

# UM **Sexual** ETHICS

Raising  
**awareness,**

**Preventing**  
sexual abuse,

**Promoting**  
healthy boundaries,

Bringing about  
**justice and**  
**healing**

The UMC believes sexual misconduct within ministerial relationships represents an exploitation of power and is a betrayal of sacred trust. The UMC defines sexual misconduct as a continuum of behaviors that includes sexual harassment which is the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender. *2012 Book of Resolutions ¶2044*



**The General Commission on  
the Status and Role of Women in  
The United Methodist Church**

77 W Washington Street, Suite 1500  
Chicago, IL 60602

[www.umsexualethics.org](http://www.umsexualethics.org)  
**800-523-8390**

Toll-free, confidential



## **You May Have Experienced Sexual Misconduct If:**

- » An incident with a ministerial leader makes you feel uncomfortable or confused
- » You receive inappropriate personal gifts from a ministerial leader.
- » Your counseling session with a ministerial leader focuses on their needs and issues, especially details of their intimate relationships.
- » A ministerial leader invites you out for intimate, social occasions
- » A ministerial leader touches you in a confusing, uncomfortable, or upsetting way.
- » A ministerial leader sends you emails, instant, and/or text messages with sexual overtures
- » A ministerial leader uses theological rationale for questionable conduct.

## **If You Believe You Have Experienced Sexual Misconduct:**

- » Pay attention to, and trust your feelings during and after the situation
- » Be direct and tell him/her to STOP the behavior
- » Be safe and leave the situation
- » Remember, you are not to blame
- » Document incidents by keeping and saving a record of dates, times, places, and witnesses of incidents
- » Save emails, letters, cards, voicemail messages, text messages, receipts, or notes.
- » Share your feelings of hurt, betrayal, confusion, anxiety, or fear with someone you trust
- » Remember you are not the only person to whom this has happened.

## **Reporting Sexual Misconduct of a Person in Ministerial Leadership:**

- » The UMC encourages you to file a complaint if you believe a sexual boundary is violated.
- » Submit the complaint in writing, signed and dated, to your Bishop or District Superintendent
- » You may also contact GCSRW's confidential, toll-free number 1800-523-8390 for support
- » For more information, visit [www.gcsr.org](http://www.gcsr.org) or [www.umsexualethics.org](http://www.umsexualethics.org)