



A LESSON FROM STANLEY

One day, when I was in our office in Mitchell, SD, I noticed one of the staff had a Stanley Quencher Tumbler sitting on their desk. I had not heard Stanley redesigned their thermoses to appeal to today's audiences. Seeing the name Stanley immediately brought me back to the memories of my grandfather's Stanley Thermos, which he took to the field during harvest. The image of the green aluminum cylinder with a lid shaped like a cup popped into my head. It was a convenient way to bring coffee or soup to the field and know that it would remain hot until it was time for lunch or dinner. A moment of nostalgia took over, and I revisited a host of beautiful memories of those days of harvest with my grandfather.



Then it hit me, if something as practical and useful as a green Stanley thermos can adapt without losing its core values, so can the Church. As Paul reminds us in Romans 12:2, *“Do not be conformed to this age but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern God’s will—what is good and acceptable and perfect.”* The Stanley thermos, a staple for many in the rural landscapes of the Midwest and beyond, represents more than just a container for hot coffee or a hearty soup. It symbolizes resilience, reliability, and the ability to adapt while maintaining its purpose. Originally designed to withstand rough handling in work environments, the thermos has evolved. Today, it comes in various forms, sizes, and colors, catering to a broader audience. Yet, its essence – keeping things at the desired temperature, regardless of the outside conditions – remains unchanged.

The Church has the same opportunity to change with the times yet keep its core mission: to spread the Love of God and the teachings of Jesus while fostering a sense of community through its ministries. Like the Stanley thermos, the church needs to find ways to adapt to societal changes while holding on to its deep mission of being the hands and feet of Jesus.

In the Stanley thermos, we see a reflection of the church's journey. The message for the church is clear. Change is not just inevitable; it's essential. The way we practice faith, connect with our communities, and uphold traditions will continue to evolve, just as our methods of preserving our coffee's warmth have done for many years. For all of us in the Christian community, it is our responsibility to navigate these changes, finding a balance between tradition and innovation and maintaining a strong commitment to philanthropy to support the changes ahead of us.

As we look towards the future, let the Stanley thermos remind us of the importance of adapting while maintaining our core values. Throughout its history, the church has shown us that it's not just about surviving changes but thriving through them, offering warmth and sustenance, both physically and spiritually, to all who seek it.

Let's all take a minute to think about ways we can support our churches and ministries financially as we adapt to new ways of bringing the love of Jesus to those who need it most. Let's dream of the ministry possibilities that may look different as they did many years ago yet still hold true to our church's core values and beliefs. Join me in supporting these endless possibilities. Together, we can make a difference.

Sheri Meister
President/CEO

NEW WEBSITE COMING IN JULY



We are excited to announce that we have begun work on a combined website for the Dakotas and Minnesota Methodist Foundations. This move is another example of our commitment to collaborative ministry, allowing us to showcase activities across both Conferences in one centralized location. The new website, accessible at www.dkmmmf.org, will merge our current websites while retaining specific pages for each Foundation as needed.

Our goal is to create a user-friendly and cohesive platform that reflects our shared mission and values. We look forward to unveiling the new website this summer and hope you will find its simplified format both inviting and informative.



If you haven't already, check out our 2022 - 2023 Annual Reports. You can find them on our websites, www.dakotasumf.org or www.mnumf.org.

If you would like a print copy, contact our office.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE MINISTRY GRANTS ADVANCE COMMUNITY MINISTRIES

Last year at the Annual Conference, the Foundation offered visitors the chance to win a \$1,000 ministry grant for their church. Linda Eisenbraun from Wall United Methodist Church and Peggy Carlson from St. Charles United Methodist Church were the winners at the Dakotas and Minnesota Annual Conferences, respectively.

The outreach committee at Wall UMC decided to focus the grant on two areas: the elderly in their community and their new pastor, Justin Trent. They designated the funds for an elderly care ministry in Wall, South Dakota.

The grant was used for a dual purpose. Many residents at Prairie Village Apartments, an affordable housing complex for the elderly, are essentially homebound. To help Pastor Justin Trent connect with these individuals, the grant money was used to fund his visits to the Senior Meals Program. This ministry has allowed him to meet and build relationships with elderly members of the community, including those without a church affiliation. Through these interactions, Pastor Justin became a pastor figure to many, going as far as visiting them in the hospital.



Sharing a meal and conversation with the elderly who cannot get out on their own has been a meaningful opportunity for Pastor Justin to build connections in his new community. He developed relationships with residents at Prairie Village Apartments and their families, leading to further opportunities to meet new people and invite them to church.

The ministry grant has allowed Pastor Justin Trent to embody the church's mission and extend its presence into the Wall community. The Foundation invites attendees of this year's Annual Conference to stop by the Foundation booth for a chance to win a \$1,000 ministry grant for their church and community.

In May 2023, St. Charles United Methodist Church partnered with Ruby's Pantry to combat hunger in their local southeast Minnesota community. Ruby's Pantry is renowned for stretching monthly grocery budgets by distributing surplus food through Pop-Up Pantries across Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and North Dakota. The organization collects surplus food from various sources, including manufacturers, distributors, and producers. This food is then sorted and delivered to Pop-Up Pantries, where it is made available to anyone in need without any income or residency requirements. All that's asked is a \$25 donation, and individuals receive groceries valued between \$125 and \$200.

On the second Thursday of each month, a Ruby's Pantry semi-truck arrives at St. Charles UMC's distribution location at Brookwood Park. A dedicated group of 30-40 volunteers, including church members, 4-H club members, and others from the community, gather to unload, sort and pack the food. After packaging, they join in a prayer of blessing over the food before loading it into guests' vehicles. Guests pay \$25 per share, open their trunks to receive the food, share any prayer requests, and then depart. Any leftover food is shared among local food shelves and community ministries.

To support this initiative, St. Charles UMC utilized funds from a ministry grant to purchase an enclosed trailer for hauling equipment and supplies and tables and chairs for the site. The remaining funds contributed to a matching grant for a commercial freezer. This freezer is also used for the church's Freezer Program, which stores frozen foods for local food shelves, the Food for Families program, and other churches needing storage space.

Despite having only 93 members and an average weekly attendance of 24, St. Charles UMC has significantly impacted its community and beyond. The church's Pop-Up Pantry sells an average of 270 shares monthly, distributing over 19,000 pounds of food, thanks to the dedication of individuals who want to make a difference. The church receives 10% of the shares sold for mission work.

St. Charles UMC Pastor Gerhardt Miller reflected on the ministry, stating, "This ministry has given this little church a purpose. The church is pretty proud of this ministry and how it has brought people together. Many of the same people, young and old come together to work, laugh, pray, and serve."

ST. CHARLES, MN
THURSDAY,
MAY 9, 2024
4:30 PM

Brookwood Park
 272 West 1st Street
 St. Charles, MN

Ruby's PANTRY **\$25**
 cash per share donation

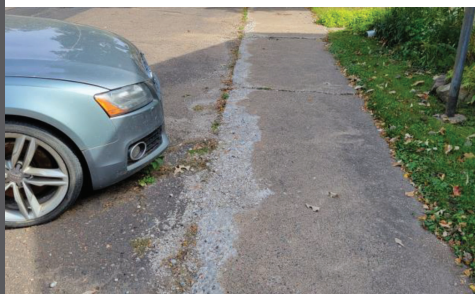
Ruby's Pantry is for anyone looking to extend their monthly grocery budget.

There is no income or residency requirement.

- Partial List - Subject to Change*
- Chicken
 - Asst Frozen Groceries
 - Ice Cream
 - Bread
 - Fresh Produce
 - Breakfast Bars
 - Coffee Drinks
 - Pickle Relish
 - Canned Vegetables
 - Taco Shells
 - Frappe Mix
 - Chips
 - Cookies
 - Pretzels
 - Drinks
 - Snacks
 - Asst Pantry Groceries



MINNESOTA UNITED METHODIST BUILDERS AWARDS SPRING 2024 CALL



Since its founding in 1889, Mora United Methodist Church has been a cornerstone of the Mora, Minnesota, community. As the town’s first church, it has been a symbol of faith and community, opening its doors to all who seek spiritual guidance and support.

To fulfill its mission of being an integral part of the Mora community, Mora UMC desires to provide a safer and more inviting place for people to gather and worship. The current parking lot and sidewalks make it difficult for the elderly and people with mobility challenges or physical limitations to enter the building. After many years of trying to bandage it, Mora UMC plans to remove the tar completely from the sidewalks and parking lot and replace the sidewalk on the north and east sides of the church building. They also plan to correct the parking lot elevation so water will drain to the street rather than into the church basement and partially pave the parking lot to provide handicapped spaces by the front doors.

Mora UMC doesn’t want its parking lot to hinder anyone from being able to attend worship or a community event. “Even though the parking lot is not directly involved with Mora UMC’s mission, it indirectly allows us to minister to our church family as well as the community of Mora as we yearn to be ambassadors of Christ’s church in growing in faith and transforming our world through discipleship,” shares Steve Sigstad, project coordinator.

We are so grateful for your continued support of the Minnesota Methodist Builders Club and ask that you prayerfully consider a gift to support Mora UMC. The gifts for this call will be received through September 30, 2024. Send your gift to MN UM Builders, c/o DUMF, PO Box 460, Mitchell, SD 57301 or donate online.

Thank you to those who supported Stillwater First UMC in Stillwater, MN, during the Fall 2023 Builders Club Call. Stillwater First UMC was awarded a \$4,500 grant.

NEW SHORT-TERM INVESTMENT FUND-I SERIES (STIF-I)

In February, we added a Short-Term Investment Fund (STIF-I) option to our Wespath Institutional Investments portfolio, and we’ve been pleased by the positive feedback from our churches regarding how well this fund aligns with their investment strategies.

The STIF-I provides an excellent option for funds currently held in a bank account, offering quick accessibility if needed. Its key advantages include high liquidity, performance structured to mirror that of U.S. Treasuries, no penalties for withdrawals, and investment alignment with John Wesley’s social principles.

As of March 31, 2024, the fund was allocated to U.S. Treasuries, U.S. Government Bonds, U.S. Corporate Bonds, Asset-Backed Securities, cash, repurchase agreements, and CDs. The fund yielded just over 5% in 2023 and approximately 1.25% in Q1 of 2024.

It’s important to note that the suitability of this investment fund depends on your specific financial goals and risk tolerance. Please reach out if you’d like more information on this fund or any of our investment options.

Short Term Investment Fund – I Series – Allocations and Performance

Benchmark: 90 Day U.S. Treasury Bill

Preliminary Allocations as of December 31, 2023

Holdings-Based Allocation	Fund Allocation	Benchmark Allocation	Difference
U.S. Treasuries	37%	100%	-63%
U.S. Government	3%	0%	3%
U.S. Corporates	34%	0%	34%
Asset Backed Securities	22%	0%	22%
Other*	4%	0%	4%

* Other includes primarily cash, repurchase agreements, and CDs.

Net of Fee Performance

as of December 31, 2023

	MTD	QTD	YTD	Annualized				
				1-Year	3-Years	5-Years	10-Years	Since Inception ¹
Short Term Investment (STIF) Composite	0.50%	1.45%	5.17%	5.17%	2.06%	1.84%	1.23%	1.47%
STIF Composite Benchmark ²	0.47%	1.38%	5.05%	5.05%	2.17%	1.89%	1.26%	1.46%

Historical returns are not indicative of future performance. Future asset allocations may be different than those stated above. Please see the additional Composite Disclosures at the end of this presentation.

¹ The inception for the Short Term Investment Composite is April 18, 2002.

² The benchmark for the Short Term Investment Composite is the BofA Merrill Lynch 3-Month Treasury Bill Index. For periods prior to January 1, 2019, the benchmark for the Short Term Investment Fund-I Series (STIF-I) is presented. The benchmark for the STIF-I was the BofA Merrill Lynch 3-Month Treasury Bill Index.

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Dakotas | Minnesota
**METHODIST
 FOUNDATIONS**

*developing relationships
 cultivating resources
 embracing ministry*

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DAKOTAS BUILDERS CLUB ANNOUNCES SPRING 2024 CALL

In May 2022, a derecho swept across portions of South Dakota. The community of Madison was hit hard, with wind gusts of up to 97mph causing extensive damage. Unfortunately, the Madison UMC sustained substantial damage to its roof, and the bell tower louvers were blown off, allowing water to seep into the building.

Repairs and renovations to the Sunday school rooms include asbestos abatement, updating/installing electrical, repairing the ceiling, installing new flooring, painting, and renovating the bathroom. In the sanctuary, the list of repairs includes removing the damaged plaster, fixing and painting the ceiling, replacing the carpet, and updating the electrical and lighting systems. Plans for the bell tower include leveling, capping off, and monumentalizing the bell on ground level.

These repairs will allow Madison UMC to provide a safe space for everyone to feel a sense of welcoming and belonging as they continue to share the love of Christ in their church, the Madison community, and beyond.

We are so grateful for your continued support of the Builders Club and ask that you prayerfully consider a gift to support Madison UMC. The gifts for this call will be received until June 30, 2024. Send your gift to Builders Club, PO Box 460, Mitchell, SD 57301 or donate online.

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to all who supported Prairie View UMC in Oelrichs, SD, during the Winter 2024 Builders Club Call. Your generous support has made a significant difference, and Prairie View UMC has been awarded a grant of \$8,500.



NEW STATEMENT PORTAL FEATURES COMING SOON

As we seek to provide enhanced security and streamlining in our withdrawal process, we are adding the following new features to our statement portal:

- Two-factor authentication
- Two additional access levels
- Ability to enter withdrawal requests and bank information for electronic transfers directly into the portal



We are looking toward a launch date of June 17. All churches and organizations as well as all statement portal users will receive more information as we get closer to this date.

Here are two important things that **must happen before the new features are implemented:**

- All statement portal users **must add their cell phone number** in the portal to receive an authentication code. This can be done now in the Communications tab in My Pro file. Once two-factor authentication is turned on you will be unable to log in if this step is not completed.
- There will now be **three levels of user access**. All account holders must submit a form listing all users and their appropriate level of access:
 - Read-Only – view & print statements, view account activity, download forms (currently all statement portal users have this access).
 - Full Access – in addition to Read-Only access, Full Access users are authorized to enter withdrawal requests into the portal.
 - Financial Admin – view account activity, enter bank account information into the portal and update as necessary for electronic transfers. (This can be a person with Read-Only Access but not someone authorized to enter withdrawals.)

The **Account Holder Statement Portal User Authorization Form** will be uploaded to Account Documents in the portal in May. We'll also send it out via email by the end of May.