



FOR OPPORTUNITIES - YOU MUST GET OFF THE FENCE

When I was a kid, my parents enrolled me in 4-H. At that time, Dean, a family friend and farmhand, introduced me to the competition of showing beef cattle. I was just nine years old. I was supposed to get into the pen with this steer! The rope looked like a string. I was scared, and there was nothing to protect me!

I remember sitting on the corral fence, thinking that there was no way I could do this. There was no way I would have the courage or the willpower to take on this untrained animal. I remember saying to Dean, "I can't!" He turned to me and said: "All 'can't' does is sit on the fence and watch the world go by."

Once I overcame the fear, I named my new 1000 pound friend Sebastian and showed him at the county and state fair. From that day forward, I knew there would always be opportunities even when things look unproportioned and seem impossible. Showing beef cattle became our family passion at fairs for years to come. Once I got off the fence, opportunities were endless.

I think of this often at the Minnesota Methodist Foundation. Unfortunately, churches are facing many challenges. It may be a building that no longer meets their needs, a rapidly changing community, or a budget that never seems to balance. So naturally, many church committees and individuals choose to "sit on the fence," feeling it is safer there.

But the real opportunities come from exploring options, making sound decisions, and moving forward. We in the Church cannot look at these challenges with scarcity but rather with the abundance we find in the living Gospel. Only then will we see all the tremendous occasions for ministry.

That day on the farm, staring down at Sebastian, was I scared? You bet! But something changed inside me as I sat on the fence that day. Something told me that this was an opportunity that could not pass by.

Do you see places in your church where people are sitting on the fence and missing opportunities for ministry? Where is Jesus leading your church? If we help others step off the fence, imagine the abundance ahead! We can make obstacles into opportunities!

If you would like help with the first step, please call our office. We'd be thrilled to walk with you and your decision-makers as you journey to abundance!

Sheri Meister
President/CEO

ENDOWMENT CARES FOR HISTORIC "LITTLE WHITE CHURCH"

The Zehnder family was among the founders of what is now known as Old Salem Shrine, an historic site of the Minnesota Conference of the United Methodist Church that was built in 1875. Generations of the family have cared for the "Little White Church" in Inver Grove Heights, which held its last regular Sunday service around 1910. Like her father and grandfather before her, Jill (Zehnder) Lewis was President of the Board of Trustees, serving 30 years until her death in June 2020. Jill had wanted an endowment established to care for Old Salem but the Trustees were reluctant to commit funds to an endowment and feared the process would be laborious.

To honor Jill's wishes, her heirs created a named endowment with the Minnesota Methodist Foundation with proceeds from her estate. Beginning in 2023, distributions from the Zehnder Memorial Endowment will be available for the sole purpose of caring for and maintaining Old Salem Shrine.

"When establishing the endowment fund, I wanted to be sure anyone considering a gift would be confident the fund was managed by a reputable organization or brokerage, would be assured of tax exemption and would trust the money would support Old Salem," said Amy Nugent, Jill's daughter and now an Old Salem Trustee. "The Minnesota Methodist Foundation satisfied all those criteria and made the process to set up the endowment so easy. I completed two short forms, got input from family members and submitted the check."



"Through the support of the Grannis-Martin Memorial scholarship and their partnership with Minnesota Methodist Foundation, I know that I can focus on becoming the best pastor I can be without the woes that a lot of student loan debt can bring. For this, I am truly thankful."

– Kelby Werner,
seminary student

NOW ACCEPTING SEMINARY SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

As we continue our partnership with the Grannis-Martin Memorial Scholarship Board to administer their scholarship application process, we welcome the opportunity to work with the Grannis Memorial Scholarship Board this year as well. By completing the online application found on the Foundation's website, students will now be eligible for both scholarships. Applications are being accepted now through May 15th.

This one application model saves valuable time for our seminary students as well as our scholarship boards and committees. The Foundation considers the parameters of each scholarship fund, assuring the candidate's eligibility. We also handle promotion and collection of the applications and are able to assist with award distributions as well.

If you're part of a scholarship committee at your church or are considering establishing a scholarship fund and would like to discuss how this process might be a fit for you, please contact the Foundation office today.



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MN UM BUILDERS AWARDS SPRING CALL

The Minnesota United Methodist Builders is delighted to announce that Faith Church in Farmington, MN is the recipient of the Spring 2022 Builders Call. Faith Church hosts a weekly community meal, "Loaves and Fishes", that serves up to 250 meals each Wednesday. Their current kitchen is outdated and not equipped to handle the abundance of use it gets each week. Faith Church plans to update their kitchen and make it more efficient and useable. "These updates will allow the congregation to continue serving the community and reaching new people through kitchen ministries well into the future," says Scott Evenson, project coordinator at Faith Church.

A brochure regarding the project and how to donate will be sent to all MN UM Builders members in early April. If you are not a MN UM Builders member and would like to receive Call information via mail or email, please sign up on our website at www.mnumf.org/mn-um-builders.

Thank you for those who supported Blooming Grove UMC during the Fall 2021 Builders Call. Blooming Grove UMC was awarded a grant of \$6,000.



MINNESOTA UNITED
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More information about MN UM Builders along with the application form can be found on our website. In addition to UM Builders Grants, we also offer loans to churches for capital improvements or repairs. Please contact Diane Weller at diane.weller@dkmnmf.org or 612-230-3337 if you have any questions.

**For more information on Minnesota Builders East grants and loans, contact Brent Holmberg at brenth3514@earthlink.net or call 612-940-4303.*

SPENDING POLICY - DO WE NEED ONE?

A spending policy is helpful because it guides organizations in connecting their funds with their mission, ministry, and long-term goals. A clear spending policy helps assure that funds are used as intended. This documentation is beneficial for current finance teams and trustees while also serving as a way for future teams to know and understand how funds are to be used. Additionally, a spending policy gives donors peace of mind that their gift is used according to their wishes.

There isn't a "one size fits all" regarding spending policies. Some factors to consider when developing or revising a spending policy are:

- the original purpose of the fund
- your risk tolerance and time horizon
- balancing today's spending needs with a long-term investing strategy



While there are many spending models, we see two options most often used in our churches and organizations:

- **Simple: Year-End Balance x Set Spending Rate**
Flat spending amount or spending rate tied to the annual market value of the investment. While easy to implement, this model can lead to large swings year over year.
- **Smoothing: Average Balance (i.e. 3-4 years or 12-16 quarters) x Determined Spending Rate (4-5%)**
Becoming more widely used, this method uses a rolling average balance to calculate the amount available for distribution each year. This method gives a more smooth or even distribution year over year. Using this model with an investment account creates a "quasi-endowment" where an annual distribution is taken while protecting the principal.

A spending policy is essential because it gives leadership permission to invest in the missions and ministries of their church while being good stewards of the funds entrusted to them. This long-term mindset will benefit church ministry both now and in the future.



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NEW LOGO, STRENGTHENED PARTNERSHIP

Our new logo reflects our strengthened partnership between the Dakotas and Minnesota Methodist Foundations and our continued dedication to serving, building relationships, and encouraging innovative ministry throughout the Minnesota and Dakotas Conferences. Read more about the new logo on our website.