



## Have you Heard the Great News? – Halfway Check-In on the Foundation

*“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver”*

2 Corinthians 9:7

By Sid Johnston

Can you believe that we are more than halfway through the year? As we wrote in our [January 2017 blog](#), we are continuing to look forward! Mid-year and the Foundation is thriving. We want to take a moment to share the great news and say thank you.

When the leaders gathered to create the Foundation, their idea was to encourage Legacy gifts. Donations that would never be used themselves, only the generated income. This income could then be used by our church to preserve the magnificent building that was and is the spiritual home for the First United Methodist community. This was a way to guarantee that many more generations would find inspiration, guidance, and comfort in our church. More than that, though, they envisioned that the endowment would also support the church’s mission. Supporting the church’s mission in the following ways:

- Augment children’s ministries that would instill and nurture lifelong faith.
- Bolster youth ministries so they could creatively help young people connect with God and each other in a protected and encouraging environment.
- Fund choral and instrumental music ministries.
- Help the poor or abused through empowering justice.
- Feed and give sanctuary to the hungry.
- Support the technological advances of the television ministries to bring the word of God to the FUMC community wherever the congregation finds a place to worship.



Since 1964, a total of 51.5 million dollars has been released to the Church from earnings of the Foundation endowment income. The total assets of the Foundation have increased from \$2,500 to \$62 million since 1964. During the past 10 years alone (2006-2016), total assets grew over \$30 million. The mission is clear and articulated; the sole purpose of the Foundation is to support the Church. The Foundation strives to communicate openly with all Church members and friends. We share governance documents on request and report activities/efforts on an ongoing basis.

Our goal is to excel at being completely transparent about the process we follow in distributing money to the Church. The Church can request funds from any endowment throughout the year. However, most of the money is given in quarterly distributions throughout the year. The Foundation is comprised of 25 funds invested as a single entity but maintained by the Foundation staff to discern their appropriate values for distributable amounts when requested by the Church. Once money is released to the Church, it is up to the Church's discretion to distribute the funds appropriately.

The distributable requirement set by the IRS is the greater of 85% of adjusted net income or 3.5% of the fair market value of its non-exempt use assets based on amounts from the previous year end. This amount is calculated yearly between June and August in the IRS Form 990 (which we are currently working on). Once the amount is determined, the Foundation divides the amount in two payments to be given to the Church in September/October and December. Last year, the Church received just over \$2 million from the Foundation throughout the year.

Some may say that we have a prosperous Foundation and we do! That is a fact, but we only have a substantial Foundation as a result of generous gifts, smart investing and excellent management. If one of these three parts becomes lackluster, then the Church as an entity will reap the consequences. As long as we maintain our strong Board of Directors, then the excellent management will continue to guide the decisions of the Foundation. Our returns on investing of late have been impeccable due to the astute management of the Foundation's investments by our portfolio manager.

And finally, that brings us to generous gifts. The Foundation is excelling in every way possible for now, but only through all three of the above-mentioned tactics can the Foundation's endowment continue to be sustained for generations to come as the original founders intended. While it is terrific that the Foundation is a well-rounded one, it must be maintained and nurtured through the continuation of generous gifting to ensure that this vision provides for the Church beyond the here and now.

As I've mentioned, the Foundation strives to maintain transparent communication at all times. We are always available to provide further explanation on how you can make your mark within the Foundation's lasting legacy in providing direct support towards the Church that we all hold dear to our hearts. We can be reached at 817-336-5698 or at [fmc@fmcfoundation.org](mailto:fmc@fmcfoundation.org). We look forward to hearing from you! Let's all work together to preserve not only what our elders have created, but also our place of worship for future generations.