

*Every day they taught in the temple courtyards and from house to house.
They never stopped telling people the Good News that Jesus is the Messiah.*
Acts 5:42

Christmas blessings to you and your family!

I am writing to you this Christmas season asking for your help. As you know, ministry is changing. The way we worship is different today. Most of us grew up going to Church with our family every Sunday. You went to Sunday School. The service was in the sanctuary that morning. Back in the day, sporting events, extracurricular, and other competing activities were not scheduled on Sunday mornings. It was reserved for time with God.

Until it wasn't.

Sunday mornings are not the same today and are no longer "reserved" for Church. As our pastors answer their call to share God's Love, they understand things need to look different. Keeping the Church responsive to changing times and culture is never easy and can be challenging at times.

Many lives are transformed, and programs flourish because you support the **Dakotas Methodist Foundation**. Because of your generous past gifts, prayers, and partnerships, people across the Dakotas have had the experience of solid ministries in your churches and communities. Now is a wonderful time for us, as the Church, to do something different to capture the hearts of those searching for God's love.

But how?

Your pastor knows that your Church needs to develop in ways most of us have never imagined. But budgets are tight, and resources are limited. This leaves little room to initiate new and vibrant ministries. Dollars are needed for seed money for new and creative ministry. If more funds were available just for ministry innovation, the possibilities would be endless! We can't expect the lost, the lonely, and the weary to come to the Church any longer.

Imagine with me for a moment how Church in the Dakotas could better respond to today's world. What about meeting people where they are in their Spiritual Journey on the days, times, and in spaces that work for them? How might we find God's people who are lost or have not had the opportunity to meet Jesus? By offering worship in new ways and creative ways to share a deepening relationship with God.



The sky is the limit.

There are so many new ways that could be found to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. To do Church differently, pastors need your help. Innovation costs money, and providing funds is how you can help reach new people in your community. That's why we are asking you to help fund **Ministry Innovation Grants**. The Foundation will provide grants to the pastors with the most innovative ideas. The granting dollars will be seed money for new and creative ministries for their churches and communities. Together, we can share the Good News.

During this Christmas season, let's take a moment to thank our pastors for being innovative and developing new ways to spread the Good News. Together, let's give from our hearts to help fund **Ministry Innovation Grants**, which will help pastors initiate a groundbreaking ministry in their churches to spread God's love into their communities. Let's help find new ways of doing "Church" while embracing the core of the Church in each community. Let's help them lovingly and effectively pastor and share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Christmas is my favorite time of the year. It's a time to be reminded of our blessings as we celebrate the birth of Jesus. So, will you please join me this Christmas in giving back to those yearning to unleash their creative ministry? Let's help those with innovative ideas and have entered the ministry to share the joy of the birth of Jesus in new ways.

May this season give our pastors support and hope to spread "Joy to the World!" in your community and across the Dakotas.

We are wishing you a very Merry Christmas!



Sheri Meister

PS. Your gift will help change the lives of those searching for God's Love. Would you please join me in helping your pastors to create new ways to share the Good News through the Foundation's **Ministry Innovation Grants**? *Thank you!*

