

WE BELIEVE THAT HEALTHY PASTORS HELP CREATE
HEALTHY CHURCHES AND HEALTHY CHURCHES HELP TO
CREATE HEALTHY COMMUNITY.

NEXT ISSUE:

Introduction of
MTM's new Interim
Executive Director,
James B. Johnson,
who will begin
January 1, 2017.

(REFLECTIONS ON THE PILGRIMAGE...cont.)

A primary aspect of the MTM ministry is to help ministers see a full range of alternatives in everyday ministry as well as when under attack or while deeply wounded. At MTM, we do it in many ways.

One of the major aspects of the total ministry which has evolved under the leadership of professionals is an effort to prevent clergy from suffering alone and in silence.

In addition to the Wellness Retreats, there's also the: 1) Ministry of Presence – providing a listening ear for those who need to talk in person or by phone seeking guidance on what to do and options for their future, 2) "Friends for the Journey" Network, 3) "Helping Ministers Help Other Ministers" Workshops, 4) Creating Awareness Events, 5) the MTM Membership Association, 6) MTM Regional Boards, 7) Prayer Partners, and 8) more than 50 volunteers who have been the lifeline of the ministry.

Since MTM's inception, we have held 132 *Healthy Transitions Wellness Retreats* with 1,287 participants coming from 38 states, plus Canada and the Bahamas, and representing 40 denominations/faith groups. Over 10,000 ministers, spouses, denomination leaders, and key lay leaders have also benefitted from some other aspect of the MTM ministry. Our goal is to make a difference – one at a time.

It has indeed been a faith venture, but I am convinced that when God plants a good work through His people, He will see it through. Though I am passing the role of leadership to another, my heart and soul will continue to be imbedded in the ministry. When church leaders and clergy find themselves in major conflict, remember the Apostle Paul's admonition – there is a more excellent way!

- VOLUME 18
- ISSUE 1
- FALL

MINISTERING TO MINISTERS

THE SERVANT

Communicating
Advocating
Reclaiming
Equipping



FEATURE ARTICLE: FOUNDER SET TO RETIRE



nation for ministers in pain, helping 1,287 men and women discover new hope.

"It's been gratifying to see ministers reenter their world with greater wisdom and renewed commitment to serve other people who hurt," he said.

Now Chandler is set to retire and pass the baton to current board chair, James B. Johnson, of Richmond, who has agreed to serve as interim executive-director beginning Jan. 1. He said he has big shoes to fill.

When Dr. Charles Chandler experienced involuntary termination at his church in Virginia he wrestled with the fact that he was 58 years old and "less marketable" as a prospect for another pulpit. He found few resources to help him deal with these issues and began to dream of an organization that would benefit ministers in crisis. He created the Ministering to Ministers Foundation in 1994 and the organization has sponsored some 132 Wellness Retreats throughout the

"No one has attempted to do more for the disenfranchised pastor than Charles Chandler," Johnson said. "This effort on behalf of clergy has excelled because of his kindness, wisdom, counsel and deep personal sacrifice. To be sure, there is none like him!"

Chandler said a number of things have changed in his 22 years at the helm of MTM. "Early on I'd search for pastors who needed help and phone them with

Invitations to our retreats," he said. "Now the Internet has revolutionized this process and we also get many referrals from others who've benefitted from this ministry. And we've developed a team of professionals who assist us. It's so different from the early days when it was basically [the late Chattanooga psychiatrist] Ross Campbell and me."

But the basic format of the five-day Healthy Transitions Wellness Retreat for Ministers and Spouses has remained the same, with some additions and revisions, Chandler explained. The core group is limited to 12-15 participants who share their crisis stories and engage in intensive individual and group therapy led by a psychiatrist, psychologist or certified therapist. Participants also hear from numerous experts including an attorney, a job counselor, a physical fitness instructor and spiritual leaders.

For every participant attending a wellness retreat, at least nine others will experience some other aspect of the MTM ministry, according to Chandler, such as what he calls "the ministry of

(cont. on page 2)

Beginning with this issue, *The Servant* is now being sent electronically and can also be found on our website. The quarterly issues of *The Servant* will inform you and keep you abreast of the retreat and workshop schedules, and *The MTM Messenger* will do so each month. We hope that you will find these publications to be helpful in your ministry. Please feel free to forward to your friends and colleagues!



Ministering to Ministers Foundation Inc.

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IN THIS ISSUE:

- PAGE ONE: Feature Article: MTM Founder Set to Retire
- PAGE TWO: Retirement Dinner Planned; *Healthy Transitions Wellness Retreat for Ministers & Spouses*
- PAGE THREE: Message for the Executive Director "Reflections on the MTM Pilgrimage"
- PAGE FOUR: Next Issue



FOUNDER SET TO RETIRE

(cont. from page 1) Presence” that occurs when ministers seek counsel by telephone. MTM also offers one-day workshops, awareness presentations and has trained some 40 “Friends for the Journey” to partner with ministers in their struggles.

Chandler said the two most oft-cited reasons for pastor-church conflict have been a constant for many years: control issues and people skills. And he believes in many ways these issues are more pronounced today than ever before.

“We find a corporate-mentality in many churches,” he said. “The pastor is expected to function like a CEO. He or she runs the organizational machinery and grows the organization. If either doesn’t materialize, the pastor can be expendable. But most pastors aren’t trained to be CEOs and they find themselves very frustrated.

“If a pastor provides leadership, he or she is a change agent and change brings conflict. But there’s conflict also if the pastor doesn’t provide leadership. I’ve always believed the pastor is to cast a vision, but must ask the people to help shape and carry out the vision.”

Chandler noted that sometimes the terminated minister is victimized by forces outside their control, but at other times ministers make bad choices leading to crisis. He often tells retreat participants: “Don’t waste your pain. Grow from it.

Wounded ministers can have a new dimension of ministry since we grow in wisdom through all life experiences.”

Chandler said MTM’s surveys find that about two-thirds of retreat participants go back into full-time vocational ministry – well above the national average of 54%. Others don’t return to full-time ministry but to non-ministry vocations where many have opportunity to do part-time ministry. Chandler himself is in the latter group having served as bi-vocational pastor during his early tenure at MTM.

Chandler grew up in a pastor’s home in Alabama and Georgia. He graduated from Jacksonville High School, Jacksonville, Ala., Samford University, Birmingham, Ala. and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY, from which he earned three degrees. He served churches in Kentucky, Illinois and Virginia and was elected to two terms as president of the Illinois Baptist State Association composed of over 1,000 congregations. He has contributed more than 200 articles to denominational publications.

Chandler and his wife, Betty Lou, are parents of four children, grandparents of six and great-grandparents of three.

Chandler says he wants to remain active and supportive in the organization he founded.

The MTM board of directors will honor Chandler at a dinner on November 3.

By Michael J. Brooks

RETIREMENT DINNER PLANNED

We hope that you will be able to attend a retirement dinner for Dr. Chandler at 6 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 3, at the Willow Oaks Country Club in Richmond. After a short fellowship and dinner, program participants will briefly address the vision, beginnings, journey and legacy of Dr. Chandler and MTM. Testimonies and good humor will be evident as well. Reservations will be accepted until Oct. 26 online at www.tinyurl.com/ChandlerRetirement/ or by check mailed to the attention of Cathy Ralcewicz, 501 Branchway Rd STE 100, Richmond VA 23236.

MTM SEEKS TO BE ADVOCATES FOR CLERGY AND THEIR FAMILIES, AND OFFER GUIDANCE TO THE CHURCHES THEY SERVE, THAT THEY MIGHT ENJOY HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AND YEARS OF PRODUCTIVE SERVICE.

HEALTHY TRANSITIONS: A WELLNESS RETREAT FOR MINISTERS AND SPOUSES

The *Healthy Transitions Wellness Retreats for Ministers and Spouses* provide a relaxed atmosphere and confidential setting for healing and encouragement to ministers and their families who have experienced termination, or for those in conflicts possibly leading to termination.

Competent and compassionate leaders guide the journey toward wholeness and health through counsel, practical information, sharing, and rest, that speak to the emotional, physical and spiritual needs of participants. The wellness retreats offer the opportunity to renew, refresh, and nurture spirit, mind and body. The next retreat is scheduled for:

November 14-18, 2016

**Geneva Camp and Conference Center
Holland, Michigan**

Contact us at mtm@mtmfoundation.org for more information and to register.

*Non-refundable Registration Fee:
\$75.00/person, \$125/couple*

Retreat scholarships are available.



WHAT'S GOING ON AT

MTM



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

AFTER SERVING AS FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MINISTERING TO MINISTERS FOUNDATION FOR 22 YEARS, CHARLES H. CHANDLER, D. MIN., RETIRES JANUARY 1, 2017. HE SHARES ABOUT HIS VISION, THE MINISTRY AND WHAT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED, AND THE WORK WHICH IS LEFT TO DO.

a constitution and bylaws, founded a non-profit organization, and elected a Board of Directors (trustees). We elected Bill Irvin, an attorney from Richmond who specialized in non-profits, to serve as the first trustee chair. He crafted the actions we adopted and the guiding principles we agreed on and transformed them into legal documents to file for certification by the Virginia Corporation Commission and to petition the Internal Revenue Service for tax exemption status – both of which were granted.

Prior to that trustee organizational meeting, an enormous amount of work had been done by several people in helping the dream to be shaped.

During the six month sabbatical concluding my ministry at my previous pastorate, I spent more time in prayerful discernment concerning the direction of my future ministry than I have ever spent on any one issue.

But something was happening during those six months. A conviction had begun to grow that was first dismissed as either impossible or at least improbable. It was a conviction involving starting an organization that would minister to wounded clergy by helping them gain new tools that would enable

them to navigate through the turbulence and fog of parish ministry and maintain their physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health.

I spent three months meeting with people of various professions with diverse gifts that would blend together to form a nucleus through which the ministry could be founded and nurtured. Thus, Ministering to Ministers Foundation (MTM), Inc. was founded.

The first *Healthy Transitions Wellness Retreat for Ministers and Spouses* was held in May 1995, at the same retreat facility where the first MTM trustee meeting had been held about six months earlier. It was a faith venture that really cannot be communicated or understood unless it was experienced.

Our goal at MTM was and continues to be to help ministers and churches have better and healthier relationships. We want ministers to learn to follow the positive dynamics of stress and utilize it as an opportunity for personal and professional growth rather than a destructive interference. We want to be contributors to the positive forces that will enable ministers and churches to grow together rather than divorce. If the relationship cannot continue, our desire is that solutions be found that embody the Spirit of Christ and assure that no one be destroyed in the process. The message of Christ is too important to allow conflict and termination of ministers to thwart its impact. Every minister and every congregation deserve to be treated fairly.



REFLECTIONS ON THE MTM PILGRIMAGE BY THE FOUNDING DIRECTOR

In November 1994, a group of ministers and interested lay professionals with expertise in various fields gathered at my invitation at a retreat center about 20 miles west of Richmond for a Thursday afternoon through Saturday noon meeting. We hammered out a new concept of nurturing wounded ministers towards healing and equipping other ministers to remain healthy – or at least healthier – in their ministry setting. We drafted a mission statement, developed