

THE ENDOWMENT FUND

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF ASIAN AMERICAN UNITED METHODISTS (NFAAUM)

The NFAAUM was organized in April, 1975 in (WJAAC) Chicago, Illinois. Prior to the organization, the Western Jurisdiction Asian American Caucus (was organized several years following the disbanding of the Oriental Provisional (1960) and the Japanese Provisional Conferences (1964). The Oriental Provisional Conference consisted of 30 churches from the Chinese, Filipino and Korean constituency and the Japanese Provisional conference consisted of approximately 40 Japanese American churches in the West. The WJ Asian American Caucus was organized in response to a feeling of discontent and disenfranchisement of Asian American clergy and laity from both conferences following the disbanding. The Rev. George Nishikawa was the first Executive Director of the WJAAC.

Bishop Wilbur W.Y. Choy was elected in July, 1972 to the episcopacy and assigned to the Seattle Area. It was through the support and efforts of the WJ Asian American Caucus that Bishop Choy was elected at that Jurisdictional Conference.

Asian Americans from other four Jurisdictions were invited to the October, 1974 meeting of the WJ Asian American Caucus in Oakland, CA. At that meeting it was agreed to form a National Asian American Caucus. Out of that decision, the NFAAUM was organized at the April, 1975 meeting in Chicago, IL.

The work and ministry of Asian Americans was recognized at the 1976 Western Jurisdictional Conference in Salt Lake City, UT. The WJAAC was then merged into a Western Jurisdiction Asian American Coordinating Committee.

The idea of an Endowment Fund remained in its embryonic state until its actual birth in January, 1991. The idea of an endowment fund began when the NFAAUM followed through on a recommendation contained in a document entitled, "Developing and Strengthening Ethnic Minority Local Church," prepared by Roy Sano (at the time a faculty member of the Pacific of Religion, Berkeley, CA; and elected to the episcopacy in 1984).

The document served as the blue print for the Missional Priority, which was adopted by The United Methodist General Conference of 1976, and renewed in the General Conferences of 1980 and 1984. This meant the resources of the church were to be prioritized to develop and strengthen Black, Hispanic, Native American, and Asian American churches. For Asian Americans, one of Bishop Sano's recommendations was that since Asian Americans lacked institutions such as colleges and universities some other ethnic minorities had, they should establish an endowment fund.

The Rev. Jonah Chang, Executive Director (1975-1986) of the NFAAUM, followed through on Bishop Sano's recommendation. In 1983, he gathered together a group of clergy and lay people to San Francisco and sought their response to establishing an endowment fund. The group affirmed the proposal and implementation began. He reported that there was a small balance from several NFAAUM projects funded by the Missional Priority and this could be the seed money from which an endowment fund could grow.

The Rev. Lloyd Wake,, minister of Community Life with Glide Memorial UMC in San Francisco, serve as a member of the General Council on Ministries (GCOM) from 1976 to 1984. During those

years when GCOM administered a portion of the Missional Priority Funds. he facilitated a Stewardship Education Grant from GCOM for the NFAAUM. In consultation with The Rev. Thomas Rieke, a staff member of the Stewardship Section of the General Board of Discipleship, working with The Rev. Peter Chen, Chairperson of The Endowment Fund and Pastor of Wesley UMC, San Jose, CA; Mrs. Anne Chin of Berkeley; Jonah Chang of El Cerrito; and Lloyd Wake, a series of stewardship education workshops focused on growing an endowment fund were held in various geographic areas of our connection. Specific areas included Washington, DC; New York, NY; Chicago, IL; Ontario, OR; Seattle, WA; Portland, OR; Stockton, CA; San Francisco, CA; and Los Angeles, CA. With the encouragement and strong support of Honorary Chairperson, Bishop Wilbur W.Y. Choy, The Endowment Fund ministry was established.

Following his retirement in December, 1989, The Rev. Lloyd Wake volunteered in 1990 to serve as manager of The Endowment Fund. In addition to Chairperson Peter Chen, the Committee included Mrs. Nellie Ancheta, Mr. Leon Chang, Mrs. Anne Chin, Dr. Dora Ames Lee Wong, and The Rev. Peter Sun, Executive Director of NFAAUM at that time. The Committee agreed that, in order to **minimize administrative costs and maximize grant awards**, the committee would consist of persons residing in the bounds of the California-Nevada Annual Conference and additional advisory committee members would come from other regions. The Committee agreed to publicize and develop the fund by publishing a quarterly newsletter and began making grants in 1991.

The Fund had \$56,000 when the Committee began its work in 1991. Dr. Dora Ames Lee Wong donated \$50,000. Jane and Leon Chang contributed property worth \$29,000 and later donated \$40,000. Rev. Jungrea Chung and friends established the Choon Soo Chung Mission Fund. Following the passing of Dr. Amos Rhee, Mrs. Rhee established an Amos Rhee Evangelism Fund in his name. Several donors have included The Endowment Fund in their wills. Through the years, **growth continued through large and small contributions.**

In keeping with the purposes of The Endowment Fund, individuals, churches and groups (such as sub-ethnic caucuses, Asian American Women, Asian American Youth) may establish a fund with an initial contribution of \$5,000 designated for the fund. Additional contributions can be made to grow each fund.

Currently The Endowment Fund has a principal of \$500,000 plus and will continue to **make grants and pay for administrative costs from the principal only.** Interest is used for grants in each individual fund according to the purposes of each fund.

The Endowment Fund Journal is mailed to all clergy, interested persons, and persons who have made contributions in the past announcing that The Endowment Fund will be accepting applications for the current year grants. A description of each fund is made available. The committee meets late spring/early summer of each year to make grants. As applications are reviewed, if committee members have questions about the applications, members will contact the individual or group applying for more information and clarification. Often individuals and churches request application forms and then choose not to submit their applications.