

March 26, 2020

Dear Ministry Partners and Constituents,

Our local communities and communities around the world are facing uncertainty and anxiety in response to COVID-19. Understandably, we are concerned for our health, the well-being of our families and communities, and, of course, our financial resources. We are struggling to navigate new rules for the workplace, social encounters, and volatility of the marketplace.

During this time of heightened uncertainty, the United Methodist Foundation – Board members, investment advisors, staff, and service providers – remains steadfastly committed and resourced to serve you and your churches and communities. We continue to be an institution of stability and trust, and we remain focused on our responsibilities as a fiduciary for the resources that have been entrusted to us.

The three main portfolio models offered by the Foundation – Conservative, Moderate, and Aggressive – are optimized for total return over the long-term with varying degrees of risk through a diversified balance of stocks, bonds, and cash. We remain confident in and committed to the time-honored principles upon which these investment models are based. History has demonstrated that “staying the course” is the prudent way forward in the wake of market volatility. The past several decades have shown that periods of volatility are to be expected and that downturns, while occasionally abrupt and dramatic, are temporary.

Please review the materials included with this letter. They demonstrate the importance of remaining committed to a long-term investing approach based on proven principles in contrast to adverse and ad hoc decision-making by the “reflexive brain.” You are welcome to share these materials with others who may also benefit from these time-tested principles for long-term investors. The Foundation’s Investment Committee and its advisors have experienced and navigated volatile markets in the past: October 1987, the Dot.com market of 2001, and the Great Recession of 2008, among others. We are drawing upon their experiences to provide confident leadership in the current market environment.

Please know the Foundation continues to serve you. We are focused. We are guided by prudence. And we remain focused on our mission: “Multiplying resources for ministry in the name of Jesus Christ by encouraging lifelong generosity with God’s abundance.” We remain a committed, stable, and trusted partner – as we have since 1949 and through many trying times – to help you make a positive impact and change lives.

May you and your loved ones be blessed with peace, calm, and the reassurance of God’s grace.

Rev. Chris Walters, President
George Gill, Chair
Sach Diwan, Treasurer
Jim Lumberg, Investment Advisor

Carolyn Cook, Executive Assistant
David Foster, Vice Chair
Marta Rodriguez, Investment Committee Chair

