Redactions were made in the interest of protecting victims/survivors.

Statement of Findings
Regarding Allegations of Ministerial Misconduct
Prepared by the Joint Credentialing Committee
of the Illinois Mennonite Conference
and the District of Illinois and Wisconsin of the Church of the Brethren
June, 1997

Introduction

In August, 1996, the Illinois Mennonite Conference received from Reba Place Church leadership a written complaint of ministerial misconduct by John Lehman during the 1970's. This written complaint had initially been received by Reba Place leadership in July. An investigation team representing the Illinois Mennonite Conference and the Illinois and Wisconsin District of the Church of the Brethren was appointed in late August, 1996. Janice Kennel Ropp and Ron Ropp were asked to represent the Illinois Mennonite Conference and Allegra Hess was asked to represent the Illinois and Wisconsin District. Bob Williamson of the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center was asked to serve as consultant. Legal counsel was provided by attorney Don Clark of the firm of Clark & DeGrand, Chicago.

Since John Lehman is credentialed by both the Illinois Mennonite Conference and the Illinois and Wisconsin District of the Church of the Brethren, two judicatories were to be involved in responding to the complaint. It was agreed that the Illinois Mennonite Conference would take the lead in processing the complaint. The investigation team was asked to operate by the ***Guidelines For Discipline Regarding Ministerial Credentials*** of the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church.

The investigation team's primary tasks were to determine, to the best of its ability, whether the alleged behaviors occurred, and to identify those standards found in the ***Guidelines*** which would be at issue. In addition to the primary parties, the investigation team spoke with a total of nineteen persons. It reviewed letters and other written material from seventeen persons regarding John Lehman's functioning in pastoral relationships, and it reviewed letters and other written material from nine persons regarding the investigation process. Some witnesses were not able to meet in person and were interviewed by phone in conference fashion by two members of the investigation team.

Key dates in the investigation process were as follows:

August 14, 1996	Illinois Mennonite Conference Pastor Glen Horner receives notice of the allegations.
August 22, 1996	Dates set for initial interviews by the investigation team with principal parties.
Sept. 10, 1996	The congregation is informed of the investigation and of John Lehman's leave of absence.
Sept. 14, 1996	Investigation team interviews Complainant A.
Oct. 19, 1996	Investigation team conducts first interview with John Lehman.
Nov. 1, 1996	Investigation team conducts five interviews with others.
Dec. 7, 1996	Investigation team conducts five interviews with others.
Dec. 14, 1996	Investigation team conducts six interviews with others.
Jan. 24, 1997	Investigation team conducts second interview with John Lehman.
March 6, 1997	Virgil Vogt, Julius Belser, and Allan Howe of Reba Place Church meet with Glen Horner, Ken Holderread (District Minister of the Illinois and Wisconsin District of the Church of the Brethren), and Bob Williamson.
May 21, 1997	Maurice Yordy (Chair of Illinois Mennonite Conference Leadership Commission) and Judd Peter (Acting District Minister of the Illinois and Wisconsin District) meet with John Lehman and his support person.
June 9, 1997	Investigation team presents its findings to the joint credentialing committee.

The investigation team presented its findings to a meeting of a joint credentialing committee of the Illinois Mennonite Conference and the Illinois and Wisconsin District of the Church of the Brethren which included the following persons:

Maurice Yordy (Chair of the Illinois Mennonite Conference Leadership Commission)
Janine Katonah (Chair of the Ministry Commission, Illinois and Wisconsin District, Church of the Brethren)
Carol Bohnert (Illinois Mennonite Conference Leadership Commission)
Roger Kennell (Illinois Mennonite Conference Leadership Commission)
Rick Troyer (Illinois Mennonite Conference Leadership Commission)
Patty Yordy (Illinois Mennonite Conference Leadership Commission)
Lester Zook (Illinois Mennonite Conference Leadership Commission)
Glen Horner (Conference Pastor, Illinois Mennonite Conference)
Judd Peter (Acting District Minister, Illinois and Wisconsin District, Church of the Brethren)

The primary responsibilities of this joint credentialing committee were to decide if a violation of ethical standards had occurred and, if so, to take appropriate action with regard to ministry credentials. This document constitutes the report of the joint credentialing committee. The recommendations for action contained in it have been affirmed by the Ministry Commission of the Board of the Illinois and Wisconsin District of the Church of the Brethren at its meeting on June 21, 1997.

Respondent's Request for Signed Consent Forms

The respondent, John Lehman, is both an ordained pastor and a licensed clinical social worker. In September, the respondent requested and received through the conference a signed consent from Complainant A regarding his sharing of information with the investigation team in an effort to respond to his understanding of Illinois state law regarding the sharing of privileged information by licensed clinical social workers. The conference declined John's request that Complainant A be asked to provide documented consent for his sharing of privileged information with others with whom she had shared her July letter. In December, John Lehman and his attorney, Mitch Kingsley, requested that the investigation team ask Complainant A to provide signed consents for several other witnesses whom John wished the investigation team to interview. The conference declined this request. The investigation team interviewed all persons whom the respondent asked them to interview. No persons interviewed — other than John Lehman — indicated to the investigation team that they had withheld any information which they considered important to the investigation for lack of signed consent forms.

At the second interview with John Lehman on January 24, 1997, John was given documents with additional complaints beside those of Complainant A. Verbal approval had been given to the investigation team by all complainants to share their names and stories with John so that he could speak more fully to their concerns. Following the second session with John, word was received via his attorney, Mitch Kingsley, that signed consent forms from some nine persons who had spoken to the investigation team should be obtained before John could respond any further to allegations by these individuals. Attorney Don Clark advised the investigation team not to provide signed releases from these persons to John, the investigation team agreed, and the request was denied.

The position taken not to provide the signed consent forms was the primary occasion for the meeting on March 6 involving several leaders from Reba Place, Glen Horner, Ken Holderread, and Bob Williamson. An effort to speak to this issue with John Lehman was the primary purpose of the May 21 meeting involving Judd Peter, Maurice Yordy, and John. This issue continues to serve as a basis for charges of unfairness directed at the investigation process by John Lehman and other Reba Place leaders.

The joint credentialing committee has affirmed the stance taken by those responsible for the investigation to date.

The right and responsibility to supervise its ministry (including the right and responsibility to investigate allegations of misconduct in the ministerial relationship) are the inalienable right and responsibility of the church. That is, this right and this responsibility are not capable of being given up or transferred.

The right and responsibility of the church to supervise its ministry have their origins in the church's call to the ministry of the Word, of drawing people to God in Christ. Without its response to this call, the church would not be faithful. It would not, in fact, be the church.

The right and responsibility to supervise and protect its ministry should be recognized as flowing from and necessarily accompanying that call which creates ministry. Thus, the church's right and responsibility to maintain the integrity of its ministry are derived not from the consent of individual complainants, or from the permission or satisfaction of state laws, but from the church's commissioning to ministry by God and from the whole church's faithful response to that call.

Therefore, it is inappropriate for the church to solicit any kind of signed consent forms for a pastor from someone who has shared concerns or complaints with representatives of the church regarding that pastor's conduct with her/him within a ministerial relationship. To do so suggests an inability on the church's part to pursue an investigation apart from such authorization, thereby obscuring the church's own responsibility for its ministry and its own necessary right to monitor its ministry.

Background to the allegations of Complainant A

Complainant A was a counselee of John Lehman for approximately three years in the mid-1970's, beginning in 1972-73. She was a member of Reba Place. John Lehman was seeing Complainant A as her therapist and was an elder in the church. For at least some of this time she lived as part of the same household as the Lehmans, living in the same building. During this time in which John served as both pastor and counselor to Complainant A, the behaviors and incidents at issue in the allegations occurred.

In one counseling session (see below), Complainant A undressed. This incident occasioned a "retreat" from Reba Place which Complainant A was asked to undergo by Reba Place leadership. This retreat, which lasted approximately five months, involved relocating to a rooming house and engaging in a number of disciplines aimed at addressing what congregational leaders regarded as Complainant A's "deceptive and manipulative patterns." Complainant A remembers and John Lehman acknowledges this retreat as having been an "emotional holocaust" for Complainant A.

After Complainant A returned to living arrangements within the Reba Place community in the spring of 1976, a reconciliation process involving John Lehman and Complainant A was attempted. John acknowledged during this reconciliation process that the "retreat" was inappropriate. An exchange of letters occurred in the fall of 1979 as part of the effort at reconciliation in which some of the issues raised in the current allegations were discussed. Complainant A left Reba Place six to seven years ago.

Allegations of Complainant A, with Responses

The allegations of Complainant A contained in her July, 1996 letter (with responses and supplemental information) are presented below in two parts: those regarding patterns of "Holding/ Touching", and those regarding "Specific Incidents".

I. Allegations of Complainant A and Responses Regarding Holding/Touching

A. Statements from July, 1996, letter by Complainant A re: Holding/Touching

B. Responses

1. Responses by John Lehman in 9/6/96 written statement to the investigation team:

[redacted]

2. Responses by John Lehman in notes submitted to investigation team dated 2/8/97:

[redacted]

C. Supplemental Information

1. From letters by Complainant A to John Lehman written in 1979 (provided to the investigation team by John Lehman):

[redacted]

2. From November 18, 1979, letter by Complainant A to John Lehman (provided to the investigation team by John Lehman):

[redacted]

3. From a letter to Complainant A written by John Lehman dated October 30, 1979 (provided to the investigation team by John Lehman):

[redacted]

4. Information from Linas Brown in a letter to the investigation team dated 10/31/96:

5. Questions asked of John Lehman by investigation team and his responses in written notes to the investigation team dated 2/8/97:

Conclusions re: Holding/Touching

[redacted]

II. Allegations of Complainant A and Responses Regarding Specific Incidents

A. Allegations from Complainant A re: Specific Incidents

[redacted]

B. Responses from John Lehman in 9/6/96 written statement to the investigation team re: Specific Incidents

[redacted]

Conclusions re: Specific Incidents

A. John Lehman had been seeing Complainant A in a counseling relationship in which Complainant A was described as being very emotionally fragile.
B. John Lehman acknowledges being alone with Complainant A on the occasions she describes.
C. John Lehman indicates that he would now insist that they not meet in similar circumstances.
D. John Lehman acknowledges that Complainant A undressed in his presence.
E. John Lehman acknowledges that he made bad judgments on these occasions.

Additional Concerns From Persons Other Than Complainant A

I. John Lehman was in a pastor/mentor relationship with Complainant B and for a time served as therapist for her. In a letter to John Lehman copied by Complainant B to the investigation team, Complainant B states to John:

"For you to repeatedly tell me of your attraction for me went beyond what would be considered open and honest. Part of your speech included how self-controlled you were not to physically act out that attraction. There was even the assumption on your part that the attraction was mutual. What I felt at the time was extreme discomfort, enough so that I had to bring in a third party ( ) to tell you as much."

When read Complainant B's report of such a meeting and asked whether she recalled it, told the investigation team: "I'm so foggy — it could have happened," and later, "I think it probably did happen."

John Lehman, when asked, reported only one occasion on which he told Complainant B, "If something tragic ever happened to Joanna, you would be the kind of person I would like for a wife." (Complainant B reports no recollection of such a remark by John.) In a written communication from John Lehman to Complainant B dated 12/96, John stated:

"I can remember telling you in my office that if something tragic ever happened to Joanna you would be the kind of person I thought I would like for a wife. Is this one of the times you are talking about? I am clear this statement was inappropriate and confusing to our therapeutic relationship. I own this has incestuous feeling because of the significant father role I had with you. I was just reading some separation notes and the father role is spoken to more than one time. I remember having a check about telling you this but at the moment did not listen to that check. I wish I would have. I do not remember repeatedly telling you this kind of thoughts [sic]. I would be glad for you to tell me others times [sic] as you remember them. I did tell you repeatedly that you did a good job as household manager at leading dance, or numbers of things you did well. I can believe that telling what I did re: Joanna and tragic loss statement confused the other compliments too maybe. As I said before, I am clear it was inappropriate to say this to you because it is confusing when I have such a clear father role with you. I take responsibility for having violated our therapeutic relationship. I am glad you brought into the situation. I can hear it took courage. For what it is worth I was not assuming some mutual attraction. In fact sexual attraction was not what I was focusing but the quality of women [sic] you were. Even so this still wasn't wise to say because of the fatherly quality to our relationship."

Complainant B also reported that John Lehman asked her to assist later in sessions with women in therapy and she states that, "even though I can't imagine that he would overtly act out sexually, his questions of women at times seemed voyeuristic — asking gruesome details of sexual abuse."

II. Another former client, Complainant C, raised the issue of "breast contact that felt uncomfortable", or "excessive hugging" by John. Of these complaints John cites the shift away from the old "German style -- hand shake as the only touch" to the era of "hugging" as an expression of brother-and-sisterhood.

III. Another member of Reba Place Fellowship, Complainant D, reported to the investigation team that while she was preparing to leave the Elmwood office after doing some reading until around 10:00 p.m., John appeared, held and hugged her, "caressed her," and "whispered in her ear that 'I love you sister.'" John indicated to the investigation team that "I don't remember, can't picture the event." Complainant D reports confusion both at the time and now around this experience.

IV. During the investigation process, young women reported to the investigation team the sexual abuse they experienced as children in the Reba Place Fellowship. It was important to them that their issue come to the attention of the larger church. John Lehman was one of the elders who was alerted to this abuse perpetrated on younger girls by teenaged boys. The complainants allege that John did not take their concerns seriously — the perpetrators denied their involvement at the time when they were confronted by John. The church did little else with the allegations and the girls were left to grow up with feeling it was their fault while the perpetrators were not held accountable for their actions. They believe that John Lehman, one of the respected elders, should be held partially responsible for the church's failure to deal with abuse within its own fellowship.

Findings Regarding Faithfulness to Ethical Standards

I. "It is...always the responsibility of the pastor/counselor to establish and guard the boundaries which must exist for appropriate care giving to be possible, as well as for the personal integrity of the two persons to be maintained." (*Guidelines*, p. 17.)

It is incumbent on those who minister to troubled and vulnerable persons to assume special vigilance in their responsibility for establishing and guarding appropriate physical, emotional and spiritual boundaries.

- It is the view of the joint credentialing committee that John Lehman fell short of the above standard

[redacted]

II. "Unnecessary, unwanted physical contact such as touching, hugging...." (*Guidelines*, p. 18.)

"Unnecessary, unwanted physical contact" should not be viewed simplistically in cases in which a counselee's own feelings are confused and ambiguous. In such circumstances, the responsibility of the pastor/counselor to discern and honor boundaries is most important.

In all cases, whether touch is ultimately viewed as "good," "bad" or "confusing" is primarily determined by its impact on the receiver — not by the intentions of the person doing the touching.

- It is the view of the joint credentialing committee that John Lehman fell short of the above standard when he engaged in some form of hugging of Complainant A as part of his therapeutic work with her.

- It is the view of the joint credentialing committee that John Lehman fell short of the above standard in his contacts with Complainant C and Complainant D, whose feelings of discomfort with John's hugging were clearly negative.

John acknowledges, "in this counseling relationship [with Complainant A] and in this complex setting with the combination of roles any kind of touch, e.g.: hugs of Complainant A, was too complicated." John acknowledges using modes of therapy in the 70s that dealt with getting at some of the "primitive" or "long repressed material". It was the investigation team's view that some of these therapeutic approaches are at risk for behaviors that may appear abusive to the non-therapist, and be experienced as abusive by some clients.

It was clear to the investigation team that John's hugs have not always been wanted or appreciated by others. While John indicated that he sought to be sensitive to others' feelings, it is clear that he did not perceive as they did. To John some contacts have been incidental. Others have experienced serious boundary violations.

III. "Unusual attention from a pastor...." and "Unsolicited or unwelcome flirtations...." (*Guidelines*, p. 17).

The pastoral relationship is one which offers great potential for depth, richness, and satisfaction. But, like all concrete relationships, it has its own nature and limits. Among its characteristics: (a) It exists to meet spiritual needs of the congregant/counselee, not personal needs of the pastor; and (b) it exists to facilitate the congregant's relationship with God in Christ.

To the extent that a pastor voices or acts out his personal relationship needs within the pastoral relationship, he distorts and misuses the pastoral relationship.

- It is the view of the joint credentialing committee that John Lehman fell short of the above standards when he expressed feelings of attraction for Complainant B with whom he stood in a pastoral relationship.

John agrees that he made "unwise and inappropriate" statements to Complainant B. He has acknowledged to her that he takes responsibility for violating their therapeutic relationship.

It is a concern to the joint credentialing committee that John perceives statements such as he recalls having made to Complainant B as inappropriate because of the way she viewed him within their particular therapeutic relationship (in a "father role"), but not as a given on the basis of his role as pastor. What is at issue here is not merely John's sensitivity to how a particular counselee viewed him. What is at issue is John Lehman's understanding of the nature and limits of all pastoral relationships.

Actions Regarding Ministerial Credentials

In light of the findings regarding faithfulness to ethical standards cited above, the joint credentialing committee suspends the ministerial credentials of the respondent, John Lehman, for a period of two years.

During this suspension the respondent's credentials for ministry shall be inactive, and therefore there can be no endorsement as "ordained in good standing" while the suspension is in effect. It does not mean that the credential has been permanently removed, but that before it can be reactivated and before active ministry can be resumed, there must be a process dealing with the issues for which the suspension has been imposed. The suspension of ministerial credentials calls for a leave of absence from any ministerial position. Before the conclusion of the suspension, the respondent's credentials for ministry will be either reinstated or withdrawn.

The joint credentialing committee further calls for the following steps to be taken during the suspension:

1. An ongoing relationship will be maintained between the respondent and the larger church for both accountability and support.

2. An evaluation of the respondent will be conducted by a therapist designated by the joint credentialing committee. The therapist will be provided a copy of this report. The therapist will submit a statement of findings to the joint credentialing committee and/or the accountability group described below.

3. An accountability group will be formed by the joint credentialing committee which will function throughout the period of the suspension. This group will meet at least monthly during the time of suspension. This group will:

   a. Monitor the suspension and the process toward restoration on behalf of the joint credentialing committee.
   b. Discern the appropriateness of any communication between the parties involved and facilitate any such communication.
   c. Make recommendations and suggestions regarding the restoration process.
   d. Make a final report to the joint credentialing committee prior to the final disposition of the suspension.

The period of suspension is intended to provide opportunities for the respondent both to work at such changes as are outlined below in "Reinstatement of Ministerial Credentials" and to seek restoration to active ministry. The conference/district credentialing committees retain the right and responsibility to withdraw ministerial credentials at any time should the conditions of the suspension be violated.

Reinstatement of Ministerial Credentials

The joint credentialing committee calls attention to the statement in the ***Guidelines for Discipline Regarding Ministerial Credentials*** (page 22):

"The church and its representatives may need to make an important distinction between forgiveness and restoration to the fellowship of the church, which is always the appropriate goal, versus the issue of restoration to a ministerial leadership office in the church, which always calls for additional discernment and is not contingent simply upon confession and forgiveness."

During the period of suspension, both the respondent and the accountability group should keep in mind the conditions cited in the ***Guidelines*** (page 22) for the reinstatement of ministerial credentials:

"The ministering person has (1) appropriately acknowledged the sin or error, (2) has repented and altered patterns of behavior or beliefs (3) gives evidence of concern for the person(s) wronged by appropriate forms of restitution, (4) adheres to the safeguards deemed appropriate to preclude subsequent misconduct, (5) has cooperated with the committee in the process set forth, and (6) is perceived as a person capable of effectively representing the church and a gracious God who in Christ forgives and restores to newness of life."

In addressing the above conditions for reinstatement, the respondent and the accountability group will need to address several items of concern to the joint credentialing committee.

1. ***The dynamics of power***: Even within the Anabaptist-Mennonite understandings of ministerial leadership, there is a difference in power between the pastor/counselor and the member of the congregation/counselee. This inequality of power comes from the fact that the person in the congregation is usually seeking counsel in a time of stress or crisis. The pastor or counselor is perceived to be able to provide counsel, support or assistance in a care giving situation.

Furthermore, the pastor's authority comes from his/her having received credentials from the conference and district and thus having been given the church's office of ministry, itself a position of power.

John Lehman is, and has been, experienced in the Reba community as a very "powerful" person, and although equality of brother and sister are basic tenets of the community's life, leaders like John are experienced as having great "authority" over others. What the investigation team heard from various persons — including several beyond those described as complainants above — is that some feel intimidated, even fearful to defend their own feelings of boundary violations.

John's need to be more mindful of power and boundaries was also evident when John failed to honor the ***Guidelines'*** prohibition of contact with complainants during the investigation process itself. John justified these actions as an attempt to "reconcile," but the persons involved felt retraumatized.

Deeper understanding of the dynamics of power inherent in the pastoral relationship and enhanced capacity to manage those dynamics in the interests of congregants/counselees will be critical for John in "precluding subsequent misconduct."

2. ***Understanding the pastoral relationship***: "Appropriately acknowledging the sin or error, and repenting and altering patterns of behavior or beliefs" would include coming to clarity on the nature and limits of the pastoral relationship. This would include taking genuine ownership of the responsibility to establish and maintain the boundaries proper to the pastoral relationship. It would also include demonstrating genuine understanding of the inappropriateness of a pastor's voicing his feelings or thoughts of personal attraction to anyone with whom he stands in a pastoral relationship.

3. ***Dual roles***: Another concern of the committees is the problematic nature of John's dual role in the Reba Place community. John has assumed both the role of "therapist" whose task includes inviting persons to share intimate information, and the role of "spiritual leader" who has participated in actions of church discipline.

As a therapist, John states that his case load was heavy with persons of severe pathologies. One of the great dangers seen by the investigation team (which was composed of pastoral counselors and therapists) is this dual role of "pastor" and "therapist" — especially to those of severe pathology. Therapists trained to be accepting of reported behaviors without passing judgment and pastors called to declare right from wrong and at times impose judgments may create great confusion, if not trauma, in those they are seeking to help. These are certainly dual roles upon which persons project great authority and power, and those seeking an integration of those roles need to be trained and supervised by individuals qualified to nurture that integration and declare its limitations.

4. ***The importance of supervision***: In addition to the usefulness of supervision in integrating or limiting the dual roles of therapist and pastor, those engaged in extended counseling of persons require qualified, objective supervision. Efforts to "adhere to the safeguards deemed appropriate to preclude subsequent misconduct" would reasonably include intentional structuring of ongoing supervision of such work.

5. ***Cooperation with the wider church***: One of the conditions cited by the ***Guidelines*** for reinstatement of ministry credentials is that the minister "has cooperated with the committee in the process set forth." Efforts at reaching deeper levels of understanding and change during the period of suspension will require a greater degree of openness and cooperation with representatives of the wider church than the investigation team and others have experienced in their associations with John in the past several months.

Procedures for Review and Appeal

If the decision of the conference and district credentialing committees is unacceptable, either to the respondent or to the person(s) bringing the charges, they may submit a written appeal within 30 days for an additional hearing.

An appeal committee of five persons shall be formed within 30 days of the initiation of the appeal in the following manner: The executive committee of the area conference shall appoint five persons (at least three from within that area conference) who have not served on either the credentialing committee or the original investigation team. At least three of the five shall be persons currently having ordained status in the church.

This committee shall meet at the convenience of the members, but no later than 60 days after the appeal is initiated.

This committee shall review all the evidence and records of the original process. They shall determine other relevant sources of information and invite such additional testimony. They shall remember that their primary task is seeking to discern whether the person accused can appropriately serve as a credentialed minister within the church. It is important that this issue retains priority in the process rather than exclusively looking for the guilt or innocence of the respondent.

The guidelines outlined in section "IV. Basic Understandings" of the ***Guidelines*** shall generally apply also for the review process. Decisions of this committee shall be by majority opinion.

Congregational Support

1. The investigation team and the joint credentialing committee have been disappointed with some actions taken by Reba Place Church leaders during the course of this investigation. Requests to abandon an active investigation process and to negotiate alternative approaches to the process outlined in the ***Guidelines***; statements from associates that ministry credentials will be resigned in the event of unacceptable findings; and the participation of other leaders in initiating and facilitating premature contacts between John Lehman and complainants could not have contributed to John's own participation in and cooperation with this process.

2. Congregations are expected to honor the disciplinary action of their area conference and district ministry/leadership commissions. It is important to maintain the distinction of responsibility between the congregation as employing agency and the conference/district as credentialing body. It is also important to be in consultation regarding their relationships. The conference and district should assist the congregation in making appropriate decisions.

3. When ministerial credentials are suspended, termination of employment is not required. However, in such circumstances there should be a longer term leave of absence from any ministerial position. The congregation will need to determine the nature of its agreement regarding salary and benefits during the time of this leave of absence.

4. Sometimes the congregation functions in ways that enable ethical violations by a pastor. The joint credentialing committee recommends that the leadership of the Reba Place Church work with conference and district leaders and appropriate resource persons to evaluate the structures, practices and expectations within the congregation which may contribute to inappropriate conduct.

5. One concern brought to the investigation team which the joint credentialing committee has not addressed in official actions above is that raised by young women who reported experiencing abuse by teenaged boys when they were younger girls at Reba Place. These complainants came forward because they believe John Lehman did not respond to their allegations in a responsible manner at the time they were initially shared with him. Their experience, however, speaks also to broader concerns about congregational functioning. Appropriate follow-up to these reports would include validation by Reba Place congregational leaders of the stories and concerns of these persons, and assessment of what steps the congregation can take to better protect the safety of all members.

Additional Observations

I. Numerous persons wrote or gave verbal testimony to the good things that John's ministry has brought to their lives, and have affirmed John Lehman as one who has devoted a great deal of energy and sacrifice both as a pastoral leader and therapist to the people of Reba Place for many years.

2. Reba Place has a great history in working to establish a model of Christian community in the Spirit of Christ. The events of the past months have not only caused great stress upon individuals involved but have revealed some of the problems that can accompany such bold efforts to be "the Body of Christ." It is our hope and prayer that justice, reconciliation and healing can be the final result in what has been a very difficult and painfilled process for all involved.