

INDIANA AREA
UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH

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Called Anew~Sent with Love: An Invitation for Support



"To be an effective church in the 21st century, we have to recruit capable new clergy, but we also must help some of our ineffective clergy find a new calling – both for their own happiness and for the good of the church."

Bishop Michael J. Coyner, Indiana Area,
The United Methodist Church

Called Anew-Sent with Love

A Program to assist marginally effective pastors to seek a new calling to which we can send them with support and blessing.

Overview:

Over the past twenty years our culture has changed in ways that have impacted the church and its clergy leadership. Training of clergy in a previous generation prepared candidates for ministry in a world that only vaguely exists today. Over that period of time Bishops and District Superintendents have deployed pastors to churches in situations which resulted in poor performance of the pastor. Consequently, churches and pastoral leadership have become demoralized because a particular pastor did not have the skill or ability to provide effective ministerial service. The United Methodist Church system of appointments is focused on deployment of pastoral leadership. When a pastor has demonstrated a series of difficult appointments to churches a need to provide assessment and potential career redirection becomes necessary for the sake of the pastor and any congregation he/she may be assigned to serve.

A current assessment of the Indiana Area of the United Methodist Church indicates a need to assist approximately 5 or 6 pastors per year through a career/vocational redirection process. The challenge is made more complex because in the United Methodist system pastors are provided a minimum salary support level, a suitable housing arrangement, medical insurance coverage, and pension/retirement program. Further complicating the challenge is the specialized training and experience a pastor receives in preparation for ordination. While it is focused on pastoral leadership of a congregation it has few overtly transferable skills for the person to seek employment in a secular context.

When it is determined by the Bishop, Cabinet, and Board of Ordained Ministry that a pastor needs to be transitioned to a new vocational environment the current system provides for minimal assistance for a pastor to cease ministry and enter into the secular job world. Consequently, this becomes a disincentive for the pastor to voluntarily seek alternatives to ministry. Therefore, the bishop, cabinet and board of ordained ministry must process the decision through a judicial procedure which ends in the person being severed from service. The impact on the pastor and family is an immediate loss of salary, home, medical

insurance and access to financial support for retraining. This creates major disruption to the pastors' family, negative reactions by the congregation being served by the pastor, and a general sense of the system appearing to be arbitrary and not humane.

Objectives:

1. Help these persons to discover God's call to new ministry as a layperson by affirming the call with support as they move to that ministry.
2. To provide a funding stream to assist in supporting a pastor who is being transitioned from active parish ministry to a secular employment status.
3. To humanely and justly provide up to 6 months of financial support. This is intended to enable the pastor to continue supporting his/her family while gaining training in preparation for a secular job. In addition, it will sustain medical insurance coverage until coverage for the pastor and family can come under another program related to the pastor or spouses employment.
4. To provide a funding stream that would support the transition of up to 6 persons per year.

Our Vision is to initially create a \$2,500,000 endowment fund with proceeds of \$200,000 per year which would provide assistance to these pastors during their transitions.

When this vision is implemented we will be able to help up to 6 pastors per year. These pastors will have had a record of at least three congregations in which their effectiveness was evaluated as severely limited. The funding stream will assist them to seek a new calling in the secular world to which we can send them. This will give congregations experiencing such a pastor a compassionate way to encourage their pastor to seek other employment. It will assist the District Superintendents and Bishop in deploying higher quality pastors. And will be a compassionate and just witness to the community about the way the church deals with these situations.

Implementation:

Due to the sensitive nature of dealing with the potential candidates for this assistance we will initiate a fund gathering campaign on a low visibility basis focused on making individual contacts with potential donors' to explain the case and invite the donors' participation.

We will seek Gifts at various levels from churches and individual donors. The following schedule would make this possible.

This two and half million dollar campaign would include gifts at the following levels:

1 Lead Gift of \$1,000,000

3 Initial Gifts @ \$250,000

2 Initial Gifts @ \$100,000

4 Gifts @ 50,000

4 Gifts @ 25,000

10 Gifts @ 10,000

20 Gifts @ 5,000

20 Gifts @ 2,500

The funds will be housed with the Indiana Area United Methodist Foundation or its successor organization. This is a 501.C3 corporation and therefore all contributions qualify as a charitable contribution under IRS regulations.

Recipients of the support would be qualified by a confidential assessment process with the cooperation of the pastor and implemented by the Bishop and Cabinet in conjunction with the appropriate section of the Board of Ordained Ministry of the Annual Conference.

In the event in a given year there is not sufficient request for the funds for this purpose the earnings will be made available for scholarship assistance for promising clergy in training.