

 **Issue 5 *News and Notes* Fall 2020**

**Generous Giving**

So much of The Foundation’s work consists of disbursing funds: cultivating, receiving and vetting applications and ideas, and then providing financial resources to those projects which the Board believes will advance the work of the Kingdom.

Recently, The Foundation has been the recipient of generous contributions to continue its mission. In this current year six donors have made a significant gift to The Foundation. Several of the gifts are undesignated and added to the assets of the Fund to be part of future distributions. In addition, the Board has made provision to receive contributions with appropriate restrictions that specifically fund ministries blessed by the Conference and the Foundation. These donor-restricted gifts align with the mission of the Conference and extend The Foundation’s work.

One of the operational goals of The Foundation is to increase contributions. Presently The Foundation’s assets total $8.5M; the Board hopes to exceed $9M by 2024 and $10M by 2029.

We are grateful to all who have given and all who are considering a contribution to The Foundation. We would welcome a chance to chat about your gift.

**Update on Grant Funding for Covid Relief**

In March The Foundation requested applications for grants designed to bless the community in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Fifteen grants totaling $51,285 have been awarded to Conference churches and Camp Otyokwah. Many of the grants were food-related and not only directly affected individuals and families, but in at least one case, stimulated a local restaurant that had otherwise suffered lack of traffic. A recent college grad had connected with her family’s neighbor whose computer crashed leaving children trying to do homework on their  parents’ cell phones. As a result of the grant the congregation was able to purchase a laptop for the family and greatly bless the family’s in-home covid-required schooling.

Most of these grants were matched by the local congregation, thereby extending the relief and support to the community and aligning with the Foundation’s mission of “Stimulating Life-Changing Ministry.”

**2021 Grant Cycle**

Preliminary Grant Requests for 2021 are due in The Foundation office on Monday, January 25. Applications may be found on the website or by contacting The Foundation Office.

The Foundation is guided by three values or principles: **Discipleship** – transforming lives through Jesus; **Generosity**—nurturing stewardship and sacrifice; and **Creativity**—turning new and imaginative dreams into reality. As such The Foundation looks for ideas that develop people as followers of Jesus (raising up leaders, deepening Christian faith, reaching those far from God, transforming communities) and involve a local congregation’s financial participation in the project.

That does not diminish “brick and mortar” projects. The Foundation will continue construction or renovation projects. But buildings exist to serve people and without a passionate commitment to people-development and raising up disciples, the Kingdom is not advanced.

We look forward to creative ideas in this next grant cycle. Questions? Do not hesitate to contact The Foundation Office.

**Planned Giving Ideas**

***The Donor Advised Fund***

A Donor Advised Fund consists of an irrevocable gift transferred to The Foundation (or any other 501c3 organization equipped to administer it). The Donor Advised Fund allows an income tax deduction in the current year and distribution in future years. The minimum contribution to establish a fund with The Foundation is $10,000 and the minimum distribution is $500.

An Advisor (often the donor) is named when a DAF is established to provide direction to the Board for distribution. Distribution must be made to a 501c3 entity. No distribution will be made for personal inurement nor to an entity whose purpose is inconsistent with the mission and values of the Churches of God, General Conference.

The Foundation is the sole owner of the fund and has final responsibility for managing and distributing the Fund. The Board will make every effort to honor the Advisor’s wishes according to the restrictions above.

A fee of one quarter of one percent (0.25%) per calendar quarter will be assessed to help underwrite expenses of the Fund.

If you have interest in exploring a Donor Advised Fund, contact your attorney or tax advisor, or The Foundation, (419) 425 9602, FoundationDirector@cggc.org.

**Stewardship Moment**

***Living a Life of Generosity***

I spent some time this summer volunteering at Tom Lawrence’s produce farm, picking green beans and strawberries, mowing, and providing other kinds of help at Mr. Lawrence’s direction. The experience refreshed my love of the soil, hopefully provided some support to Mr. Lawrence, and offered an abundant dose of sunlight and fresh air.

Lessons abound, one of which is that weeds never stop growing. The Lawrence Family has been

farming their particular land since 1962. One would think that with the systematic and aggressive weeding over so many decades, a weed could not be found. But to turn one’s back on the patch almost invites weeds to emerge, and they return with a vengeance. Six days each week Mr. Lawrence tends his produce, often with hoe in hand.

The joy of this summer’s activities is experiencing Mr. Lawrence’s generosity.  He lives as a steward of the earth, as if all this belongs only to the Lord, and he has been entrusted with both time and inclination to manage it well. In response he shares freely of whatever is produced. I never came away from my volunteering without something produced on the farm. I certainly did not spend time there for any remuneration. But he would have it no other way: *Here, I want you to have this…* and he would give us sweet corn, beans, apples, strawberries, raspberries or whatever else he had to give.

It reminds me of a recent follow-up conversation after I had been describing my work with The Foundation. “I am so glad you told me about the DAF (*donor advised fund*—see above),” she said. “This has become so much fun. For my birthday I decided to give myself the gift of giving away $100 for every birthday. It is such a joyful experience to share so broadly. I hope to keep this going and add another hundred dollars each year.”

That’s the spirit of generosity, living with open hands, giving generously, sharing broadly, blessing others. It reminds me of Jesus’ word in the Sermon on the Plain: “Give and it will be given unto you, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap.“ (Luke 6:38). And it reinforces Haddon Robinson’s observation that something is not true because it is in the Bible, but it is in the Bible because it is true: God has gathered His truth in the scriptures and we can live by those words. Generosity is God’s idea offered to us by our Lord, and he invites us to live into that truth.

So, the questions emerge, *How am I called to be generous? To whom? With what?* And then in self-reflective tone, *What prevents generosity in my life? And how specifically will I open my hand to share generously with others?*

We are called to a life of generosity, living with open hands that reflect an open heart, that we may share with others the bounty given us by our Good Father.

I close with a prayer for us all: Lord, deepen a spirit of generosity in my life, that I may live with open hands and share your resources generously as a faithful steward of your resources. Amen.

Pastor Bill

William H. Reist, President