



The United Methodist Church, Florida Conference
North East District

Dr. Richard Neal
District Superintendent

Dear hearts,

The fall 2008 church conference schedule has been set and you should have your date already. The following directions are intended to help make these meetings as productive and meaningful as possible. We will once again be meeting according to our clusters.

There are a few matters deserving special mention. **First, all Church Conference Reports and paperwork with signatures are due in the district office by OCTOBER 1, 2008.** Second, remember we no longer report on membership information at the Church Conference, this information is collected through the year end reports however lists for removal of members by Church Conference action will still need to be included in the conference reporting. This year the Joy Reports will be replaced by Chage Conference Form #5 entitled Living into the Methodist Way of Discipling. Please be prepared to share the four items that are listed in the box on page one of this form. Lastly, another reminder that decisions are made at Church Conference and the people who attend the conference are the people who will decide the issues.

The Church Conference should last between an hour and an hour and a half. During that time, we will take twenty to thirty minutes for each of three things to happen: first, there will be time for Holy Communion including a devotional message by me. I am asking the host church to work with me on the arrangements for the worship time, including music if possible. Providing refreshments is optional. Second, there will be time for a brief presentation of District and Conference-wide news, which may include a power-point presentation. I will bring my own computer and projector unless the host church can handle a CD of the material with their own equipment. Third, there will be a joint business meeting which will handle all of the “routine” reports and business, plus the Methodist Way report (Form #5). Designate the pastor or lay person making the report on the agenda.

To facilitate moving through the business meeting, each church will prepare a packet containing the following: First a list of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd readings of members to be removed by Church Conference action; Second a list of proposed officers and committee members by the Lay Leadership (Nominating) Committee; Third a recommendation from Staff Parish Committee with Church Council’s concurrence for the Pastor’s Compensation Package; Fourth a list of persons being recommended for or being continued in candidacy for ministry, and a list of persons recommended for or being continued as Lay Speakers. This office will supply color-coded voting cards to distinguish the balloting by each congregation. If a written ballot is required, a group of tellers – one from each participating church – should be ready to help count the vote.

If there is a special matter beyond the routine business for your Church to approve, such as a property purchase or a subsidiary trust or foundation meeting and election, this needs to be handled by a special gathering either in the half hour before or the half hour after the regular meeting. Such matters need to be cleared with this office in advance of the gathering. The Recording Secretary for each church will be seated with the Superintendent at the front of the gathering with signed copies of all Church Conference reports in hand. Pastors will be asked to sit on the front row for ready reference as needed.

Grace and peace,

Richard W. Neal, Superintendent