

## **Doing Well and Doing Good**

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“For the first time in history, more and more people have more money than they want to leave to their kids,” according to Paul Schervish of Boston College, a noted authority on philanthropy, as quoted in “Doing well and doing good,” the title of a recent article in *The Economist* magazine. “There is an extraordinary amount of money available. The lack is of good ideas on how to get the basket under the apple tree,” adds fund-raising consultant Tony Knerr in the article.

Schervish and his colleagues predict that between \$41 trillion and \$136 trillion will be transferred from older to younger generations in the first half of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, an enormous wealth transfer that is four times greater than the entire present American economy. That’s good news for all non-profit, charitable institutions, including local United Methodist churches in Florida.

Traditionally, local churches have done a good job when it comes to raising the annual budget and when asking members to support capital projects. We have not done as well when it comes to asking for bequests and other planned gifts. With such an unprecedented opportunity before us, now is the time to encourage members and friends to consider a bequest or other planned gift to support our mission and ministry into the future. That’s one good way to “get the basket under the apple tree.”

The Florida United Methodist Foundation has recently launched a new and improved website at [www.fumf.org](http://www.fumf.org). The new site offers a wealth of information both for churches and for individuals who are considering a gift from their estate. An easy-to-use gift calculator enables potential donors to discover how a planned gift can benefit their church as well as, potentially, themselves and their families.

By the way, the *Economist* article singles out the United States as unique among large economies in our support of religion: 62% of all charitable giving is directed to religious institutions here in America. That’s a good start, but it still represents only 2.2% of U.S. gross domestic product. John Wesley might exhort us to be moving “on to perfection,” which, in stewardship terms would be a tithe, or 10% of our income while we are alive and 10% of our estate assets after we are gone.

The Florida United Methodist Foundation is ready to help. Please call, click or write us at 1-800-282-8011, extension 106; [www.fumf.org](http://www.fumf.org); or Post Office Box 3767, Lakeland, FL 33802-3767.