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**For Immediate Release**

## ***Protected Annuity Rate Balance (PARB) Option Announced***

*Evanston, IL* – In its ongoing mission to care for its participants, the Board of Directors of the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits of The United Methodist Church today announced a change to the Protected Annuity Rate Balance (PARB) promise.

### ***Intention of PARB Rate Guarantee***

PARBs were originally established for Ministerial Pension Plan (MPP) participants eligible to retire on July 1, 2003, who were at least age 62 or had a minimum of 35 years of service. They were designed to protect MPP participants close to retirement from significant reductions in expected monthly retirement benefit payment amounts.

The General Board continuously works in the best interest of plan participants and PARBs helped to accomplish this goal. Until recently, a PARB was a very good option for participants.

PARBs were established when the General Board decided that a participant's MPP annuity would be calculated based on the market interest rate instead of at the historically used rate of 8%. Since then, stock market performance and rising interest rates have prompted a reexamination of PARBs to determine whether or not they are the best option for current plan participants. The Board of Directors has decided that participants should have a choice between (1) continuing the PARB 8% annuity rate guarantee or (2) having their account credited with earnings that would have accrued as if they had not had a PARB.

### ***Option Granted***

Participants with a PARB will receive complete instructions and information about their choices in early 2007. From the time they receive notification from the General Board, they will have six months to make a decision and respond.

Participants who do not make a choice and those who choose to relinquish their PARB will have their PARB converted to a balance with earnings credited, as explained above, and the PARB guarantee will end. From that time forward, the participant's account balance will be subject to market fluctuations and, when the balance (at least 75%) is annuitized, the annuity rate in effect at the time will apply. Participants do not need to respond until they are notified.

The General Board believes that providing participants with this option will allow them to make the decision that is in their long-term best interests.