



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Dakotas-Minnesota Area

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Dear Friends:

It is my pleasure to greet you in the name of the risen Christ.

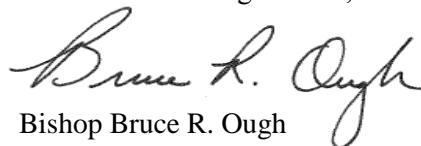
I invite you to join me in embracing God's unlimited imagination! Imagine launching 10 new churches and/or multi-site ministries in the Dakotas Conference over the next seven years. Imagine equipping more than 100 congregations to start a new life cycle in that same time frame. Imagine preparing leaders to pursue congregational renewal and grow healthy churches. Imagine reaching thousands of the 58% of Dakotans, many of them new residents, not currently involved in a congregation or faith community.

These visions for ministry illumine our spiritual journey as never before and build on the successes our Dakotas Conference has already experienced in creating new places for new people and strengthening existing congregations. Our congregational development team and conference leadership have spent many hours of prayer and collaboration discerning the best course of action for escalating these efforts. This discernment has led to a recently launched feasibility study to assess our readiness for a congregational development capital campaign. This campaign would enable the Dakotas Conference to seed new faith communities and help existing congregations grow in strength, spirituality and community impact.

Friends, please join in this crucial step of discernment by participating in a short, confidential survey that is part of the feasibility study. Go to the Dakotas Conference website (www.dakotsumc.org) and click the "Capital Campaign Feasibility Study" heading on the home page. There you will find the current project case statement and an electronic questionnaire to complete. If you prefer a paper version be sent to you, call or email Bea Stucke at the conference office (605-996-6552 or bea.stucke@dakotsumc.org), and a questionnaire and return envelope addressed to Tyler Associates, the group that has been selected to guide our feasibility study, will be sent to you. Electronic and written responses are needed BY DECEMBER 1. All responses will go directly to Tyler Associates and will remain confidential with them.

Our Dakotas UMC commitment to mission, vitality and fruitfulness inspires great ministry, and God's unfailing grace abides with us as we serve Christ. Thank you for giving your input through the confidential questionnaire, and please pray for our leaders and for one another as we discover how to best move forward together.

In Christ's extravagant love,



Bishop Bruce R. Ough