

PUBLIC STATEMENT FROM GOBIN MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Aug. 12, 2009

My name is Jeff Hansen, and I serve as Lay Leader at Gobin Memorial United Methodist Church. I've been asked to speak on behalf of our pastor and our church leaders about the arrest of our secretary, Mindy Fenwick, on charges of forgery and theft.

Mindy was a valued employee for five years, so her arrest has obviously shocked and upset us. Mindy has been placed on unpaid leave effective August 11. We're carefully investigating exactly what happened. We're working closely with authorities who are doing the same. We learned there was a problem through our own auditing process just days ago. We followed up on the concern that was raised, then alerted police. It will take time to understand the full details of what happened, but it's clear the policies and practices we had in place to prevent misuse of funds were circumvented.

To find out precisely what occurred, the extent of the loss and what steps we should take to prevent something like this from ever happening again, we plan to hire an independent auditor or accounting firm with expertise in this area.

We are concerned about both the financial loss and the potential loss of trust among the people who so generously support our ministry and mission. We are concerned about the effect of this incident on our congregation and even its implications for Mindy and her family. Our pastor, our staff, our leaders and, I hope every member, are committed to learning from this painful experience, correcting any problems and moving forward with God's work.

It would not be helpful to anyone, at this time, for us to release more information or speculate on what additional steps will be taken without more facts and time to digest them.