

News and Notes from The Florida United Methodist Foundation, Inc.

*by Tom Wilkinson, Vice President, Development
The Florida United Methodist Foundation*

With the summer in full swing, here are some thoughts from the Florida United Methodist Foundation.

- Annual Conference was held in early June at Bethune-Cookman College in Daytona Beach and it was a rousing success. Delegates approved the “Connecting for Transformation” proposal, reducing the number of districts from fourteen to nine. The proposal also aims to strengthen our United Methodist heritage of “connection” among churches, clergy and laity of the conference. One way this is expressed is through our connectional giving to apportionments and other denomination-wide efforts, such as the UMCOR relief efforts under way in Haiti. Churches often report that giving suffers a decline in the summer months, and we urge all Florida United Methodists to remain faithful givers all through the year, because the needs of God’s people know no seasonality.
- Many people will be traveling this summer, and now is the time to review your will or estate plan. The Foundation recommends reviewing your will at least every five years to make sure your instructions are up-to-date. It’s also important to review your plans whenever family circumstances change, for example, upon the birth of a child or grandchild, death of a spouse or family member, moving to a new state where the laws may be different, or a change in your financial circumstances. If you don’t already have a will, now is the time to create one. And please make sure to include a bequest to your church. It’s easy to do, by including your church in a new will or by adding a codicil to an existing will. Please contact your attorney or estate planning professional for assistance.
- Florida United Methodists and their churches continue to turn to the Development Fund as a sound investment option. The Fund recently passed the \$60 million mark and is still growing. With the increase in the Fund size, we can now make mortgage loans to churches of up to \$3 million at a very attractive 4.5% current loan rate. As Foundation chairperson Doyle Perry reported at annual conference, “In our 28-year history, every loan has been repaid in full, and no investor has ever lost a penny by investing in the Development Fund. It is truly a win-win situation.” If your church is considering a building project, property acquisition or renovation and needs to borrow money, please contact the Foundation. We are ready to help with your financial needs.

The Florida United Methodist Foundation is available to help with all your stewardship needs. For information please call, click or write us at 1-800-282-8011, extension 106; www.fumf.org; or PO Box 3767, Lakeland, FL 33802.