

FIRST FOUNDATION: *Providing a Vital Safety Net*

For its seven years in existence, *First Look* has been a powerful vehicle through which to share the story of First United Methodist Church. The members of the First Foundation board would like to share our gratitude to Bobbi Foutch-Reynolds and Earl Madden in particular, along with the many others who contributed to this publication throughout its seven years. It takes a tremendous amount of work to create such a professional publication, and it's a tremendous gift to the church when that professional work can be done voluntarily (or, in the case of the many church staff who have contributed their words, a tremendous amount of "other duties as assigned").

The production of *First Look* has been sponsored by a \$10,000 annual grant from First Foundation's general fund - just another example of the many ways that donations made to First Foundation support the church's ongoing and evolving outreach initiatives. Gifts made to the Foundation endure indefinitely. A member or friend of the church who donated \$50 in 1998 probably did not envision their money supporting seven years' production of a professional news magazine. Or that their money could have helped the church acquire more technology to take services and community online during a pandemic! But that hypothetical \$50 donation doubtless did support *First Look*, and the videography equipment, and the countless other things that have been sup-



ported by Foundation dollars over the years. By investing gifts of \$50 to \$50,000 (and beyond), the Foundation's funds expand over time and the Church benefits from those dollars today and far into the future.

The Foundation's total assets were around \$5.3 million at the time of this article's publication. As assets grow, earnings grow; as earnings grow, distributions to First Church grow. Since 1982, the Foundation has distributed around \$2.97 million to First Church - that number should top \$3 million in 2024. It provides a vital safety net for the Church that, thanks to such generous support, market growth, and conscientious management has grown to become a significant and fairly reliable portion of the Church's annual budget.

As you consider your philanthropic plans for today, next year, and far in the future, remember First Foundation. Visit first-foundation.org to learn more about ways to give

to the Foundation. You can make a one-time donation or a recurring one, designated to Mission and Outreach; Property Care and Improvement; Worship and Music; Youth and Young Adults; Christian Education; or the General Fund, which provides the most flexibility for how the funds are allocated to the Church. You can also find estate planning resources on the website should you like to designate First Foundation in your will, trust, or beneficiary designation, and find the profiles of some church members who support the Foundation. And, should you ever want to refer to these Foundation articles from *First Look* in the future, you'll find an archive there as well. Though this particular initiative is ending, the Foundation will still be there to support whatever comes next.

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