

#### **2044 Sexual Misconduct Within Ministerial Relationship (BOR 2012, pp. 134-137)**

- Sacred Trust, Power, and Responsibility
- Definitions: Sexual misconduct, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Abuse, Sexualized Behavior
- Ministerial Role of Leadership

#### **Administrative Fair Process (BOD 2012, pp.304-309)**

- Judicial complaints: complaints which are chargeable offenses (BOD 2012, ¶2702.1)
- Complaints must be written, signed statement
- Upon receipt of complaint, Bishop shall notify chairperson of the BOOM
- 90 days allowed for supervisory response process (one 30 day extension possible)
- If complaint resolution is not achieved in 90 days, Bishop shall either:
  1. Dismiss the complaint with consent of the cabinet giving reasons in writing
  2. Refer matter to the counsel for the church as a complaint
- **New term in BOD: Abeyance** ---A complaint may be held in abeyance due to matter being litigated in civil court. (BOD 2012, ¶1363.1g) Complaint must be reviewed every 90 days by the Bishop and BOOM.

#### **Mandate to provide for healing (BOD 2012, ¶¶1363.1b,f; 2701.4c)**

- Three roles of bishop or designee (often a district superintendent) handling a complaint of clergy sexual misconduct:
  1. Administrative: Fair process, follow procedures, advocate for all parties
  2. Supervisory: Clergy accountability, pastoral appointment, disciplinary measures and/or behavioral covenant for clergy
  3. Pastoral: Promote healing for all parties
- The *Discipline* also allows for the use of a Response Team to provide pastoral care when handling and following-up on a complaint: the Bishop may select “persons with qualifications and experience in assessment, intervention, or healing” to assist during the supervisory response. (¶1363.1b)
- “The United Methodist Church commends the use of Response Teams in cases of sexual misconduct by ministerial leaders and urges judicatory leaders to train and employ them.” (BOR, 2043, pp.131-134)
- Provide advocates/support person for alleged primary victim(s), for the accused, and for families involved.
- Use Response Team to facilitate congregational healing through processing feelings and thoughts.
- Provide visibility of Bishop or District Superintendent to convey official communications to congregation
- Provide debriefing following a congregational intervention.