



In one of his most familiar parables, Jesus compares the kingdom of God to a mustard seed, “which, when sown upon the ground is the smallest of all the seeds of the earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.”

We have an opportunity to be sowers of a different kind of seed, the fruit of which will enable congregations of the Florida Annual Conference to be in ministry for many years to come. In that spirit, the Florida United Methodist Foundation provides **The Mustard Seed Society**, a thank-you and recognition program for use by local churches to say “thanks” to members who have made planned gifts to benefit the church.

Just as the tiny mustard seed grows into a large plant, planned gifts such as bequests, life income arrangements, gifts of real property and gifts of other appreciated assets can grow into substantial endowment funds that will nourish and sustain local church ministries far into the future. We are living in a time of unprecedented wealth transfer from older to younger generations, and the Foundation likewise encourages churches to encourage their members to be active stewards of the resources God has bestowed on them – during their lifetimes and after – to benefit the church, its mission and ministry.

The Foundation provides a lapel pin and personalized certificate, signed by the Bishop, the President of the Foundation and the recipient’s Pastor, as a public way of saying thank you to the donor of any planned gift.

We recommend an annual recognition and celebration event to honor all members of a congregation who have made planned gifts to the church, and especially to recognize those who have done so in the previous year.

Foundation staff members are very happy to participate in the recognition service or other celebration event to add our thanks. Our staff members are always available for no-cost consultation to individuals on estate planning, planned giving, and how individuals can remember their church in their estate plans. Our staff is also available to aid churches in the establishment of a permanent endowment fund to provide financial strength and stability for future generations.

If you would like more information, please call the Foundation at 1-863-363-9673.