

Alabama-West Florida  
United Methodist Church

# Response Team

When a church experiences a traumatic event, such as death of a clergy person or charges filed against a clergy person, the Alabama-West Florida Annual Conference will be prepared to respond with appropriate support and action.

In such event, the Bishop may choose to mobilize a response team. A team of lay and clergy persons, trained specifically to respond, will be convened by Rev. June Jernigan, our conference's Response Team Coordinator. The team would meet with the individual(s) or group(s) involved, creating a care plan to support the grieving process that follows the traumatic event. The team may be charged with providing support to any combination of the clergy person, the clergy person's family, the complainant, and/or the affected church.

The response team has no role in the supervisory process. The purpose of the team is to care for and provide support to those who are hurting and aid in the grief process after a traumatic event.

We are looking for both lay and clergy members within our Annual Conference to serve on the Response Team. The Response Team works primarily to help in the grief process after a traumatic event (such as death of pastor, clergy sexual misconduct, etc.) in order to promote healing and recovery.

Team members will receive appropriate training to serve on the Response Team. However, please consider those with applicable skills and experience.

Here are factors to consider when recommending persons to serve on the Response Team:

- Availability. Team members will need to be available within 24 hours of initial notification of need. They will work with the congregation for an average of two to four visits over a six week period, with additional visits set further apart, eventually ceasing all together. They will also participate in initial and ongoing training.
- Representation of all constituent groups within our Annual Conference, with special attention to diversity of gender, race/ethnicity, age, and geographic location within the Conference.
- Diversity of Professional Specialization (but not mandatory). For example, law, counseling, social work, psychology, therapists, grief counselors, etc
- Bilingual
- Offer a non-anxious presence, particularly in difficult situations
- Ability to listen and empathize
- Display emotional health and maturity
- Demonstrate integrity and ability to maintain confidentiality
- Persons who have experienced healing themselves may prove to be an asset

### Response Team Training

August 12

First United Methodist - Evergreen

Please provide the names and addresses of those you recommend to serve on the Response Team to Rev. June Jernigan by May 1, 2017.