

## Free Methodist Church

Board of Bishops  
P. O. Box 535002  
Indianapolis, IN 46253

*fmcna INFO*

TO: General Conference Delegates, Pastors, Superintendents, Ministers in Special Appointments and Relations, World Ministries Center Staff, Missionaries, Retired Bishops, Retired Ministers, AFMEI Presidents, AHSM Presidents, WMI President, MMI Executive Director, MMI President, FMF President, Chaplaincy Endorsing Agent

FROM: Joseph James, World Ministries Center Overseer  
Hank Bode, Board of Administration Chair

RE: **FMCNA INFO** (Vol. 2, No. 1) May 2002

### Board of Bishops Report

The Board of Bishops has met four times since the November 2001 report. Some specific decisions of the Board of Bishops that may be of interest to you include:

Approved bishop liaison persons to work with new networks:  
Roger Haskins: Hispanic Network, Family/Children Network  
Richard Snyder: Brazilian Network

Sent letter and 9-11 publications from American Bible Society to all pastors.

Approved nineteen church planting grants in the amount of \$6,000 each to:

1<sup>st</sup> year - Iglesia Betania, Cororna - Southern California  
1<sup>st</sup> year - Jehova Reyna, Lincoln, NE - Great Plains  
1<sup>st</sup> year - First Brazilian of West Palm Beach, FL - South Atlantic  
1<sup>st</sup> year - Church on the Lakes, Lansing, MI - East Michigan  
1<sup>st</sup> year - Day Spring, Medina - Ohio  
1<sup>st</sup> year - Cornerstone South, Canal Fulton - Ohio  
1<sup>st</sup> year - ALPHA FMC, San Ysidro - Southern California  
1<sup>st</sup> year - New Life Community, Rock Hill, SC - New South  
1<sup>st</sup> year - Logos Christian, Waterbury, CT - New York  
2<sup>nd</sup> year - Iglesia Cristiana Luz y Vida, Long Beach - Southern California  
2<sup>nd</sup> year - The New Link, Endicott, NY - Susquehanna  
2<sup>nd</sup> year - Redeeming Love, Fruitland Park, FL - South Atlantic  
2<sup>nd</sup> year - Telegu FMC, Silver Spring, MD - Maryland-Virginia  
2<sup>nd</sup> year - Dayton African, Huber Heights - Ohio  
2<sup>nd</sup> year - Nueva Vida, Lorain - Ohio  
2<sup>nd</sup> year - Christ Community FMC, Twinsburg - Ohio  
2<sup>nd</sup> year - West LA Christian, Los Angeles - Southern California  
2<sup>nd</sup> year - Faith Community, Harrisonburg, VA - Maryland-Virginia  
2<sup>nd</sup> year - Silver Spring Brazilian - Maryland-Virginia

Named a Strategic Planning Task Force to give intensive thought and prayer to lay the foundation strategy planning process to achieve the vision of the FMCNA.

The Bishops also conducted Bishops' Schools for Renewal in McPherson, Kansas; Spring Arbor, Michigan; Lancaster, Pennsylvania; and Atlanta, Georgia. Three more Schools for Renewal are scheduled for the fall. The theme for the Schools for Renewal is "Set Free." Topics for presentations are "Free to Be," "Set Free, A Holy People," "Free to Multiply," and "Set Free, A

Spirit-filled Leadership.” The Bishops had listening sessions with women clergy at each event.

The Bishops also participated in the Large Church Pastors Conference, the FM Urban Ministries Conference, and the Wesleyan/Holiness Women Clergy Conference where they had a listening session with about eighty Free Methodist women clergy.

As a result of the tragic events which happened on September 11, contributions to the Bishops Famine & Relief Fund designated for the Attack on America have totaled over \$145,000. Of that amount, \$99,500 has been disbursed to families and churches where needs have been most evident. A program is underway by which New York City churches may submit a request for funds to enable them to respond to new ministry opportunities that have opened as a result of the attack. All funds designated for Attack on America will be used in this program. Thank you for your generous support.

### **Board of Administration Report - April 12-13, 2002**

The Board of Administration met at the World Ministries Center in Indianapolis on April 12 and 13. Members present included: Eric Baird (Mid-America), Carol Bartlett (Pacific Northwest), Robert Bedford (South Atlantic), Hank Bode (Southern California), Forest Bush (Sierra Pacific), William Cryderman (Southern Michigan), Josh Fajardo (South Atlantic), Hector Fernandez (New York), Byron Forbes (Sierra Pacific), Zonda Haase (Ohio), Roger Haskins (Western Area), Joseph James (Central Area), Gene Keene (Pacific Northwest), Leslie Krober (Heartland Area), Pearson Miller (Wabash), Larry Roberts (Columbia River), Dan Shinabarger (East Michigan), Richard Snyder (Eastern Area), Vernon Snyder (New England), Matthew Thomas (Columbia River), Rob Turner (East Michigan), Mark Van Valin (Wabash), Mark Whitlock (Gateway), Brenda Young (Ohio). Excused absences were approved for Steve Fitch (Southern California), Mark Logan (Genesee), and Alex Marufu (Zimbabwe).

#### **Reports were received from the following:**

Budget and Finance Committee -- Gene Keene  
Free Methodist Foundation -- Stanley Thompson  
FMCNA/FMF - BOA Task Force -- Gene Keene  
Task Force on FMCNA-AFMEI Relationship -- Pearson Miller  
Board of Bishops -- Richard Snyder  
Correspondence Model Ordination Task Force -- Leslie Krober  
Study Commission on Doctrine -- Leslie Krober  
Communications Committee -- Larry Roberts  
Missions Committee -- Matt Thomas  
Task Force on Role of Bishops -- Dan Shinabarger  
General Conference 2003 Coordinator -- Robert McDowell

#### **Personnel Update:**

**Rev. Eric Spangler** will begin serving in Free Methodist World Missions as Director of Mobilization, effective July 1.

**Rev. Jerry Coleman** has been named European Area Coordinator in Free Methodist World Missions, effective April 1.

#### **The following actions were taken:**

Noted positive year-end report in United Ministries for Christ giving in 2001. Home Ministries received \$2,730,191, which is 100.2% of the accepted goal. World Missions received \$3,701,058, which is 102.57% of the accepted goal.

Approved accreditation for social service agencies as follows: Olive Branch Mission; The Gerry Homes; Deaconess Hospital/Copper Lake; Woodstock Christian Life Services; Life Line Homes; Warm Beach Senior Community; Clawson Manor, New Life, Inc.; The Birth Connection; Oakdale Christian High School.

Expressed appreciation to the executives and staff of the Free Methodist Foundation for their work in behalf of the Free Methodist Church of North America.

Approved recommendation presented by FMCNA/FMF - BOA Task Force (copy attached).

Approved recommendation presented by Task Force on FMCNA-AFMEI Relationship to replace current Paragraphs B/472-B/474 of the *Book of Discipline* (copy attached).

Responded to Roberts Wesleyan College that under the new paradigm they continue to qualify as a denominational institution.

Approved continued affiliation and JWSF funding for Wesley Biblical Seminary.

Approved renaming the correspondence ordination model JT/XL Model (J-Term/ Extended Learning). Students are encouraged to take as many of their courses as possible via the J-Term (live) or through close-site video/digital options. Team learning by means of professor and student interchange, whether live or on-line, is favored. This model will continue to be developed over several years (copy attached).

Approved a simplified Annual Report form for statistical reporting (copy attached).

Approved dividing the Latin Network into the Hispanic Network and Brazilian Network. Gonzalo Cruz was affirmed as leader of the Hispanic Network. Jesse Carvalho will continue as leader of the Brazilian Network.

Received report on the location of Regional Sitzings of the 2003 North American General Conference:

Latin America (Venezuela)	March 11-16, 2003
Africa (Lilongwe)	March 18-23, 2003
Asia (Hong Kong)	April 25-27, 2003

Approved recommendation from Study Commission on Doctrine that the existing ritual for ordination of elders be retained, but that an alternate, longer Preamble be added along with additional Scripture lesson options.

Noted that the Study Commission on Doctrine has agreed to begin a process of examining Article XII of the Articles of Religion regarding Entire Sanctification in partnership with the SCOD of the Canadian General Conference.

Received a report from the Task Force on Reformatting the Book of Discipline as ordered by the 1999 General Conference. A draft of the reformatting had been distributed to the BOA by mail.

Approved recommendation from the Communications Committee that election of BOA members at General Conference be carried out as follows:

- a. early on during General Conference the delegates shall meet by region (Bishops' areas) to become acquainted with one another and to elect a nominating committee;
- b. later in the conference, the delegates shall meet by region with the nominating committee bringing two nominees for each position, and with additional nominations allowed from the floor. After such nominations are closed, each of the nominees will be given one

minute to introduce themselves to their region's delegates. As they are speaking, their picture, their name, and their conference will be projected so that all of the region's delegates can see them. Such names will remain projected until the vote is taken, with the delegates writing the names of those nominees for whom they are voting on blank ballots.

Note: Nominations from each bishops' area will be presented to the general conference for election.

Received updated report on plans and details of 2003 North America General Conference to be held June 28 - July 4 at Seattle Pacific University, Seattle, Washington.

Approved that the chair appoint a task force of at least three persons plus the chair to review possible inconsistencies and ambiguities in the Book of Discipline, especially related to the Free Methodist Constitution, and report its findings to the October meeting of the BOA. John Van Valin, David Wills, and David Colgan were appointed to serve with Chairman Hank Bode.

Received a report that the Genesee Conference BOA agreed to provide for the maintenance of Centenary Park in Pekin, New York. The Board went on record acknowledging the goodwill of the Genesee Conference for assuming this responsibility.

Approved Archives Retention Schedule as presented by the Free Methodist History and Archives Committee.

Approved report of the Task Force on the Role of Bishops to be sent to the general conference (copy attached).

Approved recommendation from the Task Force that four bishops be elected by the general conference to the FMCNA. This recommendation will be forwarded to the general conference.

Approved changes to the Hong Kong Annual Conference constitution.

**Dates for upcoming Board of Administration meetings:**

October 24-26, 2002

April 10-12, 2003

October 22-25, 2003

We welcome your comments, reflections, concerns. You may contact us by:

FAX 317-241-8897

Phone 800-342-5531

**NOTE:** Because of recent problems with several viruses coming into the World Ministries Center network system through AOL email messages, we are setting up a new email address for the Board of Bishops which can more easily be protected. The address is [bishops@fmcna.org](mailto:bishops@fmcna.org). Please make note of this change in your address book.

*For additional information, visit our website at [www.freemethodistchurch.org](http://www.freemethodistchurch.org).*

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**Free Methodist Church of North America and Free Methodist Foundation  
FMCNA/FMF - BOA Task Force Sub-Committee**

The mission of the Free Methodist Church is to make known to all people everywhere God's call to wholeness through forgiveness and holiness in Jesus Christ, and to invite into membership and equip for ministry all who respond in faith.

**VISION**

A healthy biblical community of holy people...multiplying disciples, leaders, groups and churches.

Steps to funding the mission and vision:

1. The Board of Bishops and the Board of Administration in consultation with leaders in the church will define, quantify and prioritize the elements needed beyond United Ministries for Christ Home Ministries and World Missions funds to accomplish the mission and fulfill the vision of the church.
2. The FMCNA will develop an advancement thrust and secure an on-site advancement coordinator (closely related to FMF) to implement and coordinate the plan.
3. Subsequently, a consultant will guide in developing a preliminary case study followed by a feasibility study of a funding plan.
4. Under the leadership of the FMCNA advancement coordinator a steering committee that includes FMF representation and a team of campaign volunteers will be secured to assist in completing the plan.
5. The Bishops with other church leaders will communicate the vision and campaign goals to the church through FM Communications, the annual conferences and churches with regular updates.
6. The FMCNA advancement coordinator working in concert with church and campaign leaders and the FMF will work together to successfully accomplish the advancement thrust of the church.
7. The FMCNA leaders will keep the vision and mission of the church and the giving opportunities before its constituency.

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**FMCNA BOA Task Force on Relationship to FM Educational Institutions  
Proposal: Replace B/472-B/474 (1999 Book of Discipline) with the following:**

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**B/472. Free Methodist Denominational Educational Institutions**

The Free Methodist Church of North America (FMCNA) recognizes as 'Denominational' institutions those colleges and universities whose commitments are consistent with the history, theology, mission and character of the FMCNA.

**B/472.1. Leadership Commitments**

1. The president shall be a member of the Free Methodist Church who actively seeks to create a Free Methodist presence in the life and leadership of the institution.
2. The Chief Academic Officer shall be a member of the Free Methodist Church, or one who is in both conviction and spirit committed to Wesleyan theology and perspectives.

**B/472.2. Mission Commitments**

1. Articles of incorporation, by-laws or other appropriate governance documents which:
  - A. Identify the college or university as a private institution of evangelical higher education affiliated with the FMCNA;
  - B. Define the relationship of the institution to the churches and conferences of the FMCNA, and,
  - C. Specify FMCNA representation in the governing board.
2. A Wesleyan statement of faith consistent with FMCNA doctrine, which boards of trustees and executive

leaders agree shall guide the policies of the institution.

3. A mission statement, which includes an institutional priority to serve as an educational resource for the advancement of Christianity through the church.
4. A statement of lifestyle expectations for the campus community, which is consistent with the principles and practices of the Book of Discipline of the FMCNA.

#### **B/472.3. Connectional Commitments**

1. No less than 25% of trustees shall be members of the Free Methodist Church.
2. No less than 10% of faculty shall be members of the Free Methodist Church.
3. School, division or department of religion having a majority of full-time faculty who are members of the FMC or sister Wesleyan denominations with all members affirming Wesleyan theology and the Articles of Religion of the FMC as its educational focus.
4. Religion Department Chair shall be FM or thoroughly Wesleyan.
5. Course offering in FM History, Government, Mission and Theology.
6. Relationship to and presence of bishops and denominational leaders defined.
7. An intentional plan for FM speakers at chapel, colloquia and 'events.'
8. Participation in the AFMEI.

#### **B/473. Recognition Process - Denominational Institutions**

Based upon an application to the FMCNA Board of Administration in the year prior to General Conference an institution of higher education, which meets these leadership, mission and connectional commitments may be endorsed as a 'Denominational' institution. Denominational institutions shall be recognized at each General Conference.

#### **B/474. Affiliated Institutions**

Other institutions of higher education may apply to the Board of Administration for endorsement as 'Affiliated' institutions. The minimal expectations for this relationship shall be:

1. The institution shall have Free Methodist representation on the board of trustees, administration and faculty.
2. Provision shall be made for instruction in our curricula of concern: i.e. Free Methodist history, doctrine, polity, mission and vision.
3. All instruction shall be in harmony with and conformity to the teachings of the Scriptures and the FM Articles of Religion.
4. The task of nurturing a Free Methodist 'presence' on the campus, by welcoming Free Methodist clergy, educators, leaders and innovators to speak at chapel, colloquia and special events shall be assigned.

#### **B/475. Recognition Process - Affiliated Institutions**

Based upon an application to the FMCNA Board of Administration in the year prior to General Conference an institution of higher education, which meets these criteria may be endorsed as an affiliated institution.

#### **B/476. Educational Funds**

All educational endowment funds, including the permanent endowment fund, designated to educational institutions (including John Wesley Seminary Foundation) and such as may be raised or otherwise received for the Educational Endowment Fund, shall be held for safe and proper investment as directed by the Board of Administration. The income only shall be distributed annually to the Free Methodist denominational schools in the United States as directed by the Board of Administration. When funds are available for operating budgets or capital projects, the Board of Administration shall determine the appropriation for each school according to the numeric enrollment of full-time Free Methodist students in those institutions.

#### **B/477. The Association of Free Methodist Educational Institutions (AFMEI)**

1. The denomination sponsors an association for denominational institutions of higher education:
  - A. to advance in common cause their mission as Free Methodist schools;

- B. to explore cooperative programs, and
- C. to define and maintain the quality of their relationship with the denomination.
- 2. Denominational institutions shall be represented by the president and the chairperson of the board of trustees, each having one vote.
- 3. Affiliated institutions shall participate in the AFMEI as associate members.
- 4. Affiliated institutions shall be represented by the president and a Free Methodist member of the board of trustees; the two having one vote.

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### **Report of the Task Force on the Role of a Bishop**

#### **I. BISHOPS**

##### **A/590 - The Nomination and Election of Bishops**

1. The General Conference shall elect by ballot two or more traveling elders as bishops to serve as the pastoral overseers of various areas of the denomination who shall constitute the Board of Bishops. These are to be persons who exhibit exemplary character and leadership qualities, and who embody deep commitment to the mission, doctrine and theology of the Free Methodist Church. They shall remain in office for the years of the interim between General Conferences and, unless the General Conference decides upon a lesser number of bishops, until others shall be elected in their places. (See also Par. A/436, Sec. 4.)
2. In preparation for the election of bishops, each annual conference's newly elected General Conference delegation may submit a maximum of two nominees. Due attention shall be given to the nomination of persons having qualifications equip to or exceeding those for conference superintendents (see Par. A/581, Section 3, 1999 Book of Discipline); as well as to ethnic, gender, cultural and geographical considerations. A one-page biographical sketch and rationale for each nominee shall be submitted to the General Conference Secretary no later than sixty (60) days prior to the opening of General Conference. The General Conference Secretary shall compile the nominee information in standardized format and distribute, by paper or electronic means, to all delegates no less than thirty (30) days prior to the opening of General Conference. The first ballot for election of bishops shall consist of the names of these nominees and the incumbent bishops.
3. In the event of a vacancy in the Board of Bishops during the interim between sessions of the General Conference, the preceding General Conference shall fill the vacancy with an election held by paper or electronic ballot. Existing rules for the election of bishops by the General Conference shall apply.

##### **A/591 - The Role of a Bishop - Conceptual**

1. All elders have responsibilities in Word, sacrament and order. Bishops are elders who are called to be pastors of the church at large. As such, for the health of the church, their duties in each of these areas are expanded by the responsibility of general oversight.
2. Word: The task of the Word applies to the bishop in two regards, to teach the apostolic Gospel and to protect the church from error. The first concerns such things as preaching, making official statements to the church and the public at large, overseeing the preparation of tools for evangelism and discipleship and training for the ordained ministry. The second refers to the protection of the church from heresy or from trends that obscure the Gospel. Thus the bishop must be theologically orthodox and an able preacher of the Gospel.
3. Sacrament: In worship the church gives praise to God, pleads with Him for mercy and receives the grace God mediates to His people. The bishop leads the church in its adoration and petition of God and in upholding the sacredness of the Lord's Supper and baptism as a means of grace. We extend the sacramental scope of the bishop's tasks to deep personal piety and intercession for the church and the world. Thus, bishops must be persons whose souls are nourished by public and private devotion and who can lead congregations into the renewing presence of Almighty God.
4. Order: As pastors of the church at large, bishops give oversight to the pastoral care of each local church. They

oversee the ordained ministry. Bishops, on behalf of the church, set apart those persons whom the church has determined are called of God and competent to feed the sheep. This enables the general ministry of the church to practice the Great Commandment and fulfill the Great Commission. Bishops, together with superintendents, give oversight to the ordained ministry through appointment, guidance and discipline. Bishops lead the church by articulating its vision. Thus, bishops must have a deep commitment to the church's mission, insight into the complexities of human nature and skill at guiding others.

#### A/592 - The Role of a Bishop - Practical

1. In each generation and culture, the applications of these foundational concepts may vary. To assist the church, we set forth these practical leadership priorities for our bishops:
  - A. Regarding self and family [A/402.2.b re qualifications]:
    - 1) Feed his/her soul (heart, mind, spirit); diligently attending to the means of grace,
    - 2) Love his/her spouse and family; maintaining a household of faith,
    - 3) Fulfill his/her vows as a baptized disciple and elder called to leadership.
  - B. Regarding the church at large:
    - 1) Multiply godly, competent leaders, who disciple and equip others,
    - 2) Encourage every church to be a healthy church with Spirit-filled leaders, working a plan to fulfill our Expected Outcomes.
  - C. Regarding annual conferences:

Accept mutual responsibility for the mission to make Christ known and to develop whole people through forgiveness and holiness.

    - 1) Ordain those called to and approved for Elders Orders,
    - 2) Teach and guide regarding denominational priorities,
    - 3) As the conference president, oversee the organizational health of the annual conference,
    - 4) Disciple each superintendent to:
      - a. identify, recruit, equip, deploy and encourage godly, competent leaders
        - 1). Encourage faith-driven ministry,
        - 2). Guide leaders to be wise innovators,
        - 3). Facilitate change so that healthy process is the norm,
        - 4). Support godly, competent risk-takers.
      - b. Encourage and equip conference leaders in crucial priorities, such as:
        - 1). Convert and membership growth,
        - 2). Making disciples who make disciples,
        - 3). Networking,
        - 4). Church planting,
        - 5). Cell-based ministries,
        - 6). Free Methodist missionary enterprises.
      - c. Influence all churches to be Wesleyan in:
        - 1). Ethos (see Distinctive Principles, *Discipline*, pages 5-6),
        - 2). Doctrine (see Articles of Religion for sound doctrine, A/101-130),
        - 3). Practice (see Covenant and A/315-342 for maturing life goals).
    - D. Regarding local churches  
In partnership with superintendents and others, develop and nurture Spirit-filled pastors, who equip believers to minister, resulting in:

A healthy biblical community of holy people...multiplying disciples, leaders, groups and churches.

#### A/592 - Duties of the Board of Bishops

1. To practice healthy biblical community as a board by speaking the truth in love,
2. To organize as a board to oversee all conferences, presiding at the annual conference meetings,
3. To travel throughout the denomination, but to reside in the area they serve,
4. To assign themselves to the several areas and arrange conference schedules so that no annual conference

has a non-bishop presiding officer for two successive years. To receive from one whom they have appointed to hold an annual conference a comprehensive written report of all the administrative proceedings which arose in the conference,

5. To administer the annual conferences of mission origin of the North American General Conference. The bishop, in consultation with the conferences and the area director, shall designate the presiding officer for the conference,
6. In the case of a conference of less than six hundred members, or of a conference with membership falling below ten ministers in full membership and/or six hundred members, or any other conference showing continuous loss, the Board of Bishops shall have authority to initiate and recommend corrective measure to the general Board of Administration and those conferences affected.

A/594 - It shall be the duty of the bishops:

1. To assist superintendents in personal and professional development through periodic training, giving special training for newly elected superintendents;
2. To suspend conference appointees according to Paragraph A/713, Sections 2, 3;
3. To serve as chair of the ministerial appointments committees of their assigned areas (see Par. A/419);
4. To transfer a minister from one conference to another with the consent of the minister and of the conference to which transferred; provided that no minister shall be transferred to another conference without a certificate of good standing and general acceptability, given by the board of ministerial education and guidance or the annual conference;
5. To cite a conference appointee to show cause according to Paragraphs A/703 and A/720;
6. To assist the area fellowships in the development of national leadership and in achieving the level indicated in the disciplinary standards for new general conferences.

*Approved by BOA*  
4/13/02