

Brotherhood/Sisterhood Sunday Announcement for Immediate Release

February 19 is designated in our WNCC as Brotherhood/Sisterhood Sunday. We encourage all churches to include the following information in their church newsletters and bulletins to inform the lay members of this ministry to our clergy families and to lift up our ministry during their worship services that day or on a more convenient Sunday closest to it.

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The Brotherhood/Sisterhood of the Western North Carolina Conference has been actively caring for the families of deceased clergy members ever since this voluntary association of clergy and laity was organized in 1894.

With the founding 121 clergy members pledging \$5.00 and with laity who joined as honorary members pledging \$1.00 or more after the death of a member, clergy families received \$400.00 to help with funeral and other expenses.

The amount of the death benefit is \$9,500.00 as we begin 2017 with 674 clergy members pledging \$8.00 and nearly 1,807 lay members contributing \$3.00 or more per call. While we anticipate an average of 15 deaths during each Conference year, there was an abnormally high number of deaths (29) in 2013-2014, followed by 16 in 2014-2015 and 15 in 2015-2016.

After having had more than 1,000 clergy and 3,000 lay members enrolled, the number of clergy and lay members has decreased in recent years. Your Board of Directors is searching for ways to increase our membership, and we rejoice that 26 new clergy and 23 new lay members have joined since this past June.

With deep gratitude for the faithful and generous support for this connectional expression of compassion and love to clergy families at a critical time in their lives, we invite everyone to join us. Please visit our website at brotherhoodsisterhood.com to learn more about your Brotherhood/Sisterhood including how to become a member and make contributions. We welcome your thoughts about ways to strengthen our ministry, and we will be happy to respond to your questions.

Your brother in Christ,

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