

North Georgia Conference
Program of Nurture and Guidance for Probationary Members
2004-2008

The North Georgia Conference currently has 87 persons involved in the probationary process. Thirty-five candidates have been recommended to the Board for commissioning and will appear before our Board in March of 2005. During the three-year probationary period we seek to address both the supervisory needs of the Board and the continuing education and growth needs of the probationers through the following programs:

ANNUAL THEMES

The entire program focuses annually on one of the following themes: Balanced Living, Leadership, and Missions. An in-depth experience is provided in each of these areas during the probationary period. Emphasis is placed upon hands-on involvement and practical value. Examples of these include work missions (locally, nationally, internationally), participation in leadership seminars at teaching churches, and a spiritual formation retreat.

MONTHLY COVENANT GROUPS

Groups of 12 to 14 individuals are formed based on the geographical location of their appointments. Two members of the Board are assigned to lead each of these groups. The mandatory covenant groups meet for at least four hours once a month (September-May) and the probationers are evaluated on participation, attitude, and attendance. Failure to complete the covenant group requirement results in a one-year extension of the probationary period.

At each covenant group meeting, the probationers lead the group in the following areas: a time of devotion and prayer; two individual case studies based on acts of ministry in the ministry setting; and a book study. We furnish the participants both a required reading list for the year and a "case study format" informational sheet. The reading is directly related to the continuing education events and we encourage the case studies to be in the same focus of the CE event and reading.

Covenant Group Leaders serve as conveners of the monthly group meetings and also as mentors to the probationary members.

CONTINUING EDUCATION EVENTS

Three day-long events are scheduled to provide training and give the probationers' contact with "specialists" in various fields. Attendance at the CE events is required. Each event convenes at 10 a.m. and dismisses at 3 p.m. They are held in September, January, and May.

The CE events attempt to focus on the particular needs. For example, we handle our required sexual ethics and legal issues training with the first year probationers each year at the September gathering.

PREPARATION FOR FULL CONNECTION BOM INTERVIEWS

A workshop is conducted in the fall for probationary members planning to come before the board the next spring to assist them in preparing for their interviews with the Board. Board members representing the three interview areas of the BOM: Theology and Doctrine; Practice of Ministry; and Called and Disciplined Life lead ninety-minute workshops. This event is optional and is intended to reduce the stress of full connection interviews and to demonstrate the support of the Board for the candidates.

For more information, contact

Dr. Jamie Jenkins, Director of Ministerial Services (678-533-1399), jjenkins@ngumc.org
Rev. Nancy Folsom, Chair, Nurture and Guidance (770-993-6218) nfolsom@rumc.com