

THE FOUNDATION



A NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF THE OKLAHOMA UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION

From the President



Greetings from the Oklahoma United Methodist Foundation.

We are pleased to announce our new web site, designed to better assist you and your church's

planned giving and stewardship needs. I hope you take the opportunity to visit our site at www.okumf.org to see new features such as our planned giving page, online giving and even online account statements.

In this newsletter you will find many resources on bequests—leaving a gift to your church or special ministry through your will or estate plan. Many gifts come to churches and ministries through bequests. I hope you consider the great impact any gift, even a tithe of your estate will make to your church. As always, the Foundation stands ready to assist you in the process of making a bequest to your church or favorite ministry.

This year marks the United Methodist Church's quadrennial, which is an exciting time for our church. Last May, I was elected by Conference delegates to be one of twenty Oklahoma representatives to the worldwide United Methodist General Conference in April.

Delegates will travel from all over the world to consider the wide range of issues and challenges facing our church. I look forward to representing Oklahoma United Methodists.

Thank you for your continued support for the Foundation. May God bless you and your family.

**Bill Junk,
Foundation President**

Profile in Giving: Dr. Bob Long **Seeing both sides**

Dr. Bob Long's relationship with the Oklahoma United Methodist Foundation is one of giving and receiving. The Oklahoma City St. Luke's United Methodist Church senior pastor sees the Foundation's reach and impact as a clergyman and a member of the Foundation's Board of Trustees.

Even as a new pastor in Houston, Texas, Bob quickly understood the importance of including gifts to the church in a will or estate plan.

"As a young pastor starting a new church, I received tremendous support from the Texas Methodist Foundation," says Long.

Bob became familiar with the Oklahoma Foundation's support of ministries and local churches as a member of the Conference Council on Finance and Administration.

For the last nine years, however, Bob has served on the Foundation's Board of Trustees, where he is

currently the vice chair and on the investment committee.

"As a Trustee, I witness the great work of the Foundation in the local church," says Bob.

"I remember one church receiving a grant to implement Rotational Sunday School. This may seem like a small thing, but the program revolutionized the church's Sunday School. Attendance grew from nine to ninety children! That grant made a huge difference in the church."

Bob's church also benefits from one particular donor's gift. Ollie Bell established a charitable gift annuity with the Foundation. After she passed away, the gift annuity became an endowment fund for St. Luke's UMC.

"We could not offer all of our programs and ministries without the support of faithful people like Ollie Bell. She saw a need and chose to provide for that need well after she was gone," says Bob.

Bob and his wife Marsha have always known the importance of honoring God with their financial resources.

"In those early years it was tough; we counted every penny. I remember going through the store and adding up our groceries,



Bob and Marsha Long have been at St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Oklahoma City for more than 17 years.

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Sensible of the uncertainty of life



By David Battles, CPA
Executive Vice President

“I, G.E. Castleberry of Weatherford, Oklahoma being now in good health, strength of body and mind, but sensible of the uncertainty of life, and desiring to make disposition of my property and affairs, do hereby bequest a tithe of my estate to my church.”

This paragraph captured my attention as I recently read Mr. Castleberry’s Last Will and Testament.

He gave a tithe of his estate to establish a General Endowment for the benefit of Weatherford First United Methodist Church to ensure the future of his home church for the next generation.

We all face the same uncertainty of life, but share the same opportunity to make certain the future of ministry for the next generation.

What do you consider your most significant act of stewardship? For many, it is probably the final distribution of our estate. How we distribute our estate speaks volumes about our values and concern for others. This final act of stewardship can only be accomplished through a thoughtfully and carefully planned will (or revocable trust).

Your will is the most important document you will ever sign. Your will accomplishes several things: distributes all of the property accumulated in your lifetime, contributes to the financial security of your beneficiaries, benefits causes you believe are important, and memorializes your legacy.

Your will provides insight into what is really important in your life. Bequests to family members tell of your love and concern for their welfare. A bequest to your church

or other United Methodist cause affirms your belief in its mission and ministry.

A bequest is a transfer of property through a will. However, there are different forms of bequests that can be used to accomplish your goals.

A specific bequest directs a specific asset be given to a specific beneficiary. For example, you may leave 5,000 shares of stock to your church.

A general bequest directs a specified amount of money or specified percentage of your estate be paid to a particular beneficiary. You may leave 10% of your estate to your church, for example. Since estate values may increase or decrease over time, percentages are often preferable to bequests of absolute amounts.

How should you structure your bequest? Do you distribute it to your church or other United Methodist cause outright, or in the form of a carefully considered endowment fund? The answer depends on how you wish your bequest to be used. An endowment fund preserves the principal and provides annual payments forever. It serves as a witness to your foresight and commitment to ministry—your legacy.

Bequests through endowment funds can be established for any purpose—scholarships for college, missions trips or church camps; local and global missions; children and youth enrichment programs; building maintenance; annual contributions to the church budget; and other favorite ministries or programs.

Endowments can also be established to provide grants for worthy programs to be determined by a grant making committee or designated family members such as children or grandchildren.

You can establish an endowment fund through the Foundation today to accomplish your goals for the future. Contact us to explore your options.

Dr. Bob Long, continued from page one

making sure we had enough money,” Bob recalls.

“When Marsha and I realized we will not be around forever, we used the same principles to make provisions for our current assets.”

Bob and Marsha made a commitment to tithe 10% of their estate to the church after they are gone.

“Leading St. Luke’s to be a church committed to sharing, growing and serving in our community and around

the world has been a tremendous experience.”

“I only hope when we are gone people remember how much we loved St. Luke’s, the people that make up the church, and we believed in what the church can do here and in the world.”

The St. Luke’s congregation honored Bob a few years ago with an endowed scholarship for an Emerson Alternative School student. The

church’s ministry to the school is one very special to Bob and Marsha.

“The scholarship fund was such a special gift. This is the third year we are able to send a student to college when they would not have the opportunity otherwise,” says Bob.

Bob’s service to the Foundation and our church makes a difference in so many lives. We thank Bob for his faithfulness and dedication.

Ministry helps improve school

“Empower Eisenhower” helped transform an Oklahoma City elementary school from pending closure into a thriving school. Now, students’ test scores are improving and more volunteers are impacting young lives.

Eisenhower Elementary students consistently scored low on standardized tests, and the school was listed at-risk for closing. Many students have little parent involvement at home, live in low-income areas, and are in families headed by single parent or grandparent households.

The Women’s Ministries at Oklahoma City’s Church of the Servant started “Empower Eisenhower” more than five years ago as a way to minister to the school.

“Empower Eisenhower” operates through donations from Church of the Servant members, and recently benefited from additional financial support from a Petree Grant through the Foundation.

The program received a grant from the Petree Endowment Fund to provide interactive labs for 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders.

“The grant allows us to give the students a greater understanding of different aspects of science. They are able to touch, feel and experience rocks, minerals, seashells and many other things. We could not provide these opportunities without the help of the grant,” says Amber Neaves, lead shepherd for the program.

“Through the program, we paint classrooms, help repair and paint lockers, provide teachers with needed



Eisenhower Elementary fifth graders are glad to take a break from school work to explore sea creatures.

supplies, provide weekly tutors and help with class holiday and teacher appreciation parties,” says Neaves.

“Most importantly we have a group committed to pray for each student and teacher by name during the school year,” she continued.

Since the project was started, the school’s students and faculty clearly show the effects of constant prayer and commitment from the church. The school’s improvement moved them off the “at-risk” list.

“Most schools on this list never come off and are closed,” says Neaves.

Last year, Eisenhower Elementary was taken off all needs improvement lists and received the Oklahoma Academic Achievement Award. They were even second in the state in the school’s student population group for significantly improving test scores. The “Empower Eisenhower” program was also awarded one of three Oklahoma City Public Schools Perfect Partnership Awards.

“Tutors and volunteers may not see a difference in the students, but teachers and staff certainly see the difference. From the student’s academic progress to behavior, they improve drastically through interaction with our volunteers,” says Neaves.

Since 1996 the Petree Endowment Fund has awarded more than \$850,000 in grants to United Methodist agencies and churches across our state. Grant applications are now available and may be downloaded from our website at www.okumf.org. Grants are awarded up to \$10,000, and applications may be submitted to the Foundation between June 1 and September 15, 2008.



Two Eisenhower fifth graders closely inspect a sea horse and starfish. Students spent weeks learning about the ocean before being able to view seashells, sea horses, sponges and other organisms with the science lab.

Biggs honored

An endowed chair at Phillips Theological Seminary was recently established to honor Dr. Mouzon Biggs Jr., senior pastor of Tulsa Boston Avenue UMC. Biggs teaches classes at Phillips Seminary.

Richard and Norma Small, members of Boston Avenue, along with a matching gift provided the funding for the endowed chair. Dr. Biggs and Richard Small are both members of the Foundation's Board of Trustees.

THE OKLAHOMA UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION

4201 Classen Boulevard
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
73118-2400
800-259-6863

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Kristin E. Van Nort, Editor

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4201 Classen Boulevard, Oklahoma City, OK 73118

800-259-6863 www.okumf.org

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“Be Prepared” good motto for trustees, too



By Andy Oden
Director, Foundation Relations

The famous Boy Scouts motto, “Be Prepared” provides wisdom in many parts of life as well as the church, but especially among a church trustees committee. From emergency procedures to spare light bulbs, the trustees’ job covers a lot of territory and calls for much

preparedness.

One role often overlooked, though, is their job to receive gifts to the church, especially bequests—gifts made to their church through a will or estate plan.

An example could go like this: If someone donates a refrigerator to the church, the trustees receive it and are responsible for it. If someone gives money for a refrigerator to the church, the trustees receive that, too, and are responsible for it.

Throughout this newsletter, stories discuss a variety of issues around bequests and gifts made through wills or estate plans. On the other end of those bequests and gifts are

church leaders who should “be prepared” to receive such gifts.

One way the Foundation helps churches and trustees be prepared is by assisting them with a Gift Acceptance Policy. This policy is an expression by your church of how your church receives gifts, terms that are or are not available, and what will be done with the gift or bequest.

You can find a sample Gift Acceptance Policy on the Foundation’s web site, or call our office and we will mail or e-mail you a sample. By instituting a Gift Acceptance Policy, you demonstrate to donors your readiness to receive and be a good steward over their gifts.

An undesignated gift can do great things in a church or ministry, and can stimulate lively discussion over how the gift should be saved, invested or spent. A Gift Acceptance Policy can give your church leaders the flexibility to make the most of the gift and a structure to operate within, plus give your donors confidence in your ability to accept significant gifts.

Contact the Foundation today to establish a Gift Acceptance Policy or plan a seminar for trustees and others in your church about stimulating, cultivating and receiving gifts.