

Jury Decision

In response to the guilty verdict, the Trial Court requires the respondent, Rev. Amy Delong, to be suspended from the exercise of the functions of an Ordained elder of the United Methodist Church for a period of 20 days beginning July 1, 2011.

The suspension is to be used for spiritual discernment in preparation for a process seeking to restore the broken clergy covenant relationship. The process shall include:

1. An open and collaborative communication which shall include Rev. Amy Delong, Bishop Linda Lee, Rev. Jorge Mayorga Solis (Cabinet), Rev. Richard Strait (Chair of Board of Ordained Ministry), and a Wisconsin UMC elder of Rev. Amy Delong's choosing.
2. Rev. Amy Delong will initiate a written document outlining procedures for clergy in order to help resolve issues that harm the clergy covenant, create an adversarial spirit, or lead to future clergy trials. The document shall be informed by the Bible, 2008 Book of Discipline, Judicial Council rulings, and other relevant materials.
3. Rev. Amy Delong will write the first draft in collaboration with the persons named above, and will present it to the Board of Ordained Ministry by January 1, 2012.
4. After review and edit by Rev. Amy Delong and the persons named in number one, the final document will be completed in time to be distributed to the clergy of the Wisconsin Annual Conference prior to the 2012 Annual Conference, to be acted upon as an action item at the 2012 Clergy Session.

Failure of Rev. Amy Delong to comply with the requirements will result in a suspension from the exercise of the functions of an Ordained elder of the United Methodist Church for a period of a year beginning June 3, 2012.

Note: The press has often reported or quoted someone that the suspension proves Rev. Amy harmed some "clergy covenant". This is because they did not adequately read that the 20 suspension was for a very particular purpose: preparation for a very specific and important task -- to aid the clergy of the Annual Conference to move toward clarity of what they hold in common and away from focusing on what divides. Please help people read the whole decision and they will see this is not a "Penalty", but an "Opportunity".