

SECTION IV

RESOLUTIONS

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Resolution #1

Prayer

WHEREAS, JESUS is The Supreme Model of praying to GOD THE FATHER (Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 5:12-16; John 17:1-26);

WHEREAS, JESUS paid the price of time of praying to GOD THE FATHER, morning and evening (Mark 1:35; Luke 6:12);

WHEREAS, the praying of JESUS TO GOD THE FATHER shows victories in The Kingdom of God (Matthew 14:19-21; Mark 5:1-20; John 11:38-45);

WHEREAS, JESUS shows us to be persistent in praying to GOD THE FATHER (Matthew 7:7-11; Luke 18:1-8);

WHEREAS, THE HOLY SPIRIT and JESUS pray to GOD THE FATHER in our behalf (Romans 8:26; 8:34);

WHEREAS, faithful praying by the disciples of JESUS, His mother, His brothers, and some devoted women helped to spark a flaming Pentecost and powerful Church (Acts 1:12-14; 2:1-47);

WHEREAS, praying to GOD THE FATHER as JESUS prayed is a way of showing dependence upon the HOLY SPIRIT (Luke 4:1-5);

WHEREAS, Bishop Hope Morgan Ward would continue to welcome our prayers for her many needs and for her family;

WHEREAS, all our clergy with their families, all our laity with their families, and all our children and youth are standing in need of praying;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That we continue our 12:00 o'clock noon daily prayer time for The United Methodist Church in Mississippi and beyond; whether our prayers are several seconds, minutes or longer in THE NAME OF JESUS: and that we depend upon THE HOLY SPIRIT to direct us in our praying for THE BODY OF CHRIST;

2. That we earnestly ask our HEAVENLY FATHER'S help for the continued recovery and restoration of our KATRINA brother, sisters, youth, children, and churches;

3. That we ask our Pastors to inform The Church briefly from time to time about the 12:00 o'clock hour, urging their praying;

4. That any time during the last two weeks prior to Annual Conference each pastoral charge have some type of prayer meeting GLORIFYING GOD THE FATHER, GOD THE SON, AND GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT: asking His help as we face Annual Conference with faith, hope, and love; and to give power to live the life of CHRIST in the world.

Johnny A. Dinas

Resolution #2

Housing/Rental Allowance

For Retired and Disabled Ministers

WHEREAS, the religious denomination known as The United Methodist Church has and functions through ministers of the Gospel who are ordained or licensed; and

WHEREAS, the practice of The United Methodist Church is to provide a parsonage or a rental allowance as part of the gross compensation for each of its active ordained or licensed ministers; and

WHEREAS, pensions paid to retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers of The United Methodist Church are considered as deferred compensation and are paid to said retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers in consideration of previous active service; and

WHEREAS, the Internal Revenue Service has recognized that the Mississippi Annual Conference is the appropriate organization to designate a housing/rental allowance for retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers who are members of this conference;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. An amount equal to 100 percent of the pension payments received during the year of 2009 be and is hereby designated as a rental/housing allowance for each retired and disabled ordained or licensed minister of The United Methodist Church who is or was a member of the Mississippi Conference at the time of his or her retirement;

2. This rental/housing allowance shall apply to each retired and disabled ordained or licensed minister who has been granted the retired relation or placed on disability leave by the Mississippi Conference and whose name and relationship to the conference is recorded in the Journal of the Mississippi Conference and in other appropriate records maintained by the conference;

3. The pension payment to which this rental/housing allowance applies shall be the pension payment resulting from all service of such retired and disabled ordained or licensed minister from all employment by any local church, annual conference, or institution of The United Methodist Church, or of any former denomination that is now a part of The United Methodist Church, or from any other employer who employed the minister to perform services related to the ministry and who elected to make contributions to the pension funds of The United Methodist Church for such retired minister's pension.

*G. E. Jones, Chair, Board of Pensions
David Stotts, CPA, Conference Benefits Officer
Byrd Hillman, Liaison Officer*

Resolution #3

Funds from Sale of Closed, Abandoned or Discontinued in the Mississippi Annual Conference

WHEREAS, the Mississippi Annual Conference has resolved to start a minimum of three new churches per year for this quadrennial;

WHEREAS, one of the most effective means to evangelize is through the planting of new churches;

WHEREAS, the Mississippi Annual Conference has started four new churches since the 2007 annual conference session:

The following policy is recommended to the members of the Mississippi Annual Conference for concurrence:

That the proceeds from the sale of land and facilities of any closed, abandoned or discontinued local church shall be used for congregational development purposes to help establish new churches. The monies will be deposited into the annual conference for the purpose of new church development.

This policy is to be effective for any church which votes to close after January 1, 2009, or which is closed or discontinued by vote of the Annual Conference after January 1, 2009.

RATIONALE

The rationale for this policy is to assure that resources of closed, abandoned or discontinued local churches are reinvested in the annual conference in order to assist in their continuing legacy by the establishment of new churches.

The Cabinet and the Members of the New Church Development Committee

Resolution #4

Resolution Regarding Guidelines for Dealing with Self-Destructive Behavior by Clergy

WHEREAS, in our society today people struggle with the temptation of self-destructive behaviors, moral failures, and addictions, including addictions to alcohol, prescription drugs, pornography, and gambling.

WHEREAS, clergy, no less than all other people, are sinners who struggle with such self-destructive issues.

WHEREAS, the Mississippi United Methodist Conference has policy in place to deal with moral failures which victimize other people, such as sexual harassment, but has no set policies to deal with issues that are primarily self-destructive.

WHEREAS, it is important that such self-destructive behaviors by clergy be dealt with in a consistent, compassionate, and equitable manner, which protects the integrity of the United Methodist Church, while offering grace and mercy where appropriate.

WHEREAS, self-destructive behaviors by clergy must be dealt with in a manner which is consistent with the United Methodist Discipline.

WHEREAS, scripture instructs us “if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also maybe tempted.” (Galatians 6:1)

WHEREAS, moral failures that are primarily self-destructive should be dealt with in a different manner than those moral failures which are directly harmful to others.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mississippi Conference of the United Methodist Church adopt the following guidelines for dealing with clergy who commit moral failures which are primarily selfdestructive in nature.

When a concerned person becomes aware that a United Methodist clergy is engaging in immoral behavior which is primarily self-destructive, that person shall confidentially inform the offending clergy’s District Superintendent, who shall in turn inform the bishop.

The District Superintendent shall confront the accused clergy with the accusation and attempt to determine its validity. The District Superintendent shall confidentially report his or her findings to the Bishop, who shall send a sealed written report to the chair of the Mississippi Conference Board of Ordained Ministry. The report to the Board of Ministry shall remain sealed until action by the Board of Ministry is required.

If the accusation is determined to be valid, the offending clergy shall be given the opportunity to undergo appropriate counseling and treatment to deal with the behavior or addiction. Such counseling and treatment must be approved by the bishop, and shall be at the expense of the clergy. Monthly reports of the progress of counseling and treatment shall be submitted by the offending clergy to the bishop.

A peer group of four fellow clergy shall be appointed by the bishop to meet biweekly with the offending clergy for a period of six months. The offending clergy is accountable to honestly report progress in dealing with his or her behavior issues to this group. This group is to hold the offending clergy accountable for progress, and this group is to report to the bishop on the offending clergy’s progress. This peer group is to hold all matters relating to its work in confidence.

If the offending clergy is cooperative and faithful to this process, he or she shall be allowed to continue his or her service during the entire process. All issues shall be held in confidence to protect the ministry and reputation of the offending clergy who is sincerely seeking to cooperate with the process.

The offending clergy, who is cooperative and faithful to this process, shall be on probation for a period two years. If the self-destructive behavior is not repeated during the two year period, the matter shall be considered resolved.

If the offending clergy is uncooperative with this process, or if the self-destructive behavior is repeated during the two year period of probation, the bishop may ask the executive committee of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry for approval to immediately suspend the offending clergy from all clergy responsibilities in accordance with paragraph 362c of the *Discipline*. At this time the report to the Mississippi Conference Board of Ministry shall be unsealed and all the members of the Board of Ministry shall be fully informed. The offending clergy shall be allowed to meet with the Conference Board of Ministry executive committee prior to its decision to approve the clergy’s suspension.

Once the offending clergy has been suspended, a written complaint shall be referred by the bishop to the Mississippi Conference Board of Ordained Ministry as an Administrative Compliant (in accordance with paragraph 362.2 of the *Discipline*) for appropriate action.

Michael F. Childs

