

ANNUAL REPORT

2022 / 2023



Dakotas | Minnesota
**METHODIST
FOUNDATIONS**

A Word From Our President

As I travel across the Dakotas and reflect on the ministries we share, a favorite hymn often plays in my heart – “This Is My Story, This Is My Song.” The familiar lyrics of this hymn beautifully encompass the essence of our shared mission: to weave our individual tales of faith into a rich tapestry that exemplifies Jesus’s transformational love. In the Dakotas, our tradition of sharing our stories across the miles is a vital means of spiritual connection, celebrating the diverse ways we draw nearer to Jesus and how sharing these narratives aids others in their own journey of faith.

When our staff gathers at the Conference office, we hear these stories during our time of sharing of what we call “breakthroughs” – powerful testimonies of God’s presence in the communities around us. It’s truly inspiring to witness the countless ways God’s light radiates across the Conference. The stories we share not only strengthen our faith but also play a crucial role in fostering connections and guiding others towards Jesus. It’s particularly heartening to see the partnership between the Conference and the Foundation, where our combined resources fuel ministry each and every day.

A key focus of our work is the rural church initiative. These churches are the heartbeat of their communities, transcending traditional Sunday services to become havens of support, fellowship, and communal faith. Our commitment extends to nurturing the spiritual growth of our youth and young adults, encouraging them to deepen their faith and actively engage in church life. The Foundation also proudly supports emerging ministries, recognizing the need for continual growth and renewal in our faith journey.

Leading the Foundation is an honor that fills me with much gratitude. Witnessing the tangible impact of our collective efforts – from financial support to leadership development, resource sharing, and collaborative storytelling – reinforces the profound difference we make in so many lives. Our ministry narratives are more than just recounting our events; they’re testimonies of transformation, service, and the overwhelming effects of love and grace, encouraging others to join us in embodying and sharing Jesus’s teachings.

As you reflect on your own spiritual path, I invite you to consider: What is your story? What is your song? How have your experiences shaped you and touched the lives around you? These remarkable stories and ministries we celebrate are made possible through your unwavering generosity. With the Dakotas Methodist Foundation as a catalyst, these stories will continue to flourish, reaching more hearts and drawing others closer to Jesus.

Let us joyfully continue to share our stories and faith, marveling at the wondrous works of God in the Dakotas each day. I encourage you to join me in this effort of embracing and expanding our ministries. For more information on how to support these stories with your generosity, please feel free to reach out to me.

Together, let’s keep sharing our stories and singing our songs!



Sheri Meister
President/CEO



By the Numbers

\$37.2
Million

assets under management

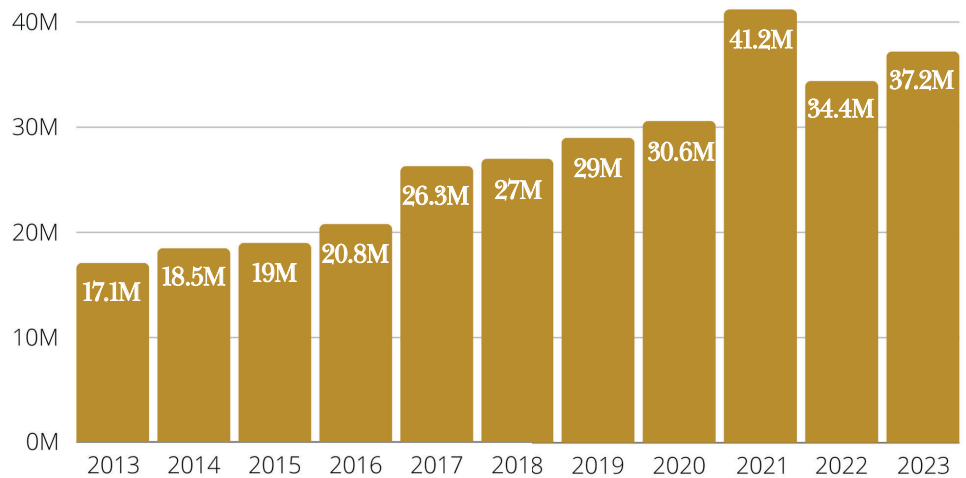


Student Aid: **\$83,800**

Builders
Club Grants:
\$33,600



10 Year Growth
Total Assets



Conference
Ministries
\$844,500

Churches
\$737,903

Earnings
Distribution

Other
Nonprofits
\$99,320

Life Income
to Donors
\$135,893

Total funds distributed
to churches, ministries,
and individuals:
\$1,817,616

Breakthrough
Ministry Grants:
\$46,100



3 new
endowments
totaling
\$228,944

4 new
investments
totaling
\$979,105



Breakthrough Ministry Grants



\$46,100
granted



14
churches



19
new ministries

“ Thank you so much for awarding us the Breakthrough Ministry Grant and investing in this exciting ministry of our church. We look forward to God’s continuing work in the Dakotas and here at First UMC in Watertown. **”**

- First United Methodist Church, Watertown

2022 Recipients

3rd Quarter

- Bismarck Legacy UMC - Culture of Call
- Center UMC - Helping Hands Pantry
- Fargo First UMC - Culture of Call
- Fargo First UMC - Moms Conference
- Fargo First UMC - Tutoring Center
- Huron Riverview - Online Ministry
- Jamestown First UMC - Crosswalk
- Mission Bismarck - Outdoor Concert
- Rapid Valley UMC – Griefshare

4th Quarter

- Bismarck Legacy UMC – Wednesday Workshops for Students
- Brandon Celebration UMC – Brandon’s Big Celebration
- Fargo First UMC - Neurodiversity
- Park River Federated – Lighthouse Youth Group
- St Thomas UMC - Little Free Food Pantry
- Watertown First UMC - First Church Young Adult Ministry

2023 Recipients

2nd Quarter

- Fargo First UMC -Let’s Do Life Young Adult Group
- Mitchell Fusion Church - Car Repair Ministry
- Bismarck McCabe UMC / Open Door Community Center - Preschool Branding and Expansion
- Woonsocket Spirit of Faith Church - Young Adult Gatherings

Hunger Grants

2022 - \$12,600 granted

- Brookings First UMC – Brookings Harvest Table
- Clear Lake UMC – Stewards Against Childhood Hunger
- Fargo First UMC – Café 1st
- Gregory UMC – Gregory School Back Pack Program
- Hazen Salem UMC – Hazen Food Pantry
- Howard Beach UMC – God’s Beach Bucket
- Madison UMC – The Gathering Meal
- North Sioux City ARK UMC – Dakota Valley Backpack
- Rapid City Knollwood Heights UMC – Knollwood Townhouse Food Pantry
- Sioux Falls First UMC – The Banquet Christmas Meal
- Sioux Falls Sunnycrest UMC – Feeding Hayward
- Southeast Pierre Community Center – Home of the Banquet
- St Thomas UMC – Little Free Food Pantry
- Yankton First UMC – 605 Wednesday Evening Meals

Celebration UMC Plants Seeds of Faith at Brandon's Big Celebration

"We believe God has called us to the mission of reaching people who aren't connected to Christ or to a church home, connecting to God and one another, and growing in our faith through serving," says Pastor Addy Kenkel serving Celebration United Methodist Church in Brandon.

Celebration UMC was looking for ministry opportunities in and for their community. The congregation wanted to connect and interact with people in Brandon who were not a part of the church. Brandon's Big Celebration was the result of much prayer and dreaming. The idea to host a carnival in Brandon surfaced because Pastor Josh Willprecht's family owns a full carnival that travels around. This unconventional church sponsored event was the perfect avenue to reach people from all backgrounds, many who are unchurched.

For the second year in a row, Celebration UMC partnered with Mac's Carnival and Attractions to bring a weekend of fun to the Brandon area. Last year, more than 2,000 people attended the event. Celebration UMC handed out free water bottles as an opportunity to spark conversation.

This year, over 3,700 people came to Brandon's Big Celebration on Memorial Day weekend. It was a three-day event held at McHardy Park with carnival rides, food trucks, Christian music, and a place to connect. They were also able to add live music by inviting the Christian band, Boiling Point, to play this year with the help of a Breakthrough Ministry Grant. Celebration UMC's worship band, Living Springs Church Band, and Elizabeth Anna also played during the celebration.



There were many opportunities for the seeds of the Gospel to be planted throughout the weekend. On Sunday morning, Celebration UMC held their worship service at the park right before the carnival opened for the day. Members of the congregation volunteered throughout the event. Some shuttled people from the parking lot to the event on golf carts while others manned the Celebration UMC booth and prayer station. This provided many opportunities to meet people and converse, share about Celebration UMC, and build relationships within the community. They also collected supplies for Brandon Food Pantry in exchange for \$3 off the price of a carnival wristband.

"The whole idea behind it is to make relationships with people. So, if they ever want to come to church, they have interacted with that Celebration UMC and may want to check that out. Or, if not, at least they heard something about Jesus over the weekend," said Pastor Addy.

Brandon Celebration UMC received a Breakthrough Ministry Grant that provided financial support to host live music throughout the event. "Thank you for your support of Celebration UMC and Brandon's Big Celebration. With your help, the carnival was a success and we had many happy visitors over the Memorial Day weekend. We will continue to see the positive effects of Brandon's Big Celebration throughout the year and we have you and your generosity to thank for that."



Back 57 Years Ago

Julian and Lois Wigen were farm kids who grew up in Minnesota. College took them to Grand Forks, North Dakota and then on to Wisconsin where Julian attended seminary at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. While in seminary, Julian served student-charges in Tower Hill, IL, and Union Grove, WI. After graduating, Lois and Julian came back to North Dakota where he served the congregations of Tioga-Columbus and Enderlin-Sheldon. He was transferred to the South Dakota Conference in 1972 and served at Rapid City Knollwood Heights UMC, Milbank Parkview UMC, Redfield UMC, and Rapid City Canyon Lake UMC. In 1992, they moved to Mitchell, SD where Julian became the Director of the Dakotas United Methodist Foundation before retiring in 2003. Julian and Lois have been married for 64 years, have 3 daughters - Amy Moore (Matt) in Mitchell, SD, Diana Johnson (Lynn) in Big Lake, MN, and Malea Radermacher in Willmar, MN. They are also blessed with 10 grandkids, and 2 great grandkids.



As a young married seminary student, Julian and Lois experienced financial struggle. Julian recalls one particularly stressful time when they didn't think they were going to financially be able to make it, he received a letter out of the blue. In it was a check for \$100 and a note from a man at First United Methodist Church in Fargo, ND. The note mentioned that the man's wife had recently passed away and he wanted to honor her memory by making a gift to a seminary student, with the stipulation that the money be used for personal needs and not for books or tuition. That letter and financial gift were an answer to the Wigen's prayers as Julian was in desperate

need of a suit to wear to Sunday morning services at the church he was serving. Julian also received a scholarship from the Wisconsin Conference that was a huge help in paying for his tuition his last year.

In 2008, the Wigen's decided to open the A. Julian and Lois M. Wigen Endowment to support future clergy by providing scholarships for seminary students. As a young couple experiencing the financial struggles of attending seminary, Lois and Julian wanted to be able to pay it forward in appreciation of those who helped them. "This endowment is a way of saying thanks to someone who blessed me and my family at a special time and to share with others the blessings that God has given us as a part of the clergy family of the Dakotas." As the former director of the Foundation, Julian also saw how an endowment could benefit people year after year. He understood the difference it could continue to make long after he and Lois are gone.

Since opening their endowment, over \$12,000 has been awarded in scholarships and 12 students have been helped with their seminary costs. The principal of the endowment has also grown from the initial \$15,000 gift to currently over \$38,000. When they established their endowment, the goal was to be able to provide a \$500 scholarship to a seminary student each year. This past year, the Foundation was able to award a \$1,500 scholarship from the A. Julian and Lois. M Wigen Endowment.

Janson Steffan, who is currently attending Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary has been a scholarship recipient from the Wigen's Endowment. *"I am not sure I can summon the words to proportionally express my gratitude for your continued contributions to my education. Your support encourages me through difficult times, knowing that somebody somewhere believes in me as I labor to follow the call,"* says Janson. *"This investment in a future leader in the United Methodist Church brings joyful weeping. With all that I have, with all that I am, I thank you."*

The Wigen's continue to make monthly gifts to their endowment to help it grow and make a bigger impact for years to come. "Perhaps some other seminary student will appreciate the help from such a gift as I did, back 57 years ago," says Julian.

\$83,800 in student aid awarded in 2023

Merit Scholarship Recipients



Tiana Bohn
Kairos University
Serving Milnor UMC



Annie Carlson
Kairos University
Serving Washburn and Center UMCs



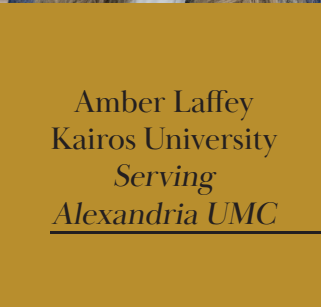
Allison Galbreath
Wesley Theological Seminary
Jamestown UMC



Andrea Hult
Lilly Family School of Philanthropy
Brookings First UMC



Andrea Plueddeman
Kairos University
Serving at Fargo First UMC



Amber Laffey
Kairos University
Serving Alexandria UMC



Rebecca Hafner
Kairos University
Serving Edgeley and Jud UMCs



Cory Thrall
Kairos University
Serving Mission Bismark



Josh Willprecht
Kairos University
Serving Brandon Celebration UMC



John Schomberg
Kairos University
Serving Beresford Zion UMC



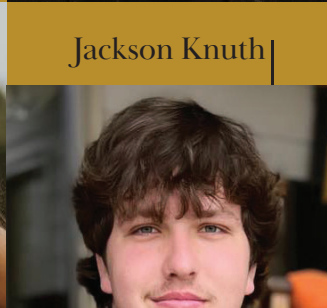
Janson Steffan
Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
Serving West Fargo Flame of Faith UMC



Erin Moncur



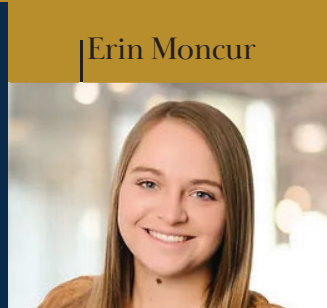
Tyra Gates



Jackson Knuth

Dollars for Scholars Recipients

Attending
Dakota Wesleyan University



Anna Mutzenberger

Ways to Give

Deciding on the right gift for your church or favorite ministry can be difficult. As you discern your “why” for giving, we invite you to consider the option that works best for you and your needs.

The Dakotas & Minnesota Methodist Foundations are here to assist you with your legacy giving plan. We will work with you to find options that fit with your wishes and the needs of the church or ministry you’d like to support.

Give Now

Support your church during your lifetime

Outright Gifts

Donate cash, stocks & mutual funds, personal property, and IRA distributions including required minimum distributions and qualified charitable donations.

Donor Advised Fund

A Donor Advised Fund is a Named Endowment that allows you to select the recipients of the annual distribution each year.

Name Endowment

Establish an Endowment to benefit your church. Gifts to the endowment can be made at any time. An endowment gives your peace of mind by providing an annual distribution to assist your church in continuing their mission and ministry into the future.

Give Later

Make a sizable gift after your passing

Real Estate Gift

Make a sizable gift without using liquid assets. Transfer title to your church or a Charitable Remainder Trust.

Bequest in Will

Name your church or favorite ministry as a beneficiary in your will.

Life Insurance Gift

Name your church as the beneficiary of your life insurance policy or create a new policy.

Retirement Plan Gift

Name your church or favorite ministry as beneficiary of all or part of the remaining assets after your lifetime.

Give and Receive

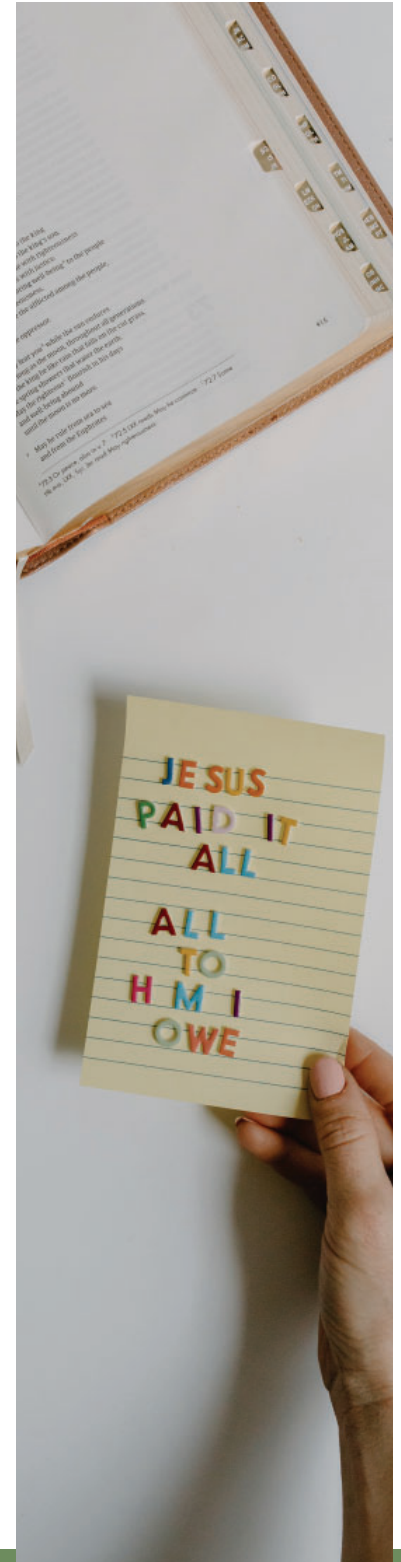
Receive income payments now and leave a sizable gift after your passing

Charitable Remainder Trust or Unitrust

Charitable Remainder Trusts and Unitrusts provide you with semi-annual payments now. The remaining funds will be distributed according to the language in the trust document.

Charitable Gift Annuity

A Gift Annuity will provide you with fixed payments during your lifetime with the remainder of the gift going to the church or ministry of your choice.



Polio Leads to Handicap Accessibility for Churches



Marjorie Haskins was described as a sweet, kind lady with a loving soul. She grew up on a farm outside of Oldham, South Dakota before moving to Madison, South Dakota in her adulthood. Marjorie had a love for music. She taught piano lessons for over 40 years, was a faithful member of the Harmonica Katz, and accompanied several singing groups and individuals. Marjorie was an active member of the Madison United Methodist Church, where she played organ for many years, was a part of the UMW, and various other committees.

At the young age of 2, Marjorie contracted polio and lost the use of her right leg. Having grown up with a physical handicap, she was aware of what could be done to help those with limitations. Because of her love for the church, Marjorie wanted to make sure that people were not stopped from knowing God because of the physical limitations that churches have. In 2002, Marjorie established the Foster, Ethel, and Marjorie Haskins Endowment to provide grants for United Methodist Churches to make their buildings more handicap accessible. for all.

Many churches have made upgrades to their buildings to make them more welcoming and accessible for all because of Marjorie's generosity. Aberdeen North Highland UMC installed a lift chair for those that struggle with stairs. Milnor UMC addressed several safety and accessibility concerns throughout their building. Wessington Springs UMC installed automatic doors so that entering the building wouldn't prevent anyone from joining them for worship. Marjorie's dream to provide barrier-free spaces for worship continues to inspire churches to address accessibility so all are welcome.

Marjorie passed away in September 2021, but not before thinking about how she could continue to support the ministries she cared about. She named both the Madison United Methodist Church and the Dakotas United Methodist Foundation in her estate to receive undesignated gifts. Marjorie not only wanted to make sure that her local church was taken care of, but also wanted to ensure other ministries and churches throughout the Dakotas United Methodist Conference would be looked after for years to come.

We are grateful for Marjorie's dedication to her faith and her commitment to making churches accessible for all.

**If you are interested in applying for a handicap accessible grant through the Haskins Endowment, contact our office.*

I Give Because . . .



“We have a long history with Lake Poinsett Camp as we both attended camp as high school youth. Now we enjoy camp with our four granddaughters as we’ve led Grandparents and Me camp for the past 10 years. LPC provides us, and other grandparents and grandchildren, with time away to experience God’s creation, enjoy the lakeside setting and bond over Bible stories, crafts and games.”

Jeff and Cynthia Nelson

“In 2015—after more than 20 years of working in a completely different field—I recognized God was calling me to something else, and it was going to require additional education. The generosity of others made available through the Dakotas Methodist Foundation scholarship fund for seminary students covered most of the cost of obtaining my Mdiv. I give with thankfulness toward Ministerial Student Aid in a desire to help pay it forward, because I was freed from having to pay it back.”

Rev. Michele Stott



“I support Builders Club each quarter because it helps churches within the Conference that are outside of my local church. I give a certain amount each quarter in hopes that it can help them reach their goal so that they can fix their building or expand their ministry work.”

MK Huggins

“I met my husband at church camp and we returned this summer to renew our vows in the place where we got engaged! We support the church camps because it is where we both met Jesus. Camps allow kids to step back, become undistracted and feel/hear/see God on the move. Camp is important to experience your faith with others and deepen the connection in your heart for him. Minus the noise of the world - you can capture your faith or find a faith that will satisfy for years to come!”

Rebekah and Nick Scott



“Monica and I experienced life transformation growing up in United Methodist Churches in the Dakotas. Our lives were impacted and formed as followers of Jesus through conference ministries and support including camping, missions, scholarships and much more. It is our prayer that our small gifts to the Foundation will continue providing opportunities like we have experienced while leaving a Wesley United Methodist Footprint here in the Dakotas for generations to come.”

Dan and Monica Bader

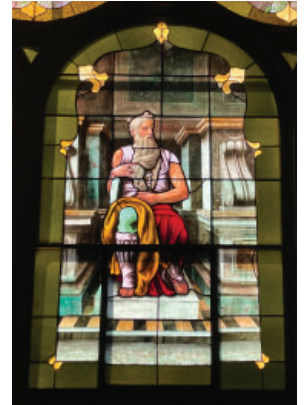
“To honor their parent’s memory, the Raymond & Lucille Hylland Endowment was established to assist in providing Bibles to children at Sunnycrest UMC.”



Because You Gave . . .

“Downtown Mitchell First UMC received a generous gift from a church family through the Foundation. This gift has allowed our church to be involved in ministry in our community, being the hands and feet of Christ to a world in need. Plus, part of the gift was used to help with our Stained Glass Window project, to repair, clear, and recover the windows with a new material that allows more light through. This gift has helped make ministry to our community possible, as well as our caring for our beautiful facility so we can share the love of Jesus from the heart of downtown Mitchell.”

Downtown Mitchell First UMC



“The biggest impact my scholarship for seminary has made was getting me started on my Master of Divinity. While I no longer receive scholarship funds, that first gift in 2022 got me started. For that I will always be grateful! Thank you!”

Rev. Andy Early

“Camp is important to me because I like to do the fun things- like swimming, playing on the playset, and learning about Jesus!” (6 years old)

“Camp is special to me because I worked for 8 summers at LPC and now it is a joy to come back as a shepherd with my own children! I love the atmosphere camp has to offer and it’s great to reminisce the memories now with my own kids!”

Tiffany and Hannah Runia



“Because you gave we were able to kickstart campus ministry at Northern State University beginning with hosting and feeding about 130 players and coaches from the NSU football team! Next up - plans are in the works developing a monthly meal and time of worship primarily led by college students. Excited to see what God is going to do through this outreach at NSU!”

Aberdeen North Highland UMC

“The new deck at the retreat center is beautiful! Whether sitting out and enjoying a morning coffee or afternoon, watching the sunset, or having a small group discussion out there! It’s such a great update to the retreat center!”

Rev. Peggy Hanson



“Thank you to all the Builders Club partners for sharing in the call for the Grace UMC in Piedmont, SD. We are very grateful for the generous response that will enable us to better connect with our community and to invite people to come and experience the love of Jesus Christ. It is a great example of the awesome connectional system at work in and among us.”

Piedmont Grace UMC

Our Donors

\$10,000+

Anonymous
Paul Christen
Garry and Jo Freier
Marjorie Haskins
Alan and Mary Ann Thornburg
Keith and Diane Weller

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Howard and Karen Grinager
Jeff and Cynthia Nelson
Tom and Michele Olsen

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Dianne Willey
Curt and Sue Wischmeier
Jim and LeAnne Worley
Richard and Jane Worlie
Lois Zander
Paul Zeeb
Peggy Zerface

To our Donors,

*thank you for your
generous support! We
value the partnership we
have built and the role
that you play in helping
shape ministries
across the conference.
Together, we can
make a difference.*

Our Investor



Wespath
INSTITUTIONAL INVESTMENTS

Wespath Institutional Investments (WII) is a not-for-profit subsidiary of Wespath Benefits and Investments (Wespath). Wespath is a general agency of The United Methodist Church (UMC), managing over \$24 billion assets as of June 30, 2023. WII provides investment solutions for institutional investors related to the UMC, including foundations, children's homes, older adult facilities, higher education institutions and healthcare organizations. WII offers diversified global exposure to its world-class investment managers through a family of daily priced funds. WII's investment process proactively incorporates the consideration of environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors into investments across asset classes and in the selection of external asset managers.

What is Builders Club?

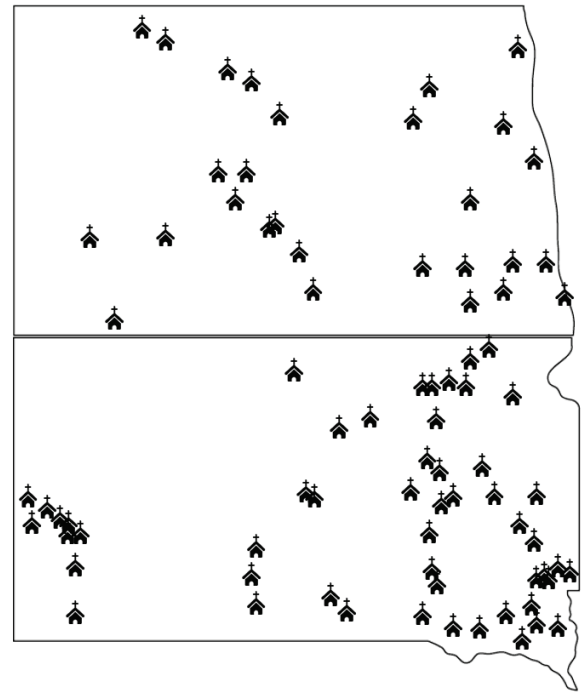
Each year, the Builders Club supports the building projects of four United Methodist Churches or United Methodist-related Ministries across the Dakotas Conference. The goal of Builders Club is to assist churches in need of financial support for their building, remodel, or expansion programs. By providing support for the building projects of churches, it allows them to grow current ministries or build new ministries to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Builders Club is unique in that it is a partnership of hundreds of individuals, organizations, and churches across North and South Dakota. Individually the gifts wouldn't make much of a difference, but together they can make a big impact. In the same way, a single church being helped doesn't make a big difference, but the number of churches that have received support over the years has added up and thousands of lives have been reached for Christ because of it.

How does it work? A church applies for a grant for their building project. Once a church is selected, a call letter is sent out to our hundreds of Builders Club partners. Our Builders Club partners send back donations throughout the quarter. These gifts are collected and then granted to the church at the end of the quarter. The grant amount varies each quarter, as it depends on what the Builders Club partners give. Donations received go directly to the church to help with their building project.

Join Builders Club: If you're interested in helping to support churches in the Dakotas Conference with their building projects, consider joining the Builders Club today by visiting the Builders Club tab on our website.

Apply for a grant: Is your church planning a building or remodeling project? Submit an online application which includes a full description of the project. Applications can be found on the Builders Club tab on our website. Applications are accepted all year long, with grants being awarded quarterly. Grants vary between \$7,000-\$10,000 depending on the donations received each quarter.



Churches who have received a Builders Club grant since the year 2000.



2022 Recipients

Asbury UMC – Sioux Falls, SD
ReNew UMC – Kenmare, ND

2023 Recipients

Grace UMC – Piedmont, SD
Flame of Faith UMC – West Fargo, ND

\$33,600
awarded

Our Staff



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President/CEO



Diane Weller
Director of
Foundation Relations



Lisa Schultze
Director of Accounting
and Finance



Kelsey Morgan
Program Assistant



Andrea Hult
Administrative Assistant

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