

THE CONFERENCE BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

The South Carolina Annual Conference Board of Ordained Ministry began the 2006-2007 conference year with two major concerns: seminary education for South Carolina Candidates for ordained ministry and the instrument the conference uses for pastoral evaluation. The University Senate of The United Methodist Church removed Erskine and Gordon Conwell seminaries from their list of approved schools and universities beginning in July 2007. The reasons for their removal have been reported to the seminary, but are not public knowledge and cannot be shared with any individual or body by the University Senate. Both of these non-United Methodist seminaries have provided opportunities for South Carolina's ministerial candidates to obtain a sound seminary education. In her November meeting the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry established a committee to review the impact of this decision of The University Senate on seminary education for South Carolina students and to explore additional opportunities for seminary education within our region. This committee has begun its work which will continue throughout the next conference year.

The 2006 Annual Conference approved an instrument for pastoral evaluation but requested continued exploration of this subject. The chair appointed a committee for this purpose at the November meeting of The Conference Board of Ordained Ministry. There are many instruments available for evaluation from both the secular and sacred realm, which were reviewed by the committee. Emerging from these discussions is a document whose purpose is to guide Committees on Staff/Pastor Parish Relations in an ongoing dialogue about the nature and role of the clergy among the people of God and the performance of specific ministerial duties within that context. We are not prepared to present that document for a vote this year, but would ask your permission to utilize this emerging process in the fall/winter of 2007. This would permit the board and the cabinet to receive feedback from pastors and committees before presenting the final instrument at the 2008 annual conference.

The Board has reviewed several new initiatives this year. The Bishops of the Southeastern Jurisdiction, joining the College of Bishops, has launched an initiative titled Tending the Flame. The purpose of this initiative is to provide encouragement and support to young people who are being called to leadership and service within the church. The Conference Board committed \$5,000.00 from her contingency funds to this initiative.

The Bishop and Cabinet requested financial support through the Conference Ministerial Education Fund for a trip to the Holy Land (civil situation permitting) for each of our newly received full members of The Annual Conference. The Board approved a \$700.00 grant for each newly received full member in 2007 for a trip in 2008. The Board requested that a joint team from The Board and Cabinet explore this possibility for future years.

Last year the Annual Conference adopted a policy on Pastoral Ineffectiveness. The Board and the Cabinet are beginning to explore ways in which we, as a conference, can intervene and address the issues of pastoral effectiveness through continuing education, clergy support, and vocational counseling. We are currently reviewing other conferences methods of intervention and hope to develop a plan that facilitates supporting all pastors as they seek to fulfill God's call to ministry effectively.

The ongoing work of the conference Board of Ordained Ministry is to recommend persons for candidacy in ministry, and licensed, commissioned, and ordained ministry and for Professional Certification in specific areas of ministry. In addition the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry makes recommendations for change in status for each of these areas of servant leadership. The report of that work is made to the Clergy Session and from that body the Annual Conference has received the recommendations for conference membership.

We would like to recognize the following persons for professional/para-professional certification:

Murial Jordan - Para-professional certification in Christian Education

Dianna Flake - Para-professional certification in Youth Ministry

Jillianne Davis - Professional certification in Christian Education and Youth Ministry

This year marks the tenth year of the Ordination of Deacons. The Reverend Kathy James will lead us in a celebration of the role and the service of the Deacons among us.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of The Board of Ordained Ministry who so faithfully serve this Annual Conference. Service on this Board requires a huge commitment of personal and professional time. These members have served you graciously and honorably.

Patricia J. Parrish, Chair