

NEWS RELEASE: From Gobin Memorial United Methodist Church
DATE: August 12, 2009
CONTACT: Dr. Jeff Hansen

Greencastle, IN – Gobin Memorial United Methodist Church today confirmed that its secretary, Mindy Fenwick, has been placed on unpaid leave after her arrest for forgery and theft in connection with financial misrepresentations discovered as part of the church's own auditing process.

“Mindy Fenwick was a valued employee for five years, so her arrest has obviously shocked and upset us,” said church spokesman Jeff Hansen, who serves as Lay Leader of the congregation. “Mindy has been placed on unpaid leave effective August 11, 2009. 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,” said Dr. Hansen. “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,” he said, “as well as 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.”

Mindy Fenwick began serving as church secretary at Gobin in 2004.

Dr. Hansen said it would not be helpful to release more information or speculate on what additional steps will be taken without more facts and more time to digest them.