



Faith & Generosity

A quarterly newsletter for Foundation partners and friends

DECEMBER 2022

From Anne Martin, Board Chair



Why Methodism keeps me focused on the future

My United Methodist faith is about more than family heritage. It is about the Church's commitment to serving ALL the people of our diverse world.

I am a United Methodist because I love the witness of John Wesley and the radical stands of inclusion and service woven into his theology. I am thankful that my heritage is grounded in this theology as I am committed by my faith to all people.

William Hammet was my great-great-great-great grandfather. He was ordained by John Wesley in the British Conference. He was sent to Charleston, SC in 1791 and attended the SC Annual Conference of the Methodist Church. The conference was held at Cumberland Church (the first Methodist Church in Charleston) with Bishop Frances Asbury presiding.

Hammet traveled for some years with Asbury, then returned to Charleston and founded Trinity Methodist Church.

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Why Methodism keeps me focused on the future

Eight generations of Methodists

Starting with Willlliam Hammet, I can trace a line of eight generations of Methodist ministers (now United Methodist). I am married to a UM minister (Dan Martin) and am the mother of an UM minister (Duncan Martin, serving Hawthorne Lane UMC in Charlotte, and his wife, Meredith, also a UM minister).

Through the generations, this family of ministers has been committed to Christian evangelism while leading the church in addressing the social issues of the times.

Christian people are forward-looking. We believe tomorrow, with Jesus Christ, will be a better day. I have no room for nostalgia in a modern church. I do not want to go back to some previous age, only sing the old hymns, or become stagnant in my spiritual relationship through the Holy Spirit.

I believe in our future and I am not afraid to let the living Word of God transform the world from popular heresies.

‘Stay in love with God’

I am dedicated to: welcoming and serving all God’s people, celebrating women as faithful leaders in the church and society, having courage in the face of racism, and believing in the victory over the evil of divisive hate actions that are acted out in our society and churches for the cause of becoming exclusive.

I have lived my professional and spiritual life believing in the rules of John Wesley: “Do no harm. Do good. Stay in love with God.”

I am honored to lead as a faithful, forward-looking Christian — in the Church and also in my role as chair of the Board of Directors of the Foundation.

Note: This reflection is part of a series of faith stories to help you get to know Foundation leaders and friends.

From President David Snipes



BEFORE THE RUSH, TAKE A MOMENT TO LINGER ON THANKSGIVING

Why I cherish this time of year

The older I get, the more Thanksgiving seems to be nudged out between Halloween and Christmas. I was somewhat shocked (but maybe I shouldn't have been) to see Christmas decor on display at Lowe's prior to Nov. 1.

I remember thinking — in that moment when I rounded the corner of Aisle 24 and saw a neon skeleton next to a 7' Christmas tree — “But what about Thanksgiving!?” I suppose Lowe's could handle this dilemma by having a pilgrim statue and a skeleton sitting under a Christmas tree for a conversation by the firepit.

Maybe I wouldn't be as concerned about the disappearance of Thanksgiving if it weren't for the fact that I was born on Thanksgiving Day in 1964. Who knows? One thing I do know is that as people of faith, we have much to be thankful for.

Sometimes it's hard to build the bridge between the stressors of everyday life to see what's right in front of us.

A time to pause, reflect

Thankfulness. A simple definition is “consciousness of a benefit received.” For many, consciousness leads to a feeling of happiness for the blessings received. Who doesn't want that? Yet sometimes it's hard to build the bridge between the stressors of everyday life to see what's right in front of us.

One of our biggest challenges is taking time to recognize the blessings in our everyday lives. That's why I have such an appreciation for the Thanksgiving holiday. Not because of my birthday, the turkey, dressing or pumpkin pie. Rather, I am grateful that we designate a time of year not only to recognize the harvest feast of the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag people, but also to acknowledge the blessings we have received.

So, before you journey too far into the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany, I hope you will stop, make a list of the many gifts you receive daily, and take time to intentionally thank God.

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DON'T LET THANKSGIVING GET LOST IN HOLIDAY RUSH

'Cease from distressing'

My list often goes from one end of the spectrum to the other. Family, home, ministry, the everyday challenges of getting older (at least I'm still alive) and the occasional need to navigate difficult people (because I always learn something about myself in that exercise).

No matter what your list includes, let us be mindful of the words found in that great hymn by Adrianus Valerius, "We Gather Together:"

*We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing;
He chastens and hastens His will to make known;
The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing;
Sing praises to His Name; He forgets not His own.
Beside us to guide us, our God with us joining,
Ordaining, maintaining His kingdom divine;
So from the beginning the fight we were winning;
Thou, Lord, were at our side, all glory be Thine!
We all do extol Thee, Thou Leader triumphant,
And pray that Thou still our Defender will be;
Let Thy congregation escape tribulation;
Thy Name be ever praised! O Lord, make us free!
May God bless you well today and everyday...and may you be thankful!*

PASTOR WILL SHARE PERSONAL STORY OF BURNOUT, RENEWAL

The Foundation is partnering with the WNC Conference's Leadership Development Team on a lunch-and-learn series designed to connect with one another in ministry, imagine the future, and engage in missions and ministries that can better our world.

CONNECT: Love over Fear: Navigating Pain in Polarized Times

A conversation with Rev. Dan White, Jr., about his story of clergy burnout that led to the opening of the Kineo Renewal and Retreat Center, a place where ministry leaders can process their tired and traumatized souls. Dan will speak to the situation of leaders now who are experiencing anxiety and stress that can lead to burnout and how to prevent it.

This talk, sponsored by the Foundation, is for leaders to feel seen and heard as they connect with Dan and one another.

Tuesday, December 6

Noon-1:00 p.m.

**Western North Carolina Conference**
The United Methodist Church

**Connect
Imagine
Engage**

Leadership Engagement Live Webinar Series

Session 3

**December 6
12-1pm EST**

CONNECT: Love Over Fear:
Navigating Pain in Polarized
Times
with guest speaker Dan White,
Co-Founder of The Kineo Center



**Sponsored by The United Methodist Foundation of
Western NC



HAVE AN IDEA TO ENGAGE NEW BELIEVERS IN 2023? A REYNOLDS GRANT CAN HELP

Apply now to fuel your ministry endeavors

The Reynolds Ministry Fund offers funding to ministries that demonstrate ability and intention to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

Your community is ready. The world is waiting.
Dream, vision, plan and apply!

Jane and the late Royce Reynolds shared a lifelong Christian faith with a particular passion for growing Methodist churches. The Greensboro couple created the Royce and Jane Reynolds Ministry Fund of the United Methodist Foundation of Western North Carolina in 1998 with a clear mandate often articulated by Royce: “We have one purpose – to make disciples for Christ.”

The grants from this fund support disciple-making on an extraordinary level. Our gratitude for Mr. and Mrs. Reynolds cannot be overstated. We continue to be inspired by their commitment to evangelism.



AT DENVER UMC, A UNIQUE APPROACH TO LOCAL MISSIONS

“This is where the energy of the congregation lies.”

A storage building at Denver United Methodist Church doesn’t look like anything remarkable. It might be the church’s holiest place.

On a tour of the Denver UMC campus one recent afternoon, Rev. Steve Autrey paused outside the new building, dubbed the Mission Depot.

“This would be closest to the heart of Christ,” said Steve, the church’s senior pastor. “This is where the energy of the congregation lies.”

The 5,000-square-foot warehouse is the new home of Helping Hands, a local missions cooperative led by Denver UMC. With a dozen outreach initiatives under its purview, Helping Hands responds to the needs of folks who are struggling by coordinating with school counselors, social workers, domestic abuse and homeless shelters, and other churches and agencies.

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AT DENVER UMC, A UNIQUE APPROACH TO LOCAL MISSIONS

The building will soon be filled with supplies for a long list of Helping Hands initiatives:

- Volunteers on a building and repair team build wheelchair ramps and make home repairs for people in need.
- Furnish a Future collects donated furniture and household goods for families working toward self-sufficiency.
- Backpacks for Kids provides food pantry items for area school children to bring home on weekends, school breaks and holidays.
- Amy's Closet sells gently worn women's clothing and accessories in support of a domestic abuse shelter.

"Over the past several years, we've been begging for and borrowing space from other congregations," Steve said. "We've been dreaming of this building for a long time."

Situated on the western side of Lake Norman, Denver's rural character is changing as suburban growth creeps further into Lincoln County. With the growth comes a higher cost of living and the accompanying challenges for middle- and low-income residents.

One part of a bigger solution

A capital campaign raised enough to pay for the building. In early 2020, when the pandemic brought progress to a halt, church leaders reached out to the Foundation for help with managing the funds.

"During COVID, we couldn't get any construction done," Steve said. "Rather than leave those funds (in a savings account), we invested with the Foundation and did really well."

Helping Hands is an example of how churches can adapt to stay vital, said Brian Mateer, the Conference's director of missional engagement.

"Like a hub on a wheel, Denver UMC is able to identify the assets of its community while connecting people to resources and the church," Brian said. "They lay a foundation for what God is going to do next."

Now church leaders are working on an even more ambitious vision as part of a master plan for the 26-acre campus. Future development may include a child care center for working families, senior living units or affordable housing for people under designated income levels.

"We're trying to figure out what is our wheelhouse – what is God calling us to do with the resources we've been blessed with?" Steve said. "And how can we be just one part of a bigger solution?"

PHOTOS OF FOUNDATION HAPPENINGS



The Foundation hosted two grant writing workshops in preparation for the next cycle of Reynolds grant funding.

Bishop Ken Carter (center) spoke to the Foundation Board of Directors at its Nov. 8 meeting.



Jennifer Davis (left), vice chair of the Foundation board, caught up with Rev. Ashley Crowder Stanley at the SEJ Conference in Lake Junaluska.

PHOTOS OF FOUNDATION HAPPENINGS



Clergy met at Huntersville UMC for a two-day gathering of the Reynolds Leadership Academy for Evangelism and Discipleship, a Foundation offering designed around the idea that wise leaders should dedicate time to learning from one another.

Bishop Ken Carter (center) spoke to the Foundation Board of Directors at its Nov. 8 meeting.



A staff retreat in August was a chance for Foundation staff to get to know one another outside the office setting.