

Special fund for “Professors in Methodism” – vision and aim

Vision:

The continuing mission of the United Methodist Church needs principled Christian leaders, rooted in a Wesleyan mindset of joining knowledge and vital piety. Theological education for our future clergy is of vital importance. Endowing theological education, an initiative of the Council of Bishops, works cooperatively with the “Central Conference Theological Education Fund”.

We need professors who teach Methodist history, theology and polity for a new generation of clergy in each of our United Methodist (‘UM’)-related Schools and Faculties of Theology around the world.

Challenge:

Outside of the USA, many UM-related Schools and Faculties of Theology work with limited budgets and minimal professorial staff. Teaching and reflection on Methodist topics lack the needed resources for building a strong, future-oriented awareness of the riches of our Wesleyan heritage for the mission of The United Methodist Church in the 21st century.

The special fund “Professors in Methodism” will complement the funds distributed by the “Central Conference Theological Education Fund”. The latter was created and is funded by General Conference but does not allow for payment of salaries of professors in theology. **Therefore, the UMC needs such a complement of an endowed special fund.**

Chance:

Endowing a special fund “Professors in Methodism” for UM-related Schools and Faculties outside the USA will provide long-term, sustainable support for salaries of part-time or full-time positions in teaching Methodist history, theology and polity. There are at present more than thirty UM related Theological Schools or Faculties outside the US, with salaries of full-time positions between \$5’000 and \$100’000 per year. The salary support will also allow funding for future pensions if professors are not clergy members included in the Central Conference Pension Initiative.

Goal:

The ultimate goal will be raising \$10.0 million as permanent endowment, with a base payout of \$500,000 annually.

Implementation:

“Professors in Methodism” is a special fund within “FORMING TRUSTED LEADERS”, the endowment fund for theological education in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines. It profits from all the infrastructure and guidelines put in place by this endowment fund, established by the Council of Bishops.

As soon as the first \$1.0 million is endowed in the special fund, a “first-fruit” payout of 2% annually will start, while still helping to raise the total amount of the special fund.

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