

PRESBYTERY OF FLORIDA

MINISTRY OF CONGREGATIONAL HEALTH

POLICIES FOR AWARDING REVITALIZATION GRANTS

The Ministry of Congregational Health (MCH) has been blessed with funding to help revitalize congregations in their service to the Lord and the community in which they are situated. This will be extremely helpful as the climate toward “church” continues to evolve and refocus. To aid congregations in their attempt to revitalize and refocus their ministry, funding through MCH may be available.

TYPES OF GRANTS AVAILABLE

There are three categories for which revitalization assistance may apply. *All grants, if approved by the Ministry of Congregational Health, are considered to be matching grants up to the amount specified in this policy. Grants may be applied for once every 18 months.*

- **Equipment (up to \$1,000)**

Given current, broadly available digital communication and learning tools, outdated equipment holds little appeal for communicating with the digitally-literate. If just cause can be presented demonstrating how updating equipment will play a key role in revitalizing and refocusing a congregation’s ministry, a request for equipment will be considered.

- **Emergency Repairs (up to \$5,000)**

There may be occasions when repairs to church facilities are needed in an attempt to be more visually appealing to potential newcomers to a congregation, as well as for the safety of all. A leaky roof leaving water stains, rotting wood that needs to be replaced and painted are just a couple examples.

- **Pastoral Leadership (up to ½ the Presbytery minimum compensation requirements)**

Congregations that have completed the Holy Cow! Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT) and the MissionInsite demographic study, and have devised strategic plans showing viability for future ministry, may apply for a Pastoral Leadership Grant. This would be to help call a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) pastor to serve the congregation for a minimum of three years. There will be a stringent review process prior to awarding this grant.

INITIAL CRITERIA

As Presbyterians, we are part of a connectional system. We work together and are a part of one another’s others’ lives. When a grant request is submitted, several initial criteria will weigh heavily on considering the request:

- Have members of the congregation been serving on committees of the Presbytery?
- Has the Session been faithful in sending commissioners to attend Presbytery meetings?

- Has the congregation been faithful in financially supporting the work and ministry of the Presbytery?
- A copy of the congregation's financial budget and holdings will be required.
- At least two (2) estimates will be required for the Emergency Repair Grant.

SOURCE OF FUNDS

There arise occasions when a congregation within the Presbytery of Florida has fulfilled its ministry to our Lord. The completion of that ministry is celebrated at a time of worship and thanksgiving for the work accomplished.

But the influence of that congregation, its assistance and aid to its sister congregations, is not completely over, even though its doors are closed.

As is the policy of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Presbytery is responsible for the disposition of the church property (G-4.0205). The funds received from the sale of the property is used to give witness to the connectional nature of our denomination and further the work of our Lord in our sister congregations and the Presbytery of Florida.

In 2020, the Presbytery of Florida passed the following in order to spread the funds in such a way as to best serve the Presbytery:

“After the equivalent of one half of the current year’s budget is set aside, which can be used to zero-balance the current year’s budget before closing the books for that year,

- 10% of the remainder shall be set aside for special, unbudgeted presbytery projects defined by that policy,
- 50% shall be assigned to the Committee on Congregational Revitalization [now Ministry of Congregational Health] to be used as defined by their policy for such funds, and
- 40% shall be assigned to the Committee on New Congregational Development to be used as defined by their policy.
- Any growth in the Reserve Fund shall be distributed *pro rata*.”

Resources have been afforded the Ministry of Congregational Health through investments made possible from the sale of church properties whose congregations have concluded their ministries. With the approval from Presbytery, the maximum amount to be invested will be no more than \$650,000 the interest of which will be used to assist qualified projects and requests for assistance.

PRESBYTERY OF FLORIDA

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PASTORAL LEADERSHIP GRANT DEFINITIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

Purpose

The Presbytery of Florida has established a Congregational Revitalization Fund to provide grants to its congregations with small membership in support of a congregation's specific plan for its revitalization. The awarding of a grant will be based on the attraction and retention of fulltime designated pastor to enable and guide the congregation's implementation of its plan for revitalization.

Administration

The congregation's Revitalization Plan shall be approved by the Presbytery's Ministry of Congregational Health in consultation with the Committee on Ministry. The fund shall be administered, and grants awarded by the Ministry of Congregational Health.

Definitions

Small Member Congregation: While the definition of what constitutes a small congregation may vary, in the Presbytery of Florida it is generally considered to refer to congregations with an average weekly attendance at worship of less than 50 persons.

Pastoral Leadership: will ordinarily be understood to mean a Minister of Word and Sacrament who holds ordination in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Plan for Revitalization: A congregation's Plan for Revitalization, also known as a *strategic plan*, shall reflect findings from a Holy Cow! Vital Signs Report and a MissionInsite Consultation, and must include, but not be limited to:

1. a statement of the congregation's vision and mission as it relates to congregational revitalization;
2. specific strategies for implementing that vision and mission;
3. identified goals and benchmarks for assessing the congregation's progress in implementing its plan;
4. a means of evaluating annually how the congregation and/or community have been transformed, including the congregation's next steps in its revitalization.

Qualifications

To qualify for a Pastoral Leadership Grant, a congregation will have completed, with the assistance of a Presbytery Consultant, both the Holy Cow! Congregational Assessment Tool and a MissionInsite

community demographic assessment. Those tools are essential to the development of the congregation's strategic plan for revitalization.

A Viability Assessment Form must also be completed to determine the potential life and vitality of the congregation and the promise it holds for future ministry. The Ministry of Congregational Health will review this information.

After review of the Viability Assessment Form, the congregation will need to submit a Grant Application form which will aid MCH in determining its decision.

Terms

Ordinarily, a grant may be awarded annually for up to three years for a full-time designated pastor, depending upon the Fund's financial growth and the congregation's active participation in its Revitalization Plan. Failure to meet conditions of the congregation's strategic plan may constitute a default of the provisions of the grant and result in its early termination. Funds are to be disbursed to the congregation annually following the awarding of the grant, and each year thereafter following assessment of agreed upon benchmarks and achieved goals.

Evaluations

- Evaluations shall be conducted by the Ministry of Congregational Health every six months following the call of a pastor and the initiation of a congregation's Revitalization Plan. Each evaluation will be preceded by a written self-evaluation to be submitted by the Session.
- The six-month evaluation will focus on the investment and energy of the members of the congregation. It will include written recommendations for modifications to the Plan that may be considered desirable, along with other feedback.
- The twelve-month evaluation will assess the progress of the congregation toward the achievement of the goals set forth in the Plan. Steps taken to date and all tangible results observed will be examined. The evaluation will include any written modifications to the Plan deemed appropriate along with other recommendations and feedback from the MCH.
- The eighteen-month evaluation will focus on progress observed toward the goals of the revised Plan and the results of the implementation of any recommendations contained in the six month evaluation. The MCH will provide recommendations and additional feedback to the congregation.
- The twenty-four-month evaluation will examine the achievements of the congregation in the fulfillment of the goals of the Plan.
- The thirty-month and thirty-six-month evaluations will examine the achievements of the congregation in the fulfillment of the goals of the Plan. In addition, the congregation and the MCH will jointly determine next steps for the pursuit of the congregation's continued life and ministry.

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CONSULTANT VIABILITY ASSESSMENT FORM

Church Name

CONFIDENTIAL

To help the Ministry of Congregational Health determine whether engaging full-time called and installed pastoral leadership will be appropriate for this congregation, please provide answers to the following questions. There is an assumption that, by this time, both the Holy Cow! Congregational Assessment Tool and MissionInsite data search have been completed. ***Please keep this information confidential until you present this report to the Ministry of Congregational Health for review.***

Please respond to the following:

1. How does the Holy Cow! Assessment data describe the level of vitality in the congregation?

2. How does the MissionInsite data describe the level of vitality in the community?

3. To what degree does the congregation espouse a willingness to bring about change? How has this been expressed?

4. Please attach indications of the financial health of the congregation for the past 3 years (e.g., budget revenue, investment funds and their restrictions, pledging/giving history, other sources of income).

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PASTORAL LEADERSHIP GRANT APPLICATION

Congregation Name: _____ PIN: _____

Address: _____

Session Clerk: _____ Session Moderator: _____

Contact Person for Grant: _____

Address: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Home/Work Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Congregation Membership: _____ Average Worship Attendance: _____

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In what ways is your congregation demonstrating its commitment to the process of congregational revitalization?

In what ways has "Holy Cow!" impacted your thinking on congregational revitalization?

In what ways has “MissionInsite” impacted your thinking on congregational revitalization?

Where do members of your congregation see God at work in your community?

As you seek God’s call, based on what you learned through participation in “Holy Cow!” and “MissionInsite,” what three things do you intend to pursue in the process of revitalizing your congregation?

Provide plans, goals, and timelines for each of them.

The Session of _____ met on _____ and voted
(church) (date)
affirmatively on this matter, fully understanding the expectations of this request.

Signed:

Clerk of Session

Date