

The Society for the Increase of the Ministry
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For Immediate Release

SIM Board of Directors

Adding diversity and experience, ministry to seminarians expands

Seven new members will be around the table when the newly-expanded Board of Directors of the Society for the Increase of Ministry (SIM) meets at the Desmond Tutu Center at General Theological Seminary, New York, in October.

Joining the current board members of SIM, which provides financial, pastoral and advocacy support to Episcopal seminarians throughout their years of study, will be the Rev. Ernestine Cassell-Flemister of Cincinnati, the Rev. Charles Fulton, III, of New York, the Rev. Martha Horne of Alexandria, Va., the Rev. Canon Angela Ifill of New York, the Rev. Dr. James B. Lemler of Greenwich, Conn., the Rev. Canon C.K. "Chuck" Robertson of New York and Mr. Richard M. Wenner of West Hartford, Conn.

"The need for dedicated, educated ordained leaders of the church in 2008 remains the same as when the Society was founded in 1857, but the circumstances have changed dramatically," said SIM's newly-appointed executive director Thomas Moore. "The expansion of the Board comes at a critical time when the Episcopal Church needs to invest in its future leaders."

He said the board's expansion, drawing in new members with different talents, increases its experience, skills, diversity and geographical representation. The new board members include two former seminary deans and boost the board's geographic representation to incorporate four Episcopal provinces.

SIM had its beginnings 151 years ago, when a group of seven clergy and one layman met at Trinity College in Hartford, Conn., to discuss how to find suitable young candidates for the Episcopal ministry "and aid them in acquiring a thorough education". It was a time of rapid church expansion when great attention was being paid to recruiting and training clergy. Throughout its history, SIM has provided nearly \$7 million in scholarship assistance to more than 4,800 seminarians. Currently SIM's network of alumnae includes 27% of current diocesan bishops, 27% of seminary deans, and 24% of cathedral deans.

New board members are:

- The Rev. Ernestein Cassell-Flemister, a native of Liberia, is vicar-in-charge of Grace Episcopal Church in Cincinnati. A former finance and marketing consultant who received a master's degree in those fields, she has tutored in public schools, mentored young people in Junior Achievement and worked on behalf of the Columbus (Ohio) Homeless Shelter and the Back Women's Health Project. A graduate in 2007 from Bexley Hall, Columbus, Ohio, she was SIM's Penfield Scholar for 2006 and 2007.
- The Rev. Charles N. Fulton, III, is the executive director of Mission Funding for the Episcopal Church. Earlier this year he retired as both director of Congregational Development for the Episcopal Church, a position he held since 2001, and president of the Episcopal Church Building Fund, a position he assumed in 1987. A national consultant on issues of congregational health and development, he has written books and produced a video on the ways by which people gather for work and worship in the church. Trained in architecture and a parish priest for 15 years, he is a graduate of General Theological Seminary, New York.
- The Rev. Martha J. Horne is the retired dean and president of Virginia Theological Seminary ("VTS") in Alexandria, Va., the largest of the 11 accredited seminaries of the Episcopal Church. She served from 1994 to 2007. Under her leadership at VTS the school's endowment increased substantially to \$155 million. During her 13-year leadership, she recruited gifted new faculty and staff members and at a time of great uncertainty in theological education, she led the seminary to reaffirm its commitment to full-time, residential education as the normative pattern of ministerial formation. A graduate of Duke University and Virginia Theological Seminary, she has served as associate rector of Christ Church in Alexandria, Va.
- The Rev. Canon Angela Ifill is currently Missioner for Black Ministries at the Episcopal Church Center in New York. A native of Trinidad, she was previously canon pastor at Trinity and St. Philip's Cathedral in Newark, N.J., and served in parishes in Hewlett, N.Y., and Cleveland Heights, Ohio. She was the recipient of a SIM grant during her studies at Virginia Theological Seminary.
- The Rev. Dr. James B. Lemler, former dean and president at Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, is currently priest-in-charge at Christ Church in Greenwich, Conn. Most recently he was Director of Mission at the Episcopal Church Center in New York. Prior to his tenure at Seabury-Western, he served as Rector, Trinity Church, Indianapolis. A native of Indiana, he served on the staff of St. James Cathedral in South Bend, Ind., after receiving a master of divinity degree from Nashotah House in Wisconsin.
- The Rev. Canon C.K. Robertson, a fellow of the Episcopal Church Foundation and former professor of ethics and communications, is currently Canon to Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, an honorary SIM board member and supporter. Prior to moving to the Episcopal Church Center, Canon Robertson served as Canon to the Ordinary in the Diocese of Arizona and Honorary Canon of the Diocese of Dar-es-Salaam. He served congregations in Florida and Georgia and has worked as a consultant in leadership development and conflict management in both the Church of England and the Episcopal Church. He received a master of divinity degree from VTS and has authored six books.

- Richard M. Wenner taught in high school before beginning a 30-year career at Aetna, one of the nations' leading diversified health care benefits companies. At retirement he was Vice-President and Actuary in the group pensions department. A Fellow of the Society of Actuaries and a member of the American Academy of Actuaries, he has served on the Connecticut Teachers' Retirement Board, the Children's Home of Cromwell Board, the vestry of St. James's Church, where he is Assistant Treasurer, and is currently on the board of the Aetna Retirees Association.