

**Independent Panel for Review of Child Abuse in Mission Settings
The United Methodist Church**

Final Bulletin 5, December 2008: The Independent Panel

This is the 5th and Final Bulletin of the Independent Panel and its activities. As stated in *Bulletin 4, May 2008*, in compliance with the Charge as stated by GBGM, the endpoint for the completion of the Panel's mission and work is *December 31, 2008*.

As reported in previous bulletins, The General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) of The United Methodist Church (UMC) established the **Independent Panel for the Review of Child Abuse in Mission Settings (Panel)** in October 2004. The life of the Panel was to extend through December 31, 2008. The Panel was "to focus primarily on the allegations of abuse of children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire) for the period 1945 – 1978." The Panel was created specifically to receive allegations of the physical and/or sexual abuse of children when the accused individual or child was under the supervision or employment GBGM. The Charge also stated that the Panel would be primarily fact-finding, consultative, and pastoral in nature – and not a judicial commission or governing body. The Panel was empowered to maintain the confidentiality of all survivors, witnesses, and any and all of its activities.

Termination of the Independent Panel

It is important to note that all the following Panel contact and services will *terminate* on *December 31, 2008*: **Telephone, fax, email address, and Post Office Box.**

Post-Termination Contact

Upon conclusion of our work, and as stated in the Charge, the Final Report of the Independent Panel will be submitted to GBGM on December 12, 2008. The Final Report consists of two Volumes: Volume I and Volume II. If you signed a *Witness Agreement*, we will distribute a copy of the Final Report, Volume I, directly to you. GBGM has established a process through which the Final Report is to be distributed.

Post-Termination Distribution of the Final Report

According to the GBGM Child Protection and Community Assistance Officer, in an email on November 4, 2008, all requests for copies of the Final Report must contact Joanne Reich, Staff Officer at GBGM. She will explain the policies and process for access to, or application for, Volume I and/or Volume II of the Final Report.

Post-Termination Requests for Any Reports of Abuse or Counseling Support

As additionally stated by Joanne Reich, Staff Officer, Child Protection and Community Assistance, in the email on November 4, 2008, all reports of abuse or requests for counseling support will be handled through her office. The following contact information is reported as confidential, private, and secure:

Contact person:	Joanne Reich, Staff Officer Child Protection and Community Assistance
Address:	475 Riverside Drive, Room 1549, New York, NY 10115
Secure telephone:	212-870-3833
Email address:	jreich@gbgm-umc.org
Secure fax line:	Not yet available

As also stated by Ms. Reich, she has instructed her staff to leave *unopened* all mail addressed to her with *Personal* and *Confidential* written on the envelope. These letters will be opened by her only.

We conclude our work and mission with a sincere statement of appreciation and unending gratitude for all the courageous survivors and witnesses who were willing to share their testimonies. This has also been a journey with a path that could not have been traveled without your courage and the Lord, who has been the source of our strength and perseverance.

Until December 31, 2008, you can contact the Panel through:

Lauri B. Bracey
P.O. Box 1375
Roswell, GA 30077
Telephone/fax: 770 641-0134
Email: panelcoordinator@hotmail.com

May God continue to bless you!

Marshall L. Meadors, Jr.
Retired Bishop
Chair of the Panel

Edith M. Fresh, Ph.D.

James S. Evinger, M. Div.