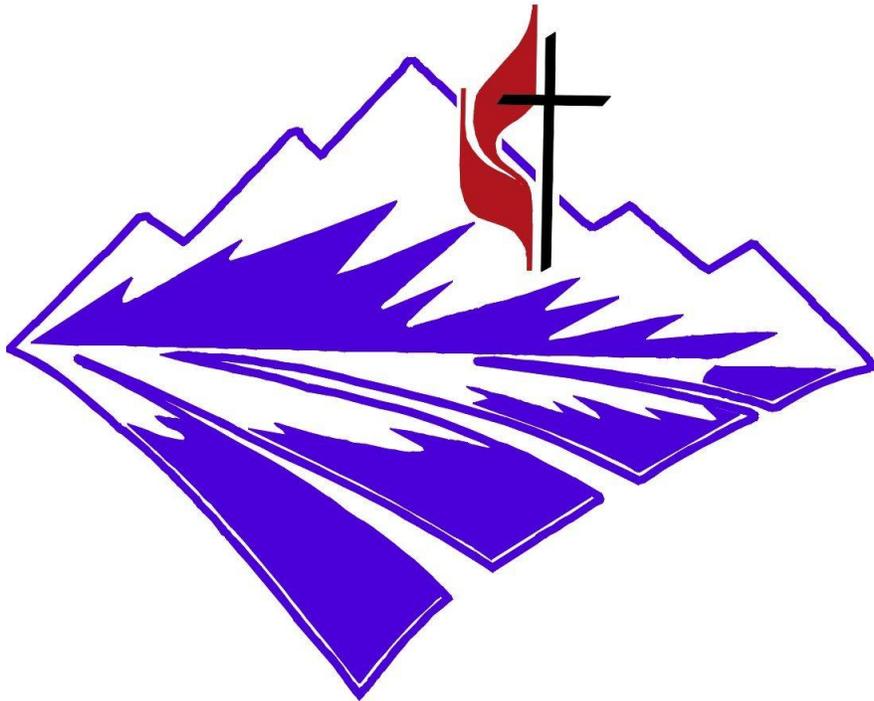


CONTINUING FORMATION MANUAL

For Elders, Deacons, Local Pastors, and
Provisional and Certified Candidates

Rocky Mountain Conference
of the United Methodist Church



Board of Ordained Ministry
Adopted October 2010, Amended March 2011

Statement of Continuing Formation

“Throughout their careers, clergy shall engage in continuing education for ministry, professional development, and spiritual formation and growth in order to lead the church in fulfilling the mission of making disciples for Jesus Christ. This shall include carefully developed personal programs of study augmented periodically by involvement in organized education and spiritual growth activities.”

(2008 Book of Discipline Reference Paragraph 351.1)

Following Christ means lifelong transformation. If we, as leaders, are not being transformed, how can we expect others to follow? In the Wesleyan pursuit of perfection, we are all about the work of sanctification and wholeness.

Our Book of Discipline reminds us that we are not just about acquiring new skills, tools and knowledge for the practice of ministry, but also about becoming “formed spiritually.” Continuing formation is not just about amassing information. It is about changing perceptions, living more fully as a Disciple of Jesus Christ and staying in love with God.

(Drafted by a task group of the Board of Ordained Ministry, March 2010)

Conference requirements:

The Rocky Mountain Conference requires that every full, provisional and associate member of the Annual Conference complete a minimum of 20 contact hours or two (2) Continuing Education Units (CEUs) each year, and/or a minimum of 100 contact hours or 10 CEUs per quadrennium.

Types of continuing formation:

Increasing professional knowledge or skills in ministry.

Evaluating and/or changing behavior.

Rethinking or forming opinions and personal values.

Increasing faith and commitment through spiritual growth.

Forms of continuing formation:

Short-term events such as seminars and workshops.

Supervised activities such as undergraduate or graduate degree programs, credit courses, pastor's schools, clinical training, etc.

Clusters or peer study groups.

Short study leave (one month during one year of each quadrennium).

Sabbatical study leaves.

Carefully chosen travel and work experiences, including mission trips.

Residence in Ministry program for provisional members.

Spiritual retreats that contain dedicated time for focused reflection and renewal.

Funding

Ministerial Education Fund:

The Ministerial Education Fund, an apportioned fund, which is part of local congregations' connectional giving, supports clergy members and local pastors growing in competence and effectiveness through continuing formation, which includes both continuing education and spiritual growth. Grants may be made for tuition or fees to attend events, required texts, travel, room and board, and other expenses. Application forms are available in appendices of this manual and online at www.rmcumc.org or by contacting:

Rev. Michael Dent
Continuing Formation Coordinator
Trinity United Methodist Church
1820 Broadway
Denver, CO 80202
E-mail: mdent@trinityumc.org
Phone: 303-839-1493
Fax: 303-839-1901

Areas of financial assistance:

The following are purposes for which ordained elders or deacons, licensed local pastors, provisional members under appointment or candidates for ministry certified by their District Committee on Ordained Ministry (Seminary Scholarship only) may seek grants through the Ministerial Education Fund. In each case, when the general application form is used (Appendix A), the clergy member should note on their application the area under which they are applying for funding.

Short-term study: The Continuing Formation Coordinator will give consideration to short-term programs of continuing formation when financial assistance through the Ministerial Education Fund is requested. A maximum of \$500 per person per calendar year can be allocated for such study. (Application form: Appendix A)

Mission trips: The Continuing Formation Coordinator will give consideration to providing assistance with clergy going on mission trips as a spiritual formation experience when financial assistance through the Ministerial Education Fund is requested. A maximum of \$500 per person per calendar year can be allocated for such trips. (Application form: Appendix A)

Extended study: For extended continuing formation events (two weeks or more) or sabbaticals, clergy may combine yearly funds for a total of up to \$2,000 for the quadrennium. The Continuing Formation Coordinator will keep records and share these with the Board of Ordained Ministry, Cabinet, Bishop and Conference Treasurer's Office as requested to ensure clergy do not exceed their allotted amounts. (Application form: Appendix A)

Course of Study for licensed local pastors: The Ministerial Education Fund will support each licensed local pastor in their continuing studies up to \$500 per year. (Application form: Appendix A)

Seminary Scholarship (Service Loans – Ref. Paragraph 816.1a, 2008 Book of Discipline): Funds available through Seminary Scholarships shall not exceed \$2,500 per school year for seminary students who are certified candidates through their District Committee on Ordained Ministry, up to \$7,500 total for seminary education. Requests should be submitted to the Continuing Formation Coordinator for each

year. (For complete Seminary Scholarship Qualifications/Eligibility Policy and application forms, see Appendix D.)

Advanced degree work: The Ministerial Education Fund is available to ordained clergy for advanced degree work after three (3) years of service in a pastoral setting in the Rocky Mountain Conference. This grant provides modest support toward tuition for advanced degree work or toward expenses for professional certification. Up to \$750 in any one year or up to \$3,000 maximum will be available for coursework in a recognized certification program or institution of higher education. (Application form: Appendix E)

Cluster programs: Applications for funds to be used in the development of cluster or group programs of continuing formation for ministry will be considered, and grants will be evaluated in light of available funds, quality, direction of the program envisioned and relation to our conference goals. (Application form: Appendix A)

Conference programs and group regional programs: The Continuing Formation Coordinator will consider co-sponsorship and partial funding of programs that the conference or groups of clergy in a certain region of the conference envision. These must primarily be designed to assist with the continuing formation of clergy and meet the core themes of continuing formation, including spiritual growth. (Application form: Appendix C)

Stipend for retired clergy to attend Orders Retreat: An annual stipend of up to \$100 may be allocated to each retired clergy (both elders and deacons) to attend the annual Clergy Orders Retreat. Application should be made to the Continuing Formation Coordinator, and, as with all MEF grants, an evaluation of the event must be submitted to the same in order to receive the stipend again the following year. (Application form: Appendix A)

Interim ministry training: Clergy under appointment or retired clergy recommended by a district superintendent and the bishop or the bishop alone in writing are eligible for up to \$750 annually to attend interim ministry training. (Application form: Appendix A)

Application process for funding:

The evaluation of the previous continuing formation event and the Clergy Continuing Formation Annual Report must be received by the Continuing Formation Coordinator before a new grant is approved.

Requests are considered **only in advance** of the start of the event or coursework.

In most cases, the application form requires the signatures of the applicant, the applicant's district superintendent and the chairperson of the applicant's Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. All three signatures must be on the document before it will be approved by the Continuing Formation Coordinator.

Process of evaluating applications/appeals process:

Whenever an out-of-the-ordinary situation arises, or a clergy member applies for funding for an event that may not clearly fit the above guidelines, the Continuing Formation Coordinator will consult with the chairperson of the Board of Ordained Ministry and other BOM members, at the Coordinator's discretion, to seek input on whether the request should be granted.

In the event an applicant is denied the requested amount of funding by the Continuing Formation Coordinator and feels the decision has been made unfairly, he or she may appeal the decision to the chairperson of the Board of Ordained Ministry.

Accountability

Planning: The Book of Discipline (2008, paragraphs 351.2 and 351.5) stress that continuing education must be planned. Paragraph 259.2.g.8 states planning shall be done in consultation "with the pastor and staff concerning continuing education and spiritual renewal, to arrange with the church council for the necessary time and financial assistance for the attendance of the pastor and/or staff at such continuing education and spiritual renewal events as may serve their professional and spiritual growth, and to encourage staff members to seek professional certification in their fields of specialization."

Evaluating: Evaluation is a continuous process for formation in servant ministry and servant leadership that must take place in a spirit of understanding and acceptance. After each continuing formation event funded by the Ministerial Education Fund, evaluation must be submitted to the Continuing Formation Coordinator within three (3) months of the event. The form can be found in Appendix B at the end of this manual and online at www.rmcmc.org.

Annual Reporting: “Clergy shall be asked by the District Superintendent in the charge conference to report on their programs of continuing education, formation and spiritual growth for the past year and plans for the year to come.” (2008 Book of Discipline, Paragraph 351.5)

Every full and associate member of the Annual Conference is required to submit an annual report of their continuing formation experiences. (See Appendix F for form)

The report includes:

1. Events you attended during the previous year
2. Number of CEUs you received
3. A brief statement of reflection on learning
4. Events you would like to attend in the coming year
5. A list of books you have read that have been helpful to your ministry

Reports will be returned to the Board of Ordained Ministry’s Continuing Formation Coordinator for review and inclusion in an a report to the board that will help guide the BOM’s efforts to provide opportunities for continuing formation and spiritual growth for the clergy in the Annual Conference.

Failure to complete this annual report, along with evaluations from previously MEF-funded continuing formation events, will result in the clergy member not being eligible to receive MEF funds in the following calendar year.

Recordkeeping: Continuing formation records maintained by each clergy member in the Annual Conference will be accessible to the Bishop, the Cabinet, the Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee and the Board of Ordained Ministry upon request.

Appendix A

Ministerial Education Fund Application Form

Ministerial Education Fund Application

For Clergy Members of the Rocky Mountain Conference

Statement of Purpose of Continuing Education, Formation and Spiritual Growth:

Continuing Education, Formation and Spiritual Growth are an important part of professional responsibilities which clergy members are expected to fulfill and which represents a primary basis of continued eligibility for their annual appointment. The Ministerial Education Fund, an apportioned fund, part of your congregation's connectional giving, supports clergy members growing in competence and effectiveness through continuing education, formation and spiritual growth.

Ministerial Education Fund grants may be made for tuition, required textbooks, travel, room and board, and other expenses. Grants shall not exceed \$500 per calendar year, or \$2,000 per quadrennium. For sabbatical leave or multiple year events, you may apply for funds up to your quadrennial limit.

As you apply for these funds, we hope you will encourage your congregation to support MEF. In this way, you may express your gratitude for the use of these funds.

I. Personal Information

Name: _____
Current mailing address: _____
Phone: _____ (Church) _____ (Home)
E-mail: _____ Fax #: _____
Current appointment or RMC home church, if attending seminary:

II. Present Request

Area under which I am applying: _____
Continuing formation event/program: _____
Dates: _____ Location: _____
Sponsored by: _____

Cost: Registration	\$ _____
Living costs (room, board, etc.)	\$ _____
Travel	\$ _____
Books and materials	\$ _____
Total cost	\$ _____

Anticipated Income:

Personal	\$ _____
Local church (Must be used before requesting MEF funds)	\$ _____
Other	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____
Requested grant (total request)	\$ _____

III. Please state your continuing education, formation and spiritual growth goals as shared with the District Superintendent and SPR. (To be answered on a separate sheet.)

1. Goals for the current year
2. Long term goals

Signature of the Applicant _____ Date _____

Signature of District Superintendent _____

Signature of SPR Chairperson _____

Application Process:

1. The evaluation of your previous continuing formation event and your Clergy Continuing Formation Annual Report must be received **before** a new grant is approved.
2. Requests are considered only **in advance** of the event.
3. Once the application has been approved, it takes no more than 28 working days before you receive the check from the Conference Treasurer's Office.

Send application to:

Rev. Michael Dent
Continuing Formation Coordinator
Trinity United Methodist Church
1820 Broadway
Denver, CO 80202

Phone: (303) 839-1493
Fax: (303) 839-1901
E-mail: mdent@trinityumc.org

Appendix B

Continuing Formation Event Evaluation Form

Continuing Formation Event Evaluation Form

Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Methodist Church

Name and date of continuing formation event:

How did this event fit into your continuing education goals?

How did this event or class benefit your ministry?

What are some things you learned from this experience?

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Date form submitted: _____

(Note: This form is to be submitted to the Continuing Formation Coordinator upon completion of the event or class. Failure to do so will result in no additional funding from the Board of Ordained Ministry.)

Rev. Michael Dent
Continuing Formation Coordinator
Trinity United Methodist Church
1820 Broadway
Denver, CO 80202

Appendix C

Ministerial Education Fund Group Application Form

Group Request for Ministerial Education Fund Grant

From The Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Methodist Church

Group contact person: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Program, plan or event: _____

Who is sponsoring the event? _____

Date(s): _____ Location: _____

Number of persons expected to attend: _____

Cost: Instructional cost (Tuition, books, speaker)	\$ _____
Living costs (Room, meals, etc.)	\$ _____
Travel costs (Mileage or fares)	\$ _____
TOTAL COST	\$ _____
Subtract other financial help	\$ _____
TOTAL COST	\$ _____
Fee charged each participant	\$ _____
Times number of participants	\$ _____
TOTAL REQUEST	\$ _____

Goals and purposes: *(use additional space as needed to describe)*

1. What needs do you hope to meet through this group event?
2. How many contact hours and/or CEUs do you anticipate from this event?

(Remember, to receive future grants, the group contact person must submit a brief Evaluation Form of this experience to the Continuing Formation Coordinator and supply a list of the names and addresses of all participants in this event.)

Upon completion, mail this completed form to:

Rev. Michael Dent
Continuing Formation Coordinator
Trinity United Methodist Church
1820 Broadway
Denver, CO 80202

Appendix D

Service Scholarship Qualifications/Eligibility Policy and Application Forms

Service Scholarship Qualifications/Eligibility Policy

Board of Ordained Ministry, Rocky Mountain Conference

As provided for in Paragraph 816.1a, 2008 Book of Discipline, funds available through the Ministerial Education Fund service scholarship shall not exceed **\$2,500 per school year** for full-time seminary students (defined as those taking **12 credit hours or more** per semester or quarter) who are certified candidates through their District Committees on Ordained Ministry, and who intend to seek ordination as an elder or deacon in the Rocky Mountain Conference, up to \$7,500 for seminary education.

These funds are available for students seeking a Master of Divinity degree and those in graduate study required for their preparation for deacon's or elder's orders (seminary enrollment verification required).

For less than full-time students, service scholarships may be made by the conference Board of Ordained Ministry on a pro-rated basis as outlined below:

Students taking **9-11 credit hours** per semester or quarter: **\$2,000 annually**

Students taking **6-8 credit hours** per semester or quarter: **\$1,500 annually**

Students taking **fewer than 6 hours** per semester or quarter: **\$1,000 annually**

Applications, which are available on the Rocky Mountain Conference Web site at www.rmcm.org, should be made annually to the Board of Ordained Ministry's Continuing Formation Coordinator.

Upon ordination by the Rocky Mountain Conference, seminary students shall not be required to repay this service scholarship money.

However, if a student does not complete the ordination process, the money shall be repaid by the student. Repayment would be according to the terms agreed to by both the student and the designated BOM scholarship officer (generally the BOM Continuing Formation Coordinator) at the time the money is awarded in the form of a promissory note completed and signed by both parties. Repayment shall be in the form of cash payments as outlined in the promissory note.

(Adopted 3/9/10)

Service Scholarship Application

Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Methodist Church

Procedure:

1. You must be a certified candidate in the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference.
2. Answer the questionnaire careful and fully, using ink or type.
3. Complete and sign the applicant pledge.
4. Request the Registrar of your School of Theology to complete the Certification of Academic Enrollment.
5. Mail the questionnaire and application to the District Superintendent of the charge conference of which you are a member in the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference for recommendations.
6. The District Superintendent will mail the forms to: Rev. Michael Dent
Continuing Formation Coordinator
Trinity United Methodist Church
1820 Broadway
Denver, CO 80202

Questionnaire

Personal Data

Full name: _____

Present address: _____

Permanent address: _____

Age: _____ Date of birth: _____

Marital status: Single _____ Married _____ Divorced _____ Separated _____

If married, will spouse be a student? _____ Employed? _____

If yes, list employer: _____

Family: Names and ages of children and other dependents: _____

Seminary degree program: _____

Year of expected graduation: _____

Are you a full-time degree candidate? Yes _____ No _____ If not, # of hours per term/semester: _____

The scholarship/loan (to be forgiven upon ordination) for which you are applying is to be used for:

School _____ Class _____

____ Certificate of Candidacy ____ Conference Probationary Process

____ Local Pastor's License ____ Deacon's Orders ____ Elder's Orders

Have you received scholarships/loans from this fund previously? Yes ____ No ____

If so when/amount: _____

Is your intention to seek full membership in the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference? _____

Budget

(Please give all financial information on the basis of the academic year – nine months.)

Source of income for academic year:

Gifts from parents and friends: _____ Your earnings: _____ Spouse's earnings: _____

Housing allowance: _____ Car allowance: _____ Reimbursable account: _____

Cash on hand and in the bank: _____

Other scholarships and loans anticipated: _____

Other sources of income (please list): _____

TOTAL INCOME: \$ _____

Estimated expenses for academic year:

Tuition and fees: _____ Book purchases: _____

Housing: _____ Board: _____

Car payments: _____ Car operating expenses: _____

Travel: _____ Clothing & laundry: _____

Taxes & insurance: _____ Benevolences: _____

Other expenses (please list): _____

TOTAL EXPENSES: \$ _____

What outstanding debts have you or your spouse: *(Include any previous loans made by the Board of Ordained Ministry)*

Creditor	Amount	Date Due
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

What other circumstances or needs related to financial situations should be considered?

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of District Superintendent: _____ Date: _____

APPLICANT'S PLEDGE

I hereby solicit a scholarship/loan of \$ _____ from the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church which, if granted, will be applied only toward necessary educational expenses.

I have studied the terms of my note and promise to meet them promptly. I also promise to keep the Continuing Formation Coordinator of the Board of Ordained Ministry informed regarding my charges of address as long as any part of my indebtedness to the conference remains:

Date: _____ Signed: _____

SCHOOL CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that _____ is currently enrolled in
_____ as a candidate for the degree of _____

and is currently enrolled for _____ hours of academic work toward that degree. He/she is presently classified as a member of the _____ class.

Date: _____ Signed _____

Title _____

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT'S CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that _____ is a candidate for United Methodist ministry in the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference. I understand that he/she will attend:
_____ as a candidate for the degree of _____

I recommend / do not recommend that the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference Service Scholarship be extended to: _____.

Date: _____ Signed: _____

District: _____

Please sign and return to:

Rev. Michael Dent
Continuing Formation Coordinator
Trinity United Methodist Church
1820 Broadway
Denver, CO 80202

Service Scholarship Program

PROMISSORY NOTE

Name: _____

Date of Note: _____ Amount: \$ _____

FOR VALUE RECEIVED, I promise to pay the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, through the Treasurer's Office, the sum of \$ _____.

This amount is to be repaid in two (2) consecutive annual installments, the first year of repayment to begin with the opening day of the Annual Session of the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference after I have discontinued full-time seminary attendance.

I agree that these annual installments shall be canceled upon ordination by the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference. I further agree that no interest shall be charged so long as I complete ordination by the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference and not leave seminary or the conference before that time.

In the event that I should leave the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference prior to ordination, then the entire remaining principle sum shall become due and payable at the option of the Continuing Education Coordinator of the Board of Ordained Ministry.* I further agree that should I fail to pay any installment on this note when due, the entire unpaid balance, shall be due and payable on demand. I further agree that should I fail to pay any installment on this note when due, I shall pay all expenses of collection.

Signature of Borrower: _____ Date: _____

Permanent Address: _____

Street

City

State

ZIP

Signed: Scholarship Officer _____ Date _____

* In exceptional circumstances, an appeal may be placed before the Board of Ordained Ministry of the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference by the recipient of the scholarship/loan through the Continuing Formation Coordinator to lengthen the payment period.

Appendix E

Advanced Degree Work Application Form

Advanced Degree Work Application

Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Methodist Church

Procedure:

1. You must be an ordained clergy person (elder or deacon) who has served at least three (3) years of full-time ministry in the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference.
2. Answer the questionnaire careful and fully, using ink or type.
3. Complete and sign the applicant pledge.
4. Request the Registrar of your School of Theology to complete the Certification of Academic Enrollment.
5. Mail the questionnaire and application to your District Superintendent for his or her signature.
6. The District Superintendent will mail the forms to: Rev. Michael Dent
Continuing Formation Coordinator
Trinity United Methodist Church
1820 Broadway
Denver, CO 80202

Questionnaire

Personal Data

Name: _____

Address: _____

Advanced degree program: _____

Institution attending: _____

Year of expected completion: _____

Are you a full-time degree candidate? Yes ___ No ___ If not, # of hours per term/semester: _____

Have you received money from this fund previously for advanced degree work? Yes _____ No _____

If so when/amount: _____

Number of years you have served in full-time ministry in the Rocky Mountain Conference: _____

Estimated expenses for academic year:

Tuition and fees: _____ Book purchases: _____

Other expenses (please list): _____

TOTAL EXPENSES: \$ _____

APPLICANT'S PLEDGE

I hereby solicit a scholarship of \$ _____ from the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church which, if granted, will be applied only toward necessary educational expenses for my advanced degree work.

Date: _____ Signed: _____

SCHOOL CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that _____ is currently enrolled in _____ as a candidate for the degree of _____

and is currently enrolled for _____ hours of academic work toward that degree. He/she is presently classified as a member of the _____ class.

Date: _____ Signed _____

Title _____

DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT'S CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that _____ is a full-time elder/deacon of the United Methodist ministry in the Rocky Mountain Annual Conference and has served as such for _____ years. I understand that he/she will attend:

_____ as a candidate for the degree of _____.

Print name: _____ Signed: _____

Date: _____ District: _____

Appendix F

Clergy Continuing Formation Annual Report

Clergy Continuing Formation Annual Report

Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Methodist Church

Date: _____ For calendar year: _____

Name: _____ District: _____

Church or Extension Ministry: _____

The Rocky Mountain Conference Board of Ordained Ministry has established minimum continuing formation standards for every full and associate member of the Annual Conference: 2 CEUs (20 contact hours) each year and/or a minimum of 10 CEUs (100 contact hours) per quadrennium.

This annual report helps us be accountable to one another and also helps the board know how to help meet the continuing formation needs of the clergy. All information will be collated and studied by the board. In addition, failure to complete this report at the end of each calendar year will disqualify you from receiving funding from the Ministerial Education Fund the following year.

Name up to three books that you have read this year for continuing formation and spiritual growth and that you recommend to others:

Author: _____ Title: _____

Author: _____ Title: _____

Author: _____ Title: _____

Name up to three activities that impact you that are outside your ministry responsibilities:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

List up to three resources that nourish you when you are wounded, hurting and/or disillusioned:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

List the continuing formation and/or spiritual growth events in which you participated during the last calendar year, Jan. 1-Dec. 31, along with the CEU value. Assign one CEU to 10 contract hours.

Event: _____ Date(s): _____ CEUs: _____

Event: _____ Date(s): _____ CEUs: _____

Event: _____ Date(s): _____ CEUs: _____

Are there particular educational events/classes that you want to attend this year?

Event/Class: _____ Leader/instructor: _____

Event/Class: _____ Leader/instructor: _____

Event/Class: _____ Leader/instructor: _____

Do you have any other plans for continuing formation this year? Please list up to three:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Send completed report by Jan. 15 to your district superintendent and:

Rev. Michael Dent
Continuing Formation Coordinator
Trinity United Methodist Church
1820 Broadway
Denver, CO 80202