

The Ministerial Education Fund Provides Vital Assistance for Future Clergy

The **Ministerial Education Fund** is the church's affirmation that we continue to share the responsibility for education of our clergy. It is one of the seven apportioned funds that enable United Methodists to do together what no church, district, or annual conference could do alone. Through the MEF and other funds, each individual, each family, each congregation gives a fair share for the church's work.

Our seminary students need the support of their annual conference, congregation, and the MEF, which is a critical piece of the circle of support for those on the path to ordained ministry.

For most of our seminaries, MEF support represents between 12 percent and 20 percent of their annual budget -- a big piece of keeping tuition and other costs lower for the clergy we need.

All of our 13 seminaries make scholarships available to qualified United Methodist students, and GBHEM has endowed a **Special Seminary Scholarship Fund** to further increase support for educating clergy. These funds are in addition to money students receive from annual conference MEF dollars. *Twenty-five percent of MEF apportioned dollars are retained in annual conferences.*

As Myron McCoy, president of Saint Paul School of Theology has said so well: "MEF dollars are critically important to the life and mission of Saint Paul. The church's MEF disbursement to us accounts for approximately 20 percent of our educational budget. The MEF dollars given to Saint Paul are a great investment for the UMC's present and future as roughly 80 percent of our graduates are directly involved in ministry leadership in the local church."

Our 13 United Methodist theological schools can, with our financial support, respond to the immediate and future needs of the church in terms of curriculum, focus, and special programs.

Amee Miller, a student at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, recently wrote the following thank-you letter:

"Your contribution to Garrett-Evangelical affirms your commitment to equipping our churches with well-educated leaders. To be perfectly honest, I had no idea how much I needed to learn until I got here and got started. I now see more than ever how crucial our seminaries are to the growth and development of the Church," she wrote.

Ministerial Education Fund FAQ's

What is the Ministerial Education Fund?

The Ministerial Education Fund is one of the seven apportioned funds of The United Methodist Church. Since 1968 the Ministerial Education Fund apportionment has helped thousands of men and women become pastoral leaders in The United Methodist Church.

It is nurtured and funded by United Methodists to provide vitally needed scholarships through annual conferences, essential funds for the support of our 13 United Methodist seminaries in the United States, programs that encourage men and women to respond to the call to ordained ministry, continuing-education opportunities for pastors across the connection and course-of-study education for local pastors.

What schools are supported through the Ministerial Education Fund?

Boston University School of Theology
Boston, MA
www.bu.edu/sth

www.smu.edu/theology

Candler School of Theology at Emory
University
Atlanta, GA
candler.emory.edu

Saint Paul School of Theology
Kansas City, MO
www.spst.edu

Claremont School of Theology
Claremont, CA
www.cst.edu

United Theological Seminary
Trotwood, OH
www.united.edu

Drew University
Madison, NJ
www.drew.edu/theo

Wesley Theological Seminary
Washington, DC
www.wesleysem.edu

Duke University, The Divinity School
Durham, NC
www.divinity.duke.edu

Gammon Theological Seminary
Atlanta, GA
www.gammonseminary.org

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
Evanston, IL
www.garrett.edu

Iliff School of Theology
Denver, CO
www.iliff.edu

Methodist Theological School in Ohio
Delaware, OH
www.mtso.edu

Perkins School of Theology
Dallas, TX

How is the money distributed?

Of the monies received, 25% of the annual conference remittance is retained in the annual conference for scholarships for seminary student and continuing education for current clergy. The remaining 75% is managed by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry and a portion is used to help the 13 United Methodist seminaries.

How can I get a Ministerial Education Fund scholarship?

Scholarships through the Ministerial Education Fund are awarded through your annual conference. To find your annual conference, please visit The United Methodist Church website.

Does the Ministerial Education Fund only help students?

The Ministerial Education Fund helps more than just students. In addition to scholarships for seminary students, clergy can receive funding to attend continuing education opportunities. Also, a portion of the monies remitted go to support the seminaries.

How much money was remitted to the Ministerial Education Fund in the last three years?

In 2007, \$18,488,162 was remitted to the Ministerial Education Fund. In 2006, \$18,602,252 was given and \$18,101,107 in 2005.

Can I give to the Ministerial Education Fund online?

You cannot give online to the Ministerial Education Fund. We hope to be able to offering online giving to the apportioned funds in the future. However, you can remit money to your local church and designate it for the Ministerial Education Fund.

Where can I order promotional resources for the Ministerial Education Fund?

Follow this link to order free promotional resources for the Ministerial Education Fund.

What is GBHEM and how is it related to the Ministerial Education Fund?

GBHEM is the acronym for the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. The Ministerial Education Fund supports the programs of enlistment, education and support for clergy through the Division of Ordained Ministry, which is a division of GBHEM. Also, Course of Study and Basic Graduate Theological Studies are supported through the Division of Ministry. For more information about the Division of Ordained ministry, please visit their website. Through the 75% of remitted monies, the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry supports and nurtures our future and current clergy members.

Stories from Two Seminary Students

Michael DeMoss: Fulfilling his Call to Becoming an Ordained Minister

What did you want to be when you grew up? Baby boomer Michael L. DeMoss set his sights on psychotherapy, but God had other ideas.

“I am the son of a United Methodist preacher,” said DeMoss, pastor of First United Methodist Church, Guthrie, Okla. “Early on, I was sure I wasn’t going to be a pastor. I

wanted to live in a home of my own, not in a parsonage. I wanted to have Sundays off, and I wanted to be home at night. I said to myself, ‘God doesn’t need me.’ I was convinced, and I saw it as my job to convince others.”

Along his journey, however, DeMoss met people who nudged him toward the ordained ministry—pastors who guided him as a teenage camp counselor and a youth director who mentored him as an undergrad at Southwestern State University, Weatherford, Okla.

As he considered earning a master’s degree in social work, however, DeMoss felt God’s presence. “I knew God was calling me to a life I had always resisted,” he said. “This time, God’s call felt so close, and for the first time, I felt ready.” He enrolled at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas.

April Blaine: Redefining the Role of Pastor

Fridays are quiet for April Blaine. It’s the day the busy seminary student and church youth pastor takes as a Sabbath to feed her soul. “If you’re not intentional about taking time for yourself, no one is going to give it to you,” Blaine laughs.

Blaine is in her fourth year of a five-year seminary program at the Methodist Theological School in [Delaware] Ohio. She’s also a full-time youth pastor at Riverside United Methodist Church, Columbus, Ohio.

“I have no idea how God plans to use me,” Blaine admits. “I want out of the box of what people assume the role of a pastor or a church should be. I am reimagining what ministry can look like for me.”

Soon Blaine will take a three-month sabbatical from school. She plans to visit four “atypical” churches across the United States to pick the brains of likeminded pastors.

“Wherever people are is an opportunity to be in dialogue about faith,” she says. “It can be at a coffee shop, at a favorite restaurant, at a book-club meeting. God constantly gives us opportunities to build relationships with people.”

Blaine’s learning experience wouldn’t be possible without financial help from the Ministerial Education Fund.

“The fund has been incredibly generous,” Blaine said. Because of it, “I’ve had more opportunities to understand my role as a pastor.”

To explore the **Ministerial Education Fund** Website, and to read more stories like the ones above, enter **www.umcsgiving.org** into your web browser. On the left menu bar, highlight and click on Connectional Giving Programs/Apportioned Funds, and then highlight and click on Ministerial Education Fund/Stories.

For More Information

The Ministerial Education Fund

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