shall be heard only upon consent of the Conference.
3. Consent of the Conference shall not be required for those organizations whose reports shall be received during the reporting time of the Conference agency to which they are related within the Conference structure.

#### **B. Reports**

1. To be eligible for action by the Conference, any report or resolution by a council, board, commission, committee, society, or individual, not included in the

Pre-Conference Reports booklet, must be in writing and placed in the hands of the members twenty-four (24) hours before being considered.

2. Reports of minorities of committees, adopted by them with a view to their being offered as substitutes for majority reports, shall likewise conform to all conference rules and policies as far as it is applicable, indicating clearly to which committee the respective minorities belong and for what reports they propose the respective substitutes.
3. The Secretary may prepare and administer a plan for numbering of documents so that each report, resolution, recommendation, information bulletin, or other item presented to the Conference or distributed to the members of the Conference for consideration or action shall have a distinguishing number of identification which shall mark it off from each and any other document.

#### **C. Distributions on the Floor of the Conference**

1. Distribution of material on the floor of the Conference shall be done only by the Conference appointed ushers.
2. Material distributed on the floor of the Conference shall be limited to that which is pending action by the Conference. All other material which may be of special interest to the Conference may be placed in a convenient location, designated by the Conference, upon recommendation by the Conference Secretary, where interested parties may obtain copies.
3. Individual members of the Conference who desire to have printed or reproduced material distributed on the floor of the Conference shall submit such material, except resolutions, to the Conference Secretary. She/he shall be authorized to consider and approve such material and, if approved, provide for its distribution at the proper time.
4. No non-member, or organization or institution unrelated to the Annual Conference, shall be permitted to distribute printed or reproduced material on the floor of the Conference without prior consent of the Conference Choreographer. All material so distributed shall contain the name of the individual and/or organization that assumes responsibility for its origination.

#### **D. Conference Journal**

1. The Journal and Yearbook shall be ready for distribution by October 1 of each year.
2. The Conference Secretary, upon written request, shall mail, without charge, a copy of the Journal and Yearbook to retired and disabled clergy members, their widows or widowers.
3. Following any special session of the Annual Conference, the Secretary shall, within one month, mail a report of the action taken to all Conference members.

### **V. ELECTION OF DELEGATES TO GENERAL AND JURISDICTIONAL CONFERENCE**

- A. Voters may write any number of names on a ballot that does not exceed the number of persons to be elected. More names on a ballot than the number of persons to be elected will render the ballot defective.
- B. Write-in votes are valid at any time during the voting process, provided the number of names on the ballot does not exceed the number of persons to be elected. Persons whose names are on the ballot must meet the requirements for election established in the *current issue of the* Book of Discipline.

- C. Where there is duplication of surnames among the persons for whom a vote is to be cast and/or those printed on a ballot, both the first and last name of the person(s) for whom the vote(s) is (are) intended shall be written.
- D. Only the official ballot form (provided by the Secretary of the Conference) will be accepted by the tellers.
- E. Ballots will be received from members who are seated within the legal limits of the Conference. All members who wish to exercise their franchise must be seated within the Voting Area of the Conference at the time of the election in which they wish to vote.
- F. Pre-Conference nominations, as well as those presented on the floor, shall in no way limit the freedom to vote for any person who is able and eligible, according to the laws of the Church, to serve as a delegate to the General and/or Jurisdictional Conference(s).
- G. The Chief Teller and assistant tellers shall be appointed by the Conference Secretary. Insofar as possible they shall be non-voting persons attending the Annual Conference. They shall be instructed in the balloting and counting procedures before the first ballot is taken, including the necessity of confidentiality until the results are officially announced.
- H. As soon as the results of a ballot are tallied, the results shall be announced by the Presiding Bishop to the Conference in session and then posted in a previously announced location. If the Conference is not in session, the results shall be posted immediately by the Conference Secretary in the preannounced location and then announced to the Conference by the Presiding Bishop when it is called to order.
- I. No later than June 20 of the year of Jurisdictional Conference the delegation shall elect, by written ballots without nominations, their representatives to the Jurisdictional Standing Committees: Annual Conference Boundaries, Episcopacy, Finance and Administration, Leadership, and Program and Arrangements.

## VI. ANNUAL CONFERENCE NOMINATIONS FOR EPISCOPAL ELECTIONS

- A. The nominations shall be made in accordance with the *current issue of the* Book of Discipline, and the following procedures.
    - 1. **Biographies:** Nominating biographies shall be announced by the Conference Secretary. Submission of a biography by May 1 of the year of the Jurisdictional Conference constitutes nomination. Nominating biographies for inclusion in the Pre-Conference Book will be submitted to the Conference Secretary on or before February 1, following guidelines published by the Secretary. Nominating biographies shall be no more than 100 words.
    - 2. **Additional nominations** may be made from the floor, but no speeches will be permitted.
  - B. The Annual Conference, in the session immediately preceding a regular Jurisdictional Conference, shall set aside time for consideration of nominees for episcopal election.
    - 1. The process shall include a ballot presented to the Annual Conference with the names of candidates and their biographies. Each Annual Conference member will cast a ranked vote for the candidates listed on the ballot. Each member will receive three ballots and vote for up to three candidates, ranking them as follows: The preferred candidate receives a ranked vote of 5, the second preferred receives a ranked vote of 3, the third, receives a ranked vote of 1.
- The Annual Conference will endorse up to three candidates. In order to be endorsed by the Annual Conference, a candidate must meet both requirements as follows: A candidate who receives the highest or second highest or third highest amount of

points from the ranked balloting; and receives a vote from 25 percent of the members present and voting.

- C. Lay and Clergy members of the Conference wishing to lift up names for consideration shall, in accordance with a process defined by the Conference Leadership Committee and approved quadrennially by the Conference in the year immediately preceding a regular session of the Jurisdictional Conference, circulate information about such persons before the Annual Conference in which elections are held.

1.

## **VII. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

### **A. Conference Committee on Leadership**

1. Nominations to Conference Agencies may be made from among those nominated to a pool by district committees on leadership. The New England Conference will determine the membership and election procedure of the district committees on Leadership.
2. The Conference Lay Leader shall be nominated by the lay persons of the Conference Committee on Leadership after consultation with the District Lay Leaders. The election shall be for a quadrennium and shall be at the first Conference session following General Conference. Nominees must meet the provisions of The Book of Discipline, paragraph 32.
3. Associate lay leader(s), to work with the Conference Lay Leader, may be elected by the Conference in the same manner as the Conference Lay Leader. The District Lay Leaders shall be nominated by the lay persons of the District Committee on Leadership after consultation with the District Superintendent and elected at the District Conference.
4. The Committee shall be sensitive in making nominations to insure inclusive representation of all councils, boards, commissions and committees, in accordance with the 2004 **Book of Discipline** 609.5 (or as amended subsequently) and direct these bodies to give consideration to inclusiveness in the composition of their executive groups if not otherwise provided.
5. Whenever any Conference group calls for District representation, those nominations, with supporting documentation, shall be submitted to the Conference Leadership Committee by February 1 of each year (unless otherwise provided) to enable the Committee on Leadership to determine compliance with balance, one-person/one-position and tenure rules and guidelines.
6. The Committee on Leadership shall recommend to the Annual Conference for its approval the membership and election procedure for the following:
  - a. District Committee on Superintendency
  - b. District Committee on Lay Speaking
  - c. District Board of Church Location and Building
  - d. Council on Finance and Administration
  - e. United Methodist Foundation of New England
  - f. Committee on Episcopacy
7. The Committee shall prepare and mail its report to each member of the Annual Conference no later than thirty (30) days prior to the opening session of the Conference, provided that amendments to their reports shall be submitted in writing no later than the morning of the first full day of the Conference, and provided further that, except for those nominations which require immediate election in order that the business of the Annual Conference session may proceed, their report shall lay on the table until the day following its completion.

8. The Committee shall, in its annual report, list a convener or chair of each committee or group nominated and the Committee shall notify in writing all conveners or chairs and new committee members of the election.
9. Except where The Book of Discipline may otherwise provide, vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired term by election at the next session of the Annual Conference upon nomination by the Conference Committee on Leadership.

#### **B. District Nominations and Elections**

1. In each District there shall be a District Committee on Leadership that establishes guidelines\* and procedures\* for the nomination, election and filling of vacancies of members on the following committees:
  - A. District Committee on Superintendency
  - B. District Committee on Lay Speaking
  - C. District Committee on Church Location and Building
  - D. District Committee on Leadership
2. Guidelines and procedures may include: term of office; when term of office begins; whether in classes or not; when election takes place; cluster representation; inclusiveness in accordance with *Discipline*.
3. The District Committee on Leadership is also responsible for nomination of equalization members of Annual Conference as mandated in the *Conference Rules* III. A. 3. a. (Note: This list must be in the hands of the Conference Secretary by January 1.)
4. The District Committee on Leadership will also nominate for election by the District:
  - A. District Lay Leader
  - B. District Director of Lay Speaking
  - C. Disaster Response Person
5. The District Leadership Committee shall develop a pool of names of persons with the abilities and willingness to serve on conference boards and agencies. These names are to be submitted to the Conference Committee on Leadership for consideration in the process of nominations to conference boards and agencies.

#### **C. Membership on Conference Organizations**

1. With the exception of the District Committees, the Site Committees, the Board of Trustees, the organization elected for Conference Program leadership, the Council on Finance and Administration, and the Board of Pensions, chairs of all other agencies shall be elected by the Annual Conference for the quadrennium of portion there of, furthermore, when there is a vacancy of a chair of a Conference Program Agency elected by the Annual Conference, the organization elected for Conference Program leadership shall convene the conference agency whose members shall select an acting chair to serve until the next session of the Annual Conference.
2. All elected members of Boards and Agencies will be placed in four-year classes and limited to eight (8) years of consecutive service unless otherwise instructed by The Book of Discipline. The term will begin following annual conference. The class year indicates the end of the person's term. (i.e. a person whose class is listed as 2005 would end their term at the close of 2005 annual conference session.) Members of the Board of Trustees and the Board of Ordained Ministry shall be limited to twelve (12) consecutive years of service. The terms of members elected shall begin at the adjournment of the Annual Conference session.
3. With the exception of the Board of Ordained Ministry and Conference Visioning Table, no person shall be an elected member of more than one Conference agency at the same time, except as required by The Book of Discipline or these Rules.

4. Members of general boards and agencies shall serve ex officio as voting members of the corresponding board or agency of the Annual Conference.
5. The privilege of nominating from the floor shall be reserved for members of the Annual Conference.
6. Elected members of a council, board, commission, or committee shall forfeit their membership when they are absent from two consecutive regular meetings of which they have been duly notified, unless they have notified the chairperson of valid reason(s) for non-attendance. The Committee on Leadership shall be notified by the chairperson before April 1, so that a replacement nominee can be placed in nomination at the Annual Conference for election.
7. The meetings of councils, boards, commissions, committees, and board of directors or trustees shall be open to all members of The United Methodist Church within the Conference, except as noted in the **Book of Discipline**. This rule does not apply to Cabinet meetings. Those planning to attend a stated meeting shall give the chairperson at least a week's notice so that adequate space may be provided. Persons attending said meetings shall have the right to speak only with the permission of the body, but shall not have the right to vote.

#### **D. Conference Committee on Rules**

1. There shall be a Committee on Rules which shall be nominated, after consultation with the Bishop, and elected at the first Annual Conference following General Conference, and shall serve for the quadrennium.
2. Membership of the Committee on Rules shall include:
  - a. one person from each district, half of whom shall be laity and half of whom shall be clergy
  - b. In addition, a chairperson, lay or clergy, appointed by the Bishop
  - c. the Conference Secretary
3. To this Committee shall be referred all proposed changes or additions to the Conference Rules or the Conference Policies and Procedures.
4. All suggested amendments of these Policies and Procedures presented to the Committee on Conference Rules shall be submitted by a conference board, agency, committee or task force or signed by five (5) members of the Conference.
5. All items in Section XI – Attachments, will be reviewed by the Annual Conference every six years. The Conference Rules Committee will draw this to the attention of the annual conference on the fifth anniversary of adoption of each individual appendix. The Rules Committee will make a recommendation on those attachments not reviewed by the assigned body of the Annual Conference.

#### **E. Conference Choreographer**

1. See Appendix F

**F. Council on Finance and Administration** - Members of the Conference CF & A shall be nominated by the Committee on Leadership for a term of four years in accordance with paragraph 611.2 of 2004 *The Book of Discipline*. Members may be re-nominated and re-elected for a second term. No more than two consecutive terms may be served. When a member has served two consecutive terms, he/she may be nominated following a 4 year hiatus. CF&A vacancies may be filled by CF&A between Annual Conferences and may then be nominated by the Conference Committee on Leadership and elected at the next Annual Conference.

**G. Committee on Episcopacy** - The Committee on Episcopacy, in accordance with the *Book of Discipline*, will include the following members totaling seventeen (17) persons:

- A. Two (2) members elected by Northeast Jurisdiction
  - B. Three (3) members appointed by the Bishop
  - C. The Conference Lay Leader
  - D. Remainder (11) to be nominated by the Conference Committee on Leadership
- The Discipline recommends that the make up of the total committee be one third laymen, one third laywomen, and one third clergy.

**H. Conference Biographer –**

- 1. The Conference Biographer shall be recommended by the Archives and History Commission and nominated by the Leadership Committee for appointment at the beginning of each quadrennium,
- 2. The procedures for selection, a job description, and guidelines for the job shall be developed by Archives and History in consultation with the Conference Secretary and the Management Team.

**I. Archives and History –**

- 1. Historical Records Access Policy
  - a. Researchers should contact the Library in advance of their visit.
  - b. Administrative records of the conference or churches open to all researchers.
  - c. Local church membership, baptismal and marriage records open to all researchers.
  - d. Photocopy requests will be determined by the staff based on the condition of the materials. All reproduction will be done by the staff, with charges assessed to the researcher.
- 2. Historical records in the archives of the New England Conference will be located at the Boston University School of Theology Library

**J. Scholarship Committee –** The Conference Scholarship Committee will be a Task Force of the Conference Resourcing Team.

- 1. One Trustee will be selected by the Board of Trustees to serve on the Task Force.
- 2. The Task Force will recruit its own membership and select its chair.
- 3. The Trustees will annually approve the membership and chair of the Task Force.
- 4. The Task Force will report the disbursement of scholarship funds annually to the Trustees and the Resourcing Team.
- 5. The Task Force will develop its own operations manual.

**K. Site Committees or Boards –**

- 1. Camp Aldersgate
- 2. Camp Mechuwana
- 3. Wanakee United Methodist Center
- 4. Rolling Ridge Conference Center

Each Site Committee/Board is an Annual Conference entity relating to the Conference programming organization, and the Conference Board of Trustees. The Site Committees/Boards have responsibility to oversee each site locally in a manner that creates healthy site operation. Site Committees/Boards establish goals and policies, and work toward providing resources (including capital) that enable the sites' ministry to function. They oversee management practices to assure compliance with broader Annual Conference goals and needs. The Site Committees/Board do not directly supervise the Site Director, but provide input regarding their respective director to the Asst. to the Bishop/Director of Connectional Ministries who is responsible for supervision.

Members of each Site Committee or Board will be elected by the Annual Conference in regular session.

Members of each Site Committee or Board will be nominated by the Conference Leadership Committee in consultation with the Site Committee or Board.

**L. Program Agency –**

The Director of Connectional Ministries has assumed many of the program functions previously under the now defunct Resource Team.

**M. Personnel Committee –**

The Annual Conference will have a Personnel Committee that will be responsible for establishing policies and practices in the employment and compensation of all conference staffs.

Responsible to the Annual Conference and working closely with the Bishop and staff leadership, this Committee will also offer advice and assistance in all matters pertaining to employment and compensation of Conference staff.

Members, including chairperson(s), of the Personnel Committee will be elected by the Annual Conference upon nomination by the Bishop.

**N. Secretary of Global Ministries –**

Upon nomination by the conference committee on leadership in consultation with the Bishop, Annual Conference shall elect a secretary of global ministries for a term of four years

**O. Conference Director of Lay Speaking Ministries –**

The conference Director of Lay Speaking Ministries shall be nominated by lay persons of the conference committee on leadership after consultation with the district directors of lay speaking ministries. The conference director of lay speaking ministries shall be elected by annual conference for the quadrennium.

**P. Conference Committee on Christian Unity and Inter-Religious Concerns –**

Upon nomination by the conference committee on leadership in consultation with the district committees on leadership, Annual Conference shall elect one United Methodist from each district to serve on the conference committee on Christian unity and inter-religious concerns for a term of four years.

**Q. Conference Board of Church and Society –**

Upon nomination by the conference committee on leadership in consultation with the district committees on leadership, Annual Conference shall elect a conference board of church & society for a term of four years.

**R. Conference Commission on Communications –**

Upon nomination by the conference committee on leadership in consultation with the Conference Director of Communications, Annual Conference shall elect a minimum of 5 persons to serve on the conference commission on communications for a term of four years.

**S. Conference Committee on Native American Ministry –**

Upon nomination by the conference committee on leadership, Annual Conference shall elect a minimum of six persons to serve on the conference committee on Native American ministry for a term of four years.

**T. Conference Committee on Ethnic Local Church Concerns –**

Upon nomination by the conference committee on leadership in consultation with the ethnic commissions/committees, Annual Conference shall elect one representative from each ethnic commission/committee to serve on the committee on ethnic local church concerns for a term of four years.

**U. Conference Board of Global Ministries –**

Upon nomination by the conference committee on leadership in consultation with the district committees on leadership, Annual Conference shall elect a conference board of global ministries for a term of four years. (The conference board of global ministries is not related to the Board of Global Ministries, Inc. which is currently managed by the Trustees.)

**V. Conference Commission on Religion and Race –**

Upon nomination by the conference committee on leadership in consultation with the district committees on leadership, Annual Conference shall elect a conference commission on religion and race for a term of four years.

**W. Conference Commission on Status and Role of Women –**

Upon nomination by the conference committee on leadership in consultation with the district committees on leadership, Annual Conference shall elect a minimum of one person from each district to serve on the conference commission on status and role of women for a term of four years.

## **VIII. FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **A. Budgeting**

1. Each Conference board or agency requesting funding from Conference funds shall submit a detailed budget and documentation of anticipated needs for the coming year to the Council on Finance and Administration (CFA) by based on the budget building dates established by the Annual Conference. Requests for budget consideration received after the above date will require an Annual Conference Rules suspension for consideration on the conference floor.
2. Each Conference board or agency requesting funding from Conference funds shall make to CFA such reports of their financial operation as the CFA may direct.
3. The Chairperson or designate of any Conference board or agency requesting funding from Conference funds must attend, if requested by CFA, a budget preparation meeting of CFA to provide additional information as CFA may deem necessary to accomplish its work.
4. Each Conference Board or agency receiving funding from Conference funds will do so at a rate commensurate with anticipated receipts. No agency may expend more than the CFA voted anticipated receipt level unless such expenditure is approved in advance by CFA.
5. Prior to voting on the Annual Budget, the Council on Finance and Administration will present to the Annual Conference explanations of the reasons for all variances from the prior year budget of \$10,000 or more, or 10%, which ever is greater.
6. All entities receiving funds from the conference or conference agencies present their most recent annual audit reports (not to exceed 3 years prior to the current year) to the CF&A by May 1. If the audit is not received by this date:
  - a. Funding for the current year will be suspended until such report is received from the delinquent agency; and
  - b. The budget request for the following year will be withdrawn from consideration by the CF&A.
7. All boards, divisions, agencies and councils submit requests and complete all applicable questions on authorized budget forms and all payment requests must be submitted using authorized voucher forms supplied by the CF&A.
8. All budgets, methods of funding and sources and uses of funds for all divisions, commissions, boards, task forces, committees, agencies and councils shall be considered at the same time and place annually called (unless otherwise duly called) to discuss and vote upon the total conference budget.
9. Instruct CFA to bring a budget to each regular Annual Conference Session.

### **B. Apportionments**

1. The apportionment formula to be recommended by CFA to the Annual Conference shall be distributed with the proposed budget.

### **C. Reserve Funds**

There shall be Conference Reserve Funds which shall consist of the following:

1. **THE SUBSIDY POOL** shall receive earned interest from common pooled funds of all Conference Boards and Agencies. Certain agencies receiving funds other than from Mission Shares may, upon vote of CFA, receive interest on their portion of funds in the common pool. Interest shall accrue until it reaches 8% of the voted annual conference budget for the purpose of ameliorating cash flow. When 8% has been achieved, distribution of interest earned by the Subsidy Pool shall be voted annually by CFA with up to 80% of annual interest used to reduce local church mission shares and the remainder to accrue to the Subsidy Pool. The principal of the Subsidy Pool Fund is used to ameliorate the Conference cash flow.
2. **THE MINISTRY SUPPORT RESERVE FUND** shall receive unspent year end Ministry Support funds EXCEPT for those boards and agencies granted "carryover" privilege by an annual vote of CFA. The Ministry Support Reserve Fund may be voted a line item amount in the Conference Budget. The Ministry Support Reserve Fund shall be used to subsidize administrative salaries and related benefits up to 100% of budget, help pay General Church Apportionments at 100%, and fund Contingency items in the Ministry Support Budget. Disbursements are made by the Treasurer upon authorization of CFA or its Executive Committee.
3. **THE NEW ENGLAND MISSIONS RESERVE FUND** shall receive unspent year end New England Missions funds EXCEPT for those boards and agencies granted "carryover" privileges by an annual vote of the organization elected for Conference Program leadership. The New England Missions Reserve Fund may be voted a line item amount in the Conference Budget. The New England Missions Reserve Fund shall be used to subsidize Program salaries and related benefits up to 100% for New England Missions Staff as designated by the New England organization elected for Conference Program leadership, help pay General Church apportionments at 100%, fund emerging ministries and fund contingency items in the New England Missions Budget. Disbursement of this fund shall be by the Treasurer upon authorization of the New England organization elected for Conference Program leadership or its Executive Committee.

### **D. Administration**

1. The Treasurer shall make salary obligations a first priority against Conference funds. CFA shall have discretionary power to instruct the Treasurer to make additional payments to those areas with fixed operating overhead. (To work in concert with reserve fund policy.)
2. The Treasurer shall allow churches a grace period following the end of the fiscal year (Dec. 31) for the receipt of funds to be credited to the previous year. The Treasurer shall close the Conference books on all receipts for the previous year on the Friday after the second Sunday of January at 4:00 p.m. Suitable advance notice of this shall be given through appropriate ways as deemed necessary by CFA and the Treasurer.
3. It shall be the senior appointed pastor's responsibility to see that Tables I, II, III, and Chart A are in the hands of the Treasurer or his/her designee (i.e. statistician) by February 14<sup>th</sup> of the year following that covered by the report.

4. The Conference shall reimburse staff travel at a rate not to exceed the IRS rate. Volunteers shall be reimbursed at a rate not to exceed 14 cents per mile, with tolls incurred in travel also to be reimbursed (with adequate documentation). Conference Staff will be reimbursed only for their second meal- of-the-day while on regular business travel. District Superintendents will be reimbursed for meals during the appointment season, for themselves and the appointee as necessary. If in the conduct of their assigned duties other executive staff must perform a hosting responsibility, those expenses will be honored on an “as-needed” basis. Conference Staff attending workshops, seminars, training events beyond the boundaries of the annual conference must first have that event endorsed by their support/evaluation committee. Expenses while in attendance will be those assigned as part of the regular registration cost. Other meals will be reimbursed at a cost not to exceed the daily Federal Employee meal allowance. No expenses will be reimbursed without adequate documentation; however, meals less than \$5.00, if no documentation is available, will be honored.
5. CF&A is authorized to set the fee for those who are paying “full cost” of Journals.

#### **E. Statistical Table Reports**

1. The deadline for submission of Statistical Tables continues to be February 14.
2. All Conference correspondence to local churches regarding the submission of Statistical Tables be sent to the church Pastor, Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair and Lay Member to Annual Conference, and that subsequent correspondence be copied also to the District Superintendent in addition to the above named.
3. For those churches that do not submit Statistical "Table II and Chart A" on time, and for those churches, which after review by CFA and Administrative Services appear to have significant difficulty with submission. The CFA will offer to provide help and training in filling out the tables – any such meetings must include the pastor, Church Treasurer, Lay Member, and Chair of Finance Committee. The District Superintendent will be notified and invited to such meetings. These services will be offered to enable all Statistical Tables II and Charts A be Submitted by June 1.
4. Churches that do not comply with the above process by June 1 will have their Mission Shares calculated by the Office of Administrative Services based on the annual church budget for the year of the comparable statistical table.
5. Those pastors who submit their statistical tables late (by March 15) for two consecutive years in will be placed on pastoral review with the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.
6. The column titled “Outside Groups Use of Building” from Chart A will be included in the statistical tables when they are printed in the Conference Journal.

### **IX. MISCELLANEOUS**

#### **A. Honoraria**

No full time United Methodist pastor of the New England Conference under appointment, nor any lay person (or clergyperson from another denomination) who is employed full time by the New England Conference or any of its churches or agencies, shall be offered honoraria for leading or speaking at any United Methodist program within the conference.

It is to be understood that this type of work should be encouraged within our connectional structure, but that the payment for this work has already been made by the church or agency which pays the person's salary. Persons who do this work should,

however, be reimbursed for their expenses by the church or agency requesting their services.

B. SEE **ATTACHMENTS** for Appendixes

## **X. SUSPENDING AND AMENDING OF CONFERENCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

- A. The operation of any of the provisions of these policies and procedures may be suspended at any time by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting.
- B. These policies and procedures may be amended or changed by majority vote of the members present and voting; provided the proposed change or amendment has been presented to the Conference in writing and referred to the Committee on Rules, which Committee shall report thereon not later than the day following. No amendment shall be offered later than the second day of the Conference session.
- C. These policies and procedures shall be available on line, and shall annually include any amendments made at previous sessions. Printed copies are available for inspection at the Conference office or may be obtained on request at a reasonable cost.

## **XI. ATTACHMENTS**

### Appendix A

#### **RS – 211 – REPENTING: WHAT NEXT?**

(submitted by those named below)

(adopted on consent calendar Saturday Afternoon, June 14, 2003)

As a core planning team began meeting in 2001 to design the service of Call to Repenting for the 2002 New England Annual Conference Session, one Person of Color asked the rest of the group: “What will be next?”

The point was that this service, as mandated by the General Conference and as understood more broadly in our New England context, might be important and worthwhile. [In the context of the relationships with historically African-American Methodist Churches (AME, AMEZ, and CME), the UMC General Conference in 2000 offered repentance for racism toward Persons of Color both who were excluded from the Church and those who stayed.] What was more important – perhaps most important – was the change in our behaviors which would follow.

Some of the most potent criticism following the actual Call to Repenting Service in June, 2002 was that it was more a service of confession than of repenting. In the ways that this is true, it was perhaps necessarily so.

It is now incumbent on leaders and people of the New England Conference to envision some of the means by which we will continue to turn (“repent”), to walk in new ways, to live differently, so that “they may know us by our fruits.” We understand this to be a Biblical imperative.

We understand that most of this work is for white people in working with other white people. The task of the white people is to gain better awareness and understanding of their privilege. It is white racism that we seek to dismantle. The role for Persons of Color is to be strengthened in their own lives and work through training and support opportunities. We also seek to enter into a community in which the White People will be accountable and will take direction from People of Color in this ongoing work.

## ***LOCAL CHURCHES and CLUSTERS***

>The Resourcing Team in cooperation with other agencies will develop resources and/or make them available, assisting local churches and clusters in obtaining desired materials. This will include focus on the biblical and theological basis of the work on anti-racism and addressing white privilege. Specifically, local churches will be expected to enter into a reading and study program, and will report annually to the Charge Conference on this matter. District Superintendents will request such a report at each Charge Conference. Cluster clergy and laity will covenant in study and action.

>Study leaders in local churches and clusters will have priority in anti-racism training.

## ***DISTRICTS***

>District programming (i.e. District Days, district training workshops, lay speaking programs, etc.) will include content and opportunities that will reinforce the study and reflection that will be occurring in local churches and clusters.

>Each District Superintendent, in his/her annual review process with pastors, will engage in a discussion of personal anti-racism work and the leadership that the pastor is providing in the local church in this area.

## ***ANNUAL CONFERENCE RESOURCING and TRAINING***

>Anti-Racism training will be regularized in the life of the Annual Conference. Three events per year are to be planned and funded throughout the Annual Conference. Each quadrennium, members of the Board of Ordained Ministry and the District Committees on Ministry will be expected to participate in one of these events. Entering clergy will be expected to have participated in this training by the time of full membership or the end of local pastor preparation. Training will be expected for members of the Conference Staff and District Superintendents. Training will also extend to other Conference leadership, lay and clergy, volunteer and paid. Eventually, all clergy and laypersons from throughout the Conference are to be invited to participate in these ongoing events. It will be most desirable to secure the training expertise of the same person or persons over the course of several years so as to provide some continuity in this program.

>Responsibility for this planning is to be placed in the Resourcing Team Office in consultation with the Episcopal Office of the Conference. An inclusive advisory committee will gather to determine the leadership for this series of events.

>Other Annual Conference sponsored or related programs, training events, continuing education, spiritual life retreats, and the like will reflect this effort in addressing white privilege and working to dismantle racism (including their planning processes), and will seek accountability

## ***ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSIONS***

>At each Annual Conference Session, our ongoing anti-racism work will be lifted up.

>Each year, at a dialogue or workshop session, there will be information and promotion concerning the above training and local church resourcing.

>Each Annual Conference member, board, and related agency will be asked to respond in writing, prior to coming to Session, on how they have evidenced new behavior during the year. There will be some opportunity (worship, offering, study, etc.) for this to be featured during the Session.

## ***ANNUAL CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP***

>The various boards and agencies of the Annual Conference (and related entities) will, annually, commit themselves to training, resourcing, and examination of practices concerning white privilege and racism. Each board and agency (and related entity) will, as part of its annual reporting process to the Annual Conference, indicate how it has worked at addressing white privilege in its ministries and how it has sought monitoring and accountability from Persons of Color in these efforts.

>Religion and Race and Monitoring and Evaluation will receive adequate training for their respective ministries, and will develop regular programs of monitoring of practices throughout the Annual Conference in the matters of white privilege and racism. At least once in each quadrennium, Religion and Race will offer an analysis of progress and accountability in this work.

>Program committees, such as Church and Society and Christian Unity and Interreligious Concerns, will support, initiate, and coordinate programs and actions that seek to dismantle racism and address white privilege.

>All other agencies, working with the above groups or by their own initiative, will commit themselves to educating, training, resourcing, and examination of practices concerning white privilege and racism. This would include all groups and agencies related to the Annual Conference.

>The Conference Leadership Committee will make specific reports concerning its work in seeking more inclusivity among its own membership and in its tasks. The Leadership Committee will also indicate how it has sought accountability and monitoring.

>The Annual Conference Cabinet and Staff Leadership will commit themselves to educating, training, resourcing, and examination of practices concerning white privilege and racism, and will provide suggestions for Conference agencies as to how to function in ways that are hospitable in cross racial/cross cultural environment.

>Under the guidance of the Conference Personnel Committee, all Conference and related staff job descriptions, recruitment and hiring processes, and interviews will demonstrate sensitivity to dynamics of white privilege and racism.

## ***ANNUAL CONFERENCE BUDGET***

>The Annual Conference will continue to provide adequate support for educating, training, resourcing, leadership development, and monitoring in support of this ongoing work. In 2003, about \$40,000 (from all sources) was available for anti-racism training.

>The Annual Conference budget will be monitored to ensure that adequate financial resources are available for appropriate ministries with and among Persons of Color.

>Investment procedures and practices of all Conference boards, agencies, and related entities will be annually reviewed concerning sensitivity to white privilege and

racism. Specific accountability in this matter will be sought by these boards, agencies, and related entities.

## ***PASTORAL MINISTRY***

>The Annual Conference Cabinet and appropriate agencies of the Annual Conference will provide education, training, support, and other necessary resources for pastors and congregations in cross-racial/cross-cultural appointments.

>The Board of Ministry together with the Conference Cabinet will annually review procedures related to candidates and persons inquiring into ministry in the New England Annual Conference. This review should include consideration of the impact of immigration processes and requirements for such persons and could call upon the assistance of others in the Annual Conference who are working with immigration concerns.

## ***JUSTICE CONCERNS***

>Most of the above steps require individuals throughout the Conference to take initiative or respond individually or in small groups in addressing the dynamics of white privilege and racism in our midst. There is no question that individual work, in the midst of faithful, supportive, and accountable community, is vital to our healing and wholeness.

>We also need to address institutionally (in the church and wider community) the demands to which our repenting processes may lead us. With the leadership of Church and Society and others in the Conference, we need to be concerned with collective advocacy and action which will seek repentance in laws, practices, institutions, and the like. This may also lead us to serious consideration of reparations.

Appendix B – A Policy on Racial Harassment – Adopted June 8, 2002

### **A POLICY ON RACIAL HARASSMENT FOR THE NEW ENGLAND ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The right of free speech and the open exchange of ideas and views are essential, especially in the environment of the church. The United Methodist Church strongly upholds these freedoms. The New England Annual Conference is committed to assuring dignity for all and desires that every church be welcoming to all persons. Harassment based on any irrational motive, including race, color, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national, cultural or ethnic origin, or disability results in loss of self-esteem for the victim, and the violation and breakdown in the sense of community within the church.

The policy and procedures which follow are intended to insure that the churches and other agencies of the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church have a clear understanding of the definition of racial harassment and of the fact that racial harassment, as well as other forms of harassment, are not permitted among us. While racial harassment is, at root, a moral and ethical concern, it is also illegal under state and federal law. Under our United Methodist Discipline, it is also a chargeable offense for both clergy and laity. This document proposes additional, advisory procedures designed to improve our ability to respond effectively to complaints of this nature.

## B. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to laity, clergy, and lay employees of the New England Annual Conference in cases of racial harassment. The existence of a policy, including procedures for complaints, will act as a deterrent to inappropriate behavior.

## C. THEOLOGICAL BASIS

“The first two chapters of the Book of Genesis describe the ‘creative genius of God.’ Psalm 24 ‘reaffirms the relationship between God and all of God’s creatures and the divinity of God.’ Yet, in spite of humanity’s common legacy as God’s descendants, we have consistently established differences among God’s children because of race... [engaging] in verbal exchanges and behavioral demonstrations which have rejected the sacredness of all persons. When [a] prejudicial and/or racist attitude is expressed in a behavior that is focused specifically in the abuse, humiliations and defamation of persons because of their race or ethnicity, it has become racial harassment.” (*The Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church: 2000*, #157, “Racial Harassment,” p. 393)

As we seek to dismantle the racism **and cultural biases** in our structure, policies, and practices, we will also continue to work to create an environment in which all people are respected and welcomed. “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.” (1 Corinthians, 12:12) “If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.” (1 Corinthians 12:26)

## D. DEFINITION

The General Conference of 1992 defines the following conditions as racial harassment:

1. Abusive and/or derogatory language that in a subtle or overt manner belittles, humiliates, defames, or demeans a person or a group of persons based on racial and ethnic traits, heritage, and characteristics;
2. A behavior (individual, group, or institutional) which abuses, belittles, humiliates, defames, or demeans a person or a group of persons based on racial or ethnic traits, heritage, and characteristics;
3. Documentation, printed or visual, which abuses, humiliates, defames, or demeans a person or group of persons based on racial and ethnic heritage, traits, heritage and characteristics.

(*The Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church: 2000*, #157, “Racial Harassment,” p. 393)

The New England Conference will not tolerate any acts or communications intended to intimidate, demean, annoy or insult an individual on the basis of his/her race, national, or ethnic origin. We prohibit behaviors that contribute to the creation of a racially hostile and offensive church or work environment. This environment is created when words or actions directed toward a group, or an individual of a particular race or ethnic origin, are unwelcome and seriously and pervasively offensive and demeaning to the victims.

These prohibitions against racial harassment apply to any person within the New England Conference, whether laity, clergy, or staff. The offended person may be another individual in the church, a recipient of the church’s services, a staff member, or a community member. The prohibitions may apply at any place or time.

While all persons are expected to take part in maintaining an environment safe and free from racial harassment, each supervisor, pastor, and congregational leader is responsible for taking steps to create such an environment. This responsibility is also intended to cover any racial harassment complaints lodged against third-party providers of services to the New England Conference or individuals involved in business relationships with the conference. Those who have knowledge of incidents involving substantiated racial harassment and fail to respond appropriately also are in violation of this policy.

E. PROCEDURES

- I. If you are racially harassed:
  - A. State firmly and clearly to the harasser that this behavior is unwelcome and you want it to stop. It may be helpful to take another person with you for support. This action, in some cases, will resolve the issue.
  - B. Keep a journal which documents all incidents of suspected racial harassment including dates, times and descriptions of the incidents. Record the names of any witnesses to the harassment. Keep copies of all written materials you complete in reference to the harassment. If you receive any written letters, cards, or memos of a harassing nature, keep them and note the date and how the material was received (mailed to your home, left on your desk, etc.)
  - C. If the issue cannot be resolved through personal confrontation you may (1) inform your Staff-Parish Relations Committee, your pastor, the District Superintendent, your immediate supervisor, or other such person or group. Keep copies of all correspondence. Remember that the church supports an environment free from racial antagonism and that the above named persons are committed to helping you. (2) you may present your situation to the Racial Harassment Prevention/Response Team or any member of that team.
- II. If you are accused of racial harassment:
  - A. Try talking with the individual who is making the complaint against you with the permission of him or her through a third party. Try to reach a solution. Document the agreement and actions taken.
  - B. If the issue cannot be resolved through personal dialogue you may (1) inform one of the above named persons or groups depending on which is appropriate (2) present the situation to the Racial Harassment Prevention/Response Team.
- III. If racial harassment is reported to you:
  - A. Listen objectively and take it seriously.
  - B. Help the person follow the steps outlined above.
- IV. Any incident of racial harassment experienced, perpetrated, or observed is to be reported to the Racial Harassment Prevention/Response Team or any member of that team whose role it shall be to provide opportunity to reflect upon, learn from, and correct harassment behaviors in a spirit of sensitivity, and respect, and reconciliation. This policy is designed to be correctional rather than punitive.
- V. In any event, the procedures outlined in Par. 368 (clergy) and Par. 2702, numbers 1 and 3(laity) of the *2004 Book of Discipline, and other relevant*

*sections*, may be pursued by either of the parties. These procedures are supplementary in nature and do not, in any way, supersede the tenets of the Book of Discipline.

Recommendations:

1. that the annual conference adopt the policy.
2. the formation of a Racial Harassment Prevention/Response Team. (Some ideas/possibilities for the Team's purpose are: conduct anti-racism training events, implement the conference policy, and provide intervention).
3. that the current members of the Racial Harassment Policy Task Force continue to serve in the Racial Harassment Prevention/Response Team.
4. that the Bishop appoint additional members to the Team in consultation with groups in the conference which deal with issues of racial justice.
5. that this policy be made available in the Korean, Spanish, and Portuguese and other significant language groups represented in the Conference.
6. that the annual conference approve an initial \$5,000 for the work of the Racial Harassment Prevention/Response Team in the budget of 2003.

Appendix C

**RS - 123 - PARSONAGE GUIDELINES**

(submitted by the Board of Trustees)

(adopted on Saturday afternoon June 12, 1999)

These proposals for parsonage guidelines in the New England Conference have been put together by a Task Force called by the Trustees for this purpose. They have been written with the following understandings:

- 1) It shall be the purpose of each church/charge to provide a parsonage, which will not only be a comfortable home for the pastor and family, but which will also provide an environment which will be helpful in the conducting of effective ministry.
- 2) Churches and communities vary widely in their norms, resources, and settings. A helpful guideline shall be that the parsonage should reflect the norm or the average of the homes of the parishioners.
- 3) There are certain standards regarding health, safety, etc., which are not negotiable because they are stipulated by law or the *Discipline*.
- 4) All parties involved will use common sense, reasonableness, and good will.

The following are goals toward which churches/charges with existing parsonages should be working in order that these guidelines might be fully implemented, insofar as possible, within the next ten years. These guidelines are operable now for parsonages which are being purchased:

Indoor Living Areas

- 1) Living and dining areas of a size adequate for entertaining
- 2) A well-equipped kitchen, with well-functioning appliances and adequate counters and cabinets
- 3) A family room
- 4) At least three bedrooms
- 5) A room of appropriate size and privacy for the pastor's study, if an adequate study is not available at the church
- 6) One full bathroom and a half bath

- 7) Adequate closet and dry storage space, including closet space in each bedroom and other storage space distributed throughout the house
- 8) A laundry area with washer and dryer

#### Outdoor Areas

Appropriate to the community setting, the following are recommended:

- 1) A two-car garage
- 2) Outdoor living space (such as porch, deck, or patio)
- 3) A safe and adequate area in which children can play

#### Services

- 1) An adequate supply of hot and cold water, in all rooms using water
- 2) Proper sewage system
- 3) Weekly rubbish pick-up when available
- 4) Water treatment if needed
- 5) Smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers, and radon inspection where deemed necessary
- 6) Outside water faucets and electrical outlets
- 7) Snow removal and lawn service to be determined at time of appointment

#### Utilities

All utilities shall be paid; these include:

- 1) Electricity
- 2) Gas and/or oil for fuel
- 3) Water and sewage
- 4) Outside TV antenna or basic cable TV
- 5) Basic telephone service

#### Furnishings and Equipment

- 1) Floor covering for kitchen, bathrooms, and utility room shall be of durable water resistant material, i.e. ceramic tile or vinyl sheet
- 2) Window shades, drapes or curtains throughout, if the pastor does not wish to furnish one's own
- 3) Carpeting or rugs, if the pastor does not wish to use one's own
- 4) Outdoor tools: mower, hose, ladder, snow removal equipment as needed (See Item 7, under Services)

#### Maintenance and Improvements

- 1) It is important to plan ahead for repairs and improvements. There should be a line item in the church budget in the amount of at least 1 1/2% of the insured value of the parsonage to take care of routine and emergency expenses. If it is not used in any given year, it is to be held in escrow for when it is needed.
- 2) The electrical service should be inspected, and all wiring, including the installation of circuit breakers, required number of outlets, wall switches, and light fixtures are to meet the National Electrical Code.
- 3) It is important in the interest of both comfort and stewardship that all windows and doors be weather tight, with either storms or thermopane glass, and that there be screens for all windows. If new windows are being installed, they shall be high-performance type.

- 4) Both the interior and exterior of the parsonage should be kept in such repair as to preserve not only its physical condition, but its aesthetic value, and this includes sensitivity to the historical design of a building when making changes. Painting and papering should be done regularly, in consultation with the parsonage family.
- 5) It shall be the responsibility of the occupants of the parsonage to provide for the cleanliness of it and the repair of any damage which they or their pets have caused to the interior, exterior, or grounds. An exiting pastor shall also be responsible for removing swing sets, above ground pools, and other non-permanent additions. If, when a pastor is leaving, the cleaning, restoration, and repair of damage has not been done, the pastor will be billed for same. If the pastor does not pay this bill, or contests it, a recording of refusal or negations shall become a permanent part of the pastor's record.

#### Re: Annual Inspection of the Parsonage and Dealing with Needs

In compliance with the 1996 *Discipline* there shall be an annual inspection of the parsonage by the Chairpersons of the Board of Trustees and Committee on Staff-Parish Relations. (Para. 262.2f(5) and 2532.4). The purpose of this inspection is to discover needed repairs, improvements, and refurbishing, and to make short-term and long-term plans for accomplishing these, with prompt attention given to safety and health factors. Needs which arise between inspections should be taken care of promptly.

When a new pastor has been appointed, the incoming pastor (and spouse, if applicable) should tour the parsonage with a member of the Committee on Staff-Parish Relations at the convenience of the current parsonage occupants, and agree as to what repairs and redecorating are to be done before the new pastor moves in.

#### Safety and Security

- 1) If security is an issue in the community, whatever is needed to make the dwelling secure should be provided, i.e. dead-bolt locks, security systems, outdoor lighting, etc. A key change is suggested at the time of appointment change.
- 2) To make access to the house safe for occupants and guests, the driveway and the steps and sidewalks to all doors need to be of an even surface and kept in good repair. There is to be adequate illumination of all entrances.
- 3) All outside steps should have safe and secure railings.

#### **Accessibility Improvement Fund**

The Conference establish immediately a Parsonage Accessibility Improvement Fund of \$1,000,000 from which grants will be made to local churches for the purpose of making the parsonage accessible when such accessibility is required by a pastoral family member for the purpose of facilitating or maintaining an appointment. Distributions from the Parsonage Accessibility Improvement Fund shall be made by the Board of Trustees upon request of the Cabinet.

The fund shall be established initially from the surplus of the Fixed Rate Fund held by the Board of Trustees, pending approval by our Resident Bishop. The fund shall be replenished annually as needed through the Conference budget beginning in 2001.

#### Pets in the Parsonage

While it is recognized that it is the right of the parsonage family to have pets, it is also recognized that the ownership of pets requires the pastor to assume responsibility for them. At a minimum these responsibilities include:

- 1) Caring for the pets in a humane and responsible manner.
- 2) Securing permission of the local church for the construction of any needed facility.
- 3) Assuming financial responsibility for the construction, maintenance, and eventual removal (at the time of a move) of any facility, such as a dog house, etc.
- 4) Replacing/repairing any damage done by pets to the carpets, floors, drapes, doors, lawn, etc., as well as cleaning and deodorizing to the approval of the appropriate committee and the incoming pastor.
- 5) Any cleaning, repair, or removal resulting from the ownership of pets that is not done by an outgoing pastor shall be billed to that person.

A Parsonage Notebook or File

It is recommended that every parsonage family maintain and pass on to the next pastor a notebook or file of records and helpful household data, including, but not limited to:

- 1) A record of the date and place of purchase of all appliances and equipment. Manuals and service contracts for these are to be kept together.
- 2) A record of the date and name of contractor and a description of any work done on the parsonage.
- 3) A record of any decorating or refurbishing, to include paint color, type, brand, etc.
- 4) A list of reliable craftspeople and their phone numbers.
- 5) Any special information necessary regarding shrubs, flowers, etc.

Appointment Change

The responsibilities of the outgoing parsonage family at the time of a move shall include:

- 1) Removal of all personal property from the parsonage.
- 2) Leaving the house clean, particularly appliances, closets, cabinets, bathrooms, and storage areas.
- 3) Removal or arrangements for removal of all trash and discarded items.
- 4) Sanitization of house for pet odors and treatment for fleas.
- 5) Collection of all parsonage keys and transfer of same to the incoming family, being certain that all are clearly identified.

The responsibilities of the church/charge at the time of an appointment change shall include:

- 1) Washing curtains, dry cleaning draperies and window coverings (if provided) or replacing as needed, and washing all windows, inside and out.
- 2) Cleaning all rugs and carpets (if provided), and treating hardwood floors, if applicable.
- 3) Checking all smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and fire extinguishers.
- 4) Assuring that all appliances are in good repair and working order.
- 5) Having all faucets and drains in working order.
- 6) Painting and repairing as per "Maintenance and Improvements" section.

The following is to be filled out by the outgoing pastor and church representatives at the time of a move:

**Parsonage Inspection Report at the Time of Transition**

Church/Charge \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pastor \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Inspection \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Move \_\_\_\_\_

The pastor and a designated representative of the Trustees of the parsonage and a designated representative of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee shall make an inspection prior to the departure of the pastor at a time mutually agreed upon.

All items belonging to the pastor have been removed from the parsonage property.  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

All areas are clean, including walls, closets, and appliances, etc., and the home is ready to move into. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Note: If pets were kept inside, the home should be sanitized of any odors.

The cleaning of floors, carpets, etc. (after pastor moves out) will be or have been completed on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

The following damage was noted and is the responsibility of the exiting pastor.

\_\_\_\_\_

The following items/areas are in need of repair/improvement/replacement, and are recommended to the Trustees: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Pastor \_\_\_\_\_

Staff-Parish Representative \_\_\_\_\_

Trustees Representative \_\_\_\_\_

(Please mail one copy to the District Superintendent within one week following move.)

Re: Lead Paint

The Trustees of any local United Methodist Church or Annual Conference are held to the same standards as a "landlord" in all New England states. The local church Trustees are responsible for the de-leading of the church parsonage, and Conference Trustees are responsible for district/conference parsonages and staff housing to fulfill state law. De-leading shall be done prior to children living in the parsonage. Limited grants for this purpose are available through the Conference Board of Trustees.

Re: Handicapped Accessibility

It is recommended that bi-level or split level homes not be built or purchased for use as a parsonage, unless in the acquisition of such properties consideration is given to adequate facilities being provided which could accommodate a pastor or pastor's family member with handicapping conditions. The ownership of such homes limits the appointability of some pastors and pastors with family members with handicapping conditions. For further guidelines regarding accessibility see Para. 2532.6, 2543.3-4, (3), 2004 *Discipline*.

Re: New or Extensively Renovated Parsonages

When purchasing, building, or renovating an existing parsonage at a cost of more than 10% of its replacement value, the District Board of Church Building and Location is to be consulted as stipulated in the *Discipline*.

An important resource for churches that are buying, building, or renovating parsonages is the current issue of the booklet, *Parsonage Planning*, produced by The Mission Education and Cultivation Program of the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church. The guidelines set forth in this document, when used in consultation with an architect or quality builder, will eliminate many of the commonly encountered difficulties.

### YEARLY PARSONAGE INSPECTION REPORT

Church/Charge \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pastor \_\_\_\_\_  
 Charge Conf. Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 6 Month Report Due \_\_\_\_\_

Area Inspected	Condition	Date Replaced	Recom- mendations	Action on Recommend- ation
G S U	or Improved	Date	Cost	Action

- Exterior locks work
- Windows are in good working condition
- Electrical system working adequately
- Heating and cooling working adequately
- Domestic hot water working adequately
- Provisions for lawn care and snow removal
- Exterior painting
- Pointing of brick or stone
- Caulking of windows and doors
- Roof condition
- Sidewalk condition
- Driveway condition
- Garage floor condition
- Garage door condition
- Basement clean and dry
- Regular radon test
- Refrigerator condition
- Range condition
- Kitchen plumbing condition
- Kitchen cabinetry condition
- Kitchen floor condition
- Dishwasher condition
- Garbage disposal condition
- Living room floor condition
- Dining Room floor condition
- Bathroom 1 floor condition
- Bathroom 2 floor condition

2.

3. Appendix D

## **CLERGY COUPLES**

(submitted by Barbara Cann)

(adopted Monday Morning June 16, 2003)

WHEREAS it is understood in the New England Conference that to provide for a full time pastor means that a local church will provide the pastor compensation of at least minimum salary, adequate housing (a parsonage or housing allowance adequate to provide housing in the community), health insurance, a reimbursable account for business expenses, and pay 100% of Ministerial Support and other Mission Shares, and

WHEREAS the 2000 Discipline, Par. 251.4e [Par. 256.3(f) 1984 Discipline] in part states, "Housing shall not be considered as part of compensation or remuneration", and

WHEREAS Judicial Decision 588 (October 1987) rules that "P.5.25, Point B.1 of Wisconsin Annual Conference Guidelines for Housing which states: "All pastors serving full-time in local churches, and all conference staff members and district superintendents shall be provided either a parsonage or housing allowance" is not out of order and not in contradiction to Discipline Par. 256.3(f) 1984 Discipline" [Par. 251.4e, 2000 Discipline], and

WHEREAS the minimum salary for full time clergy is especially low when the provision of housing is not considered and as such makes finances a common stress factor for clergy families, and

WHEREAS there are many costs connected with living in a church owned parsonage including 15% self employment tax on the fair rental value of the parsonage plus all utilities; "renters insurance" and other expenses often allocated as "Furnishings Allowance", and

WHEREAS for pension and Social Security purposes housing and/or housing allowances are credited as income (i.e. compensation) to the minister, and

WHEREAS Judicial Council Decision 547 (October 1984) states, "The Judicial Council reaffirms the statement in it Decision No. 317 that clergy cannot be denied benefits on the basis of marital status", and

WHEREAS Judicial Council Decision 562 (April 1986) declared, "An annual conference may not adopt legislation which would permit contravention of the provisions of Par.256.3(f) 1984 Discipline by making it compulsory to provide each member of the clergy with individual housing as a matter of right whether or not the spouse was also being provided housing", and

WHEREAS the compensation for a non-clergy spouse would remain constant when he or she moved into a parsonage provided for his or her clergy spouse even though prior to the move his or her compensation had been providing for their housing elsewhere, and

WHEREAS a "one clergy person family" would not be denied use of a parsonage or a housing allowance if he or she already had adequate housing for his or her family within a reasonable distance, and

WHEREAS unequal allocation of housing benefits to a clergy couple is beneficial to one or both of the local churches involved at the expense of the pastor's family, and

WHEREAS unequal allocation of housing benefits to a clergy couple could cause future problems in making an appointment to a local church that was not providing a housing benefit or additional salary to a pastor who had been living in his or her spouse's parsonage, and

WHEREAS Judicial Council Decision 547 states, "there is nothing to indicate that ministers may not negotiate for more compensation if they are not going to use the housing", and

WHEREAS Judicial Decision 588 which states, with regard to clergy couple housing, "Additional housing allowance, unless provided as additional compensation after negotiation..." implies that additional housing allowance is legal and reasonable as long as it is provided as additional compensation after negotiation.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the New England Annual Conference will adopt and abide by the following policy:

"When a clergy couple is appointed to two full-time positions, the Bishop and Cabinet will,

1. make the local church(s) and both clergy aware that it is legal and reasonable to negotiate additional compensation for the clergy person who is residing in housing provided by his or her spouse's appointed charge, and
2. will assist the church(es) and pastors in the negotiation process, using the value of a housing benefit as a guide in negotiating additional compensation."

Appendix E – Continuing Formation Requirements – Adopted June 4, 1999

### **RS - 129 – CONTINUING FORMATION REQUIREMENTS**

(submitted by Board of Ministry)

Proposal for Continuing Formation Requirements for Clergy, Diaconal Ministers and Local Congregations of the New England Annual Conference

#### **Introduction:**

One of the critical area identified in our annual conference is "Equipping Leadership: As a people who yearn for God, we will equip our churches, clergy and laity for unabashed pursuit of effective ministry."

The Board of Ordained Ministry presents this policy for review and adoption by the 1999 New England Annual Conference. This policy grows out of a Conference-wide Continuing Education Summit Meeting held in March 1998. All Conference agencies with responsibilities in the area of Continuing Education were invited to participate. An emerging area of continuing education for ministry is to equip and uphold the life-long learning of both clergy and laity. We believe this policy is a step in addressing this issue.

#### **I. Continuing Formation Policy for Clergy/Diaconal Ministers of The New England Annual Conference**

The following quote from the Southern Indiana Conference Guidelines for Continuing Formation captures the intent of the Board of Ordained Ministry which is offering this policy.

"We interpret the spirit of the legislation for continuing formation to include the setting free of the inner gifts of God by formation and spiritual growth throughout life for ordained ministers. It is to encourage and motivate them to do continuing formation, by setting minimal standards. The intent is to enable life-long learning, leading to growth in competence and effectiveness throughout a minister's career and beyond.

To interpret the spirit of the legislation as force or threat would be counterproductive to its

intent, for it is the nature of such learning that it be willingly and freely embraced...[and] promotes standards and accountability."

### **A. Legislative Foundation**

"The board of Ordained Ministry shall set minimal standards and specific guidelines for continuing formation programs for members of their conference and insure their availability." para 325.2b 1996 Discipline

"Clergy shall continue their formation and spiritual growth for servant ministry and servant leadership throughout their careers, including carefully developed personal programs of study augmented periodically by involvement in organized educational and spiritual growth activities." para. 348.1 1996 Discipline

"Diaconal ministers shall be encouraged to continue their education throughout their careers, including pursuit of carefully developed personal programs of study augmented periodically by involvement in organized educational activities." para. 313.1.c 1992 Discipline

### **B. Standards**

Every Clergy Conference member, full or associate, whether serving full, part-time or Extension Ministry, shall complete a specified amount of Continuing Formation Credits or eight (8) Continuing Education Units (CEU's) each quadrennium.

1. Continuing Formation Credits: Qualified experiences will be identified by the Continuing Formation and Spiritual Growth Committee of the Board of ordained Ministry, in consultation with the sponsors of programs or experiences. They will establish criteria by which experiences will be assessed for credit amounts. See Appendix A for a sample of the types of events to be assessed for qualification.

2. Continuing Formation Credits may approximate Continuing Education Units (CEU's) CEU's equal 10 contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction and qualified instruction. CEU credits will equal one Continuing Formation Credit.

3. Experiences not already approved for Continuing Formation Credit shall require pre-approval by the Continuing Formation and Spiritual Growth Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry. Request for approval shall be submitted to the committee and include the following information.

- a) Date and time of course or experience

- b) Substantive course or experience outline
- c) A time schedule which isolates the number of contact hours.
- d) The credentials of the instructor or institution.
- e) Approval by the District Superintendent

4. The following special programs will qualify for credit.

- a) Overseas Pastoral Exchange Programs sponsored by the United Methodist Church qualify for .5 Credits per day of overseas duty.
- b) Volunteers in Mission Sponsored by the General Board of Global Ministries qualify for .5 Credits per day of service.
- c) Teaching a Certified Course will qualify for Credit, one time per course per quadrennium. The number of Credits granted will be related to the number of classroom hours for the course. (for example, 12 classroom hours of teaching equals 1.2 Credits.)
- d) Travel experience related to the practice of ministry and intended for continuing education and spiritual formation is eligible, but must be sponsored by a responsible, capable agency with qualified instruction. Such events require advanced approval from the Continuing Formation and Spiritual Growth Committee and qualify for .5 Credits per day.
- e) A book published which is related to the practice of ministry qualifies for 4 Credits.

5. Self-directed studies are acceptable for Credits when a qualified mentor/instructor takes formal responsibility for supervision and certification of contact hours between the mentor and student. Prior approval of the Continuing Formation and Spiritual Growth Committee is required.

6. Twenty hours of reading and reflection in the knowledge competency areas:( scripture, theology, church history, church polity, and the skills essential to the practice of ordained ministry. para 304.h 1996 Discipline) qualifies for one credit. No more than 2 credits defined as reading and reflection may be credited toward the minimum number of credits.

“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 during one year of each quadrennium. Such leaves should be planned in consultation with his/her employing agency. Diaconal ministers shall be asked by the district superintendent in the Charge Conference to outline their programs of continuing education for the year”. para. 313.c 1992 Discipline

**C. Procedures for Developing and Evaluating Clergy Continuing Formation (see ¶348.2, 348.5-6, 1996 Discipline)**

1. Individual continuing formation plans shall be developed annually in consultation with the District Superintendent, the pastor’s mentor ( if applicable) and Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee for clergy under local church appointment. Persons in Extension appointments shall consult with their District Superintendent. All are encouraged to develop plans which compliment the mission and vision of the local church and/or the mission , vision and critical areas of the Annual Conference and which equip individuals for new methods and models of ministry recognizing cultural and sociological changes. (A reporting form will be developed by the Continuing

## Formation and Spiritual Growth Committee)

2. Each individual is responsible for submitting appropriate documentation verifying completion of the program or event. "The District Superintendent is to receive annually from each clergyperson a report of his or her program of continuing education and spiritual growth, to give counsel concerning future plans, and to encourage congregations to give time and financial support for such programs." para. 421.5 1996 Discipline. The Continuing Formation and Spiritual Growth Committee will establish reporting forms.

a) Documentation or verification must be postmarked no later than December 31 of the last year of the quadrennium to count for the quadrennium. After fulfilling the requirement for the quadrennium, further documentation need not be submitted. Self-recorded documentation of additional experiences can be given annually to the District Superintendent at the Charge Conference or annual interview.

b) Units or credits may not be carried over from one quadrennium to the next.

c) Submitted documentation will be accessible to the Bishop, Cabinet and the Board of Ordained Ministry.

3. Ministerial Education Funds are available for Continuing Formation and Spiritual Growth experiences. Applications for MEF funds must be submitted prior to the event or experience.

4. The requirement for full and associate members entering the Conference will be prorated for the remainder of the quadrennium. (Entering the Conference in July of the third year of the quadrennium would make the requirement 3 Credits. Those entering in July of the fourth year are exempt for the quadrennium ending that year.)

5. Not meeting these minimum requirements within the quadrennium will be taken into consideration as part of the evaluation of pastoral effectiveness in the appointment process and may result in pastors being deemed unappointable.

6. Pastors on Leave of Absence, Disability Leave, Family Leave and medical or personal exemptions are excused from the minimum requirements during this time.

7. Classes in related fields and Doctorate of Ministry programs shall be awarded one (1) credit per class, not to exceed four (4) credits per quadrennium. Classes may include, but are not restricted to, worship arts, education, and specialty programs.

## **II. Continuing Formation Policy for Congregations of New England Annual Conference**

This section to be referred to the Board of Laity for continuing dialogue between BOL, BOOM and the Cabinet.

### **A. Continuing Education Summit Report**

"An emerging area of continuing education for ministry seemed to be the equipping of all the saints and to have functions that would uphold the life-long learning of both clergy and laity." Lynn Scott, GBGM Director of Continuing Education (5/98)

### **B. Legislative Foundation**

"The local church shall endeavor to enlist each member in activities for spiritual growth and in participation in the services and ministries of the Church and its organizations."  
¶229.1 1996 Discipline

### **C. Procedures**

1. Each congregation, during the annual Charge Conference, shall be asked by the presiding elder for a summary of their opportunities for spiritual formation for members and expectations or goals for members participation in continuing formation and spiritual growth experiences.
2. Congregations which report no participation by laity in opportunities for continuing formation or spiritual growth will be identified by the District Superintendents to the Appointment Cabinet as "ministry focus - chaplaincy" congregations. Congregations reporting participation in formation experiences may be identified as "ministry focus - missional, redeveloping, full-time, part-time" or other defining characteristics.
3. The Annual Conference shall coordinate information about continuing formation opportunities and make information about such opportunities available to clergy, laity and congregations. Addendum 1 is a partial list of the types of opportunities currently available through a variety of organizations in the New England Conference.

### **ADDENDUM 1**

The following list includes some of the training and continuing formation opportunities currently available in the New England Conference. Other valuable opportunities exist and we invite persons to send additions to the Continuing Formation and Spiritual Growth Committee for consideration for eligibility. The Continuing Formation and Spiritual Growth Committee will review these events and assess their eligibility for Continuing Formation Credits.

- Assembly of the Laity - Board of Laity
- Bangor Seminary - Small Church Certificate Program
- Certain annual meetings, eg. UMW District and Conference meetings
- Congregational Development (Parish Development Consultants and other resources)
- Congregational, Cluster and District Training (DS's and other qualified resources)
- Disciple Bible Series
- Educational Opportunities travel
- Emmaus /Tres Dias
- Institute for Church Leaders - Alban Institute
- Jurisdictional and denominational events such as Town & Country Consultation
- Lay Speakers Training
- Lite Days/Leadership training (Southern New Hampshire District)
- Pastor's Assembly
- School of Christian Missions/Mission Events - UMW
- SnapShops - Conference Council On Ministries
- Society of Biblical Literature
- Spiritual Formation Events for Clergy - BOOM

- Study Series - Rolling Ridge
- Town and Country Committee's Pilot Project
- Volunteers In Mission experiences
- Urban Institute programs
- Week of service at camp or youth program
- Directed Spiritual Retreat
- Women and Word Preaching Conference
- Boston Univ. Pastor's Colloquium

#### Appendix F

### **RS – 202 – CONFERENCE PLANNING TEAM MODEL**

(submitted by Bonnie Marden)

(adopted on 2003 consent calendar Saturday Afternoon, June 14, 2003)

### ***Holy Conferencing***

The New England Annual Conference consists of clergy and lay persons gathering for worship and learning, legislative decision-making, and for the celebration of rites of passage in ministry; commissioning, consecration, ordination, memorials, retirements and Calls to ministry.

Since the conference size includes over 1,500 members with approximately 1,300 participants each year, planning and logistics for housing, meals, special group gatherings, campus mobility, worship design and agenda management are increasingly complex. Dialogue and learning increases through smaller group gatherings. Special guest arrangements and coordination of planning teams require long range planning and advance preparation. Growing teams of volunteers support hospitality and conferencing activities, providing diverse leadership.

Holy conferencing and stewardship require us to take seriously the use of time for presentations and conferencing business (agenda management) when we gather as a corporate body. The Choreographer, in consultation with the Episcopal Office, staff, representatives from the Cabinet, the Board of Laity and presenters, continues to integrate worship and conferencing/legislative components (worshipful work) of Annual Conference. Worshipful work elements occur both in conferencing/legislation and in worship services and require careful communication with staff, leaders and presenters.

### ***Staffing and Teams***

Annual Conference planning, coordinated by a Choreographer, involves the Bishop, staff, volunteers and work area teams and includes recruitment of approximately 200 volunteers and their orientation and support. Goals and tasks are located in the Choreographer's annual contract. Persons interested in participating in Annual Conference planning or leadership may identify their interests, suggestions or recommend resources through the Annual Conference Evaluation Form, the Leadership Committee, the Bishop's Office, organization elected for Conference Program leadership, Conference Secretary or Choreographer. The Choreographer maintains a list of volunteers and resources.

Teams for Worship, Agenda, Site, AV/Tech Support, Learning Centers and Registration currently exist. Additional teams are created as needed. Relationships with New England seminaries offer opportunities for students to experience a variety of aspects of conferencing. Members of work area teams include volunteers and persons

recruited by staff and other members. Teams seek to represent diversity – cultural, geographic, theological, lay/clergy, etc., as recommended by the Discipline. Some positions are stipended (Choreographer, Registrar) and others may be as the level of responsibility increases. A fall and spring Orientation session will be scheduled by the Choreographer to share general and detailed information on the conferencing experience. Staff, volunteers, committee and conference leadership are all welcome.

## **Annual Conference Planning and Agenda Management**

### **DESIGN PHASE - Summer**

1. Develop theme and goals for AC experience, draft preliminary schedule, communicate with worship leadership and gather outline of ideas and worship experiences.
2. Recruit team leaders for conference management with input from Conference leadership building on evaluations of current model. Episcopal Office invites guest speakers, preachers.
3. Notify leadership (including Cabinet, Leadership Team, staff, Conference agencies) of developing design and create model for PreConference experiences.

### **PLANNING PHASE - Fall**

1. Confirm contract and site for next conference session.
2. Conduct worship design process, recruit remaining guests and begin their orientation.
3. Preliminary agenda development, negotiate PreConference dates with Cabinet.
4. Orientation session for staff and leadership and planning teams.
5. Communications invite conference and related agencies to submit reports or presentations.
  - A mailing from the Conference Secretary's office indicates the theme and focus for the year, restating the purpose of Annual Conference, identifying presentation ideas.
  - Notices in CrossCurrents and Conference Website indicate how to submit a request.
  - Staff and conference leadership identify emerging issues or presentation needs surfacing in other ways - mailings from general agencies, episcopal initiatives, etc.

### **IMPLEMENTATION - Winter and Spring**

#### **January**

1. Equalization names to Conference Secretary, January 1
2. A second mailing from the Conference Secretary's office includes:
  - Submission deadline for materials to be considered at the upcoming session of Annual Conference and all reports to be included in the Conference Journal
  - A process which late submissions must follow if not submitted by the deadline.
  - Explanation that deadline ensures conference members have complete materials prior to the district gatherings and conference.
3. Schedule Orientation and "run through" with Conference leadership for April or May.

4. Script for preconference video created if intended for use at district gatherings.
5. Create support technologies and resources (videos, powerpoint) Communications staff.

## **February**

1. List of Lay Members to Conference Secretary – February 1
2. Agenda Management: Set agenda format and notify participants of assigned times.
3. Conferencing/Legislation Review Team will review requests submitted and grouped into Equip - Support - Resource categories. The Team will assign preliminary time allotments to requests and indicate necessary sequencing needs (ie. the budget needs to be adopted after items impacting the budget). The Team includes the Conference Secretary, the Treasurer, organization elected for Conference Program leadership, and a representative of the Board of Laity and the Bishop's Office (typically the Bishop's Assistant) and the Choreographer. Additional volunteers provide neutral perspectives. The Team prioritizes requests submitted and identifies other outstanding business. Requests which do not fit the purpose of Annual Conference or that need to be referred or rejected will be notified by the appropriate staff person or Choreographer. In most cases, an alternative is offered.

## **March**

1. Reports due to Conference Secretary and Registration forms distributed, March 1
2. Legislation due to Conference Secretary, March 15
3. District Superintendents and/or other personnel leading district presentations receive orientation about the district presentations, feedback and guidelines.
4. Workbook (proposals and reports) created for distribution to conference members including information about campus setting and activities.

## **April**

1. **Registrations** due to Registrar – April 1
2. **Materials** due for publication – April 1
3. General Conference delegate election years: delegate nominations due to Conference Secretary – 4/1 (*Rules state 5/1 – earlier for printing*)
4. Presenters notified about presentation schedule and expectations. Expectations include:
  - Identification of participants in the presentation, preparation of a presentation script or outline reviewable by Choreographer or other personnel, submission of video or sound needs to the tech crew prior to conference, creative use of multiple medium - video, powerpoint, sound, visuals, etc.
  - Willingness to work with Choreographer and staff to integrate holy conferencing dimensions and ensure technology resources and support are prepared.
  - Presenters time their presentations in advance and if discussion is expected, reduce presentation time by the anticipated amount of discussion time allocated.

## **May**

1. PreConference materials arrive at member's homes in early May
2. District gatherings and conferencing preparation sessions, second or third weekend in May
3. Presenter's receive final notification of time slots/agenda

4. Orientation: Staff, volunteers and Choreographer run through each component of the conference experience. The run through may be broken up into sections (video, music, site, registration, etc.)

## **June Annual Conference Agenda Management**

During conferencing sessions, the Bishop manages the agenda with support from the Bishop's assistant and additional support staff. Persons identified as Agenda Stewards will:

- Ensure all presenters are present, prepared, and seated in preparation area. Remind presenters of their time allotment and options during presentations.
- Work with video crew to confirm materials and cueing of presentations.
- Agenda steward is responsible for cueing Bishop and Bishop's assistant of any adjustments or changes and for tracking the completion or relocation of presentations. A tracking form is completed by the Steward at the end of each session and submitted to the Bishop. The Bishop indicates the new time assignment and Stewards assist with communication with presenters as needed.

The Choreographer will work with the Stewards to ensure awareness of intentional sequencing strategies and requests notification of any major changes, but not the details of each change unless there are other implications for the schedule.

## **ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION PHASE - Annual Conference and Summer**

1. On site evaluation process includes listening for next year images and ideas during sessions.
2. Assess alignment with Conference Vision and Mission statements, Core Values and goals
3. Debrief and interviews as needed, including site, format, worship, staff, etc. (Debriefs recommended for Worship Team and for Staff/Conference Leadership one to two weeks after sessions.) Review evaluations and feedback on strengths and opportunities.
4. Acknowledgments and affirmations, billings, re-negotiate contracts(Choreographer, site, etc.)

Appendix G – A Policy on Clergy Sexual Ethics – Adopted June 7, 1997

### **RS - 132 -A POLICY ON CLERGY SEXUAL ETHICS FOR THE NEW ENGLAND ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

(submitted by the Board of Ordained Ministry)

(Adopted Saturday Morning, June 7, 1997)

#### **Working Document**

The current policy has been reviewed by the Board and is presented to the conference for adoption with the following proposed revisions.

## **CLERGY SEXUAL ETHICS FOR THE NEW ENGLAND ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

### *Contents of the Policy*

I. Introduction

p.

II.	Theological Reflections	pp.
III.	Assumptions	pp.
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V.	Strategies for Education	pp.
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VII.	Resources	p.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The pastoral office is a position of sacred trust and responsibility. By virtue of the trust people place in the office and the person of pastor, the office is also a position of great personal authority and power over others. Unfortunately, some persons in pastoral roles violate the sacred trust and responsibility given them. When such behavior occurs or is alleged, the Church is called to intervene and assist all persons involved, in caring and loving ways. While legal alternatives exist for persons with complaints, the Church must not ignore its responsibility to address such behavior and allegations. These guidelines deal with the specific abuse of power by those who engage in violations of professional ethics which involve sexual behavior. Such behavior, which is an abuse of power, may occur as clergy relate to laity, and as clergy relate to one another.

## II. THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

“As the Church of Christ, we are called to understand and receive the gospel promises in our troubled and uncertain times.” In acknowledgment of and in response to this summons, we affirm that:

1. God creates persons in the Divine image, male and female.
2. All people are equal in the eyes of God. This is true even if that equality is contradicted by the language, laws, prejudices, customs, habits and hidden assumptions of human society or the practices of the church.
3. The human body is good, a special part of the divine creation of matter. It is the temple in which the Holy Spirit dwells.
4. *"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"* The 1996 Book of Discipline (Par. 65.G).
5. Like any gift, sexuality can be abused and misused. Violation of the boundaries inherent in the pastoral relationship through sexual behavior is a sin against God, the victim, and the redemptive community. This violation:
  - causes potentially serious psychological, spiritual and emotional harm to victims;
  - reveals the brokenness of the perpetrator:
  - betrays Christ and the pastoral office in that it abuses the power and authority of ministry by changing it from healing and redemption to exploitation and gratification, and tarnishes the symbol of Christ as healer and Savior; and
  - rends the local parish and the whole Body of Christ in ways which require special efforts for healing the deep wounds.
6. The open airing of differences within the community of faith has strong Biblical support.

7. Too often the Church has avoided conflict and in so doing, has failed to do justice. While the Church is called by God to bring peace and reconciliation to a broken world, there can be no peace or reconciliation without justice.
8. While healing can occur for victim, perpetrator and the community, it is a gift of God's grace. Our task is to facilitate that process by seeing that justice is done.
9. The Church embraces the hope and possibility of redemption, through God's grace and by the individual's commitment to change. If a clergy person is found guilty of sexual misconduct he/she may remain in or return to full connection following rehabilitation and having met remedial requirements.

### **III. ASSUMPTIONS**

1. Justice requires: -providing a setting in which the complainant may share her or his story and be heard with openness and compassion; providing a means by which judgment can be made as to the validity of the complaint; providing clear, consistent steps, known to all participants, which will lead to achieving justice. Such steps may include: protecting the vulnerable, calling the abuser into account by confrontation and the imposition of consequences, providing pastoral care and vindicating the victim, or the accused pastor if the complaint is deemed not valid.
2. For the purpose of this policy statement, sexual misconduct occurs when there is abuse of power through sexual contact or activity, not limited to sexual intercourse, in which a pastor abuses the vulnerability of a parishioner<sup>1</sup>, client, church staff person, or any other person to whom the pastor has a professional relationship in his or her ministry. Therefore, any conduct which sexualizes the pastoral relationship, including but not limited to, sexual propositions or threats, suggestive actions, comments or insults, unrelenting jokes about sex or sexuality, is considered sexual misconduct because it is a violation of power and professional boundaries.
3. If there is suspicion of child sexual molestation or harassment one should make himself/herself familiar with state law and abide by it.
4. In this policy a "complainant" is understood to be a person who submits a written and signed complaint for arbitration. While a complainant may also be an alleged victim, the Policy of the New England Conference does not assume that the complainant is an actual victim. The complainant may be other than the person against whom the alleged offense was committed. The term "victim" will be used for the person against whom the offense was committed if the accused pastor makes a confession of sexual misconduct or is proven to be guilty.
5. When sexual misconduct occurs, there are many victims: the person(s) who has been abused, the spouse(s) and families of the abused person(s), the spouse and family of the accused pastor, and the congregation(s) and the larger community surrounding them. While all these victims are not addressed by current disciplinary procedures of the United Methodist Church, all are hurt when sexual misconduct occurs. An Area Response Team of the Conference will be available to provide care for the accused pastor and family, the complainant(s) and families,

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<sup>1</sup>When a single pastor dates a parishioner, it is recommended that the pastor discuss with the local church PPRC or SPRC or its chair and with the dating party concerning the fact that a dating relationship significantly shifts the pastor-parishioner relationship. One implication is that if the dating relationship is terminated, for whatever reason(s), the parishioner may well feel the need to find another pastor and church. Similarly, the pastor may feel the need to seek another appointment.

as well as appropriate intervention on behalf of the congregation(s) or the larger community. When allegations of sexual misconduct are made against a pastor, the complainant(s), the alleged victim(s), and the families of the pastor, will receive sensitive and respectful care from the Area Response Team. Justice for the accused pastor will also be sought. Reasonable care will be taken to protect the privacy of the pastor, the complainant(s) and the victim(s).

6. Within the New England Conference, there will be a minimum of six Area Response Teams with a chair person for each. The teams will be divided geographically in the following ways:

- Metro Boston North/Metro Boston South
- Rhode Island & Southeastern Massachusetts (including the Cape Cod)
- Northern Maine
- Central Maine
- Southern Maine and New Hampshire
- Central & Western Massachusetts and Connecticut

Each team will consist of at least four persons, both lay and clergy persons. Attention shall be given to inclusiveness. Members of the Board of Ordained Ministry cannot serve on the Area Response Team. Within each team two members shall be assigned to the complainant(s) and family, one shall be assigned to the accused pastor and family, and one shall be assigned to the local congregation. These persons shall be trained in the administration of this policy and the procedures outlined in The Book of Discipline. They will also be knowledgeable of the dynamics of sexual misconduct and readied to provide care for the persons and families involved. The Board of Ordained Ministry, in consultation with the Bishop and Cabinet, will recruit all team members. Input will be sought from COSROW. Input will also be sought from the Response Team's chair persons. Nominations for new members will be cleared with the Response Team. The Board of Ordained Ministry will be responsible for the cost of training and work of the team members, and the team will be accountable to the Board of Ordained Ministry.

These assumptions provide the basis for the procedures which follow:

#### **IV. STEPS TO TAKE WHEN A VIOLATION HAS BEEN ALLEGED**

The following policy outlines the steps a complainant may take in order to bring his/her complaint "to light and seek resolution according to the procedures outlined in the Book of Discipline, 1996."

##### **1. Initial Steps**

Anyone who feels that he/she has experienced sexual misconduct by a member of the clergy should first contact-a District Superintendent and/or the Bishop. The person may also then contact a member of the Area Response Team and/or the SPRC or PPRC chair with the knowledge of a D. S. and Bishop. Team members will be on call to support the complainant(s), the accused pastor and the local congregation. If a D. S. or Bishop does not respond within 7 days, then the complainant is encouraged to contact a member of the Area Response Team.

(Members of the Pastor/Parish Committee, Lay Leaders, and other key lay persons and staff of the local church as well as District Superintendents and other Conference personnel should have a current list of Area Response Team members.)

Any D.S. receiving a report of clergy misconduct must notify and inform the Bishop of the report. The Bishop may direct the complainant to the Area Response Team.

After the allegation has been received, the complainant will be encouraged to take one or more of the following actions:

- 1) To confront the accused pastor with his/her behavior and explain why it is unacceptable.
- 2) To keep a diary listing the time, place and nature of the offenses.
- 3) To understand the procedures available within this policy and The Book of Discipline for dealing with the problem.
- 4) When appropriate, consider a referral to a professional counselor. Each Area Response Team will compile a list of these persons.

## **2. -Filing a Written Complaint /Response of the Bishop**

If a written complaint is filed by the complainant, the Bishop receives it and determines whether or not the complaint is based on allegations of one or more chargeable offenses listed in the 1996 Book of Discipline, Para. 2624.1. If so, the Bishop may respond according to Par. 358. The Bishop may utilize the Area Response Teams to assist in this process.

Suspension is not intended, nor is it to be interpreted, as punitive action toward the accused pastor; it is to be understood as a “neutral category” during which the procedures of this policy are followed according to Par. 358.1c.

The Bishop and/or a D.S. may share with the SPRC/PPRC the nature of the complaint that has been filed and the pastor’s response.

## **3. Refusal to File a Written Complaint**

If the complainant will not file a written complaint and chooses to stop the process at that point, the team member will continue to be available to offer counsel and referral, if appropriate, until a time when either the complainant or the team member brings closure. In such cases, the Bishop and D.S. may initiate conversations with the clergy person to process credible allegations, including theological reflection, and/or make suggestions for remedial actions.

## **4. Response to Findings of Committee on Investigation**

When a complaint is sent to the Committee on Investigation, the Committee on Investigation will process the complaint in accordance with The Book of Discipline (1996 para. 2626). It is in this process that both parties are heard, and through consensus, when possible, reach a mutually acceptable resolution.

A. If remedial action is deemed necessary by the Committee on Investigation, the Committee may recommend the following steps be taken:

- 1) A form of pastoral care may be developed for the victim. This may include:
  - a. provision for future therapy
  - b. a letter of apology by the clergyperson
- 2) Other remedial action deemed proper by the Bishop and consistent with those actions enumerated in The Book of Discipline (.1996 para. 358.3a) may be taken.
- 3) The original complaint, signed by the Bishop, and the recommended remedial requirements will be entered in the clergyperson's personal file.

4) The Board of Ordained Ministry through its Executive Committee will monitor the compliance of the clergyperson with the remedial requirements.

B. According to the 1996 Book of Discipline Para. 2626.3e, "If a determination is made that a complaint is not based on chargeable offenses, the Committee on Investigation may refer the complaint to the Bishop for administrative or other action."

The Bishop's response may include:

1) Requesting that a letter be sent by the Board of Ordained Ministry to the clergyperson, informing him/her of the determination of the Committee on Investigation. This letter will be included in the clergyperson's personal file in the Bishop's office and the District Superintendent's office.

2) returning the clergyperson to full responsibilities and restoring back pay;

3) asking the D.S. and/or team member to inform the SPRC/PPRC and facilitate healing in the local church;

4) asking the DS and/or team member to meet with and inform the complainant, and facilitate healing.

## **5. When Disclosure is Necessary**

After the resolution is reached the Bishop may, for the health and protection of the local church and to assure justice, recommend that the District Superintendent share pertinent information with the PPRC or SPRC who may choose to disclose this with the members of the local congregation.

## **6. Subsequent Appointments**

When a pastor has been found guilty of a chargeable offense, the nature of the charge and its disposition shall be shared in confidence by the District Superintendent with the PPRC or SPRC of each church to which he/she shall be subsequently appointed.

## **7. Withdrawal from the Annual Conference**

If the clergyperson chooses to withdraw from the Annual Conference under complaint, the PPRC or SPRC of the local church should be informed by the D.S. that a complaint was filed and that the clergyperson chose to withdraw. A concise record will be entered in the clergyperson's personal file in the Bishop's office and the District Superintendent's office.

# **V. STRATEGIES FOR EDUCATION**

## **1. Introduction**

To enable the implementation of this policy, the Board of Ordained Ministry will appoint District Clergy Sexual Ethics Task Forces consisting of at least four persons from each District (two clergy and two lay). Attention to inclusiveness will be given. Members of the Task Force will be responsible for explaining the procedures in this policy and for providing education for clergy and laypersons on issues relating to sexual ethics. The Board of Ordained Ministry will sponsor ongoing training for the District Clergy Sexual Ethics Task Force, the Cabinet, Area Response Team members, and members of the Committee on Investigation, and Camps and Conferences personnel. The above persons will meet at least once each quadrennium to review the policy and to receive further training. The Board of Ordained Ministry is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy and for recommending its revisions, with input from the foretasted groups.

## **2. Evaluation of Policy and its Implementation**

“Each person who has been involved with the procedures of this policy is encouraged to reflect on the process and give feedback to the Board of Ordained Ministry. A formal process for evaluation is in place, persons who have feedback, concerns or questions are encouraged to contact the chair of the Continuing Education Committee of the Board of Ordained Ministry so that the evaluation can be a helpful tool.”

### **3. Education about the Policy**

The BOM will appoint District Clergy Sexual Ethics Task Forces which will include four persons from each district (including two lay and two clergy members). Members of the Task Force will be resource people, readied to provide education about this policy. The Task Force will receive training in order to carry out its function.

In order to educate clergy and laity about this policy, the District Clergy Sexual Ethics Task Forces in co-operation with the District Superintendents will offer workshops to review the policy and provide education on prevention of sexual misconduct. Clergy attendance is mandatory. Local church PPRC's (or SPRC's) will be expected to attend these workshops in order to teach the congregation about the function of this policy. District education will include methods for presenting the issues to the congregation. Education will be ongoing.

The District Committees on Ordained Ministry, the BOM, and the mentors are charged with informing those persons who are in the process of preparation for ministry about this policy.

- a. Those seeking candidacy on the District level
- b. Those seeking Deacon's Orders and Probationary Membership into the NE Conference.
- c. Those who are Continuing Probationers
- d. Those who are seeking Elder's Orders, Permanent Deacon's Orders and Full Membership into the NE Conference
- e. Those transferring into the NE Conference
- f. Those enrolled in Local Pastor's School

### **4. Prevention Education**

To be effective in preventing sexual misconduct, education must be a priority for the Church. Such education includes in-service training, growth in self awareness, a disciplined spiritual life and the clarification of one's relationship with community.

#### **A. Clergy**

Primary responsibility for one's spiritual growth, health and stewardship of sexuality rests with the clergyperson. Part of this responsibility is to discover people and other resources that assist in this journey.

The Cabinet is responsible for the continuing education of its members with regards to clergy ethics.

Clergy gatherings (such as Pastor's Assembly, Spiritual Life Retreat, and Executive Session at Annual Conference) are opportunities for training and reflection on matters of sexuality such as boundary issues, stress management, and support systems.

Persons seeking membership in the NE Conference will demonstrate an understanding of the issue of sexuality and clergy ethics appropriate to the level that they are being examined. Such demonstration can be made through seminary courses, written work, and practice of ministry or verbal dialogue with those persons on DCOM or BOM who are examining them in the ordination process.

## **B. Local Church**

The PPRC or SPRC is charged with teaching the congregation (for example, through youth and adult education, worship, and conversation) about the ethical sexual conduct in the pastor-parishioner relationship. Therefore, the PPRC or SPRC is responsible for seeking out resources, identified in Section III and utilizing resources provided by COSROW, by which it can inform itself about the dynamics of issues surrounding appropriate sexual boundaries, clergy ethics and sexual misconduct.

The Conference program agencies and personnel (for example, the District Committee On Ministry, United Methodist Women, United Methodist Men, the Conference Lay Leader and the Commission On the Status and Role Of Women) are responsible for providing continuing education for the laity about sexuality and ethics. Traditional laity gatherings such as Annual Conference, Cluster events, and Conference on the Ministry of the Laity are opportunities for such training and refecation.

## **GLOSSARY OF TERMS**

**Abuse of Power:** Power resides in a position which confers status, authority and resources to accomplish goals and tasks. Power is the ability to move, sway, influence and/or control others. A failure to recognize unequal power relationships may lead to the abuse of power. Abuse of power occurs when an individual uses an office or position with its inherent status and authority in a manner which does not respect the rights of others.

**Chargeable offense:** See 1996 Book of Discipline Para. 2624.1

**Clergy:** For the purpose of this document, “clergy” refers to local pastors, associate members, probationary members, full members (Elders and Permanent Deacons), and any person appointed by the bishop or assigned by the district superintendent. All persons in any of the above categories, including those on leaves of all types, honorable or administrative location, or retirement are included in this definition.

**Resolution:** The goal of the complaint process is to seek resolution of complaints. Resolution is a process designed to insure that all parties are heard and that recommendations are formulated which will lead toward justice. Sexual harassment is illegal and can be prosecuted under Federal Law.

**Child Protective Services:** a private agency or any equivalent state agency that provides protection for children.

Appendix H – Clergy Background Check Policy – Adopted June 15, 2003

### **RS – 203 – CLERGY BACKGROUND CHECK POLICY**

(submitted by the Safe Sanctuaries Task Force and the Board of Ordained Ministry)

1. A National Criminal Background Check will be required of all clergy entering the New England Annual Conference in or after June 2003 in any of these categories:
  - a. Election to probationary membership on either the elder or deacon track
  - b. Returning to active ministry from any non-pastoral status
  - c. As a new local pastor
  - d. As a supply pastor
  - e. Transfer from another annual conference
  - f. Cross-Conference appointment under provisions of 337.1 of the 2002 Book of Discipline
  - g. As an elder from another denomination

2. A current National Criminal Background Check will be required of all clergy (elder, deacon, local pastor, or supply) serving churches and all clergy in extension ministry no later than July 1, 2004.
3. A National Criminal Background Check shall be deemed to be current for 7 years. Therefore an updated National Criminal Background Check will be required every 7 years.
4. The BOM Registrar will be responsible for notifying individuals that a National Criminal Background Check is required.
5. The cost of the investigation will be borne by the individual clergy.
6. Clergy will apply for a background check by submitting the required form along with payment of \$ 75.00 to the Registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry.
7. Copies of the investigative report will be retained by the Episcopal Office and the Registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry.
8. Appointments will not take effect until the investigative report has been received by the BOM Registrar.
9. Any irregularities in the investigative report will be reviewed by the BOM Registrar and the Assistant to the Bishop together with the clergyperson to determine referral or further action.
10. Failure to complete the National Criminal Background Check will jeopardize the individual's appointment.

Appendix I – Lay Staff Background Check Guidelines – Adopted June 15, 2003

**RS –204 – LAY STAFF BACKGROUND CHECK GUIDELINES**

(submitted by the Safe Sanctuaries Task Force)

Purpose – The purpose of this policy is to provide a means of obtaining criminal background checks, and a means of handling the information thus obtained in local churches for hired lay staff, especially those working with youth and children. It is strongly recommended to local churches that criminal background checks are completed on **all** hired lay staff- not just those working with youth and children. Many staff come into contact with youth and children, but there are other reasons to have a background check completed for the safety of the church, such as crimes of embezzlement, theft, and violent crime.

Description – A criminal background check consists of supplying certain standard identifying information to the appropriate state or local law enforcement authorities on a standard form provided for this purpose. A search is then performed of available state and federal databases for any records pertaining to the individual, similar to the same type of check that is currently done for all teachers and volunteers in the public schools.

Information obtained – The information arising from a background check will be reviewed and kept by the Senior Pastor. If the information disclosed, in the opinion of the Senior Pastor, raises no cause for concern, the Senior Pastor may communicate approval to the person(s) in charge of the appropriate program area and to the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee.

If, in the opinion of the Senior Pastor, the information disclosed raises any cause for concern about the suitability of the individual for work in the program area contemplated, the Senior Pastor will review the information privately with the chairperson of the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee (or head of the department involved). If concern still exists, the individual shall be afforded the opportunity to meet privately with the

Senior Pastor and the chairperson of PSPR (or the head of the department involved) for the purpose of discussion, review, and/or clarification, before any final decision is made regarding approval of the individual's participation in the area of ministry proposed. If, following such a meeting, the Senior Pastor and the chairperson of PSPR (or head of the department involved) are in consensus that there is no cause for concern, the Senior Pastor shall communicate approval as above. If the Senior Pastor and the chairperson of PSPR (or the head of the department involved) are agreed that the concern is legitimate, or if they are unable to achieve consensus, the individual will be assisted in finding another, more suitable, opportunity for ministry.

Confidentiality – All information arising from a background check is to be held in confidence by the Senior Pastor (and the chairperson of PSPR or head of department if the information is reviewed with him or her). All records of such information will be kept under lock and key in a secure location. Records, notes, and information arising from a meeting with the individual as outlined above will be considered to be part of the background check and will be subject to the same provision of confidentiality.

Frequency and record retention – Results of a background check will be kept on file for a period of seven years, at which point they will be destroyed. If the individual continues to work in program areas for which a background check is required, a new background check will be required after seven years. If there is a break in employment for a period of 90 days or more, and the employee desires to resume work in a program area that a background check is necessary, a new background check will be required.

Compliance – It will be the responsibility Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee to make sure all hired laypersons comply. After persons have submitted all paperwork, they may be hired contingent on the results of the background check. Upon review, employee is retained or released.

Financial considerations – The person applying for the position will pay for the initial check. Subsequent checks will be at the employer's expense. For part-time positions, the local church administrative board or church council will determine who bears any financial cost.

## **Authorization and Request for Criminal Records Check, and RELEASE**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby authorize \_\_\_\_\_ church to request the \_\_\_\_\_ police/sheriff's department to RELEASE information regarding any record of charges or convictions contained in its files, or in any criminal file maintained on me, whether said file is a local, state, or national file, and including but not limited to accusations and convictions for crimes committed against minors, to the fullest extent permitted by state and federal law. I do RELEASE said police/sheriff's department from all liability that may result from any such disclosure made in response to this request. I understand that information disclosed to the Senior Pastor /Pastor pursuant to this Authorization may in addition be reviewed by, disclosed to and/or discussed with the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee ("PSPR"), and in signing this Authorization, I also RELEASE and agree to hold harmless the

\_\_\_\_\_ (name of local church) its Senior Pastor/Pastor, its officers, employees, volunteers, staff, and its PSPR from any and all liability arising in any way from such use, review, disclosure or discussion.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Print** \_\_\_\_\_ **applicant's** \_\_\_\_\_ **full**  
**name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Print all other names that have been used by applicant (if any):  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security number (if required by sheriff's dept.) \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's license number: \_\_\_\_\_ State issuing license: \_\_\_\_\_

License expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_

Request sent to: \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**This is a sample form. Your local police department or sheriff's department may have its own request form and prefer that you use it.**

### **Form for Reference Check**

**Applicant Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Reference Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

On a separate paper, please indicate the answers to the following questions.

1. What is your relationship to the applicant?
2. How long have you known the applicant?
3. How well do you know the applicant?
4. How would you describe the applicant?
5. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to children and/or youth?
6. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to adults?
7. How would you describe the applicant's leadership abilities?
8. How would you feel about having the applicant as a volunteer worker with your child and/or youth?
9. Do you know of any characteristics that would negatively affect the applicant's ability to work with children and/or youth? If so, please describe.
10. Do you have any knowledge that the applicant has ever been convicted of a crime? If so, please describe.
11. Please list any other comments you would like to make:

Reference inquiry completed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

The applicant has applied for a position as \_\_\_\_\_ (name position) at \_\_\_\_\_ (name of church). The New England Conference policy requires a background check for all applicants to such a position. The applicant has authorized release of the information sought by the Reference Check. The addressee's name was provided by the applicant as a possible source of information for this express purpose and any information disclosed by the addressee will be retained by the local church under lock and key, and will be disclosed only to the Senior Pastor and/or the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee for the sole and limited purpose of evaluating the applicant for the position sought.

### **APPLICATION FORM FOR HIRED LAY STAFF**

*The information obtained on this form is for internal use by this local church only.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Business phone \_\_\_\_\_

Departments in which I may serve: children \_\_\_\_\_; youth \_\_\_\_\_; music \_\_\_\_\_ (please check any or all)

Occupation, current employer, and business address:

Time at this employment: \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months

List (name and address) churches (other than this one) that you have attended regularly the past five years.

Name/address/phone number of pastor, employer, and personal references that may be contacted:

Pastor at other church:

Employer:

Personal Reference:

Describe your background working with the program and/or age group requested.

Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offense?	Yes	No
Have you ever been charged with child neglect or abuse?	Yes	No
Have any complaints or allegations of misconduct involving children or youth ever been made against you?	Yes	No
Have you been convicted of the possession, use, or sale of drugs?	Yes	No
Within the last 30 days, have you abused alcohol, legal, or illegal drugs?	Yes	No
Have you been convicted or plead guilty to a traffic offense within the last 5 years?	Yes	No

Current drivers license number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please explain fully any YES answers to the above questions. In addition to the above, is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the supervision, guidance, and care of young people? (Explain on a separate sheet of paper)

The information that I have provided may be verified by contacting persons or organizations that may have information concerning me. I hereby RELEASE and agree to hold harmless from liability any person or organization that provides information, and this RELEASE may be sent to any reference. I also agree to RELEASE and agree to hold harmless this local church its Senior Pastor/Pastor, its officers, employees, volunteers, staff, and its Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee from any and all liability arising in any way from any use, review, disclosure or discussion of the information disclosed in this Application. I waive any right that I may have to inspect references provided on my behalf.

I certify the information I have provided is true and correct; if it is found that the answers given are untrue, I understand it may be cause for dismissal.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix J – Local Church Volunteer Background Check Guidelines  
– Adopted June 15, 2003

**RS – 205 – LOCAL CHURCH VOLUNTEER BACKGROUND CHECK  
GUIDELINES**

(submitted by the Safe Sanctuaries Task Force)

Purpose – The purpose of this policy is to provide a means of obtaining criminal background checks, and a means of handling the information thus obtained in local churches for volunteers, especially those working with youth and children.

Scope – This policy applies to any volunteer layperson in ministry or program area\*\* in the local church, especially those working frequently with children or youth. This is understood to include, at least, any of the following:

- Expected contact with children or youth four or more times per year;
- Any person accompanying youth on an overnight trip or event;
- Volunteers whose work is primarily focused on children and youth. Such as, Director of Christian Education, the Sunday School Superintendent, the Youth Coordinator, Nursery positions, and others as determined necessary by the local church.
- Any leadership position in a ministry or program area, whose work involves supervision of others who work with children and youth, and who is responsible for insuring compliance with the provisions of this background check guidelines.

As additional leadership positions are contemplated, the determination of the applicable background check requirements will be considered to be a part of the task of drafting the position description.

Additional criteria may be indicated by the guidelines and procedures of a given ministry or program area.

\*\*Ministry or program area is defined by all programming areas of the local church such as Sunday School, Youth Ministry, Children's Ministry, Elder Care, Nursing Home Ministry, and others that may be in the life of the local church.

Description – A criminal background check consists of supplying certain standard identifying information to the appropriate state or local law enforcement authorities on a standard form provided for this purpose. A search is then performed of available state, county, and federal databases for any records pertaining to the individual, similar to the same type of check that is currently done for all teachers and volunteers in the public schools.

Information obtained – The information arising from a background check will be reviewed and kept by the Senior Pastor. If the information disclosed, in the opinion of the Senior Pastor, raises no cause for concern, the Senior Pastor may communicate approval to the person(s) in charge of the appropriate ministry or program area.

If, in the opinion of the Senior Pastor, the information disclosed raises any cause for concern about the suitability of the individual for work in the ministry or program area contemplated, the Senior Pastor will review the information privately with the chairperson of the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee (or head of the department involved). If concern still exists, the individual shall be afforded the opportunity to meet privately with the Senior Pastor and the chairperson of PSPR (or the head of the department involved) for the purpose of discussion, review, and/or clarification, before any final decision is made regarding approval of the individual's participation in the area of ministry proposed. If, following such a meeting, the Senior Pastor and the chairperson of PSPR (or head of the department involved) are in consensus that there is no cause for concern, the Senior Pastor shall communicate approval as above. If the Senior Pastor and the chairperson of PSPR (or the head of the department involved) are agreed that the concern is legitimate, or if they are unable to achieve consensus, the individual will be assisted in finding another, more suitable, opportunity for ministry.

Confidentiality – All information arising from a background check is to be held in confidence by the Senior Pastor (and the chairperson of PSPR or head of department if the information is reviewed with him or her). All records of such information will be kept under lock and key in a secure location. Records, notes, and information arising from a meeting with the individual as outlined above will be considered to be part of the background check and will be subject to the same provision of confidentiality.

Frequency and record retention – Results of a background check will be kept on file for a period of seven years, at which point they will be destroyed. If the individual continues to work in the ministry or program area for which a background check is required, a new background check will be required after seven years. If the individual is absent from active participation in the church for a period of one year or more, and desires to resume

work in a ministry or program area that a background check is necessary, a new background check will be required.

An initial background check required for key leadership positions will be conducted either at the time that the individual is considered for the position or at the time the policy goes into effect (in the case of current leaders). Thereafter, these individuals will be subject to the routine background check at seven-year intervals as outlined above.

Compliance – It is strongly recommended to local churches that all persons working with youth or children have their background checks done first. It will be the responsibility of the leader of each ministry or program area, if their work involves children or youth, to insure that the persons working in that ministry or program area are in compliance with this policy. It will also be the responsibility of all persons working with children or youth to report promptly, to the head of the ministry or program area in which they work, any new developments which might bear on the advisability of their continued participation in the ministry or program area.

Background checks are encouraged for volunteers in other areas including (but not limited to): people dealing with money, janitorial, those involved in nursing home ministry and elder care.

After persons have submitted all paperwork, they may assume their position contingent on the results of the background check. Upon review, volunteer is retained or released.

Financial considerations – Payment for background checks will be determined by the local church administrative board or church council.

### **Authorization and Request for Criminal Records Check, and RELEASE**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby authorize \_\_\_\_\_ church to request the \_\_\_\_\_ police/sheriff's department to RELEASE information regarding any record of charges or convictions contained in its files, or in any criminal file maintained on me, whether said file is a local, state, or national file, and including but not limited to accusations and convictions for crimes committed against minors, to the fullest extent permitted by state and federal law. I do RELEASE said police/sheriff's department from all liability that may result from any such disclosure made in response to this request. I understand that information disclosed to the Senior Pastor /Pastor pursuant to this Authorization may in addition be reviewed by, disclosed to and/or discussed with the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee ("PSPR"), and in signing this Authorization, I also RELEASE and agree to hold harmless the \_\_\_\_\_ (name of local church) its Senior Pastor/Pastor, its officers, employees, volunteers, staff, and its PSPR from any and all liability arising in any way from such use, review, disclosure or discussion.

---

Signature of Applicant

Date

**Print** **applicant's** **full**  
**name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Print all other names that have been used by applicant (if any):  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security number (if required by sheriff's dept.) \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's license number: \_\_\_\_\_ State issuing license: \_\_\_\_\_

License expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_

Request sent to: \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**This is a sample form. Your local police department or sheriff's department may have its own request form and prefer that you use it.**

## **Form for Reference Check**

**Applicant Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Reference Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

On a separate paper, please indicate the answers to the following questions.

12. What is your relationship to the applicant?
13. How long have you known the applicant?
14. How well do you know the applicant?

15. How would you describe the applicant?
16. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to children and/or youth?
17. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to adults?
18. How would you describe the applicant's leadership abilities?
19. How would you feel about having the applicant as a volunteer worker with your child and/or youth?
20. Do you know of any characteristics that would negatively affect the applicant's ability to work with children and/or youth? If so, please describe.
21. Do you have any knowledge that the applicant has ever been convicted of a crime? If so, please describe.
22. Please list any other comments you would like to make:

Reference inquiry completed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

The applicant has applied for a position as \_\_\_\_\_ (name position) at \_\_\_\_\_ (name of church). The New England Conference policy requires a background check for all applicants to such a position. The applicant has authorized release of the information sought by the Reference Check. The addressee's name was provided by the applicant as a possible source of information for this express purpose and any information disclosed by the addressee will be retained by the local church under lock and key, and will be disclosed only to the Senior Pastor and/or the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee for the sole and limited purpose of evaluating the applicant for the position sought.

**APPLICATION FORM FOR VOLUNTEERS AND RELEASE**

*The information obtained on this form is for internal use by this local church only.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Business phone \_\_\_\_\_

Departments in which I may serve: children \_\_\_\_\_; youth \_\_\_\_\_; music \_\_\_\_\_ (please check any or all)

Occupation, current employer, and business address:

Time at this employment: \_\_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_\_ months

List (name and address) churches (other than this one) that you have attended regularly the past five years.

Name/address/phone number of pastor, employer, and personal references that may be contacted:

Pastor at other church:

Employer:

Personal Reference:

Describe your background working with the program and/or age group requested.

Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offense?	Yes	No
Have you ever been charged with child neglect or abuse?	Yes	No
Have any complaints or allegations of misconduct involving		

children or youth ever been made against you?	Yes	No
Have you been convicted of the possession, use, or sale of drugs?	Yes	No
Within the last 30 days, have you abused alcohol, legal, or illegal drugs?	Yes	No
Have you been convicted or plead guilty to a traffic offense within the last 5 years?	Yes	No

Current drivers license number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please explain fully any YES answers to the above questions. In addition to the above, is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the supervision, guidance, and care of young people? (Explain on a separate sheet of paper)

The information that I have provided may be verified by contacting persons or organizations that may have information concerning me. I hereby RELEASE and agree to hold harmless from liability any person or organization that provides information, and this RELEASE may be sent to any reference. I also agree to RELEASE and agree to hold harmless this local church its Senior Pastor/Pastor, its officers, employees, volunteers, staff, and its Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee from any and all liability arising in any way from any use, review, disclosure or discussion of the information disclosed in this Application. I waive any right that I may have to inspect references provided on my behalf.

I certify the information I have provided is true and correct; if it is found that the answers given are untrue, I understand it may be cause for dismissal.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix K – Volunteers and Paid Staff Background Check Guidelines (Camps)

Adopted June 15, 2003

**RS – 206 – VOLUNTEERS AND PAID STAFF BACKGROUND CHECK GUIDELINES**

***IN THE CAMP SETTING AND DISTRICT AND/OR CONFERENCE EVENTS***

(submitted by the Safe Sanctuaries Task Force)

(adopted Sunday Afternoon)

Purpose – The purpose of this policy is to provide a means of obtaining criminal background checks. It is also a means of handling the information thus obtained from volunteers at the campsites of the New England Conference camps and retreat center (Aldersgate, Mechuwana, Wanakee, and Rolling Ridge.) This policy would also include those working with youth and children on the District and Conference levels within the New England Conference.

Scope – This policy applies to any volunteer or paid staff working at events at any of the New England Conference camps/retreat center, and events/retreats/and overnights for those working with youth and children on the District and/or Conference levels. This is understood to include, at least the following:

- Summer camps and all overnight retreats
- Any person accompanying youth on an overnight trip or event or to events/retreats sponsored by the New England Conference.

Description – A criminal background check consists of supplying certain standard identifying information to the appropriate state or local law enforcement authorities on a standard form provided for this purpose. A search is then performed of available state, county, and federal databases for any records pertaining to the individual, similar to the same type of check that is currently done for teachers and volunteers in the public schools.

Information obtained – The information arising from a background check will be reviewed and kept by the Camp Director (for camps) and the Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry (for District/Conference events). If the information disclosed, in the opinion of the Camp Director or Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, raises no cause for concern, the Camp Director or Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry may communicate approval to the person(s) in charge of the appropriate camp, retreat, or overnight event.

If, in the opinion of the Camp Director or Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, the information disclosed raises any cause for concern about the suitability of the individual for work at the event contemplated, the Camp Director or Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry will review the information privately with the person in charge of the event. If concern still exists, the individual shall be afforded the opportunity to meet privately with the Camp Director or Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry and the person in charge of the event for the purpose of discussion, review, and/or clarification, before any final decision is made regarding approval of the individual's participation in the area of ministry proposed. If, following such a meeting the Camp Director or Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry and the person in charge of the event are in consensus that there is no cause for concern, the Camp Director or Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry shall communicate approval as above. If the Camp Director or Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry and the person in charge of the event are agreed that the concern is legitimate, or if they are unable to achieve consensus, the individual will be assisted in finding another, more suitable, opportunity for ministry.

Confidentiality – All information arising from a background check is to be held in confidence by the Camp Director or Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry (and the person in charge of the event if the information is reviewed with him or her). All records of such information will be kept under lock and key in a secure location. Records, notes, and information arising from a meeting with the individual as outlined above will be considered to be part of the background check and will be subject to the same provision of confidentiality.

Frequency and record retention – Results of a background check will be kept for seven years, at which point they will be destroyed. Camp volunteers will be checked on a yearly basis, unless the volunteer is employed in a ministry area where a background check policy is already in place. For camp volunteer applicants who also serve continuously in a ministry area where a background check is already in place, the New England Conference Background Check Policy for the local church will apply (that is, the requirement for a check every seven years). If the applicant has a current background check on file with their local church, and if the applicant is also currently employed continuously in a ministry area, the applicants local church (district or conference office) may submit the background check on their behalf with a letter from the applicant asking for their background check to be released. For purposes of this Policy, the term "Ministry area" is defined by all programming areas of the local church such as Sunday School, Youth Ministry, Children's Ministry, Elder Care, Nursing Home Ministry, and others that may be in the life of the local church where the local church has required a background check.

Information of background checks on file with an applicants local church, may be shared with the Directors of each of the camps/retreat center and the Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry in the New England Conference office. This will avoid multiple background checks being done on the same person within one year.

For paid staff at any of the camps, and on the district or conference levels (ie, District Youth Leaders, Conference Youth Leaders, adult members of the Conference Council on Youth Ministries, and the Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry), results of a background check will be kept on file for a period of seven years, at which point they will be destroyed. If the individual continues to work in program areas for which a background check is required, a new background check will be required after seven years. If there is a break in employment for a period of 90 days or more, and the employee desires to resume work in a program area where a background check is necessary, a new background check will be required.

Compliance –It will be the responsibility of the Camp Director or Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry to be sure all New England Conference sponsored camps/events are in compliance with this policy. It will also be the responsibility of **all** persons working with children or youth to report promptly, to the Camp Director or Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, any new developments which might bear on the advisability of a volunteer’s or staff person’s continued participation in the camp, retreat, or event.

After persons have submitted all paperwork, they may assume their position contingent on the results of the background check. Upon review, volunteer or staff person is retained or released.

Financial considerations – Payment for background checks will be the responsibility of the applicant. If financial assistance is needed, one may apply though the camp or retreat center, the applicant’s local church or the district or conference office.

## **Authorization and Request for Criminal Records Check, and RELEASE**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby authorize \_\_\_\_\_ (name of camp, District or New England Conference) to request the \_\_\_\_\_ police/sheriff’s department to RELEASE information regarding any record of charges or convictions contained in its files, or in any criminal file maintained on me, whether said file is a local, state, or national file, and including but not limited to accusations and convictions for crimes committed against minors, to the fullest extent permitted by state and federal law. I do RELEASE said police/sheriff’s department from all liability that may result from any such disclosure made in response to this request. I understand that information disclosed to the Camp Directors/ Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry pursuant to this Authorization may in addition be reviewed by, disclosed to and/or discussed with the person or persons in charge of the camp/event (ie: Dean of Camp, District/Conference Youth Leader) and in signing this Authorization, I also RELEASE and agree to hold harmless the New England Conference, its officers, employees, volunteers, and staff from any and all liability arising in any way from such use, review, disclosure or discussion.

---

Signature of Applicant

Date

**Print** **applicant's** **full**  
**name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Print all other names that have been used by applicant (if any):  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security number (if required by sheriff's dept.) \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's license number: \_\_\_\_\_ State issuing license: \_\_\_\_\_

License expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_

Request sent to: \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Form for Reference Check

**Applicant**

**Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

Reference Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

On a separate paper, please indicate the answers to the flowing questions.

23. What is your relationship to the applicant?
24. How long have you known the applicant?
25. How well do you know the applicant?
26. How would you describe the applicant?

27. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to children and/or youth?
28. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to adults?
29. How would you describe the applicant's leadership abilities?
30. How would you feel about having the applicant as a volunteer worker with your child and/or youth?
31. Do you know of any characteristics that would negatively affect the applicant's ability to work with children and/or youth? If so, please describe.
32. Do you have any knowledge that the applicant has ever been convicted of a crime? If so, please describe.
33. Please list any other comments you would like to make:

Reference inquiry completed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

The applicant has applied for a position as \_\_\_\_\_ (name position) at \_\_\_\_\_ (name of camp/event). The New England Conference policy requires a background check for all applicants to such a position. The applicant has authorized release of the information sought by the Reference Check. The addressee's name was provided by the applicant as a possible source of information for this express purpose and any information disclosed by the addressee will be retained by the camp director or director of youth and young adult ministry under lock and key, and will be disclosed only to the New England Conference camp directors, director of youth and young adult ministry, or persons in charge of camps/events the applicant has applied for, for the sole and limited purpose of evaluating the applicant for the position sought.

**APPLICATION FORM *AND RELEASE***  
**FOR VOLUNTEERS AND PAID STAFF**  
*in the camp setting and District and/or Conference Events*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone \_\_\_\_\_ Business phone \_\_\_\_\_

Departments in which I may serve: children \_\_\_\_\_; youth \_\_\_\_\_; music \_\_\_\_\_ *(please check any or all)*

Occupation, current employer, and business address:

Time at this employment: \_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_ months

List (name and address) churches (other than this one) that you have attended regularly the past five years.

Name/address/phone number of pastor, employer, and personal references that may be contacted:

Pastor at other church:

Employer:

Personal Reference:

Describe your background working with the program and/or age group requested.

Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offense? Yes No

Have you ever been charged with child neglect or abuse?	Yes	No
Have any complaints or allegations of misconduct involving children or youth ever been made against you?	Yes	No
Have you been convicted of the possession, use, or sale of drugs?	Yes	No
Within the last 30 days, have you abused alcohol, legal, or illegal drugs?	Yes	No
Have you been convicted or plead guilty to a traffic offense within the last 5 years?	Yes	No

Current drivers license number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please explain fully any YES answers to the above questions. In addition to the above, is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the supervision, guidance, and care of young people? (Explain on a separate sheet of paper)

The information that I have provided may be verified by contacting persons or organizations that may have information concerning me. I hereby RELEASE and agree to hold harmless from liability any person or organization that provides information, and this RELEASE may be sent to any reference. I also agree to RELEASE and agree to hold harmless the New England Conference, its officers, employees, volunteers, and staff from any and all liability arising in any way from any use, review, disclosure or discussion of the information disclosed in this Application. I waive any right that I may have to inspect references provided on my behalf.

I certify the information I have provided is true and correct; if it is found that the answers given are untrue, I understand it may be cause for dismissal.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix L – Special Sundays and funds – adopted June 1, 1995, June 2, 1995, June 14, 1996, June 8, 2001, June 11, 2004, June 10, 2005 and June 9, 2006

**ANNA HOWARD SHAW SUNDAY**

(submitted by the Committee on Status and Role of Women)  
(adopted June 2, 1995)

**WHEREAS**, Anna Howard Shaw, who was educated at Boston University and was a pioneer clergywoman in the Methodist tradition and served as a pastor within the present boundaries of the New England Conference, has become a role model for both men and women who with courage and persistence seek dignity for all persons and solutions for societal problems, and

**WHEREAS**, in 1978, the faculty of Boston University School of Theology established the Anna Howard Shaw Center and ten years later, at the Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference the Anna Howard Shaw Center at Boston University was designated as the women's center to serve the Northeastern Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** honor of the one who at the time was not given a rightful place among our predecessors, the New England Annual Conference declare that the Sunday on or preceding Anna's birthday, February 14, be recognized in local churches within the Annual Conference as a time for appropriate events celebrating the mission and ministry of the women of the United Methodist Church, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the promotion of Anna Howard Shaw Day - the Sunday on or preceding February 14 - will be the responsibility of the Conference Commission on the Status and Role of Women in conjunction with the Anna Howard Shaw Center of Boston University.

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION SUNDAY**

(Submitted by Nurturing Committee)  
(adopted June 1, 1995)

The Nurturing Committee, upon recommendation of the Christian Education Committee, moves that the 4th Sunday in September each year be designated as Christian Education Sunday in the New England Conference and that a special offering be received for the work of Christian Education within the Annual Conference.

### **GOLDEN CROSS SUNDAY FOR 1997 AND FOLLOWING**

(Submitted by Bruce A. Pehrson for United Methodist Elder Care)

(Adopted Friday Morning, June 14, 1996)

We move that the New England Annual Conference declare the first Sunday in May each year to be Golden Cross Sunday, and that the offerings received throughout the Conference be distributed again, 1/3 each to United Methodist Elder Care in East Providence, RI; the Methodist Conference Home in Rockland, ME; and the Deaconess Association in Concord, MA

### **RURAL LIFE SUNDAY**

(submitted by the Town and Country sub-committee of Parish and Community Development)

(adopted June 1, 1995)

**WHEREAS**, Town and Country Churches, by definition of 731f in the Discipline, constitute 62% of the total number of churches in the New England Conference; and

**WHEREAS**, Rural life differs greatly across our conference, with many expressions of life style and many ways of depending upon the products of the soil and sea for economic support; and

**WHEREAS**, Rural Life Sunday encourages and enables congregations in both urban and rural areas to celebrate God's gifts of creation and to recognize and honor the role of rural people in providing food, fiber and minerals needed for modern life; and

**WHEREAS**, The Discipline #277.3 provides for Rural Life Sunday;

**THEREFORE, be it resolved** that the New England Conference affirms and supports the celebration of Rural Life Sunday by designating the second Sunday in August or as self-determined by the local church or cluster. An offering will be received for the work of ministries in town and rural areas within the conference, as stated in the Discipline #184. This will begin in 1996.

### **VOCATIONAL SUNDAY**

(Submitted by the Board of Ordained Ministry)

(adopted on Friday Morning June 8, 2001)

**Whereas** Christian ministers need to reclaim our sense of being called into service for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ,

**Whereas** the secular culture does not foster an environment of understanding and acceptance of Christian service,

**Whereas** God calls persons of a variety of cultures, races, and experiences,

And whereas Isaiah, states, "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I. Send me!"

In order to foster a culture of call,

**Therefore be it resolved** that local churches shall observe "Vocational Sunday."

### **RETIRED PASTOR'S DAY**

(Submitted by the Rules Committee)

(adopted on the Consent Calendar on Friday morning)

The Annual Conference establishes the Sunday preceding All Saints Day, as Retired Pastor's Day in accordance with the Book of Discipline. On this day, presentations shall be made and literature distributed in each local church throughout the conference focusing on the ministry of the Preachers' Aid Society and lifting up those pastors and their families who have served our churches and are now retired or deceased.

## **NATIONAL HUNGER AWARENESS DAY**

(submitted by Church and Society in coordination with Society of St. Andrew)

The resolution was adopted Friday Afternoon, June 10, 2005.

WHEREAS, over thirty-six million Americans struggle with the reality of hunger even though God has blessed the United States of America with more than adequate resources, including an extraordinary abundance of food, to provide for the material needs of all her citizens; and

WHEREAS, the only factor hindering the creation of a hunger-free America is the political and moral conscience to make it so; and

WHEREAS, National Hunger Awareness Day has been established as a platform for faith-based and domestic hunger relief organizations to raise awareness about hunger in America and the work they do to create a hunger free America (information is posted on the web at [www.hungerday.org](http://www.hungerday.org)); and

WHEREAS, observance of National Hunger Awareness Day has been set for the first Tuesday in June each year; and

WHEREAS, National Hunger Awareness Day was observed this year with a worship service held in the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., attended by over one thousand people representing major religious and anti-hunger organizations and culminated in visits by the participants to congressional representatives and President Bush on behalf of the poor; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that New England Annual Conference of United Methodist Church formally and actively recognize National Hunger Awareness Day as a time to unite and stand in solidarity with and for the poor and those who strive to minister to them; and be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, that all congregations of New England Annual Conference are encouraged to lift up the poor and hungry in prayer, receive an offering for relief of the poor, actively minister to serve the poor locally, contact their state, local and national representatives on behalf of the poor, or in some other appropriate way observe National Hunger Awareness Day during the morning worship service on a convenient Sunday in June each year, and throughout the year continue to stand in solidarity with the poor until hunger is eliminated from our land.

## **UNITED METHODIST GLOBAL AIDS FUND**

(Submitted by Lester Bennington, Louise Dumas, Willard Robinson, Carol Ann Parsons, Karen Peters for the Aids Task Force)

(Adopted as amended, Friday Afternoon, June 9, 2006)

WHEREAS, we seek to be disciples of the One who came to bring good news to the poor and who sent his disciples out to witness and to heal, and

WHEREAS, over 40 million persons globally are living with HIV and AIDS, and 9,000 people die from AIDS every day; and

WHEREAS, every month the death toll from AIDS surpasses the total deaths from the terrible Asian tsunami; and

WHEREAS, the AIDS pandemic causes 5 million persons to be infected and 3 million lives are taken each year, and

WHEREAS, there are more than 15 million AIDS orphans in Africa alone; and

WHEREAS, the 2004 General Conference of The United Methodist Church established a Global AIDS Fund with a goal of \$ 8 million in Special Askings this quadrennium, and

WHEREAS, one-fourth of funds raised within our Annual Conference for this Fund remain within the Conference to be distributed as our Conference Global AIDS Committee deems fit (either locally, regionally, and/or internationally);

WHEREAS, United Methodist Bishop Felton May says "Churches cannot conquer AIDS alone, but it will not happen without us":

BE IT RESOLVED, that the New England Annual Conference endorses the goal of having each local church raise an average of \$1.00 per member for the quadrennium, beginning in 2007. Local churches may choose to raise the money to support the United Methodist Global Aids Fund (Advance #982345) by special projects, offerings, or whatever other way each local church deems best.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that The New England Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church encourages each local church to observe a Global AIDS Awareness Sunday in September each year for the remainder of this quadrennium, that a volunteer Conference Global AIDS Committee be authorized to (a) provide educational and promotional materials for this observance, and (b) determine the distribution of the 25% of the funds designated for conference use.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to President Bush demanding that he make good on his promise to fund a World AIDS Fund.

## **"VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION" AWARENESS DAY**

(Submitted by James McPhee)

(Adopted Friday Afternoon, June 9, 2006)

BACKGROUND: The 1980 General Conference of The United Methodist Church (UMC) officially sanctioned the United Methodist Volunteers In Mission (UMVIM) and directed the General Board of Global Ministries to "affirm VIM as an authentic form of personal missionary involvement and devise appropriate structure to interpret and implement opportunities for -volunteers in the global community" (p1302.14 Discipline).

The 1988 GC suggested that "each annual conference name a VIM coordinator to work cooperatively with GBGM and the Jurisdictional UMVIM offices." The 1996 GC created the Mission Volunteers office within GBGM to "assist in the guidance and placement of volunteers; in short term mission assignments ". (P1312 (5)). The 2000 GC recognized UMVIM as a "one of the most dynamic mission outreach programs of the denomination today" (The Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church; 2000 page 165). The Seventeenth Northeastern Jurisdictional Conference passed a similar resolution. This action clearly recognizes the UMVIM program as a growing force in promoting the church in general, Christianity in particular, and personal Christian service; and

WHEREAS, the UMVIM program is truly a grassroots movement in allowing all persons of faith, laity and clergy alike, the opportunity to have a "hands on" experience and personal involvement in mission endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is generally accepted that all persons cannot do everything but, that everyone can do something. The UMVIM program allows persons to offer physical support, prayer support, and/or financial support to the wide variety of programs that are designed to promote the many opportunities to utilize their many varied talents in direct service to the Kingdom of God; and

WHEREAS, Scripture requires us all to be active participants in the faith, to wit, "... and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth" (Acts I: 8b, RSV) and "What does it profit, my brethren, if a man says he has faith but has not works.....So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead" (James 2: 14, 17 RSV); and

WHEREAS, there are opportunities to serve locally, nationally, or even internationally, and the "hands on" opportunity truly changes a missioners perspective towards persons or cultures with different economic, ethnic, or political backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, the UMVIM program is one essential tool in helping to promote tolerance and understanding throughout all of God's Kingdom, a tool that helps to bring a measure of relief to those in unfortunate circumstances wherever they are, and a tool that can help Christians to fulfill the mandate of Jesus as expressed in Matthew 25: 34 - 46.

THEREFORE, the Volunteers In Mission Board of Directors for the Northeastern Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church requests that the NEAC recommend to all local churches in the Conference:

1. That a Sunday of the local churches choosing (3rd Sunday in September is recommended) be set aside and declared Volunteers In Mission Awareness Day;  
and
2. That each local church with assistance of the conference UMVIM leadership, provide for UMVIM displays, information resources, solicit individual or group testimonies and/or develop other ways to celebrate the UMVIM movement in whatever fashion that best suits the local congregation; and
3. That local churches draw upon the available resources of the Conference UMVIM Coordinator to help make the day memorable, one of faith in action.

Appendix M – Covenant with West Angola – adopted June 2, 2000

**RS - 112 – AMENDED COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH WEST ANGOLA**

(submitted by the Africa Task Force as a substitute for last years RS - 115)

(adopted on Friday afternoon June 2, 2000)

WHEREAS New England Annual Conference has no colleague relationship with any United Methodist Annual Conference outside the United States, and:

WHEREAS With the current emphasis on “Hope for the Children of Africa,” a colleague relationship with West Angola Annual Conference will foster more potential personal connections in our fulfillment of our connectional responsibilities, and;

WHEREAS Bishop Susan Hassinger and Diaconal Minister Dorothy McMahan on two separate trips visited Angola and had the joyous privilege of meeting and sharing with a number of our United Methodist sisters and brothers from the West Angola Annual Conference, and;

WHEREAS these visits had a deep transforming impact on them in terms of the exemplary spirituality and inspiring faith our sisters and brothers in the West Angola Annual Conference in spite of the oppressive poverty and untold suffering they have experienced as a result of the brutal civil war in that country, and;

WHEREAS Bishop Emilio deCarvalho of The West Angola Conference has visited the New England Conference in February of 2000 and had the joy of meeting and sharing with New England United Methodists,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that a covenantal relationship be established between the West Angola Annual Conference and the New England Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church so that through the mutual sharing of resources as determined by each Conference in dialogue, by other agencies as agreed upon, by regular exchange visits, and by sister church connections between interested local churches in the two Conferences, the mission and ministry of Christ in both Conferences will be significantly enhanced, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a covenantal relationship be established with the West Angola Annual Conference and that the Africa Task Force be the coordinating body in the New England Conference for the fulfillment of this covenant.

Appendix N – Covenant with Nicaragua – adopted June 8, 2001

**RS - 207 - ON ESTABLISHING A COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH LA IGLESIA DE CRISTO EN NICARAGUA (THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN NICARAGUA)**

(tabled from the 2000 Annual Conference)

(adopted on Friday Afternoon June 8, 2001)

Whereas: In 1986 the New Hampshire Conference voted to enter into Covenant with La Iglesia de Cristo en Nicaragua;

Whereas: In 1987 the Southern New England Conference voted to enter into Covenant with La Iglesia de Cristo en Nicaragua;

Whereas: On April 15 – 18, 1987 La Iglesia de Cristo affirmed the Covenant at its General Conference in Nandasmo, Nicaragua;

Whereas: The Maine Conference has participated in the Covenant with La Iglesia de Cristo en Nicaragua since the early 1990's through Sister Churches and delegations;

Whereas: During those years over 400 members of the now New England Conference have visited the churches and people of La Iglesia de Cristo en Nicaragua, over 50 members of La Iglesia de Cristo have visited our Conference and led worship at our session in 1994; 25 sister-church relationships have been established, and over 15,000 miles have been walked together in mutual solidarity as churches of north and south, rich and poor.

Therefore, be it resolved that the following Covenant as approved by La Iglesia de Cristo en Nicaragua and the former New Hampshire and Southern New England Annual Conferences be approved by the Seventh Session of the New England Annual Conference.

*Agreement on a Covenant Relationship between La Iglesia de Cristo en Nicaragua and the New England Annual Conference*

1. To establish, share, and keep a Covenant Relationship between La Iglesia de Cristo en Nicaragua and the United Methodist Church in the New England Annual Conference.
2. This Covenant Relationship shall be based in our mutual and complete fidelity to Jesus Christ, Lord of the church, the Scriptures, salvation and history.

3. We affirm our unity in our common faith in Jesus Christ who calls us to announce the Good News of the Gospel as well as to practice true love in all human relations.
4. We enter into this relationship with a sense of humility and a spirit of obedience to the Word of God, and a profound desire to be guided by the Holy Spirit.
5. Through the development of our relationship nothing will be imposed by force; both churches will seek together to understand the will of God and the meaning of God's Word in the midst of the challenges of history. Therefore, each denomination will keep its autonomy, form of organization, theology, and doctrines, which will be respectfully shared for mutual and integral growth.
6. We promise to work together as we preach the Gospel, and as we carry on all forms of ministries to which Christ has called us in Nicaragua and in the United States.
7. We commit ourselves in the name of Christ to pray and work together to promote justice, peace, freedom, and life in Nicaragua, Central America, and in the United States. We will participate in the areas of agriculture, health, education, communication, infrastructure, as well as other forms of humanitarian ministries for the purpose of social transformation.
8. We commit ourselves in the name of Christ to pray and work together to promote justice, peace, freedom, and life in Nicaragua, Central America and the United States. We will participate in all efforts through peaceful means, in unity with the world and as participants in the community of saints.
9. We pray and hope before God so that this agreement of covenant between our two Churches may be a blessing for our members and our communities as we witness to and announce the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the Glory of God. So be it!

Be it further resolved: That the Nicaragua Planning Committee, a sub-committee of the Board of Church and Society be the committee responsible for carrying out this Covenant on behalf of the New England Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

#### Appendix O

### **RS – 202 - CONFERENCE TRANSFORMATION TEAM PROPOSAL**

(Submitted by Members of the Conference Transformation Team)

(Adopted as amended, Saturday Morning, June 10, 2006)

#### **The Vision for the New England Annual Conference**

Transformed by the Holy Spirit, we will become united in trust as we boldly proclaim Christ to the world.

#### **The Mission of the New England Annual Conference**

Our Mission as the New England Annual Conference is to equip, connect, and support local, regional and global ministries to make disciples of Jesus Christ and to serve all in his name.

#### **Table of Contents:**

- Introduction
- Organizing at the District Level
- Organizing at the Conference Level
- Implementation

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

“I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I

will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” Isaiah 43:19

Like the Israelites in exile, the United Methodist Church in New England is on the cusp of a new beginning. Many of our former practices and systems are no longer working as before, yet what will emerge in their places as we live out ministry in our postmodern

world is unclear. What new things is God doing in our midst? Where are the new pathways and rivers God is making in the wild and barren places of our churches and communities? How can we assist this ongoing, creative work of God rather than build roadblocks and dams that impede it?

## **Background**

Since 2003, the Conference Transformation Team (CTT) has taken on the tasks given to us by the Annual Conference:

1. Develop and recommend a plan to organize structure and staffing for the Annual Conference in line with our Vision, Mission, and Critical Issues;
2. Present this plan to the Annual Conference in 2005;
3. In this process, engage members of the Annual Conference in discernment.

Between Annual Conference 2003 and 2004, the CTT added new members, experienced a major change in conference staffing, and welcomed our new bishop. Interim reports were made to the Annual Conference in print and before the body in June 2004. In the fall of 2004, we organized ten focus groups throughout the conference to listen and share ideas. In November 2004, more than 40 persons from 22 conference agencies met to further this process.

**FROM OUR LISTENING IN THESE GROUP SETTINGS, WE DISTILLED THREE EMERGING THEMES ABOUT STRUCTURE AND STAFFING:**

### **RESOURCE LOCAL CONGREGATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE, TRANSFORMATIONAL MINISTRY AND LEADERSHIP**

- Redefine the role of District Superintendents and all other conference staff
- Emphasize Congregational Development (new church starts and redevelopment)
- Resource within small geographical boundaries (districts, states, clusters, etc.)

### **Effective communication and coordination**

- Intentionally coordinate at the conference level at a “Common Connectional Table”
- Connect all congregations, agencies, etc. to the internet
- Use communication technology to connect through teleconferencing, gifts database, etc.

### **Build on our common ground from our strengths**

- Vital, strong congregations resource other congregations through mentoring, being teaching parishes, “successful” story-telling
- Support cooperative, regional, or cluster ministry initiatives
- Leadership training for clergy and laity focused on excellent/best practices; develop systems of accountability

At Annual Conference 2005, the CTT presented ideas about possible structure and staffing for our future, incorporating what we heard in the Fall 2004 focus groups. While we were unable to complete our report by the June 2005 deadline, the Conference Transformation Team was clear that the New England Conference should retain its current eight districts (with any minor boundary adjustments from the Cabinet) at least through this quadrennium. Recent changes precipitated by financial crisis have caused upset in many areas, and we felt strongly that we needed to devote energies toward creatively facilitating the growth of ministry in our current configuration.

At the Annual Conference session, we received additional feedback which focused primarily in the following areas:

Affirmations:

- Focus on youth, with the proposal for regionally-based youth ministry
- Focus on congregational development in a variety of ways
- District strategy table concept
- Resourcing at the district and cluster level

Concerns:

- Provide resources to all size congregations
- Keep conference structure simple
- More emphasis on ministry and less on meetings
- Realign DS portfolios so they're not overburdened

*Since August 2005, the CTT has been meeting monthly to complete the*

*tasks entrusted to us in 2003. The results of that work include plans for*

*district ministry teams, conference structure, and staffing which we believe*

*will (1) lead to more effective resourcing for ministry and mission in our*

*local churches and (2) further the*

*conference mission, vision, and critical issues. The scope of our work*

*has not included evaluation or revision of the conference vision, mission,*

*and critical issues, or development of a*

*financial plan for the annual conference.*

*During the winter of 2006, we presented a draft of our work to persons in*

*11 focus groups around the conference. The gathered input is summarized below:*

Affirmations:

- District-based ministry structures which allow for creativity and flexibility
- Possibilities for creativity, partnerships, and communication at the Visioning Table
- Enabling greater participation of lay leadership
- Stronger connection to local churches

Ongoing Issues to Address

- Transforming the role of the District Superintendent
- Engaging laity and clergy at all ministry levels
- Creating inclusivity in geography, ethnicity, etc., around the Visioning Table
- Ensuring effective communication
- Transitioning from the current structure to the new one
- Strategies for recruitment of participants and implementation of timeframe

We have sought to address some of these questions and concerns in the revisions made to the document that follows. Some of the answers will continue to emerge and evolve as we live into this new structure. We seek your prayerful consideration of what is offered below.

## **B. ORGANIZING AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL**

### **LOCAL CHURCH MINISTRIES**

We encourage the local churches, laity,



### **DISTRICT STRUCTURE - DISTRICT MINISTRY TEAM**

The Purpose of the District Ministry Team

Develop, coordinate and evaluate a multi-year strategic plan for the ministries of the district that will strengthen ministry and mission in the local church.

Guiding Principles

- Bring resources closer to the local church; customizing for geographic, ethnic, and cultural realities
- Be dynamic, adaptable, and fluid as a DMT while having a cohesive and coherent purpose grounded in the Vision, Mission, and Critical Issues of the conference
- Provide a supportive, accountable, and creative environment for clergy and laity to assess and address ministry needs within their district
- Explore and encourage innovative, open, and diverse communication methods throughout the district

Recommended Format

- Meet minimally three times a year
- Chaired by someone chosen for their leadership skills, gifts, and energy, serving a quadrennial term
- District Superintendent and District Lay Leader are active participants
- Twelve to twenty members with half or less representing Ministry Areas and existing groups within the district, and half or more as “at large” members. The whole group reflecting gifts of energy, vision, organizational and motivational skills, etc.
- Concerns for membership reflecting various diversities in our communities
- Concerns for language translation/inclusiveness in our style of meeting

### ***Essential District Ministry Areas and Their Functions***

- **Congregational Development** – focus on redeveloping existing congregations and developing new church starts
- **Spiritual Formation** – focus on spiritual development which includes Christian Education as well as coordinating spiritual formation events and training

- **Youth Ministry** – with regional ministry centers(camps and retreat center), focus on developing and enhancing youth ministries at all levels within our conference
- **Stewardship** – resource and support local church stewardship development
- **Lay Academy** – provide on-going, short-term and in-depth training/education for our laity
- **World Parish** – develop and coordinate significant mission opportunities and advocacy strategies for local and global issues

### **Disciplinary-mandated Functions**

(These may be attended to with standing committees or within one of the above District Ministry Areas)

- District Committee on Superintendency
- District Committee on Ministry
- District Leadership Committee
- District Church Location and Building Committee
- District United Methodist Women/District United Methodist Men
- District Mission Share Review Committee
- District Lay Speaking Ministries Committee

### **Changes in the Role of District Superintendent**

The role of the District Superintendent is to:

- Function as a “coach”; a vision-leader
- Work collaboratively with the District Ministry Team
- Spend most of his/her time on leadership issues and less time on management
- Freed from expectations of being a liaison to Annual Conference boards and agencies except where mandated by the Book of Discipline

Desired outcomes of changed role are:

- Promote and encourage an attitude of excitement for transforming local churches
- Support and encourage the development of lay and clergy leadership
- Key interpreter of the Vision, Mission and Critical Issues at the district level

### **C. ORGANIZING AT THE CONFERENCE LEVEL**

#### **CONFERENCE STRUCTURE – VISIONING TABLE**

#### **The Purpose of the Visioning Table**

**To support the local church by sharing resources, leadership and gifts around a common table aligned by our vision, mission, and critical issues**

The Visioning Table is directly accountable to the Annual Conference, and serves as the connecting point of voluntary collaboration for vision, mission, ministry in the conference. The Visioning Table may make proposals to the Annual Conference and its boards and agencies.

#### **Guiding Principles**

- Recognize the value of bringing together the various ministries of Mission, Administration and Leadership in the Conference and the ministries in the Districts to resource the ministry of the local church which is the central place of ministry.
- Be dynamic, adaptable, and fluid allowing for structure to follow function as ministry evolves to meet the current needs of the local church as heard at the Visioning Table.
- Provide support for the local church by connecting resources among the Districts and across the connection.

- Explore and encourage innovative, open, and diverse communication methods at all levels of the church

### **Recommended Format**

- Meet 3 – 4 times per year at first, eventually meeting 2 times per year in possible retreat setting. Steering Committee to meet between major meetings.
- Chaired by someone chosen for their leadership skills, gifts, and energy.
- Approximately 40 members with about half representing conference board and agencies, and about half as “at large” members who are gifted in visioning, energy, organizational and motivational skills, etc. Quadrennial terms. The Bishop and Conference Lay Leader will be members.
- Concerns for membership reflecting various diversities in our communities
- Concerns for language translation/inclusiveness in our style of meeting

### **Ministry Areas**

The membership of the Visioning Table will be drawn from these categories of ministry:

- Local Church Ministry – at large representatives from diverse New England churches, Laity and Clergy
- Mission Ministries – Cong. Development, UMW, UMM, Global Ministries, Ethnic Committees and Caucuses, Volunteers in Mission, etc.
- Administrative Ministries – Trustees, CFA, Pensions, Personnel etc.
- Leadership Ministries – Bishop, Cabinet, Board of Ministry, Board of Laity etc.
- District Ministry Teams – Represented by no less than two delegates, with no less than one lay and one clergy elected by their respective districts

The existing boards and agencies of the conference will remain in place for the present time. The functional “circles” of the 1998 conference reorganization will no longer apply. We encourage the natural emergence and clustering of areas of responsibility among the conference and related boards and agencies in support of better alignment in our vision, mission, and ministries together. Two representatives each from the Board of Ordained Ministry, the Cabinet, and the congregational Development Committee shall meet at least twice annually to discuss the identification, recruitment, and support of transformational pastors.

## **D. IMPLEMENTATION**

Upon adoption, the Annual Conference approves the following timeline for implementation:

### **August-September, 2006**

Orientation and training with District Superintendents and other district leaders concerning the new district structures.

### **Fall, 2006**

Naming persons and re-naming persons for district teams, committees, etc. District Leadership Committees will offer these names, in consultation with the district superintendents, and with resourcing (as needed) by the Conference Leadership Committee.

District Conferences held to approve these teams, committees, etc. and their membership.

### **Fall, 2006**

Conference Leadership Committee names the members of the new Visioning Table.

### **Fall, 2006**

Orientation for all conference boards and agencies on the new Visioning Table format.

**January-February, 2007**

Orientation and training with District Ministry Teams and related groups

First meetings of the District Ministry Teams and related groups

**January-February, 2007**

First meeting of the Visioning Table.

**June, 2007**

Full lists of district teams, committees, etc. will be considered and approved by the regular session of the New England Annual Conference.

The Office of the Bishop will be responsible for coordinating the orientation, training, and implementation steps for the approved plan with reports made to the Transformation Team, the Annual Conference and the new Table.

During the 2006-2007 program year, the Conference Transformation Team will meet regularly to review the progress of implementation, to coordinate and sponsor the orientation and training sessions, and to encourage participation in the new structure for mission and ministry.

Following the 2007 Annual Conference, the Conference Transformation Team will be dissolved with any subsequent conversations about implementation to be the responsibility of the Visioning Table.

Appendix P

**RS – 209 – PROPOSAL FOR A STEERING COMMITTEE FOR  
COORDINATING, NETWORKING, AND COMMUNICATING RESPONSE /  
INTERVENTION TEAM WORK FOR THE NEW ENGLAND ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE**

(submitted by the Bishop's Task Force on Clergy Sexual Misconduct)  
(adopted Monday Afternoon June 16, 2003)

Theological Prologue

New England Conference of the United Methodist Church

Procedure for Responding to Complaints of Professional Sexual Misconduct

We acknowledge that all persons are created in the image and likeness of God and are called, through Jesus Christ, to be in life-giving relationship with God and other persons. As we live in this life-giving relationship, we come to recognize and affirm that all life is contingent upon the grace of God.

Grace is life-giving and it is life-changing. It is freely given by God and invites a faithful response. Included in this faithful response is a life of devotion and discipleship and acceptance of the mandate to use our gifts and skills in service to God and to further God's realm.

We believe that the Church of Jesus Christ is created to be one community with each member holding a significant presence and purpose. When any part of the community is injured, physically, emotionally, spiritually, or relationally, the well-being of the whole community is violated and all suffer, including the institutions. Therefore, those who are under episcopal appointment must hold the role and its responsibilities in sacred trust. We understand sacred trust to mean to do no harm and to be faithful to the love of God.

When sexual exploitation or other power abuse breaks that sacred trust, the entire community suffers. The task and purpose of the sexual abuse policy and procedure is to restore what has been stolen and/or broken by the exploitation.

For survivors it means healing resources and support, just actions from the Church and its judicatory's systems and restoration to their rightful place in the body of Christ.

For the abuser it means accountability, discipline and appropriate treatment, which may or may not lead to restoration to ministerial role and function.

For the church, it means support and resources to assist with the healing process, which ultimately leads to revitalized ministry and restoration to everyone's rightful place in the body of Christ.

For congregations and community it means truth-telling and healing resources and support.

Finally, we acknowledge that we are people of working in partnership with God in covenant to bring new life out of the destruction and devastation wrought by clergy sexual abuse in all its forms and expressions.

### **Proposal for a Steering Committee for Coordinating, Networking, and Communicating Response / Intervention Team Work for the New England Annual Conference**

We of the Bishop's Task Force on Clergy Sexual Misconduct propose that the New England Conference Board of Ordained Ministry revise our Annual Conference's Sexual Ethics Policy to include the establishment of a Steering Committee on Clergy Sexual Misconduct to coordinate, implement and oversee the work of the Response/ Intervention Team and to implement strategies and guidelines in the area of prevention and education. All of these guidelines, procedures, and protocols shall be guided by and in accordance with the *United Methodist Book of Discipline*.

The Steering Committee will be composed of individuals and representatives of the following groups:

Cabinet

Board of Ordained Ministry. Conference Relations

Board of Ordained Ministry

Board of Laity

Parish Consultant Team

Coordinator (A part-time Conference Staff Position under the supervision of the Office of the Bishop through the Equipping and Connecting Team and will be accountable and report to the Board of Ordained Ministry)

Bishop's Assistant

Communications Director

Chancellor

Response/Intervention Team – (2)

Survivor (2) selected by the Response / Intervention Team for service for one quadrennium

Representatives to the Steering Committee shall be recommended by the board or committee sending the representative, appointed in consultation with the bishop and shall

demonstrate an awareness of and sensitivity to the issues of professional misconduct. As a part of the agreement to serve, all Steering Committee members shall:

Commit to Steering Committee training and education on clergy sexual misconduct and the ramifications of such misconduct – some or all of the training to be provided within the annual conference.

Commit to the goal of being a leader in our conference to help facilitate what will bring the greatest healing to our covenant community, paying special attention to the needs of victim-survivors and congregations as the *Book of Discipline* defines the appropriate response to the behaviors and needs of the alleged perpetrator.

Commit to regular attendance at training sessions and meeting dates.

Those representing boards and committees shall keep their group apprised of the work of the Steering Committee as far as professional ethics allows.

The Functions of the Steering Committee will include but not limited to:

- ✠ Establish, review and maintain an up-to-date Professional Ethics Policy that is in compliance with the *Book of Discipline*. In addition, suggest changes to the policy or to the *Book of Discipline* if necessary, to address issues and concerns that may emerge in the growing expertise in our denomination and in our world.
- ✠ Establish and maintain the Steering Committee. This committee will create selection criteria and membership development criteria for the members of the Steering Committee in consultation with the Office of the Bishop and the representative boards and agencies who will serve on it.
- ✠ Establish and maintain a Response/ Intervention Team. This Steering Committee will develop a recruitment policy and membership criteria for those people who will be recruited and trained to serve on the Response/ Intervention Team. This will include planning and implementing on-going training, mentoring, support and membership development of members serving on the Response/ Intervention Team. Members of the team shall be appointed to serve in consultation with Bishop and shall sign a Membership Agreement that will include their understanding of a Covenant of Confidentiality as well as their commitment to attendance of team training sessions and meetings.
- ✠ Establish and recommend a budget and maintain appropriate fiscal records for reporting to the Conference Council on Finance and Administration.
- ✠ Establish and maintain a protocol, in keeping with the *Book of Discipline*, for responding to incidents of misconduct in ministry settings of the New England Annual Conference. This protocol will address such issues such as:

Support of all parties, victim-survivors, families, congregations, community, and alleged perpetrators.

Management of media issues.

On-going Case-Management.  
Appropriate record keeping of all interventions.

In addition, the protocol will have clearly developed step-by-step guidelines developed  
for district superintendents,  
Staff-Parish Relations Committees  
conference boards  
to guide them in the steps leading to the deployment of the Response/Intervention Team.

- † Develop a protocol concerning the coordination of the work of the Response / Intervention Team with the Parish Consultants Team.
- † Establish and maintain an after-pastor support network. After-pastors are defined as those who serve where a pastor has been removed, has left due to a charge of misconduct, or where there is a history of misconduct with a yet traumatized congregation. A qualified network for the care of, preparation, equipping, and supporting of these pastors (also called after-pastors) is of primary importance. An after-pastor can also be defined as one serving a church where there has been lay violation(s).

The Steering Committee shall coordinate on-going training, support structures, and programs for pastors serving in churches where there has been clergy misconduct or lay violation(s).

The Steering Committee shall develop and provide support and training for congregations suffering from clergy misconduct or lay violation(s).

The Steering Committee shall develop a pro-active stance in helping to foster a climate of identifying after-pastor settings and concerns.

- † Establish and Maintain a Prevention Education Program to raise the awareness of misconduct issues for all clergy and laity in our conference. Such training to include but not limited to:
  - boundary issues
  - misuse of powerdiscussions on the theological issues of trust, justice, forgiveness and restorative justice as they relate to the on-going needs of victim-survivors, congregations, after-pastors, and alleged perpetrators.

All such education to be done with the understanding that healing from breaches of trust may take years and that the primary responsibility is to do no harm to those already victimized– the victim-survivors and congregations.

- † Establish and maintain a library of professional misconduct resource materials.
- † Establish and maintain a list of professional counselors who have “a heart”, sensitivity, and understanding for this work and who have a proven record of accomplishment in assisting victim-survivors and others who have been affected by misconduct.

Appendix Q – Task Forces – Approved May 1999 by Implementation Task Force and distributed at the June session of Annual Conference.

### **Task Forces in the New England Conference**

The Conference Visioning and Implementation processes in 1997-99 called for expanded use of task forces - groups named for short term commitments to specific tasks. Task forces will make better use of time and resources and allow the conference to be a better steward of the time and talents of persons wishing to be a part of the conference missions and ministry.

- Each committee, task force, board or official body of the Annual Conference may convene a task force for a specific purpose(s) with an identified timeline.

The Discipline recommends that conference groups be diverse (1996 Discipline 607).

- Task forces may also be named by the Bishop.
- The expenses of the task force will be the responsibility of the "parent" group. If a task force has representation from several groups, the costs will be shared proportionally by the "parent " groups OR one group may assume full responsibility for the task force.
- The group(s) naming the task force shall be responsible for notifying the Bishop and the Conference Secretary of the task force's creation and indicating who is authorized to submit expenses and reports. The Conference Secretary will notify the Treasurer about the task force, naming who is authorized to submit expenses (comptroller, chair or designee) and the timeline for which the task force is established.
- The Conference Secretary will notify groups or task forces of any duplication of tasks or coordination/communication needed between task forces.
- The Conference Secretary will notify task forces of the deadlines for reporting to Annual Conference, if that is one of their assigned tasks. Reports submitted on time will be distributed with other conference reports.

Action: Approved by ITF May 1999, to be distributed at Annual Conference  
To be presented as part of conference procedures  
To be given to every new task force

### Appendix R

#### **RS – 225 – DESIGNATION OF THE NET ASSETS OF CLOSED AND ABANDONED CHURCHES**

(submitted by the Revitalization Committee of the Conference Congregational Development Committee)

(adopted Friday afternoon, June 11, 2004)

WHEREAS “The local church provides the most significant arena through which disciple-making occurs” (Par. 201\*), and

WHEREAS “The local church is a strategic base from which Christians move out under the structures of society” (Par. 202\*), and

WHEREAS “...the local church is to minister to persons in the community where the

church is located, to provide appropriate training and nurture to all, to cooperate in ministry with other local churches, to defend God's creation and live as an ecologically responsible community, and to participate in the worldwide mission of the church..." (Par 202\*), and

WHEREAS "The purpose of the annual conference is to make disciples of Jesus Christ by equipping its local churches for ministry and by providing a connection for ministry beyond the local church all to the glory of God" (Par. 601\*), and

WHEREAS from 1994 to 2003 there were 37 church closings and 6.8% reduction in church attendance in the New England Annual Conference, and

WHEREAS population demographics within the boundaries of the New England Annual Conference indicate these church closures are contrary to the opportunity for proclaiming the Word of God, and

WHEREAS there is an urgency and a need to support the transformation of existing United Methodist Congregations and development of emerging United Methodist Congregations, including those relating to providing ministry for ethnic groups within the borders of the New England Annual Conference, and

WHEREAS it is the responsibility of the District Superintendent, in consultation with the appropriate agency assigned responsibility for the conference parish and community development strategy to "include recommendations as to the future use of the property..." of discontinued congregations (Par 2548.2\*), and

WHEREAS it is the responsibility of the Annual Conference to establish policy for the disposition of assets from church closings where direction for disposition has not been provided (Par. 2548.1, 2548.3, 2548.5, and 2548.6\*), and

WHEREAS it is the responsibility of the District Board of Church Location and Building (Para 2519.2\*) and the Conference Congregational Development Committee (Para 630.5e\*) to develop strategies for development of new and established congregations.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT congregations that are being discontinued shall be asked for input for the disposition of their property and assets by the District Superintendent and the Conference Congregational Development Committee and its related subcommittees, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the New England Annual Conference has a responsibility to reinvest the assets of closed and abandoned local churches, that have not provided direction for disposition of legally unencumbered property, back into the United Methodist congregations near the one from which they were derived for purpose of ministering to, and making disciples of, the people in the local or regional area, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Conference Board of Trustees of the New England Annual Conference shall receive and invest all net proceeds not gross proceeds from closed churches that do not have direction for disposition, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Cabinet, Conference Congregational Development Committee, Trustees, District Congregational Development Committees

(where formed), and District Boards of Church Locations and Buildings shall develop and implement a strategic plan which provides for the use of these funds for strengthening and transforming existing United Methodist Congregations within the local or regional area of New England Annual Conference from which they were derived, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT priority shall be given to focusing transformation efforts into the local areas where churches have been closed.

Appendix S – Addition to Conference Policies and Procedures Regarding Maintenance and Repairs to Conference-Owned Residences

**RS – 212 – ADDITION TO CONFERENCE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

(submitted by the Conference Board of Trustees)

The resolution, as amended, was adopted Friday Morning, June 10, 2005.

The Conference Board of Trustees moves the addition of the following to the Policies and Procedures of the New England Annual Conference.

Policies Regarding Maintenance and Repairs to Conference-Owned Residences

In order to properly and efficiently manage our conference-owned residences and in an attempt to provide fair and equal treatment for and to our residents, it may become necessary from time to time, to establish policies regarding various aspects of our management. In an endeavor to achieve this end, the following practices are established by the Conference Trustees:

1. In compliance with RS 228A (2004), the Trustees will fund a housing inspection for each residence when a change of occupants occurs. This will be scheduled to occur approximately one month prior to the departure of the residents. This will provide time for minor repairs of those conditions which exceed normal wear and tear occasioned by the resident and will aid in scheduling professional assistance for more extensive repairs.
2. Except for emergencies and unexpected occurrences, no scheduled maintenance will be funded by the Trustees during the periods between occupant changeovers. If there are special circumstances which should be considered, the Trustees will respond to a request from the District Superintendency Committee or the District Parsonage Committee by appointing a sub-committee of the Trustees, consisting of the Residential Property Manager and two (2) other Trustees to investigate/evaluate the request and make recommendations to the full Board of Trustees on corrective actions. (Ex-Officio members of the Trustees are encouraged to serve on these sub-committees if their own residence is not involved in the examination).
3. In general, housekeeping and cosmetic projects will be scheduled at the time when there is a change of occupants or when other maintenance and repairs generate cosmetic projects. This includes interior paint, wallpaper projects, and carpet cleaning.
4. Occupants are strongly encouraged to scrutinize their residences carefully and frequently in order to keep the Trustees informed, through the appropriate oversight committees in accordance with RS 228A (2004), of required maintenance and repair needs. The Residential Property Manager will assess and

recommend actions to be taken for each request, and will request the formation of a sub-committee (See 2, above) when appropriate.

These policies may be modified or expanded as our experience in good management practices increases.

#### Appendix T

### **RS – 213 – DISTRICT MISSION SHARE REVIEW COMMITTEE**

(submitted by the Conference Mission Share Review Committee)

(The resolution was adopted Saturday Morning, June 11, 2005)

Whereas the 2004 Annual Conference adopted RS-227 establishing a Conference Mission Share Review Committee (CMSRC) whose purpose is to:

- “Work... with each local church to discover and address the root causes of individual local churches not paying their Mission Share.”
- Meet with “any church that has not paid mission shares in full for the previous two years.... to evaluate the root cause of the non-fulfillment of the connectional covenant of paying Missions shares in full and help to bring each church to a goal of 100%.”
- “Cherish and love each church it is evaluating and shall offer guidance and counsel for assisting the individual churches in recognizing their connection to the greater Church, and offering whatever conference resources may be available for assisting the local churches that are delinquent in payment.”
- “...that in strategic places of ministry the CMSRC be authorized to recommend to CCFA the lowering of the mission shares of individual churches where situations justify a reduction according to guidelines established by the CMSRC. (Paragraph 613, Book of Discipline)”

Whereas the CMSRC has set up interviews with 32 churches of various sizes and mission share participation to gather information about mission shares and covenant connection, and

Whereas the number of churches that have not paid 100% of their mission shares for two consecutive years (2003/2004) is approximately 39%;

Therefore be it resolved that each District appoint or nominate a committee to review Mission Share participation and recommend churches to the Conference Mission Shares Review Committee for Mission Share relief that will follow the intent of RS-227;

Furthermore be it resolved that the CMSRC with its current membership and additional leadership;

- Establish and refine a process for continuing mission share review and relief;
- Provide training to District Committees;
- Receive reports and recommendations from District Committees;
- Make annual recommendations to the Conference Council on Finance and Administration (CF&A) regarding mission share relief (per RS-227); and
- Prepare a summary report and findings to the 2006 Annual Conference.

#### Appendix U

### **RS – 112 - MISSION SHARE REVIEW FUNCTION RESPONSIBILITY**

(Submitted by Conference Mission Share Review Committee (CMSRC))

(Adopted on the Consent Calendar on Friday Afternoon, June 9, 2006)

WHEREAS Resolution 227: “Covenantal Accountability In Mission Shares” approved at the 2004 Annual Conference resolved that “a Conference Mission Share Review Committee (CMSRC) be formed and authorized to work within each District of the New England Conference for the purpose of working with each local church to discover and address the root causes of individual local churches not paying their Mission Share.”;

and WHEREAS the CMSRC has conducted a representative sample Mission Share review throughout each District of the Conference and has created a “New England Conference Mission Share Review Manual” outlining the ongoing process of carrying out Mission Share review;

and WHEREAS District Mission Share Review Committees (DMSRC) have been established and trained by CMSRC in order to carry out the Mission Share review process within each District at the local church level;

and WHEREAS the ongoing function of the CMSRC is to review DMSRC recommendations for relief and to “recommend to CCFA the lowering of mission shares of individual churches where situations justify a reduction according to guidelines established by the CMSRC. (Paragraph 613, Book of Discipline)”.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the ongoing CMSRC functions and the intent of Resolution 227 become a subcommittee function of CCFA.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the above subcommittee function of CCFA shall involve representation of the DMSRCs in order to provide a consistent and continuing approach to Mission Share Review across the Conference.

Appendix V – Bishop’s Financial Summit Recommendations – by the Bishop’s Financial Summit Taskforce, adopted June 9, 2006

### **RS – 207 – BISHOP’S FINANCIAL SUMMIT - RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Referrals and task force establishment**

##### **We recommend:**

1. that CF&A request financial support from local churches in the same way that local churches request support from their members—through tithes and offerings. We propose that churches be apportioned at a rate of 10% of the prior year’s gross income with the provision that each District be given latitude to adjust the amount when deemed necessary and appropriate by the District Superintendent, the District Mission Share Review Committee, and/or any other District bodies that might be created in this area on the recommendation of the Conference Transformation Team. We recommend that the details of implementation be developed by CF&A in conversation with the Bishop’s Financial Summit and other parties that CF&A would deem appropriate.
2. that the Stewardship Task Force be charged with the development of a network of stewardship consultants to facilitate training, resourcing, mentoring, and dialogue about stewardship in all districts of the Annual Conference.
3. The Annual Conference establish a Mission Share Interpretation/Communication Team to develop materials and resources to be shared with each church and pastor that will tell the stories of the vital missions and ministries supported through our Mission Shares. The Team will be comprised of representatives of the Council on Finance and Administration, organization elected for Conference Program leadership,

Communications, and interested lay/clergy from within the Conference. The Conference Council on Finance and Administration will be responsible for coordinating this work and will bring to the 2007 session of Annual Conference a report its progress.

4. the Retiree Benefit Taskforce of the Conference Board of Pensions explore options to bring future projected costs to a level sustainable by the resources of the local churches of the Annual Conference given their financial resources including: placing a cap on the conference portion of retiree health care, modifying the qualifications for participants, and providing a broader range of alternatives for future retirees.
- Appendix W - continued

### Action Items

#### **We recommend:**

1. the establishment of a conference taskforce that would conduct a full and comprehensive review of local church properties held in trust with an emphasis **on assisting the local church in determining** missional intention, utilization, self-sufficiency and role in living out the Vision of the Annual Conference. The Bishop will be responsible for convening this taskforce which may include persons from Conference Trustees, Congregational Development, organization elected for Conference Program leadership, CFA and local congregations.
2. that a taskforce be established to look specifically at Conference-held properties with an emphasis on missional intention, utilization and role in living out the Vision of the Annual Conference and in reviewing the camps and conference centers to include utilization, self-sufficiency and role in the larger life of the Annual Conference. The taskforce will be convened by the Bishop and should include staff, site committee members, Conference Trustees and other relevant parties.
3. ***That a task force be established to implement RS 225 (2004). The Bishop will be responsible for appointing this taskforce. The Task Force will give serious consideration to honoring and implementing Resolution 225.***
4. the 2007 Annual Conference budget will be structured and presented in a different format and the necessary rule changes to implement this change will be presented to the Special Session of Annual Conference to be held in the fall of 2006. The new presentation format for the 2007 Annual Conference Budget will include 3 funds (instead of the current 4 fund structure): **FUND 1, WORLD MISSIONS** – All General Conference apportionments currently dispersed throughout the four funds of the present budget will be consolidated into this single area of the budget; **FUND 2, NEW ENGLAND MISSIONS** – All line items in the current budget structure that relate to the support of mission and ministry throughout the Annual Conference i.e. Regional Ministries, Congregational Development, Urban Ministries, Council on Youth Ministries, organization elected for Conference Program leadership and Site Directors staffing, will be consolidated into this area of the budget; and **FUND 3, MINISTRY SUPPORT** – All line items in the current budget structure that relate to the functional support of the Annual Conference, i.e. Board of Ordained Ministry, Episcopal Office, Equitable Compensation, District Superintendency, Administration

will be consolidated into this single area of the budget. The Conference Council on Finance and Administration, in conjunction with Treasurer, will be responsible for bringing to the Special Session of Annual Conference to be held in the fall of 2006, a 2007 budget that meets this new structure. The Rules Committee, working with the Conference Treasurer, will bring to the fall Special Session all necessary changes to the Conference policies/procedures and rules to implement this new structure.

5. that beginning with the 2008 budget, a fourth fund will be developed, **FUND 4, HOLY SPIRIT INITIATIVES** – Second mile giving for special conference related ministry opportunities for congregations that have meet 100% of other 3 funds askings. The “Visioning Table” of the Conference, in conjunction with the Bishop will recommend to Annual Conference annually the priorities and conference “goal” amount for this fund.
6. **Property/Liability Insurance Billing** – Beginning September 1, 2006, all local churches of the Annual Conference will be encouraged to establish an ACH (Automated Clearing House) relationship between the Annual Conference and the local church’s bank, setting up a regular withdrawal for the purposes of paying the local church’s property/liability insurance automatically. Any reduction in administrative overhead and allowance for bad debt will be passed on to each church that establishes such relationship in the form of a discount to the regular premium cost.
7. **Health Insurance Billing** – Beginning January 1, 2007, all local churches of the Annual Conference that participate in the Conference Health Insurance Program will be encouraged to establish an ACH relationship between the Annual Conference and the local church’s bank, setting up a regular monthly withdrawal for the purpose of paying the local church’s health insurance obligation. The reduction in allowance for bad debt will be passed on to each church that establishes such relationship in the form of a discount to the regular health insurance premium.
8. **Clergy Retirement Security Program/Clergy Protection Plan** – General Conference approved effective January 1, 2007, a new retirement program and changed the disability program for clergy of the church. This new program ascribes to each church their portion of the cost of their pastor’s retirement defined benefit and defined contribution liabilities. Beginning January 1, 2007 each local church within the Annual Conference will be billed directly the proportional cost of their pastor’s retirement plan and disability program liability.
9. **Clergy Retirement Security Program/Clergy Protection Plan** -- Establishment of an ACH account will be encouraged and the reduction in allowance for bad debt and any related administrative savings will be passed on to each church that establishes such relationship. The costs associated with these programs will be removed from the 2007 Annual Conference Mission Share budget, thus reducing the total amount apportioned to each church.

Appendix W – Addition to Conference Policies and Procedures - Conference Disabilities Committee – Approved June 8, 2007 at the June session of Annual Conference.

**RS - 214 - AMENDMENT – POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, LEADERSHIP ROSTER**

(Submitted by Michael McShane, Julia Dodds)

To create a new Disabilities Committee with at least half the membership of the committee being disabled individuals to help find new ways to assist disabled people participate in the life of the church at all levels more fully and educate the church on how to help the handicapped. This shall be a standing committee of the NEAC.

Appendix X – Shared parsonages between Local Church Clergy and Conference staff – Approved June 10, 2007 at the June session of Annual Conference.

**RS – 218 - POLICY ON PARSONAGES SHARED BETWEEN LOCAL CHURCH CLERGY AND CONFERENCE STAFF**

(Submitted by NEC Board of Trustees)

In cases where local churches provide housing for an appointed pastor which is also occupied by a full time New England Conference staff person, who is eligible to receive housing benefits, the following policy will be followed:

1. The New England Conference will pay one-half of the normal and usual parsonage utilities. The utilities covered shall be: heating fuel; water; sewer; electricity; internet; telephone; cable, trash services, yard work, and snow removal.
2. The New England Conference will pay 0.75% (three quarters of one percent) of the value of the parsonage to assist in proper maintenance of the residence. This contribution shall be for capital improvements and maintenance. The value of the parsonage shall be the same as the conference insured value.
3. All taxes, maintenance, and capital expenses are the responsibility of the local church.
4. The pastor and spouse who reside in the parsonage will be expected to give proper regard to the use of the parsonage. Unusual damage (such as from improperly cared for pets) will be the responsibility of the pastor and spouse.
5. The local church will conduct a yearly inspection of the parsonage. This will be done by a member of the local church Trustees, a member of the Staff/Pastor Parish Relations Committee, and the pastor. A written report on this inspection will be submitted to the District Superintendent of record. Any concerns for needed maintenance of the parsonage or of lack of due care for the parsonage on the part of the pastor and/or family should be clearly noted.

In cases where the conference provides housing for a full time New England Conference staff person which housing is also occupied by a locally appointed pastor, who is eligible to receive housing benefits, the same policies will be followed unless the pastor is less than full time. In such a case, expenses will be pro-rated accordingly.

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