

*Winter 2015*



**Aldersgate UMC: A Model Church for our Scholarship Foundation**

## *In Their Own Words*

*One of the best ways we know how to share the mission of the Stegall Seminary Scholarship Foundation is through the words of our outstanding alumni. Over the years, hundreds of young men and women have answered the call God placed upon their hearts and entered into the ministry. Because of your support, their obedience and devotion to this call was made possible. The following are excerpts from testimonies of our alumni, the very alumni that you have faithfully supported. Thank you!*

“My wife and I had been married a scant 10 days when I began seminary. We moved to Durham, NC hoping she might find a job and hoping that my savings from one year of work after college would be enough to get us through our first year of marriage. With such uncertain resources, anyone can imagine how much the financial support of the Foundation meant to us in that first year. What is less obvious, but equally important, is how much the Foundation meant to us emotionally for all of my three years in school.”  
– **Rev. Michael Precht**, Senior Pastor, First United Methodist Church, Crestview, Fla.

“The truth is, we would not have attended seminary without Dr. Stegall’s personal investment in our lives and our ministries...No one in my family had ever been to college, much less seminary. No one in my family had ever been a pastor. No one in my family had the financial means to support me through such an expensive education. I felt alone...That changed when I met the wonderful donors of the Foundation. They were my pastors, they were my support, they were my financial blessing, but more than any of that – they were sent by God to let me know that I wasn’t alone.” – **Rev. Joe Driver**, Fairpoint Campus Pastor, Gulf Breeze United Methodist Church, Gulf Breeze, Fla.

“Every dollar used to support me through seminary was a sign of God’s faithfulness to those who answer God’s call. Every dollar was a reminder that the church is the way God meets the needs of people. Every dollar was a sign that God had not left us alone and

would see us through the journey. Every dollar reminded me that someone made his or her own sacrifices so that I could answer God’s call without fear or trepidation. Quite simply, without the foundation I could not have responded to God’s call into ordained ministry.”  
– **Rev. Jay Cooper**, Senior Pastor, First United Methodist Church, Bay Minette, Ala.

“Money is nearly always tight for graduate students, but for me the emotional support from my Conference was especially needed. The Foundation granted me the opportunity to connect with those who were contributing to my life and schooling. Any cards, letters, or emails were appreciated, and today I continue to recognize the blessings I received through this support.” – **Rev. Jennifer Zeigler Medley**, Chaplain, Sacred Heart Hospital, Pensacola, Fla.

“As is true of any great philanthropic organization, the impact of the Foundation has managed to transcend its primary objective of fund raising. When visiting with our seminary students as a representative of the Board of Ordained Ministry, I find that the Foundation is never far from the heart of their experience as they describe the ways in which God is shaping and sustaining them through their journey... Speaking as a recruiter for the Alabama – West Florida Conference, the Foundation is one of our best tools in conveying our commitment to aspiring candidates from across the country. As a previous recipient myself, I am glad to testify to the fruit that is borne from the seeds of that investment, and equally proud to be united to others in this fashion.” – **Rev. Darren McClellan**, Senior Pastor, Perdido Bay United Methodist Church, Pensacola, Fla.

“The cost of tuition alone was more than I made as my annual salary as a part-time Worship Pastor. Since my wife was in school also, neither of us was able to work a full-time job. Thanks to the Foundation, we were able to afford groceries, books, transportation to and from Atlanta, and pay all of our bills.” – **Rev. Woods Lisenby**, Chaplain, Huntingdon College, Montgomery, Ala.

*I am so proud of everything that the Foundation represents to me and to the United Methodist Church.*

**IT TRULY  
REPRESENTS THE  
BEST OF US.**

*-Christina Hale Shaver*

## *Aldersgate UMC: A Model Church for our Scholarship Foundation*

Aldersgate United Methodist Church in Montgomery is known throughout our Alabama-West Florida Conference as a church filled with loyal, faithful members that have always supported their church with their prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. Organized in 1895, the church previously bore the name of Forest Avenue where it was located for 70 years. The church moved to their present site on February 9, 1975. Across the past 120 years, the members of this wonderful congregation have always paid their apportionments in full and strongly demonstrated a heart for missions in their “second-mile” giving, both at home and around the world. While generously supporting our seminary students, the members of Aldersgate have modeled the two-fold mission of our Foundation.

1. Aldersgate has continued to nurture and encourage many of their finest young men and women to enter the ordained ministry. Among those presently under appointment include Craig Carter at Lynn Haven; Jay Cooper at Bay Minette; Reed Haigler Hoppe at Saraland; Cecil Jackson at Dauphin Island; Ken Jackson at Trinity, Prattville; Tony Jeck, Auburn Wesley Cooperative Parish; Angie Long, associate at Spanish Fort; Michael Precht at Crestview; Lester Spencer at Gulf Breeze; David Stewart at Murphy’s Chapel; and Rusty Taylor at Frazer. Jayde Rasband, in her first year at Candler, was recommended by the Aldersgate Charge Conference. Lucas Tribble, a senior at Auburn University and now serving as the youth director at Mt. Zion in Smiths Station, grew up at Aldersgate and will be enrolling in seminary in September 2016.

2. Aldersgate has continued to support our seminary students with their generous gifts. Their fine senior minister, Brian Miller, and his wife, Christina, have been two of the most generous supporters of our cause. Several years ago, God laid upon the hearts of this gifted couple to make a bank draft each month in which they have channeled a generous gift to seminary students through our Scholarship Foundation. One of Aldersgate’s retired ministers, Jim Dannelly, and his wife, Bobbie, have also been among our most faithful donors.

Some of our most loyal supporters are members of the Aldersgate congregation that know and respond to the needs of our seminary students.

Living up to their name, Aldersgate, this great church has provided a place where the hearts of their members continue to be “strangely warmed” like the heart of John Wesley 300 years ago. In response, they see, like Wesley, “the whole world as their parish.” When their young men and women answer the call of God upon their lives to become ordained ministers, the Aldersgate congregation “walks beside them” every step of the way through their gifts to our Scholarship Foundation.

**The Stegall Seminary Scholarship Foundation is now pleased to offer convenient direct debit for your automatic contributions.** Many churches and nonprofit organizations are already using direct debit, and it has proven to be a safe and reliable way to set up recurring donations.

**Stringent measures are being used by both the bank and the Foundation** to ensure that security and confidentiality are in operation and adhered to at all times. No personal information will be obtained. The only information that is required to set up direct debit is the same information that can be found on your check.

**This useful tool is being offered at no fee to the Foundation. The direct debit process has many benefits. Among them are:**

- Allows supporters to make a commitment about their giving to the Foundation in advance;
- The convenience of not having to worry about writing a check or remembering to mail in a donation;
- While out of town, your contributions are still being made to the Foundation.

If you would like to begin making monthly or other regularly-scheduled donations to the Foundation, we ask that you please consider this safe and simple option. When you are ready to set up your recurring contribution to the Stegall Foundation, please contact Mrs. Rachael Quinn at [stegallscholarship@gmail.com](mailto:stegallscholarship@gmail.com) with any questions and to initiate the setup process. Thank you for your loyal support of our students!

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*Pictured on the cover, left to right, are Dr. Brian Miller, senior minister; Rev. Angie Long, Candler graduate from Aldersgate; Lucas Tribble, Auburn senior from Aldersgate; and Rev. W. Michael Cobb, associate minister.*

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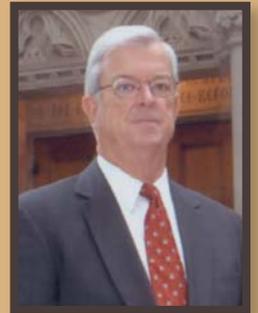
## YOUR YEAR-END GIFTS WILL MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE!

As Christmas draws near, I wanted to share with you two specific reasons why I would strongly encourage you to support our 46 seminary students with a year-end gift.

1. These are OUR students, sent forth from OUR churches, and they greatly need and deserve our support. It costs approximately \$42,000 a year for a full-time student to attend Asbury, Emory, Duke, or Wesley where our seminarians are enrolled. In addition to their basic expenses associated with tuition, books, food, lodging, and transportation, there are always unanticipated expenses. Several of our students are married with children that require

medical attention and supplies for school. Some of our seminary students in the past have taken out loans up to \$100,000 to complete their seminary educations. Your generous gifts will greatly reduce the amount of money our students have to borrow. These students that you are supporting will one day be returning to OUR Alabama-West Florida Conference to serve as OUR ordained ministers.

2. There has never been a time in the history of our world when Christians more desperately need effective clergy to share the glorious message of Jesus Christ. Like Isaiah of old, we are living in a time of great darkness. Bad theology is rampant,



and a myriad of voices all over the world are spreading fear and hatred, resulting in horrific acts of violence. Just like the time of Isaiah, people are longing for the light of Jesus Christ that will point us to a better way, a nobler way, and a safer way. Our world longs for the message of

*“How Beautiful on the Mountains  
 Are The Feet of the One Who  
 Brings News of Peace, Who  
 Announces Good Things, Who  
 Announces Salvation, Who Says  
 to Zion, ‘Your God Reigns.’”*

Isaiah 52:7 (NIV)

Christ filled with love, grace, forgiveness, and only lasting peace! When you invest in the lives of our seminary students and their education, you are investing in the transformation of the world. Effective clergy with good theology that are passionate about Jesus Christ can help change the world, one life at a time. Jesus Christ is our only Hope!

- Karl K. Stegall