

SUMMARY OF PURPOSE AND MISSION OF THE CONFERENCE BOARD OF LAITY AND FOUR CBOL PROGRAMS

CONFERENCE BOARD OF LAITY

The Conference Board of Laity (CBOL) is the elected lay leadership of the Annual Conference. It therefore represents and is accountable to the Annual Conference. Its greatest contribution is through interaction with all facets of church life and work. The CBOL must live within the system of budget appropriation and accountability set by the administrative function of the Conference.

The Conference Board of Laity has set out to determine its full range of responsibility based on (1) an understanding of the *Book of Discipline*, (2) a certain amount of self-determination, and (3) an understanding and agreement with the Bishop and the Cabinet. This is increasingly important as we are moving into new areas of responsibility and pursue different initiatives to achieve our mission.

The *Discipline* (§630.2) is clear that the CBOL shall have responsibility for the following:

- 1 fostering an awareness of the role of the laity,
- 2 developing the advocacy role for laity,
- 3 increasing the participation of laity in the life of the church,
- 4 encouraging laypersons in the general ministry of the church
- 5 developing and promoting programs to cultivate an adequate understanding of the theological and biblical basis for lay life and work,
- 6 developing and promoting stewardship of time, talent, and possessions,
- 7 providing for the training of lay members
- 8 providing support and direction for such lay programs as lay speaking, the observance of Laity Sunday, and the work of lay leaders on the local and district levels,
- 9 organizing a conference committee on lay speaking ministries

These are all action verbs that would suggest that the CBOL should be “doing something”, rather than just “meeting” from time to time. It will take quite some effort for the CBOL to position itself to suggest it is accomplishing these responsibilities. We will begin to exert leadership by focusing on § 630.2 and our objectives. Most of these functions should also be taken seriously at the District Board of Laity level. We seek to start by confirming the support of the Bishop and Cabinet on our objectives for the quadrennium.

CBOL will authorize the initial structure and subsequent changes of each program committee. The executives of the CBOL are the conference lay leader and the associate conference lay leaders. The conference lay leader will appoint members to the various program committees. Sub-committees to handle specific projects related to committee work may establish by the committees. The conference lay leader and program committee chairperson will jointly appoint members of sub-committees unless otherwise provided.

LAY SPEAKING MINISTRIES

Lay Speaking Ministries (LSM) is a conference-based system for training and mobilizing laity for services of leading, caring and communicating in the local congregation, the connectional church and the community. It is highly recommended that lay leaders at all levels, lay members of the annual conference and others seeking to prepare themselves for service be certified lay speakers.

The conference director of lay speaking ministries (conference director) is chair of the conference committee of Lay Speaking Ministries (CCLSM) and is the motivating and administrative leader of LSM in the conference. The conference lay leader and the conference board of laity (which includes the conference director of Lay Speaking Ministries and the district lay leaders) are responsible for the oversight of the CCLSM, seeing to it that lay speaking is enabled, has a conference director, and is organized. The CCLSM (which includes the District Directors of Lay Speaking Ministries) is responsible for seeing that training occurs regularly at the conference or district level, for approving locally developed teaching resources, for training and approving instructors of lay speaking, for setting conference rules, for carrying out the requirements of the Book of Discipline as it regards LSM, and for approving other training that can substitute for re-certification of lay speakers. Most of the actual organizational work and teaching of lay speaking courses occurs at the district level, where the district director as chair, district lay leader, and district superintendent make up the core of the district committee on LSM. The district board of laity relationship to the district committee on LSM parallels the relationship at the annual conference level.

The LSM program is resourced by the General Board of Discipleship.

LEADERSHIP UMC

The purpose of LEADERSHIP UMC is to identify and train emerging laity leadership from throughout the annual conference and to mentor those persons trained into participation in the leadership of the local church, district, and annual conference organizations. This will be accomplished by the conference board of laity through a series of annual training events for selected individuals who have been identified by the local church and are selected by the district boards of laity.

Expected outcomes of LEADERSHIP UMC are to:

- 1 Identify, recruit and train laity interested in church leadership
- 2 Insure that the identification, recruitment and training be age, gender, and ethnic inclusive.
- 3 Graduate a class of LEADERSHIP UMC each conference year.
- 4 Provide a laity leadership development program under the sponsorship of the Conference Board of Laity.
- 5 Facilitate the introduction and inclusion of program graduates who show interest in lay leadership roles into leadership positions.
- 6 Assist participants to develop leadership skills and to grow spiritually through instruction, class participation, and small group projects.

LAY REVITALIZATION TEAMS

The results of the Conference Board of Laity Listening Sessions throughout the Conference during 2000 indicated many concerns and needs in our churches. This was especially true in the small membership church, where resources and funds may not be readily available. Many laity also expressed their desire to take part in special laity programs, to serve their church in ways consistent with their ministry and spiritual development. The intent of the *Lay Revitalization Team* is to coordinate an expressed need of a local church with this desire to serve on the part of laity from around the conference. This will be accomplished by utilizing a structured group of dedicated laity who are knowledgeable, experienced, and trained in specific areas of ministry and service. These teams will be available to churches that request their services.

The purpose of the *Lay Revitalization Team* is to provide an avenue for our local churches to obtain assistance in accomplishing the mission and goals of local churches throughout the Annual Conference. The team visit, in conjunction with the pastor, will enable the *Lay Revitalization Team* to share their knowledge, experience, gifts, and graces in specific areas of ministry and service with other laity. The *Lay Revitalization Program* offers assistance and service in selected work areas, to meet the concerns and needs of the local church. These areas are to be identified and a needs assessment is to be developed by the *Host Church* in conjunction with the *Team Leader* who will be assigned by the *Lay Revitalization Committee*. The *Lay Revitalization Committee* will furnish qualified laity (known as *Team Members*) to address the needs as identified. The ultimate goal is to assist the *Host Church* to become stronger physically and spiritually.

LAY MISSIONARY TRAINING

The purpose and mission of the Lay Missionary Training program and of the Committee is to provide training and support to equip laity to more effectively accomplish the mission of the church, “to make disciples of Jesus Christ”.

The other programs of CBOL focus on developing leaders of the local church for leadership and work activities within the local church. Lay Missionary Training is intended to complement existing programs by providing training and support to equip laity for mission work in the world, not just within the local church. This training and support is tied to the local church mission “to make disciples of Jesus Christ” and will equip laity called to domestic or international mission to be effective in leading such mission work. Lay Missionary Training provides training and support, not currently provided, to equip laity for service connected to, but operating outside the walls of the local church. The intent of the Committee is to operate on a self-funding basis, with tuition payments covering the full expenses of the program. On occasion, CBOL may elect to provide scholarship assistance.