

From This Corner

God the Investor

Larry Baird

I suppose many of you, like I, have been anxiously watching your investments. This has particularly concerned me as not too long ago it dawned on me that I am edging toward retirement. The list of potential retirees was shared with the cabinet and oddly my name appeared as one having reached possible retirement. Brenda and I therefore dutifully attended the conference retirement seminar even though it seemed like something only older people should do. It was an eye opener for two reasons. First, we learned our investments managed by the Board of Pensions had done very well. Second, we learned many of our colleagues and friends had gotten old. Though I felt out of place being there it was high time my colleagues got themselves there. Many looked well seasoned. The main discovery that day, besides this strange aging of my peers, was that it appeared I could possibly retire at the early age of 62 and be financially sound.

That was then. I am now not only dreading my pension statement that should be arriving soon, but I have an idea 65 or beyond is now a more logical target.

So it goes with investments. You never really can be certain what they will do.

It occurred to me the other day as I watched the stock market go through its convulsions that God must watch us in a similar fashion. When you stop and think about it, God too is an investor. God has invested in every one of us banking on the notion that the high stakes investment of Jesus Christ would pay off in our redemption and produce discernable positive results. It is clear to me that God is counting on us to produce dividends for the Kingdom. Perhaps those statistical reports we require at all levels of the church are like the investment page in the daily newspaper. Maybe God is more interested in them than we ever imagined.

I will continue to watch the stock market. At the same time, however, I will also keep a more studied eye on God's investment in those areas for which I have responsibility. It's the United Methodist portfolio. You and I are the fund managers. Pray and think about it. We want a bull market that produces tenfold. That would be pleasing in God's sight.