

*The mission of The United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.* Living out this mission is not possible without the tens of thousands of clergy who have dedicated their lives to our Church. Despite the complex nature of the work done by pastors, access to theological education varies greatly across our connection. In the central conferences, which include Africa, Europe, and the Philippines, obtaining a theological education can be very difficult because seminaries are too far away or too expensive, seminaries struggle to find well trained professors and to offer library resources in needed languages, Courses of Study for initial and continuing education need to be developed, and scholarships are needed for initial and post-graduate studies.

**Endowing United Methodist theological education for Africa, Europe, and the Philippines will enable forming trusted leaders.** The initiative was adopted by the Council of Bishops in 2014 to provide efficient, sustainable support towards these challenges. The Endowment Fund will focus on the key program areas described below to ensure an education, rooted in the Wesleyan tradition, is accessible to all who seek to lead our Church.

### **Scholarships and resource material**

Whether attending on-site or through online programs, financial support is often the deciding factor for enabling churches in the central conferences to send gifted candidates for theological studies. Through the Endowment Fund, scholarships will be provided for on-site and online training for all levels of theological education including basic, graduate, and post-graduate theological education. Preference will be given to persons in courses of study for local pastors, persons training for ordained ministry and persons in post-graduate studies. Furthermore, adequate resource material is needed in multiple languages and cultural settings.

### **Impact:**

- Depending on the economic situation in a country and the academic level of theological education, a few hundred dollars may pay a scholarship for one year or it may need several thousand dollars for post-graduate studies.
- Identifying, training, supporting and providing continuing education for faculty are critical activities in our effort to enhance theological education.
  - Funding may be utilized to build human capacity to deliver theological education, including faculty development, exchange of faculty, and associations of theological schools.
  - Programs will facilitate sharing of best practices among faculty across the globe, and may include fellowship programs, speakers' series, and other opportunities to bring faculty together for continuing education and sharing of ideas.
- Resource material in the appropriate language is a critical need in the central conferences. In addition, students in the central conferences often must travel to a different country and learn a new language in order to receive a United Methodist theological education. Seminaries struggle to equip their libraries with the necessary texts, and often need resource material in additional languages in order to serve their student population.
  - Indigenous development of literature and other resource material
  - Translation of literature and other resource material
  - Libraries
  - Continuing education resources

## **New Avenues in Theological Education**

In the central conferences, we have a unique opportunity to innovate our approach to theological education. Partially out of necessity due to financial, geographic and language barriers, and partially because new technologies exist, new models can be designed and implemented to offer solutions in regions where gaining a theological education currently is a major hardship.

### **Impact:**

- Funding for New Avenues in Theological Education will promote new and innovative avenues of theological education, including the use of digital technology for resource materials, programs and for building human capacity.
- Much like the highly successful Methodist e-Academy for all Methodist churches in Europe, opportunities exist to build upon current strengths to network among seminaries, provide rich e-learning possibilities, further develop Wesleyan resources on the Global Digital Library, and use e-readers in remote areas.

Improvement in these key program areas will help form trusted leaders who are equipped for the complex nature of their roles, and will result in more opportunities in support of our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

**A total of \$25,000,000 will be raised for scholarships, resource material and New Avenues in Theological Education.**

## **Special Fund for Professors in Methodism**

The continuing mission of the United Methodist Church needs principled Christian leaders, rooted in a Wesleyan mindset of joining knowledge and vital piety. Theological education for our future clergy is of vital importance. Therefore, we need professors who teach Methodist history, theology, and polity for a new generation of clergy in each of our United Methodist ('UM')-related Schools and Faculties of Theology around the world.

Outside of the USA, many UM-related Schools and Faculties of Theology work with limited budgets and minimal professorial staff. Teaching and reflection on Methodist topics lack the needed resources for building a strong, future-oriented awareness of the riches of our Wesleyan heritage for the mission of The United Methodist Church in the 21st century.

### **Impact:**

- "Professors in Methodism" in UM-related Schools and Faculties all over the world will receive support through this special fund. It will provide long-term, sustainable support for salaries of part-time or full-time positions in teaching Methodist history, theology and polity. There are at present more than thirty UM related Theological Schools or Faculties outside the US, with salaries of full-time positions between \$5,000 and \$100,000 per year.
- The salary support would also allow funding for future pensions.

**A total of \$10,000,000 will be raised for the Special Fund for Professors in Methodism.**

*The Endowment Fund for Theological Education in the Central Conferences – in cooperation with the Commission on Central Conference Theological Education (see BOD 2016 ¶ 817) – is proud to enable sustainable support for theological education in central conferences through the key program areas mentioned above.*

**For more information, please visit [www.umctheologyeducation.org](http://www.umctheologyeducation.org) or email: [umctheologicaled@endowftecc.org](mailto:umctheologicaled@endowftecc.org).**

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