



## ***Your giving makes good pastoral leadership possible!***

Who are the pastors who have had a positive impact in your life? Who has faithfully preached the gospel, or helped you learn to be a follower of Jesus? Who cared for you or a family member at a time of crisis? Who has identified and nurtured your gifts for service, encouraging you to live out your own calling in ministry?

Our faithful connectional giving makes good pastoral leadership possible. Every pastor—licensed and ordained—has been identified and supported along his or her journey of credentialing and leadership development by our West Virginia Conference apportionment funding, from the earliest nudge of exploring God’s calling to the final offering of expertise in retirement. Our Conference budget and General Church funds support individuals’ exploration and development of gifts for ministry through the work of the District Committees on Ministry, the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, and through the Ministerial Education Fund.

*Here are some highlights:*

### **Candidacy retreats—**

Every person who senses God calling them and who wants to explore whether this calling might lead to licensed or ordained ministry joins with others in a process of discernment beginning with a 24 hour candidacy retreat. Within a group setting, each one is guided to explore his or her next steps in living into God’s calling for their life. The Conference pays for the majority of the candidacy expenses, including the retreat, mentoring, and psychological assessments, while the candidate contributes a portion.

### **Pastoral Ministry Licensing School (PMLS)**

Those desiring to be licensed for pastoral ministry participate in this week-long school, beginning their journey in the “Course of Study.” While students are responsible for purchase of books and travel, the cost of the 8-day school is paid for with your apportionment giving and free to the students.

### **The Course of Study**

Each licensed local pastor continues in learning through 20 courses, spread over a few years, in order to deepen his or her expertise in ministerial leadership, and to meet the requirements for maintaining

licensing. These courses can be taken at regional seminaries or through the WV Extension School at Spring Heights Camp. Each pastor receives a grant through the Board of Ordained Ministry budget per course, to help offset expenses.

### **Seminary Coursework**

Every ordained clergy member of the WV Conference has attended seminary and obtained a Master of Divinity degree, as an Elder, or completed Basic Graduate Theological Studies for Deacons. Many have additional master's degrees in areas of specialization. While seminary coursework is required for ordination and provides great value to our local churches and Conference, it is expensive. Our Conference offers grants to each seminary student through the Ministerial Education Fund a variety of other scholarship resources.

### **Continuing Formation Funds**

Believing in the value of life-long learning, our Board of Ordained Ministry offers continuing formation funds to every clergy person who has completed the basic credentialing requirements. These funds help clergy participate in continuing education events that they might not otherwise be able to afford.

There are many more ways that your faithful giving makes good clergy leadership possible. Each pastoral leader is a walking, breathing representative of our apportionments at work—the beginning exploring candidate, the student, your pastor, your District Superintendent, your Conference staff who equip clergy, your Bishop—all are a result of your faithful giving. Are they perfect? No. Are they examples of gifts and evidence of God's grace at work in real people's lives? Yes.

Please be in prayer for the clergy around you as you give this month. And THANK YOU for your faithful financial gifts that make *transformational leadership* possible.

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**West Virginia Conference**  
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