

Ministry is a sacred trust (¶364), and those serving in set-apart ministry must be able to exercise the basic obligations of this trust without harming others, much as physicians are expected to keep the Hippocratic Oath.

Sexual misconduct by clergy is a violation of sacred trust that offers few second chances. A clergy member's ability to understand and maintain healthy boundaries is vital to the duty to do no harm.

As a part of our covenant as United Methodist clergy, we participate in sexual ethics training each quadrennium. We do this to acknowledge the importance of the sacred trust we hold as leaders and to continue to keep that sacred trust. There are sacred trust options each year for clergy.

**Each clergy member is obligated to take 4 of the options offered throughout 2016-19.**

### **2016 Sacred Trust Opportunities:**

- **October-November:** District conversations about safe sanctuary will be held at district clergy meetings throughout the conference. This training will be led by a congregational specialist on behalf of the DS.
- **Nov. 10:** Clergy Orders will be held at Lexington UMC, featuring a sacred trust issues presentation (skit) and conversation titled "How Did We Get Here?"

### **2017 Sacred Trust Opportunities:**

- Districtwide safe sanctuary training: Churches will send representatives to get a refresher and updates on safe sanctuary issues and policy. *Dates TBD*
- Annual sexual ethics training held as part of the School of Pastoral Ministry. *May 1-6, 2017*
- The response team and leaders will offer training for response teams in an effort to create a response team in each district. The role of the response team is to offer space and support for healing when an incident or breach has occurred. *Dates TBD*

### **2018 Sacred Trust Opportunities:**

- Bishop's School of Ministry, with the Rev. Michelle Foster and the Rev. Joy Melton. Topics will include: "The Elephant in the Room," "Cyber Care" and "Boundaries." *Sept. 4-6, 2018*
- Annual sexual ethics training held as part of the School of Pastoral Ministry. *May 6-10, 2018*
- Intensive response team training for those who have been identified and feel called to serve on a district response team. *Dates TBD*

## 2019 Sacred Trust Opportunities

- Annual sexual ethics training in the School of Pastoral Ministry. *May 6-10, 2019*

- SC UMC Chancellor Kay Crowe will lead training and discussion of the legal issues and accountability around issues of keeping sacred trust and breaking sacred trust. *Date TBD*

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For more information about any of the training sessions listed here, please contact the **Office of Clergy Services** at the South Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church at:

(803) 786-9486

or

[clergyservices@umcsc.org](mailto:clergyservices@umcsc.org).



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