

IMAGINE

THE FUTURE



EQUIPPING AND EMPOWERING
LEADERS FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

ANNUAL DINNER OF CELEBRATION HONORS DONORS, CELEBRATES STUDENTS

(Montgomery, Ala.) – Imagination. The ability to imagine the future often fuels creativity, drive, and determination. On Thursday, August 10, 2017, the Stegall Seminary Scholarship Endowment Foundation asked supporters during its annual Dinner of Celebration to imagine the future, while celebrating the past 10 years. "We celebrate that you have enabled us to build our foundation to the point where tonight with \$6.25 million in our endowment, we are reaching out in faith and establishing a new goal of \$10 million," said Dr. Karl K. Stegall, volunteer president of the foundation.

The banquet, held at the Renaissance Hotel in downtown Montgomery, welcomed approximately 450 students, alumni and supporters. Including those in attendance were some of the 49 seminary students being supported by the Foundation during the 2017-2018 school year.

Each year, two extravagantly generous donors underwrite the entire cost of the banquet, ensuring that donations made to the Foundation are allocated for scholarships. Dr. Patrick M. Quinn, Teaching Pastor of Frazer United Methodist Church in Montgomery, served as the evening's Master of Ceremonies. The invocation was given by Dr. Jeremy K. Pridgeon, Senior Pastor of First United Methodist Church of Montgomery.

Following dinner, Bishop David W. Graves, resident bishop of the Alabama - West Florida Conference (AWF), shared episcopal greetings with those assembled. In his remarks Graves said, "It may have been hard in the beginning to imagine that the foundation would raise over \$6 million, and now you begin to imagine raising \$10 million. Can you imagine if we raised \$20 million, where we could equip and empower leaders for the next generation?"

"If every annual conference had what this annual conference has been blessed with, we would have seminary students all over the world that would go {to seminary} and not have any debt," said Graves. "When I go to seminaries to visit students, this foundation is a great asset as we recruit and encourage leaders in the AWF Conference. I give thanks that Karl, Brenda, and others had the great faith to imagine what could happen."

Dr. James Seay, Director of Music at First United Methodist Church of Montgomery, performed a solo of "You Raise Me Up." Later in the program he was joined by his wife, Mabs, as they sang a duet of "How Great Thou Art."

A highlight of the annual banquet is the ability for donors to hear firsthand from current seminary students. This year, two



Bishop David Graves offers a prayer over students present.

students shared words of thankfulness to donors. Miss Halle Deemer, a second-year student at Asbury Theological Seminary, was able to share a witness with those gathered via a video message. Halle is currently pursuing a Masters Degree in Pastoral Counseling after realizing a great need for the service within Christian communities.

During her video, Deemer reflected on the stress and anxiety she felt when considering seminary and the associated financial burden. "In this process (of discernment) I was prayerful that I needed help, and the Lord answered those prayers through this scholarship," she said.

Mr. Matt Langford, a first-year student at Candler School of Theology, then told donors that their support drives him to succeed. "On the Candler website it estimates that seminary will cost \$120,000 to graduate in three years. The money we (students) receive is the difference between someone like me being able to answer the call God has placed on my life and not being able to."

"I hope you know how thankful we are for you," he said. "For your prayers that sustain us, your gifts that help us respond to that call, and most importantly your love. I am blessed to know that each person who gives to the scholarship fund is supporting what I am doing."

In response to the student witnesses, Dr. David Saliba, Senior

All photos by Luke Lucas



Over 450 supporters gather for the annual Dinner of Celebration.

The Stegall Seminary Scholarship Foundation is a 501(C)(3) non-profit foundation, and all gifts are tax deductible. Gifts for our Seminary students should be mailed to Dr. Karl K. Stegall, Seminary Scholarship Foundation, P. O. Box 241661, Montgomery, Alabama 36124-1661.

Pastor at Perdido Bay (Fla.) United Methodist Church, said: "The church cannot survive without new ministers; ...we were headed to a place where we had more churches than pastors. But you helped Christ right the ship. Your gifts will bless, enrich and sustain the future of the Christian church for years to come because persons like Matt will be able to accept God's call on their lives!"

Rev. Tony McCullough, pastor at Brewton (Ala.) First United Methodist Church, then presented two special awards on behalf of the Stegall Foundation Board of Directors. The first-ever Church Appreciation Award, which seeks to recognize a congregation who faithfully supports the mission of the foundation, was presented to Fort Davis (Ala.) United Methodist Church.

"The Fort Davis church gives generously to support various mission projects, making our foundation one of their top priorities," said McCullough. "In more recent years, this small membership church of only 51 members ranks in the top five churches among the 625 churches of the AWF Conference in their gifts to our foundation."

Present to receive the award on behalf of the church was Rev. Keith Turner, accompanied by a delegation of members from the church. "In our church we have decided to reach out and to give, and we're going to continue to give," said Turner. "The United Methodist Church means so much to us and we try to always remember that 'giving is living.'"

Following the church award, the eighth annual "Spirit of the Foundation" Award was then presented to the family of the late Rev. Arthur McCoy Carlton, Sr., who died in 2016 at the age of 96. This award is presented annually to honor a donor who has shown faithful commitment to the mission of the foundation.

In presenting the award, McCullough said, "Arthur's life was marked by generosity. He and his wife endowed scholarships at Huntingdon College, Birmingham Southern College, and Africa University. For many years, they were the top supporters of Blue Lake United Methodist Assembly. Arthur and Mabel established two trusts at the United Methodist Foundation with earnings designated for our seminary scholarships through our foundation.

"Just as he had remembered our seminary students in his life, Arthur in his financial planning remembered our seminary students prior to his death," said McCullough. "Our foundation owes a great deal of gratitude to this good man, and to all of the members of the Carlton family."

Speaking on behalf of the family, Carlton's son, Charlie, said that during a time of reflection before he died his father realized the giants who had come before him and in doing so was moved to include the foundation in his will. "Dad left a small remembrance to each of us eight children, but he left the entire residual of his estate to the Stegall Seminary Scholarship Foundation," said Carlton.

Carlton then read aloud his father's own moving words: "I was born the son of a Methodist preacher, reared by the church, and loved by the church. I enjoyed three years of scholarship at Birmingham Southern College, three years at Duke University, and then I enjoyed 33 years of serving in the pastorate across the AWF Conference. My entire life has been supported and intertwined with our United Methodist Church. I can think of no greater institution like the Stegall Seminary Scholarship Endowment Foundation that can assist and provide education for our young pastors to continue the call of Christ."

Past recipients of the Spirit of the Foundation Award are: Mr. Boyd Goddard; Bishop Paul A. Duffey; Mr. John Bullard; Mr. Temple Millsap; Mr. Wayne Russell; Mr. Dan Lindsey, Sr.; and Dr. Paulette Thompson.

As an invitation to partnership, Mr. Daniel L. Lindsey, Jr. shared with those in attendance specific ways gifts may be made to the foundation. In discussing the options for planned giving in particular, Lindsey said: "You can't take it with you; just look around the room at the legacy we can leave! If we even scratch the surface of our potential for planned giving, what a difference we can collectively make in the lives of those current and future seminary students and the people they will ultimately serve in their congregations for generations to come."

Toward the end of the banquet, a video celebrating the ten-year anniversary was shown, featuring many students, alumni, and donors of the foundation. Following this video Dr.

Karl K. Stegall, volunteer president of the foundation, personally offered a word of appreciation to donors present.

"Brenda and I are indeed grateful to all of you here tonight for the wonderful support you've given our foundation and these seminary students over these past 10 years," Stegall said. "Tonight is a night of celebrating what YOU have done. When you invest in the lives of these present and future seminary students, you are investing in those who have shared and will share in the next half century the words of eternal life."

In closing, Dr. Stegall invited all of the seminary students present to come forward as Bishop Graves offered a blessing over the students as a sending forth for the evening.



*"I am blessed to know that each person who gives to the scholarship fund is supporting what I am doing."
- first year student, Matt Langford*

2007-2017
How have your gifts made a difference over the past ten years?

- 198 students supported
- \$3 million in cash scholarships awarded
- \$10,000 annual scholarships awarded to full-time students
- \$6 million foundation endowment

~ Thank You! ~





STEGALL SEMINARY SCHOLARSHIP ENDOWMENT FOUNDATION
P. O. BOX 241661
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36124

STEGALLSCHOLARSHIP@GMAIL.COM

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THANKS FOR YOUR PARTNERSHIP!



BRENDA AND KARL STEGALL



A record number of 51 students from our Alabama-West Florida Conference enrolled in seminary this month at Asbury, Duke, Emory, Gammon, and Vanderbilt. These students represent a broad spectrum of churches, large and small, scattered all across central and south Alabama and northwest Florida---Auburn, Blountstown, Clanton, Dothan, Enterprise, Fort Walton Beach, Greensboro, Greenville, Gulf Breeze, Hartford, Lynn Haven, Mary Esther, Mobile, Montgomery, Niceville, Notasulga, Opp, Pensacola, Prattville, Panama City Beach, Shalimar, Robertsdale, and Skipperville.

The Apostle Paul, in his beautiful letter to the Philippians, writes, "I thank my God every time I remember you...because of your PARTNERSHIP in the gospel." A partnership has been defined as "an arrangement where parties agree to cooperate to advance their mutual interests, the likelihood of each achieving their mission and enlarging their reach."

Your partnership is not only making a huge difference in easing the financial strain of our seminary students, but it is also making a huge difference in the future leadership of your local church.

I do not know of a greater investment that any of you can make today than in the life of one of these seminary students preparing for a lifetime of service to Jesus Christ!

Karl K. Stegall