PASTORAL TTHICS LICENSING SCHOOL – 2022

REV. MATTHEW G. SMITH

Sources:

- "Child Protection Policy Training" by Rev. Jason Stanley. Used & Edited with Permission.
- Robin Lovin, Christian Ethics; An Essential Guide (Abingdon Press, 2000)
- Richard M Gula, Ethics in Pastoral Ministry (Pilgrim Press, 1996)
- "How We Handle Money" by UMC Discipleship Ministries training, 3/12/2022
- Henri Nouwen The Spirituality of Fund-Raising (UpperRoom Ministries, 2004)
- The Greater New Jersey Conference UMC Licensing School resources



OPENING PRAYER

 Gracious and most merciful God, you have brought us together in witness to your love of all children. Open our hearts and minds in this moment and prepare us to receive your message. Show us your will and fill us to overflowing with courage to face the reality of child abuse. Give us energy and dedication enough to make this, your church, a holy and hallowed place where all your children may be safe and secure as they grow in faith and in their knowledge of your presence in their lives. Amen.

• Joy T. Melton, Safe Sanctuaries, Discipleship Resources, 1998





"Jesus said to his disciples, 'Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to anyone by whom they come! It would be better for you if a millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea than for you to cause one of these little ones to stumble. Be on your guard!





If another disciple sins, you must rebuke the offender, and if there is repentance, you must forgive. And if the same person sins against you seven times a day, and turns back to you seven times and says, "I repent", you must forgive."



WHAT ARE CHRISTIAN ETHICS?



 Ethics, in the original understanding of the term, is basically about the positive goals and directions we all set for our lives. Ethics is about how we try to become good people and shape for ourselves a life that is worth living. For Christians, that effort cannot be separated from what we believe about God and about our relationship with God. Faith and ethics are inextricably linked, though not always in the simple way that we think when we try to please God by being good."

- Robin Lovin, Christian Ethics; An Essential Guide (Abingdon Press, 2000) Pg 7.



CHRISTIAN ETHICS:

Christian ethics is ethics with a Christian orientation and biblical perspective which addresses the whole person and his or her needs. It is grounded in norms that refer directly to the biblical perspective and particularly to the person of Jesus Christ. It distinguishes itself by the recurrent all-encompassing themes of love, justice, concern for one's neighbor, the disadvantaged; grace and forgiveness (forgiving and even loving the enemy); the sinfulness of human nature; the powerlessness of an unaided human being to do the ethical task; the question of salvation and healing from, not just immoral and unethical choices, but ultimately from sin, evil, and death.

Christian ethics is also implicit in its affirmation of a Creator-God who is the source of morality, who sets the requirements for ethical compliance for His created beings, and who is also the Forgiver and Enabler in our human striving for obedient conformity to His commands.

- John B. Wong "Ethics for 21st Century Clergy", Ministry: International Journal for Pastors (Sept, 2003) pg. 20-23





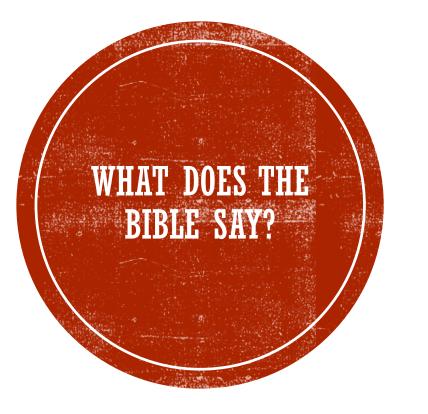
Pastoral Ethics, according to Richard M. Gula is characterized by virtue, duty, and responsibility.

- Richard M Gula, Ethics in Pastoral Ministry (Pilgrim Press, 1996) pg. 6



WHY TEACH CLERGY ETHICS?

SAFE SANCTUARIES



Exodus 22:21-23

Matthew 19:13-14

Luke 9:46-48

Romans



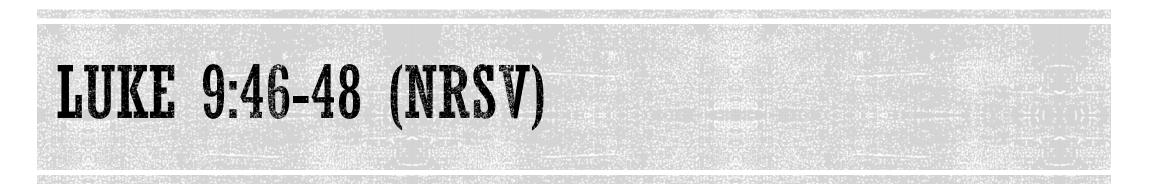
"You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. You shall not abuse any widow or orphan. If you do abuse them, when they cry out to me, I will surely heed their cry;"





"Then little children were being brough to him in order that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples spoke sternly to those who brought them; but Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs."





"An argument arose among them as to which one of them was the greatest. But Jesus, aware of their inner thoughts, took a little child and put it by his side, and said to them, 'Whoever welcomes this child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me; for the least among all of you is the greatest."





BIBLICAL MANDATE

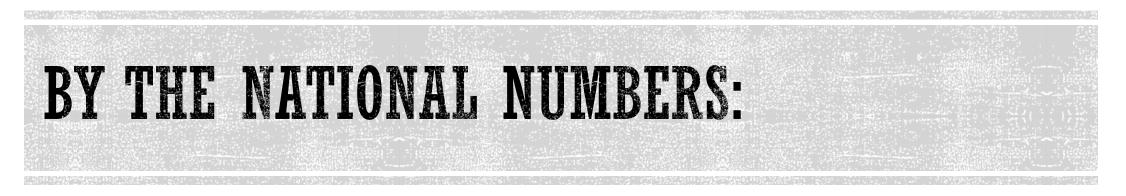




 <u>Clergy:</u> Members of the household of God, I commend this child to your *love and care*. Do all in your power to *increase their faith*, *confirm their hope*, and *perfect them in love*.

 <u>Congregation</u>: We give thanks for all that God has already given you and we welcome you in Christian love. As members together with you in the body of Christ





- 3.6 million cases reported; 6.6 million children an increase by 1.1 million since 2011 (3.2 million of reports are investigated)
- 1 out of 3 girls is sexually abused before age 18
- 1 out of 7 boys have been sexually abused before age 18
- ~ 1,580 deaths attributable to child abuse and/or neglect per year (National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse) – likely undercounted by 50%; 70% are children under 2

Updated 5/2018

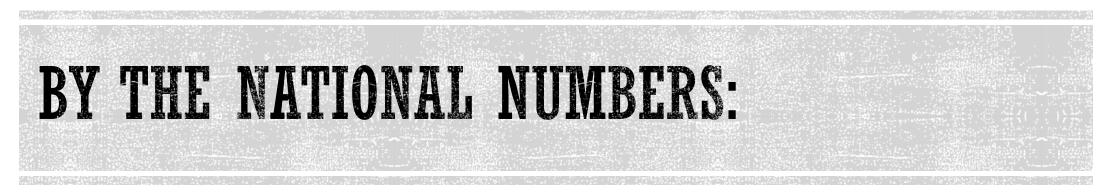




- Of abuse reported to Health & Human Services:
- 60% is neglect
- 20% physical abuse
- 10% sexual
- 5% emotional
- No data for ritual abuse

Updated 5/2018

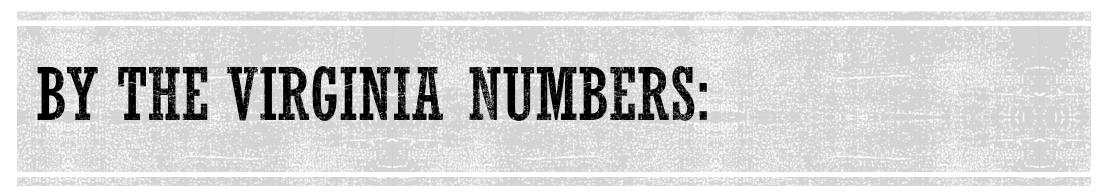




- Sexual predators can have up to 500 victims. One study showed average among incarcerated predators at 226; another found an average of 119
- 4% of teens say they sexted
- 15% of teens say they have received sexts (sexually explicit text messages)
- 33% of youth are victims of cyber-bullying; 41% of those don't tell anyone offline about it
- 34% of youth had unwanted exposure to sexual material online
- Many children are reluctant to report abuse, so numbers do not reflect the unreported cases

Updated 5/2018

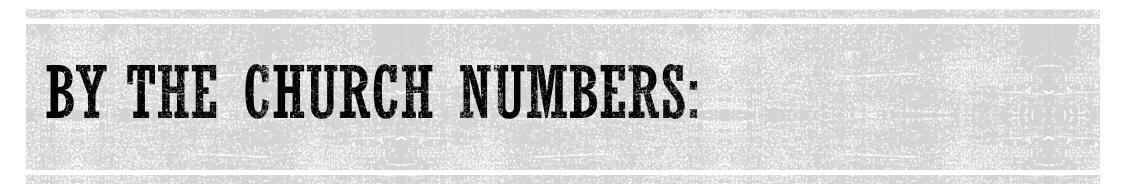




- A child is abused every 75 minutes; every 14 days a child dies from abuse or neglect (Prevent Child Abuse America)
- From the Virginia Department of Social Services:
- 49,868 reported cases in 2015 of possible victims of:
 - 32% under age 4
 - 75% under age 12
 - 68% white
 - 33% African American
 - 1% Asian
- Most common abuse is neglect

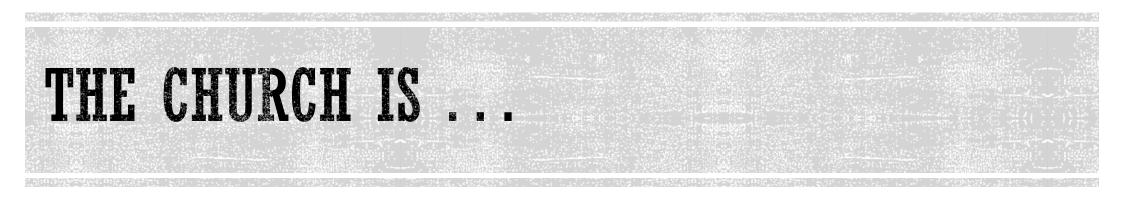
Updated 10/2018





- 70 reports of abuse in churches each week (across denominations)
- In one district in New York, there were 12 reported cases in 14 months
- 14-18% of UMC clergy are sexual predators (Do No Harm Summit 2011)
- UMC Conferences budget \$6 million to cover costs of abuse cases
 - Updated 5/2018





- A community of faith that can offer a safe haven & sanctuary where children & youth can seek advice, help, and nurture.
- A place where more than just facts of child abuse can be taught; we teach compassion, justice, repentance, and grace.
- The place where children can come & learn & develop the inner strength & spiritual resources they will need to feel truly connected to God & to face suffering & evil.
- Can be a place where children & adults are able to learn how to respond to painful & confusing events using the wisdom of Scripture, Tradition, Experience, and Reason.





- Trusting
- Inactive in screening volunteers/employees
- Opportunities for close contact
- Opportunities for cross-generational connections
- Opportunities for close, personal relationships
- "charitable immunity" (a thing of the past)



- Children: Birth to age 12
- Youth: ages 13 to 18
- Vulnerable Adults
- Staff and Volunteers
- Trustees and other church leadership
- Church's Ministry & Mission





WHAT IS ABUSE?



- Physical abuse includes:
 - Battery
 - Shaking
 - Kicking
 - Choking
 - Non-Accidental



- Emotional and Verbal abuse include:
 - Spoken or unspoken violence or cruelty



Sexual abuse includes:

- Fondling
- Intercourse
- Incest
- Exploitation and/or
- Exposure to pornography or prostitution



- Joking and touching:
 - Particularly problematic among youth and young adult groups
- 20% of insurance claims are that minors are the perpetrators
- Hazing/practical jokes/humiliation
- Criminal conduct (nonconsensual) – 4 year age difference



Also be mindful of grooming for abuse through

- gift-giving
- taking photo's/video's
- Private messages texts, etc.
- Loitering in the church during services
- Having private/secret conversations kept from parents



WHAT ARE WE DOING?

Establish Policies!

See the Small Membership Church Policy draft

IN THE POLICY:

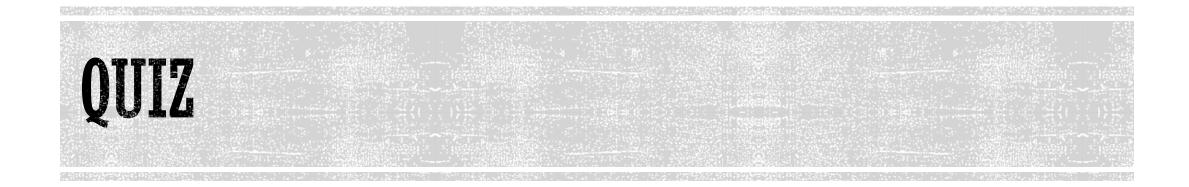
- 2-Adult Rule
- Six month Rule
- Age of workers/volunteers (18/21)
- 5-year older rule
- Windows in Doors/Half-Doors
- Open Door Counseling
- Appropriate/Adequate Equipment and Supervision
- First Aid/CPR Training





- Annual Policy Orientation/Training
- Advance Notice to Parents
- Volunteer/Worker Covenant/Screening Form
- Parent and Family Education
- Background Checks (Screening One)
 - Recommended every 2-5 years
 - Check with insurance carrier, they may have a preference









Social Media/Online Engagement

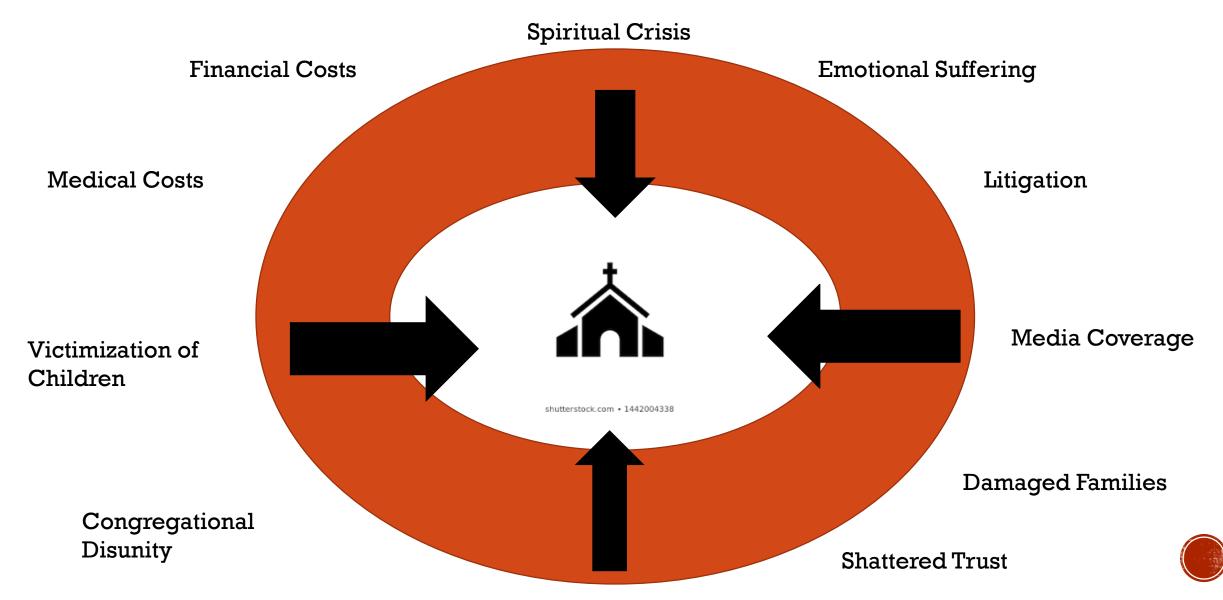
Overnight Trips

Elderly/Vulnerable Adults

Secure Building

Bullying or youth on youth violence

WHY FOLLOW THE POLICY?





OREPORTING OBLIGATIONS

ASSUMING NO CONFIDENCE - more on Confidentiality later!



- Be pastoral to the victim, and his or her family
- Be pastoral toward the accused abuser
- Keep written record of steps taken in response
- Do not speak with media contact DS first (ideally the DS and VAUMC Director of Communication, Madeline White, will identify a spokesperson)





- Report incident/concern to clergy. Clergy will notify parents, remove child from situation
- Clergy reports suspected abuse to proper law enforcement or department of family services agency.
- Clergy reports to DS. DS will notify the Bishop. Conference resources will be deployed.
- Notify church insurance company and attorney.
- Do not speak to media unless directed. Prepare a brief and honest statement that can be made to the congregation.
- Cooperate fully with the investigation conduced by law enforcement officials or department of family services.





- Create a Covenant
- Consult with the law/probation officer
- Identify Boundaries
- Secure Attendants
- Offender Compliance
- Re-review at least annually and at any change of Pastor, SPRC Chair, Children/Youth Ministry leadership, etc.



COUNSELING



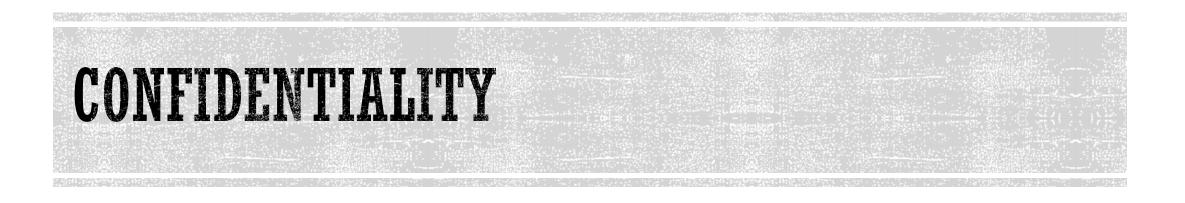
"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."





CONFIDENTIALITY

In Safe Sanctuary and more broadly in Pastoral Ministry



- What is confidentiality?
- When is a conversation confidential?
- •Why is it important that a conversation be held in confidence?



CONFIDENTIALITY – MANDATORY REPORTERS

For "Mandatory Reporters" (teachers, doctors, counselors, etc.) there are a few exceptions to confidentiality. The instances where confidentiality may be broken is if the person is a threat to themselves (such as being suicidal) or others (threatening to harm another person, child abuse, elder abuse, etc.)

How Mandated Reporters report Child Abuse or Neglect

- CPS Hotline: <u>800-552-7096</u>
- Out of State: <u>804-786-8536</u>
- Local Departments of Social Services

 (call during business hours) <u>https://dss.virginia.gov/abuse/mrportal.cgi</u>





"A minister, priest, rabbi, imam, or duly accredited practitioner of any religious organization or denomination must report, **unless the information supporting the suspicion of child abuse or neglect is required by the doctrine of the religious organization or denomination to be kept in a confidential manner or would be subject to § 8.01-400 or 19.2-271.3 (regarding clergy-penitent communications) if offered as evidence in court."**

- <u>https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title63.2/chapter15/section63.2-</u> 1509/





"All clergy of The United Methodist Church are charged to maintain all confidences inviolate, including confessional confidences, except in the cases of suspected child abuse or neglect or in cases where mandatory reporting is required by civil law." (2016 Book of Discipline para. 341.5) - this includes licensed pastors



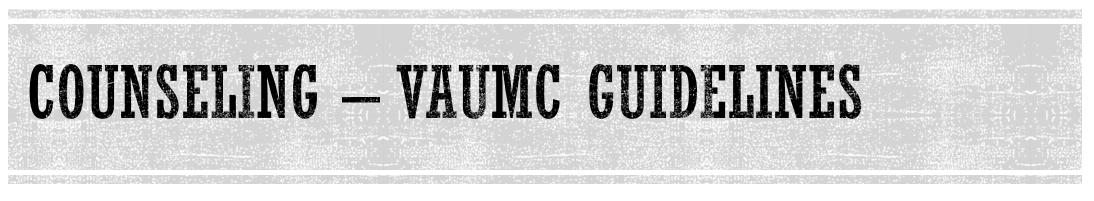
COUNSELING

Dr. Bill Blackburn in his article, "Ethical Issues in Pastoral Counseling" writes,

 "How should pastors decide how much to counsel, whom to see, appropriate boundaries in counseling, and how available to be to persons in need? These boundary issues are crucial, because if they are not decided in some reasonable manner, the pastor can risk his or her own effectiveness, mental health, family life and leadership of the congregation."

VAUMC Guidelines state: "The second concern arises from our experience that clergy misconduct and boundary violations most often originate in the pastoral "counseling" context."





- Give disclaimer at beginning.
- "Clergy should establish a personal policy which limits any counseling relationship to no more than three sessions of 60-90 minutes each per individual incident." – VAUMC Guidelines
- Refer in every new appointment seek to create a referral list soon and update upon feedback.
- "Always use caution in the physical setting and observe appropriate boundaries of touching and other inappropriate physical contact or comments, especially when meeting with minors."



FINANCIAL ETHICS



"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."



THE Spirituality of Fund-Raising

HENRI NOUWEN

"fund-raising includes proclamation and invitation as well as conversion. "Fund-raising is proclaiming what we believe in such a way that we offer other people an opportunity to participate with us in our vision and mission." For Henri, the proclamation and invitation involve a challenging call to conversion for fund-raisers and donors alike. "Fund-raising is always a call to conversion."...



THE Spirituality of Fund-Raising

HENRL NOUWEN

"All are called into a new, more spiritual relationship with their needs and their resources. Henri encourages fund-raisers to become more confident and joyful, standing up in their asking without apology. And in this vision they do not profit alone, because donors also participate in a new communion with others while becoming part of a much larger spiritual vision and fruitfulness."

– Introduction by Sue Mosteller, CSJ, pg 3-4



THE Spirituality of Fund-Raising

HENRL NOUWEN

As a form of ministry, fundraising is as spiritual as giving a sermon, entering a time of prayer, visiting the sick, or feeding the hungry.

Nouwen

September 16, 1992



FUNDRAISING IS **A MINISTRY!**

"When we seek to raise funds we are not saying, "Please, could you help us out because lately it's been hard." Rather, we are declaring, "We have a vision that is amazing and exciting. We are inviting you to invest yourself through the resources that God has given you— your energy, your prayers, and your money—in this work to which God has called us." Our invitation is clear and confident because we trust that our vision and mission are like "trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither" (Ps. 1:3)"

- Henri J Nouwen. The Spirituality of Fundraising (Upper Room Ministries, 2004) Pg. 3-4



THE SPIRITUALITY OF FUND-RAISING

HENRI NOUWEN

"The real danger facing us is to distrust our desire for communion. It is a God-given desire without which our lives lose their vitality and our hearts grow cold." - Here and Now –

- "Community is first of all a quality of the heart. It grows from the spiritual knowledge that we are alive not for ourselves but for one another."

- - Bread for the Journey -





Safely handling money in the church has always been a challenge. Technology has made this easier in some ways, and more challenging in others.

- HandlingChurchesMoneyNewDay3.21.2022





- 1 in 10 churches have been victims of embezzlement.
- Out of 2400 cases of fraud investigated in 2016 2.4% involved churches/charitable organizations
- Average loss was \$82,000
- Approximately 80% of embezzlement goes unreported to police.
- 47% of churches studied had audit in the last year 34% said most recent audit was more than 5 years 10% "Never" and 14% "Unknown"

-- From a 2017 Study conducted by Lifeway, HandlingChurchesMoneyNewDay3.21.2022





The Hard, Sad Truth

"Embezzlement and Fraud in the church is not committed by a stranger, but by Embezzlement and Fraud in the church is not committed by a stranger, but by someone you trust."

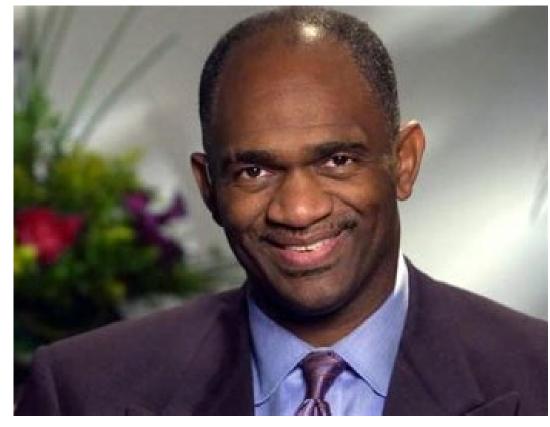
HandlingChurchesMoneyNewDay3.21.2022



UMC EMBEZZLEMENT CASES

- McCauley's Chapel Methodist Church, Gadsden, AL. Deborah K. Coker (former bookkeeper/treasurer) arrested on allegations of theft of nearly \$270,000 over ten years. <u>Bookkeeper accused of taking almost \$270,000 from church.</u> 2019
- First United Methodist Church, Bethlehem, GA. Nikki Shelton (chief financial officer) arrested for embezzling about \$80,000. <u>Church CFO arrested for embezzling funds</u>. 2018
- Whitcomb United Methodist Church, Brookville, IN. Steve Brack (trustee) pled guilty to stealing in excess of \$5,000. He also pled guilty earlier to stealing from the Brookville Kiwanis Club, a civic organization. 2017
- Bucktown United Methodist Church, Cambridge, MD. Ashley Ellis (undetermined) was arrested on allegations she "stole and forged checks totaling \$19,632.76." She was also charged with "identity theft, forgery of private documents, obtaining money by forgery and issuing a false document." 2015
- Palma Ceia United Methodist Church, Tampa, FL. Juliet Suzanne Ellis (business manager) arrested and pled guilty to embezzlement of more than \$82,000. <u>Tampa-area church manager pleads guilty</u> in federal embezzlement case.
- Chester United Methodist Church, Chester, VA. Jerri Hunter (treasurer) found guilty on 14 felony charges of embezzlement. Serving 10 in prison for stealing \$760,000. 2013

UMC FRAUD



Windsor Village United Methodist Church, Houston, TX. **Kirbyjon Caldwell** (pastor) was charged with conspiracy, wire fraud, and money laundering. The loss is estimated at \$3.5M. This pastor was spiritual advisor to former U.S. Presidents George W. Bush & Barack Obama. His co-defendant has pled guilty.

Sentenced in January 2021 to six years.

Caldwell "used his status as the pastor of a megachurch to help convince the many victim investors that they were making a legitimate investment, but instead he took their hard-earned money from them and used it for his own personal gain," Acting U.S. Attorney Alexander Van Hook said in a statement.

 https://www.cbsnews.com/dfw/news/texasmegachurch-pastor-kirbyjon-caldwell-sentenced-prisonfraud-scheme/





You can trust everyone,

IF you implement some common sense policies that protect you and your congregation.

HandlingChurchesMoneyNewDay3.21.2022



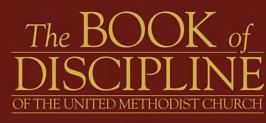


Be informed but keep you hands off.

"Be a financial leader in your congregation, but stay away from financial transactions."

HandlingChurchesMoneyNewDay3.21.2022







¶ 258 (Committee on Finance), 2016 BOOK OF DISCIPLINE OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

FINANCIAL ETHICS

A good resource! on Church audits, finance committee structure, how to count the offering, etc.

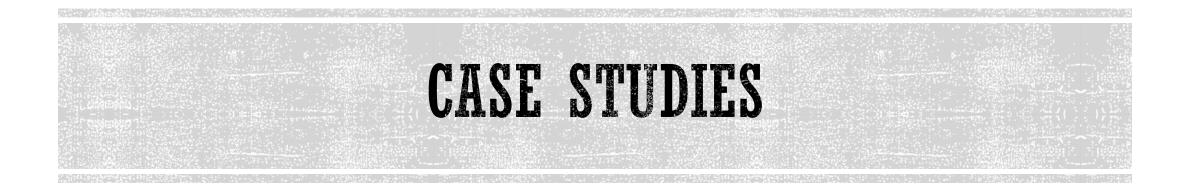


Policies

- Two people shall be present when offerings are present
- Financial gifts should be secured at church until deposited
- Offerings should not be taken to someone's home
- Deposits should be delivered to bank in sealed bag
- Counting should be done by at least two unrelated persons
- Counter's sheet should have deposit verification attached

HandlingChurchesMoneyNewDay3.21.2022





Break into small groups and review case studies

#4 Case Study - Telling the Truth in Evangelism and Mission

&

#5 - Ethics in Sermon Preparation and Preaching (Lay person perspective)



WORKPLACE ETHICS

Best practices:

 Keep things professional. You're always the pastor, they are always the staff.

THE ETHICS OF SUPERVISION

- Create a climate of mutual respect, treating everyone with dignity, and working collaboratively in service to Christ
- Do your due diligence with hiring: background checks and references!
- Keep a record/document issues.
- Provide regular/quarterly check-ins and annual evaluations
- Dismiss if the employee is not serving the best interests of the church



THE ETHICS OF SUPERVISION

Best practices:

- Regular staff meetings
- Staff should get a cost of living increase annually 2-3%
- Every staff person should have ONE direct supervisor
- Be mindful of racial and gender disparities



SEXUAL HARASSMENT & MISCONDUCT

- It is the understanding of The United Methodist Church that Scripture condemns sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. Sexual harassment is defined by The United Methodist Church as "any unwanted sexual comment, advance or demand, either verbal or physical that is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive. Sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as an exclusively sexual issue. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender." (¶ 161.II.I (p. 104), 2008 Book of Discipline)
- When the power and authority of the ministerial office is used for one's own benefit rather than for the benefit of the one served (as defined by the person being served) violation occurs.
- Sexual Misconduct or abuse should be reported to the DS.

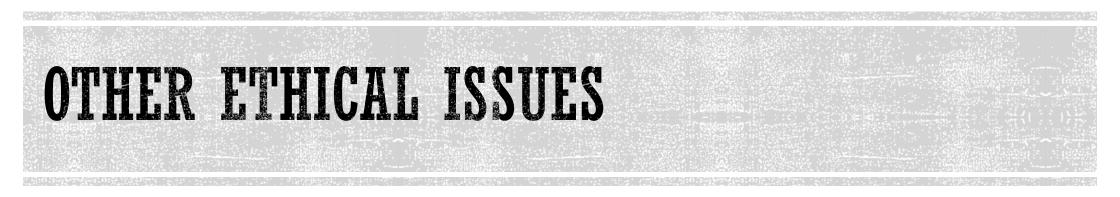


OTHER ISSUES OF CLERGY ETHICS

OTHER ETHICAL ISSUES

- Be honest with your use of time.
- "Always be gainfully employed. Do not triffle away time."
- Avoid bragging or complaining about how hard you work.
- Promptly respond to correspondences emails, phone calls, etc
- When you say you will pray for someone or something, do it!
- Avoid bitterness towards members for opportunities afforded non-clergy
- Avoid business endeavors that overlap with pastoral duties
- Do not borrow money from church members or the church
- Receive criticism without retaliation
- "Stay above the fray."





- What issues have not been raised?
- What are your experiences?





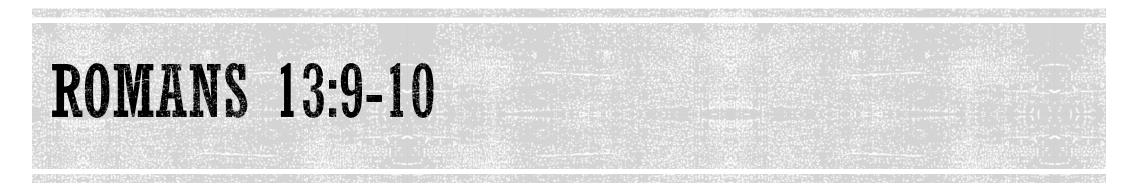
- Break up into teams of 4-5
- Create a realistic scenario with an ethical component. (can be real, but hide the names and location)
- Each team present the polemic and ask the other teams how would they respond?
- Lastly the originating team offers their consensus of how to respond.





- Do No Harm
- Do Good
- Attend to the ordinances of God (ie "stay in love with God" – Bishop Reuben Job)





"The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law."





OUTESTIONS?

CLOSING PRAYER

Holy Trinity, we give you thanks for how you continue to pursue us with your transforming love. Strengthen us by the power of the Holy Spirit to persevere in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and selfcontrol. Even when we don't see it in ourselves, help others to see in us your love and grace. Even when we do not see it in others, assist us to see in them your sacred worth. Amen.

