

BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

God is still at work as God is calling people into ministry and sustaining people in ministry. We celebrate the ministry of elders, deacons, associate members, provisional members, local pastors, and those serving churches and extension ministry in other categories of ministry. We celebrate the clergy who are retiring this year. We celebrate those who are being called or have yet to be called.

We welcome our ten new full members at this annual conference. We welcome our five new provisional members. We celebrate the nine who have completed Course of Study and the eleven who have completed License to Preach School. We welcome our pastors who have transferred from other conferences and have heard God's call to come to Indiana. We welcome pastors from other denominations who have been called to serve United Methodist churches. The Board of Ordained Ministry aspires to seek pastors who love God with a genuine faith, are inspired by the Holy Spirit, are persons of integrity, and who love people with a desire to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Clergy Covenant Days in October and March brought inspiring messages from Bishop Trimble, uplifting worship, and great teaching as we focused on Loving, Learning, and Leading. Rev. Sue Nilson Kibbey presented Breakthrough Prayer Initiative designed for churches to add prayer components to their ministry. Rev. Olu Brown presented Normalizing Next where he inspired us to celebrate what God is doing now and anticipate what God will do next. We also were inspired by Dr. Andy Jung who led us in Growing Young

The Board of Ordained Ministry adopted new and improved Behavioral Standards. We expect the clergy of the Indiana Conference to have the highest standards of behavior, so congregations are confident in the pastors who are assigned to them. While our expectations are high, we are mindful that we are all human and that pastors may sometimes struggle under today's pressures. While maintaining standards against behavior that abuses alcohol, chemical dependency, and gambling, we also expect our clergy to remain faithful in marriage, be wise in finances, and follow the laws of our state and country. We have added areas that are sensitive to social justice concerns, including social justice arrests, inclusion, and racism. I would personally like to thank Ron Bell, Oscar Ramos, Jill Buckler, Lance Newton, and Shannon Stringer for their many hours of work to rewrite and present the Behavioral Standards to the full Board.

All clergy of the Indiana Conference are required to take either an on-line or in-person training called "Understanding Clergy Sexual Ethics." We are keeping our sacred trust by doing no harm in the area of sexual ethics. The course is offered by the Lewis Center for Church Leadership. We are grateful for all clergy who faithfully completed the training.

We have completed an audit of our Indiana Conference License to Preach School. This school is required as a prerequisite for certified candidates before receiving a License to Preach and being appointed to a church. We continue to review curriculum, professor recruitment, and objectives in order to maintain the highest standards. I am personally grateful to Meg Lassiatt for the audit.

The Residents in Ministry (RIM) program led by Jean Ness is a 3-year program for commissioned members of our conference clergy. Participants engage in covenant relationships, educational programming, worship, and times of retreat designed to equip, encourage, and empower them for fruitful ministry. The Board of Ordained Ministry has established the following goals for the RIM program:

1. Transition new pastors into full-time ordained ministry.

- 1 2. Equip pastors for fruitful and effective life-long ministry.
- 2 3. Foster community and encourage commitment to accountability.

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We encourage all clergy to maintain their Continuing Education. The Board of Ordained Ministry stands ready with scholarships for clergy who are faithful to improve themselves, follow their passions, and are faithful to fulfill their Continuing Education requirements.

In an effort to dismantle racism, we have had conversations of self-reflection that have led to awareness of how to avoid our own racist tendencies. We support the covenant to dismantle racism and urge all clergy to sign the covenant found on the link:
<https://actionnetwork.org/forms/inumc-in-against-racism>

The season of disaffiliation has resulted in many of our clergy colleagues moving on from the United Methodist Church. We grieve their departure. We also anticipate what God might do next. Because God is still at work, we believe that God is calling people to lead our churches. We celebrate our associate pastors, local pastors, ordained and commissioned elders and deacons, and those who are called to extension ministry.

We are grateful for the continued opportunity to serve in partnership with Bishop Trimble, the Cabinet, the Board of Laity, and the members of the Indiana Conference. I am personally grateful for every member of the Board, every member of the ten District committees on Ministry, and to everyone who serves on a Pastor Parish Relations Committee. Together we are discerning the call of future pastors who will lead our churches.

Tony Alstott, Chair