

## Perry UMC Endowment Benefits the Church and its Members



The Georgia United Methodist Foundation offers a Legacy Ministry Webinar program to help churches jumpstart their endowment. This type of fund can be professionally managed and invested by the Foundation to establish a permanent source of income to support programs and ministries such as missions and scholarships.

After conducting due diligence, Perry UMC enrolled in this program in January 2014.

“Kevin Tolbert chaired a study committee, which began meeting last spring and completed its work in the fall 2013. It was during this study period that the church began its contact with Foundation Senior Vice President Rev. Wayne Racz,” said Dr. Brad Brady, senior pastor of Perry UMC. “That group recommended to the Board that we proceed with the webinars and get all policies in place for formal approval at a Charge Conference. Mike Jackson chairs the permanent endowment and planned giving ministry committee that is now going through the webinars and making detailed preparation for a launch of our Endowment Fund this fall.”

“Our primary reason for establishing an endowment is to create long-term financial stability for our church. The extreme economic cycle we just went through raised the awareness that we were vulnerable,” Mike said. “We also realized that our church had never received a significant endowment or bequest from a family. We felt it was because we didn’t have the vehicle in place to accept it and had not communicated the need for it to our membership.”

Each month for 12 months during a 45-minute interactive webinar, the Foundation provides step-by-step instructions for designing and implementing a customized Legacy Ministry program. After five months, Mike is already pleased with the results.

“I would recommend that other churches use this program because it saves time and resources and helps to create the framework for the endowment. It provides templates for giving and accepting gifts, making distributions, and trains you on promoting the endowment,” Mike said. “The people who I have worked with have all been very professional, caring, forthright and accessible. Their willingness to work with us has been a key to the program’s success.”

Mike shares his most important takeaway. “We feel confident, that by using the resources and guidance provided by the Foundation, that we will have an endowment that will stand the test of time and be of great benefit for God’s kingdom,” he said. “Through the Legacy Ministry, our members will now have an opportunity to leave a contribution that will benefit the future members of the church.”