



FINANCIAL FOUNDATIONS



PRACTICAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP PRACTICES

A church is an organization that requires systems, processes, and practices to operate effectively. Do you and your church struggle with sound and practical methods of running your church? Do you wish you knew more about the financial systems needed? Do you need better tools for leading stewardship and generosity efforts including identifying and working with potential donors? Does your church have a clear vision for ministry? A plan supported by a budget along with communication and outreach methods to live into this vision?

If any of these questions give you pause, then consider the Practical Church Leadership program for pastors of the Dakotas Annual Conference. A year-long graduate program provided by Dakota Wesleyan University with funding from our Economic Challenges Lilly Grant and committed donors – this program can address all of these questions! Jeff Pospisil, the Dakotas Conference Treasurer, is currently a student in the program and will be the instructor for the Financial Management course (one of five courses offered).

“I’m in the fourth quarter of this program. Great coaching, fantastic teaching, and directly applicable to those serving in a church or nonprofit. You’ll learn in one year what would take you probably 20 years to learn on your own. Also, this program gets you halfway to an MBA,” says Pospisil.

Pastors do not always have the skills and competencies necessary to effectively lead a church in the areas described. Yet, today’s church requires a pastor to provide not only spiritual leadership, but organizational leadership. If you (if the pastor) or your pastor want to move from slightly competent to significantly confident in practical church practices, consider applying for the Practical Church Leadership certificate program by May 1st at: <https://mnumc-reg.brtaapp.com/ApplicationPCL2022>. (Funding is available up to 80% of the tuition.) To learn more about the program, check out DWU’s description at: <https://www.dwu.edu/online-adult-students/graduate-certificate-in-nonprofit-church-leadership>.

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SCARCITY VS OPPORTUNITY

We hear from many Churches that they are short of money and budgets are tight. To our surprise, when we look at their budgets, we often see opportunities rather than shortfalls. It's human nature to look negatively at the money we have and to act on the fear of spending down the budget rather than looking for the possibilities which may be before us.

A few quick ways to look at your budget through the eyes of ministry:

- Define who you are as a Church and know your Church story.
- Create a narrative budget.
 - A budget which explains the estimated costs by areas of ministry
 - A budget that is program focused rather than line-item focused.
- Connect your budget with your Church values.
- Celebrate your Ministries and share your success stories with your congregation.

Call the Dakotas and Minnesota Methodist Foundations, we'd be glad to help you see opportunities.

BLUEPRINT FOR WELLNESS SCREENING IS COMING BACK TO ANNUAL CONFERENCE THIS YEAR!

Participant and spouse in HealthFlex can each earn incentives as long as they are enrolled in Virgin Pulse. You'll receive personalized data on 30 health factors and Incentives — \$100 Pulse Cash and up to 140 Wellness Credits depending on results. Fasting overnight gives the most accurate results. Ask your doctor if it's safe for you to fast. The confidential results will be mailed directly to you so you can share results with your doctor. By logging into your Virgin Pulse account and registering today you will be able to get the time that works best for you.

If unable to attend this event you still have options to participate. Log into your Virgin Pulse account:

- 1) download a Physician Results Form and take to your doctor for your annual physical
- 2) order an at home test kit.

Retirees call Leana Stunes, Conference Benefits Officer 605-990-7785 to register for in-person event or call 1-855-623-9355 to find a Quest Laboratory in your area (Employer- United Methodist Church).

CHURCH REBATES WILL BE COMING IN JULY

The wellness of our churches and pastors is the primary concern of our Board of Pensions. The concern for the continued negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the wellness of both of our pastors and churches led the Board of Pensions to recently approve issuing rebate checks to churches and bonus checks to pastors. While the exact amounts have not been finalized, a church or parish served by a full-time pastor may receive approximately \$16,000. The allocations will be based on the church's payments of their 2021 Pension and HealthFlex Direct Bills (Funds 3 & 4). Pastors may receive approximately \$4,000 depending on their current status of enrollment in pension and health plans.

In 2011, the Board of Pensions adopted a Funding Plan to guide their decisions around managing their reserves. Because of the good investment returns through Wespath along with some other factors, the Board of Pensions was in a position to be able to reinvest this money into our churches and pastors during this critical period where the need for strong pastors and churches is so apparent.