



BRIDGING MINISTRIES & TELLING OUR STORIES

2019-2020
Annual Report



Dakotas
United Methodist
Foundation



A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT

So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love.
- Ephesians 3:17

"This is our story; this is our song."

Blessed Assurance is a favorite hymn – a reminder of how our walk in faith with Jesus lends each of us a story to tell. A story to share with others. As the Dakotas United Methodist Foundation continues to tell its story, we sing a song of appreciation for every church and individual who has found value in partnering and investing in ministry in the Dakotas Conference. Thank you for your continued support and for believing in the work of the Foundation, as we walk alongside the churches and individuals we serve.

We've had some great things happen this year! We are one of 92 recipients of 800 applicants to be awarded a "Vitality of Thriving Congregations Grant" from the Lilly Endowment. This is our third grant! We will receive \$982,854 in the 2021 fiscal year to fund our Dakotas Connection Initiative. This program will enhance our successful ministries, plus provide the technical resources to further expand the impact of the church into our rural communities. We will be able to build new leadership models to help members of the local churches accomplish the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ. We will also build innovative systems to allow congregations to maximize their human, financial, and other resources.

I'm delighted to announce that the Dakotas United Methodist Foundation Board of Directors, led by Chair Jeff Nelson, has authorized another \$100,000 to go toward this project. We are thankful for the Board's leadership to partner with the Conference to enhance the growing ministries across the Dakotas.

As you can see throughout the report, you have much to be proud of in Foundation investments, endowments, and distributions. Our portfolio now has \$30.6 million in assets under management. I remember just four short years ago, we were celebrating only \$20 million. The growth is incredible, and we thank each of you for your contributions to help make this happen.

While it is wonderful to report on the amount of money the Foundation holds, it is the earnings these investments generate for ministry that writes our story. This past year alone, we've distributed **\$1,524,039** back to churches, ministries, and individuals – stories of people deepening their relationship with God and connecting with each other spiritually. This is only possible because churches and individuals have chosen to invest in the Foundation.

In our new world, we must explore opportunities to join with others as we search for resources. At the Foundation, we keep looking forward to finding new and more effective ways to tell the stories of all the ministries across the Conference. As a cutting-edge organization, the Foundation is here to explore opportunities, to look for ways to share these stories and songs that are possible only because of the generosity of others. Because of you!

How are you connecting with your Church community to tell your story, which, in turn, will encourage generosity in your church? What decisions are you making today that are moving your ministry forward? By asking these questions, you will discover ways to help generate resources. We are here to help you find ways to tell your story! Contact us, and we'd be glad to make that happen.

Each day, we at the Foundation find ways to develop relationships, cultivate resources, and embrace ministry. Ministry takes resources. And, resources happen because of generosity. Thank you for your generosity and the support of the ministries across the Conference.

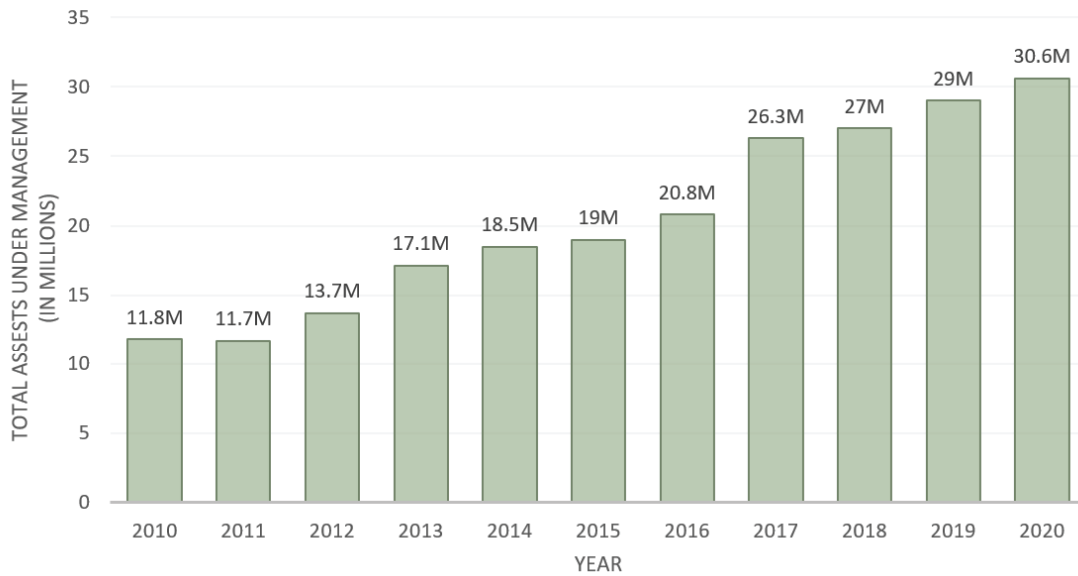
Together in Ministry,
Sheri Meister
President/CEO



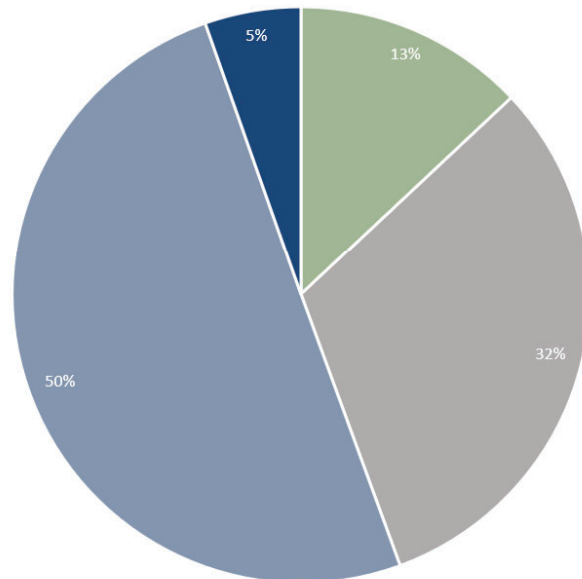
30.6 MILLION

Assets Under Management

10 Year Growth



Earnings Distributions



6 New endowments totaling **\$188,741**

6 New investments totaling **\$808,752**

Student Aid: **\$82,600**

Builders Club: **\$42,000**

Breakthrough Ministry Grants: **\$42,600**

Total funds distributed to churches, ministries, and individuals: **\$1,524,039**

BY THE NUMBERS

Breakthrough Ministry Grants

\$42,600
Granted

26
Churches

27
New
Ministries

2019

3rd Quarter Recipients - \$14,550

Burke UMC - Burke, SD; Tornado Relief
Canyon Lake UMC - Rapid City, SD; Youth-Led Worship Service
Des Lacs UMC - Des Lacs, ND; Technology Updates
Harrisburg UMC - Harrisburg, SD; Technology Updates
Knollwood Heights UMC - Rapid City, SD; Knollwood Townhouses Food Pantry
Plankinton UMC - Plankinton, SD; Operation We All Belong
Wesley UMC - Sioux Falls, SD; Technology Updates
Virgil UMC - Virgil, SD; Technology Updates
Madison UMC - Madison, SD; Young Adult/Campus Ministry
Flame of Faith - West Fargo, ND; Young Adult/Campus Ministry

4th Quarter Recipients - \$6,500

Calvary UMC - Bismarck, ND; Technology Updates
Kensal UMC - Kensal, ND; Technology Updates
Emmanuel UMC - Medina, ND; Movie Night
Stickney UMC - Stickney, SD; Financial Peace University

2020

1st Quarter Recipients - \$8,550

Mission Fargo - Fargo, ND; Lost Boys Partnership with YMCA
ARK UMC - North Sioux City, SD; Wednesday Evening Worship
Open Heart UMC - Rapid City, SD; Circle of Friends
First UMC - Watertown, SD; Bundles of Hope Diaper Ministry

2nd Quarter Recipients - \$13,000

Blunt UMC - Blunt, SD; Blunt Community Preschool
Celebration UMC - Brandon, SD; Easter/Christmas VBS
Elk Point United - Elk Point, SD; Technology Updates
Fusion UMC - Mitchell, SD; Social Media and Communication
Fusion UMC - Mitchell, SD; Transitional Congregational Leadership Internship
Grace UMC - Piedmont, SD; Worship Streaming
First UMC - Rapid City, SD; HOPE Center Partnership through Internet Services
Asbury UMC - Sioux Falls, SD; Live Streaming
Spirit of Faith UMC - Woonsocket, SD; Technology Updates

Technology Assists Kensal UMC in Making Disciples

A technology upgrade has allowed the congregation at the United Methodist Church in Kensal, North Dakota to reach into the community through small groups, growing the children's ministry, starting a youth group, and hosting community gatherings.

Kensal UMC applied for a Breakthrough Ministry Grant to help fund the technology upgrades. The funds from the grant plus donations from church members have made the entire project possible. "We have been able to move ahead more quickly, because of the grant," says Pastor Jeanne Sortland.

Since receiving the grant, they have installed a tv screen in both the front and back of the sanctuary, purchased new wireless microphones and new software to enhance worship. Prior to receiving the grant, they were able to install a projector and screen in the Sunday School room, something which they previously shared with the sanctuary and had to move each week.

The technology upgrade has enhanced in-person worship, allowed the church to stream the services for those who are unable to make it in person, and allows them to provide enriching programs, such as Sunday School and small groups. Kensal UMC hopes to use the new technology to provide additional community outreach, such as hosting movie nights or providing a place for various community events and meetings to be held.

Stickney UMC Fosters Faith and Financial Well-Being



Matt and Desirae Gahl recently led a Financial Peace University (FPU) course at the United Methodist Church in Stickney, South Dakota. The couple noticed that 2019 was a challenge for many in the community who depend on farming and agriculture for their income. After attending a class at another church and finding it life-changing, the Gahls decided they wanted to lead an FPU class at their own church.

"We want to give people the chance to understand that they do not have to be burdened by their finances," says Matt. "We have always been involved in church and trying to live out our faith. Through the lessons, we can see how finances and faith go together."

25 people signed up for the 10-week course, which began at the beginning of 2020. The class was a great success, as the members were able to pay off over \$46,000 of debt, save almost \$25,000 and cut up 12 credit cards. Stickney UMC also gained a few more people in church because of this class. Since the FPU class ended, the participants have still been going strong on working to become debt free. "Many are just so much more aware now of where their money is going as they have been doing and working with their monthly budgets," says Desirae.

Stickney UMC received a Breakthrough Ministry Grant to help purchase the Financial Peace University kits for the class members and provide funding for childcare. "We appreciate all the help from the UM Foundation and Conference, and the amazing grant that we received. It made this all possible!" says Desirae Gahl.

Knollwood Heights UMC Builds Relationships through Food Pantry

"We prayed about our participation in this project," says Pastor Sharla McCaskell, who serves at Knollwood Heights UMC in Rapid City, South Dakota. "We prayed that we could find volunteers to be part of the project and also bring food items to those that needed them."

Knollwood Heights UMC was approached by the Bethel Assembly of God Church to partner together to provide a food pantry for the local neighborhood townhouses. The low-income Knollwood Townhouse complex in Rapid City is located in what is known as a food desert. A food desert is an area that has limited access to affordable and nutritious food. The nearest grocery store is blocks away and many of the residents don't have access to transportation.

The church partners received a grant from the South Dakota Community Foundation to launch the Knollwood Townhouse Food Pantry. Both churches provided funds and food to stock the shelves, as well as volunteers to work at the pantry.

Knollwood Heights UMC received a Breakthrough Ministry Grant to further help in purchasing food and other supplies for the pantry.

Knollwood Heights UMC purchases food from Feeding South Dakota twice a month to help stock the shelves. "We pay \$.18 per pound for the food. It is amazing how much food we can purchase for \$150 a month. The funding we received from the Dakotas Conference has really helped," says McCaskell.

One of Pastor Sharla's favorite parts of this ministry is the "share shelves." Residents will bring in food they don't want or don't need to share with others. McCaskell recalls a woman bringing in two frozen chickens one week, because she thought someone else could use them more than she could.

The food pantry is about more than just providing food, it is about building relationships with those that might not know Jesus. "We are building relationships and getting to know people

every week. It is powerful to get to know the names," says McCaskell. "It is a great outreach, and a stepping-stone for discipleship by inviting people to events and just being present with each other."

The church members have continued to provide food, funds, and volunteer time to serve at the pantry during the COVID-19 pandemic. "Knollwood Heights UMC has been very supportive financially during this time, as that was something people could give to and know it would be utilized locally," says Pastor Sharla.



Endowment Allows Couple to “Pay it Forward”

George and Pat Breidenbach came to Mitchell, South Dakota in 1975. Shortly after moving to the community, they discovered the rich educational and cultural-enriching experiences that Dakota Wesleyan University had to offer, including music, theater, and lectures. The program that really caught their interest, however, was an exchanged program with Koka Women’s Institute in Kyoto, Japan. Over the next few years, they regularly hosted Japanese high school and adult students in their home. After a few years of hosting exchange students, the Breidenbachs decided they wanted to take part in the exchange program by going to Kyoto, Japan. “It was a cultural immersion like no other, a wonderful experience – thanks to DWU,” comments Pat.

In the 1980s, George and Pat joined and became active members at Mitchell First United Methodist Church. During that same time, Pat started what turned out to be a 20-year career as the Archivist for the South Dakota (and subsequently, the Dakotas) Conference at the Dakotas United Methodist Conference Center. The Dakotas Conference Center is across the street from Dakota Wesleyan University, and often hosts students as interns throughout the year. Pat worked with many of these DWU students on various archival projects in her years as the archivist. In 2007, after the Dakotas UM Conference decided to move their archives to a joint space on DWU’s campus, Pat decided to retire.

Although she has retired from working directly with the Dakotas United Methodist Conference, Pat and George are both still active in the United Methodist Church and Mitchell community. Pat serves on the Dakotas Conference Commission on Archives and History Committee. George and Pat have gone on several mission trips with Mitchell Downtown First UMC and have served in many other capacities.

During the time Pat worked as the Dakotas Conference Archivist, Wayne and Betty Testerman established an endowment for the Archives that continues to support the always-tight budget for the Archives. The Testerman’s gift through the Dakotas United Methodist Foundation inspired the Breidenbachs to establish an endowment of their own. George and Pat wanted to “pay it forward” to Dakota Wesleyan University, the Dakotas United Methodist Conference, and its local churches for richly blessing their lives for over 40 years. They established the George and Pat Breidenbach Endowment in the spring of 2020 to support the development of pastoral leadership in the Dakotas Conference through the Nonprofit Church Leadership Certificate Program at Dakota Wesleyan University.

The Nonprofit Church Leadership Certificate Program is a collaborative partnership between the Dakotas and Minnesota United Methodist Conferences and Dakota Wesleyan University. This year-long program is designed for clergy to increase competencies in various leadership areas, such as stewardship of financial resources, human resources, vision, strategy, community, and communications. Through the NPCL program, pastors are able to strengthen the competencies they need to lead today’s church but did not perhaps obtain during their undergraduate, graduate, or seminary education.

Katie Ricke, pastor at Yankton First UMC, participated in the first cohort of the NPCL program in 2018. “Seminaries prepare us well to be theologians, but they don’t always prepare us well to be administrators of the churches we serve. We need to be equipped to do both in order to serve effectively as pastors,” says Ricke.

George and Pat Breidenbach are hopeful their new endowment will support pastoral leadership development at Dakota Wesleyan University for years to come. “It’s an endowment that ticks all of our boxes,” says Pat Breidenbach.



Merit Scholarship Recipients - \$66,600

Quaya Ackerman – Sioux Falls Seminary
Bryce Blank – Perkins Theological Seminary
Thanael Certa-Werner – Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary
Jason Christensen – Sioux Falls Seminary
Donald Dinger – Sioux Falls Seminary
Amber Laffey – Sioux Falls Seminary
Jason Martens – Sioux Falls Seminary
Teresa Person – Sioux Falls Seminary
Janson Steffan – Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary
Teresa Whetsel – Sioux Falls Seminary

\$82,600 in student aid awarded in 2020

Dollars for Scholars - \$16,000*

Davis Anderson - Dakota Wesleyan University
Tommy Determan - Dakotas Wesleyan University
Erin Moncur - Dakota Wesleyan University
Hannah Wehlander - Dakota Wesleyan University

* in partnership with the Dakotas UM Conference, UMHEF,
and the local church



"One of the main reasons for my resisting seminary has always been, "It would cost way too much, I'll never afford it." Truly, that's a silly reason for denying a call that I feel so strongly. This scholarship helps to remove that excuse for not following this urging. I have been accepted into the Masters of Divinity program at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary. This financial support will help me afford courses and textbooks, student fees and other supplies. From the bottom of my heart and the top of my voice, thank you! Through prayer and continued discernment, I will do my absolute best to become that something solid worth investing in, trustworthy and hard-working, helping to bring forth the Kingdom."

Janson Steffan | Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me, and I in them, bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." - John 15:5

Beverly Sorensen truly lived out these words and had a true calling to serve others. Beverly was born in Miller, South Dakota on December 24, 1925. She spent much of her life in the Wessington Springs area, first as an elementary school teacher and then farming with her husband, Robert. After retiring, they continued to live in the Wessington Springs community until moving to Bethany Meadows retirement community in Brandon in 2006.

Beverly was a member of the Wessington Springs United Methodist Church where she taught Sunday school and was an active member of the UMW. Zach Kingery, pastor at Wessington Springs UMC says, "Beverly served as a Sunday school teacher, a leader for the Youth Group and was known as an 'Honorary Aunt' to most every child in the church for quite a number of years. Beverly's faith pointed many to Christ and she loved when people connected to God and then also to one another." Through her faithfulness and generosity, Beverly was an example of "how a person who is connected to and abides in Christ can bear much fruit."

Beverly entered her heavenly home on August 18, 2020 but the fruit of her life and faith will continue helping people know Jesus and connect to the Kingdom of God. Through endowments established by the Sorensens, Wessington Springs UMC children and families will continue to have the opportunity to attend camps and retreats, and church members will receive assistance to attend Annual Conference and other leadership events.

Beverly also had a heart for all of our Dakotas Conference clergy and understood some of the challenges they face. This passion led her to give generously to the Thrive campaign to help strengthen the leadership in the United Methodist Church. We are inspired by Beverly's life and we are thankful for her faithful service and support of the missions and ministries of The United Methodist Church.



\$42,000 awarded this past year!

2019 Recipients

Mellette Northwestern UMC – Mellette, SD

Holmes UMC – Reynolds, ND

2020 Recipients

Plankinton UMC – Plankinton, SD

Legacy South UMC and Celebrate Grace UMC – Bismarck, ND



"Thank you Builders Club from the bottom of our hearts. You have helped us to refurbish our 25 year old Northwestern United Methodist Church of Mellette, South Dakota. Your generosity will never be forgotten and we look forward to helping the next Builders Club project."

"On behalf of the Holmes UMC, I would like to say a huge THANK YOU to the Builders Club. As a small rural parish, some of the updates needed at the parsonage kept being put off until they became a safety concern. None of this would have been possible without help from the Builders Club, and we are so grateful."

"Plankinton UMC sends a giant THANKS! The Plankinton United Methodist Church is more than a place of worship, it is an integral part of the Plankinton, South Dakota community. On behalf of the Plankinton UMC faith community, I would like to extend a giant THANK YOU to the Builders Club for your support."

"Your generosity is directly responsible for helping this vision for ministry become reality. We cannot thank you enough for the generous donations. Even though we will be under construction for several weeks to come we are already moving forward in ministry and God is at work in South Bismarck. Thank you for being a part of our support team."

Did you know: Stock Gifts

A stock gift is a great way to support your local church. Donating appreciated stock allows you to increase the impact of your gift while also providing certain tax advantages.

For example, if you purchased \$1,000 of stock more than one year ago, and it has now appreciated in value, you will owe tax on the amount of the gain when the stock is sold. However, if you donate the stock directly to your church, you avoid paying tax on the gain and your church will receive the full value of the stock. Also, if you itemize, you are also eligible for a tax deduction on the fair market value of the sale up to the amount allowed by the IRS.

It's easy to donate stock through the Dakotas United Methodist Foundation. You will find the Wespath Securities Transfer form along with instructions on our website in the Forms tab. You're also welcome to contact Diane Weller for more information or help with the process.



To take advantage of a tax deduction this year, stock transfers must be completed by December 31st. Due to the higher volume of stock transfer requests in December, stock transfer forms must be received in our office by December 15th to make sure the transaction is completed by year-end.

**This information is provided as an overview and is not intended to be used as tax or accounting advice. The Dakotas United Methodist Foundation recommends that you consult with your personal tax and financial advisors to discuss the tax advantages of donating stock to charity.*

Our Ministries: Dakotas United Methodist Camps

For many generations, Dakotans have been encountering God at one of our Dakotas United Methodist Camps. Camping ministry has long provided a place apart from busy lives where faith, love, and friendships grow. Camp creates opportunities to have adventures, make new friends, share in fellowship, and create memories. But most importantly, camp offers us the place and opportunity to nurture our faith, deepen our trust and love in God, discover our spiritual gifts, and experience God's call in our hearts and lives.

Numerous individuals point to camp as a significant part of their faith story. Many of our pastors and lay leaders first received their call to ministry while at camp. That calling continued to be fostered in subsequent years attending camp, as campers, counselors, camp deans, or camp staff. Countless mentors and lifelong friendships have developed as a result of time spent growing together in community at camp. Each year, hundreds of children, youth, adults, and families continue to experience Christ, Creation, and Community at one of our camps. Our camping ministry was hit especially hard this year, as summer operations were suspended because of the Covid-19 pandemic. While suspension of our 2020 camps was the right decision, our sites are struggling financially with the loss of ministry this spring and summer. Each campsite's operational costs are funded nearly 100% by camper and guest group fees. The loss of revenue this summer has significantly impacted the financial health and the ability of your camps to do ministry.

For as long as camp has been happening here in the Dakotas, the Foundation has been a partner in supporting and walking alongside this ministry. The Foundation is proud to support the camping program this year by underwriting an appeal to bring in much-needed funds to help close the deficit caused by the pandemic. In addition to the appeal, we have numerous investment and endowment accounts that benefit Dakotas Camping, the individual camp sites, camp scholarships, and more. We are committed to building relationships with pastors, churches, and donors who understand the importance of camp ministry in building faithful disciples.

Thank you for those who have partnered with the Foundation to support our Dakotas United Methodist Camps. Sending children, youth, and adults to a fun-filled, Christ-centered, and life-changing time at camp is an investment in not only their lives, but the future of the United Methodist Church. If you would like to support our Dakotas United Methodist Camps during this difficult year, please donate online or send a check to our office.



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*"Camping is a main source
of changing people who can
change the world!"*

Rodney Gist | Retired pastor and
lifelong Dakotas Camping Supporter



Endowments and Investments benefitting Dakotas United Methodist Camps:

Dick Trotter Memorial Scholarship Fund
Seneca UMC Endowment
Gregory P. Ough Memorial Scholarship Fund
Edmund and Viola Ost Endowment
Ron and Arlene Gates Camping Endowment
Darrel Leach Camping Endowment
Manville and Alice Stoltenow
Vernon E. Wendlandt Endowment
Harvey and Carol Sander Camping Endowment
Jim Pomeroy Camping Endowment

Harry and Lorna Williams Camping Endowment
Herb and Ethel Metzger Endowment
Promise Cabin Endowment
Spring Creek Cabin Endowment
North Dakota Camping Endowment
Joe and Norma Peltier Endowment
Deloris Dow Endowment
Colman UMC Endowment
Greenleaf UMC Endowment
Finley UMC Endowment

James Larson Camping Endowment
Jacque Oswald Memorial Endowment
Ruby Alice Cox Memorial Endowment
Dakotas United Methodist Camps Endowment
Wesley Acres Camp Endowment
Lake Poinsett Camp Endowment
Storm Mountain Camp Endowment
Lake Poinsett Maintenance Fund
Joan Sercl Camping Investment

Endowments for Camp Scholarships at the Local Church level:

Steve and Marlene Hulm (Mandan UMC)
Loralee's Endowment for Children's Ministry (Pierre UMC)
Susan Denison Memorial Fund (Canyon Lake UMC)
Ethel and Miles Cotton Memorial (Miller UMC)
Dorothy M. & C. Harold Colvin Memorial (Miller UMC)

Mamie Johnson (Groton UMC)
Roy and Velma Brown (Hartford UMC)
Wessington Springs UMC
Pugsley Endowment (Huron Riverview UMC)

Our Donors

\$50,000 +

Rick and Jody Burgum
Mildred Hosmer
Scott and Julia Jones
Richard Voss

\$10,000 - \$49,000

George and Pat Breidenbach
Paul Christen
Judy Cox-Sample
Deloris Dow
Bruce Johnson
Al Yocom

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Terry Jacobson
Gary and Cindy Meyer
Michelle Triplett

\$2,500 - \$4,999

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\$100 - \$249

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\$100 - \$249

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Kenrad and Mary Pederson
Norma Peltier
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Dennis and Linda Purvis
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David and Eleanor Richards
Jan and Sandy Rieger
Carol Roozen
David Samuelson
Charles and Voleta Schnabel
Robert and Kathy Schneider

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Leonard and Joann Steckley
Howard and Marilynne Stemen
Jerome Stiegelmeier
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Robert Stoner
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Betty Taylor
Doyle and Luann Thompson
Roberta Thompson
Gloria Faye Truman
Richard and Pat Unkenholz
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Dianne Willey
Joel and Kris Winckler
Richard Wyman
Lois Zander
Paul Zeeb
Violet Zwickl



Wespath Institutional Investments acts in the best interest of our investors and makes a conscious effort to manage our investment program in a manner consistent with the principles of The United Methodist Church. We place a high priority on providing professional investment management and implementing best practices geared toward achieving positive financial results.

The Wespath Advantage:

- Over \$24 billion in assets managed through Wespath Benefits and Investments and its subsidiaries, including Wespath Institutional Investments.
- Unique Product and Service Offering with Daily Liquidity: funds are comprised of well-diversified, global portfolios, offering clients daily liquidity.
- Access to Highly Respected Investment Managers: funds provide exposure to world-class investment managers that investors would be unlikely to economically secure on their own.
- International Recognized on as a Sustainable Investment Leader: Wespath is positioned to use its voice to influence changes that it believes will enhance long-term corporate performance and create positive impacts on society and the environment.
- Team of Industry Professionals Here to Service You: experienced team of 21 tenured investment industry professionals brings strength of experience and service to our clients including timely, transparent reporting.



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Sheri Meister
President/CEO
walking alongside individuals and churches as they journey down the spiritual path of generosity



Diane Weller
Donor and Church Relations Director
getting to know people, hearing their stories and helping them connect their resources with their passions



Kelsey Morgan
Office Assistant
being able to sprinkle some hope, positivity, and love into the world by helping God-sized dreams come alive

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