

Office of Congregational Development

New England Conference of the United Methodist Church
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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Congregational Development Together For Tomorrow Grants

Introduction:

In 2005, the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church initiated the Together for Tomorrow capital funds program that included a 22.5% share for Congregational Development. The Together for Tomorrow case statement reads:

United Methodists are called to make disciples for Jesus Christ. We do this by providing for new congregations and by supporting existing congregations that show emerging opportunities and desire for growth. It is not just our tradition to give witness to social holiness, but to **spread** it across our communities.

New Initiatives: At many churches, people are hearing the call to exciting new initiatives. Congregations long in existence will be able to apply to the Transformational Ministries Committee for matching grants to start ministries to immigrant populations, upgrade ministries for children, enhance music programs, and even create jail ministries. Our creative, locally directed programs will help to revitalize existing congregations while at the same time respond to people in great spiritual need.

New Church Starts: Many congregations in New England exist today because United Methodists rallied to support emerging opportunities to grow churches. It is our collective responsibility to foster growth in Christ. And it is urgent that we embrace our heritage of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ anew and let it move us into the future. Superintendents are discovering places where United Methodist churches could be birthed. Typically, the needs are first for study and consultation, then staffing by persons with special training, and then for facilities for new congregations. Expenditures for new congregations may include staff for preliminary exploration (gatherings, Bible Studies, etc.) and for the first years of salary for church planting.

Purpose:

The purpose of the Together for Tomorrow Grant program is threefold:

1. Promote development of local church, cluster, district, or regional ministry initiatives for new United Methodist congregations in New England,
2. Promote development of new local church, cluster, district, or regional ministry initiatives of existing United Methodist congregations in New England
3. Evaluate funding proposals and grant recipient ministries for the purpose of continued development of this annual grant making protocol and process that encourages new initiatives, supports current ministries in the New England Conference and complements other congregational development funding options.

Scope:

Grant proposals will be accepted from local churches, clusters, districts, regional ministries and other agencies or organizations related to the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church. Requests funded from the 2009 grant program will be one-time grants ranging from \$3,000-\$5,000.

Areas of Interest:

- General Operation Support (staff salaries, current program funding, equipment essential to program and ministry)
- Staff/Volunteer development (training opportunities, strategic and program consultation services.)
- Seed funding for new initiatives.
- Initiatives that strengthen the development of ministries with underserved or minority populations and congregations.
- **Funding will not be granted for deferred maintenance needs or new capital improvements.**
- **Priority will be given to grant requests that include matching fund commitments and/or multiple congregations or organizations already committed as partners.**

Application Process:

Application Deadline: May 15th each year

Grant requests eligible for funding consideration are required to have the following information:

- **Contact information:** (Congregation/agency/organization, staff/volunteer name, mailing address, phone, and email)
- **Program/Ministry description:** (one page single space limit) How will grant funds enhance the overall plan of the congregation's development strategy?
- **Program/Ministry budget and narrative:** How will grant funds will be utilized, matched and/or supplemented by conference, district, congregational, or partner resources? Grant requests need to demonstrate a strong ability to leverage new resources including but not limited to in-kind income, services and facilities.
- **Congregational/Agency/Organizational Support:** Required: Local Church Council letter of support, District Superintendent letter of support. In the case of an UMC related agency or organization- a letter of support from the current board of directors and District Superintendent. Additional letters of support from partnering organizations, agencies and congregations are encouraged.
- **Plan for program/ministry evaluation and fiscal accountability**

Electronic application submissions are preferred. Please forward electronic applications to rickm@neumc.org or paper applications (post-marked no later than May 15) to:

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Grant Application Review Process:

Eligible grant applications will be reviewed by members of the Congregational Development Committee, its sub-Committees, and appropriate Conference staff. Necessary conflict of interest protections will be applied to maintain a fair and equitable grant making process.

Evaluation:

All grant recipients will be required to participate in an evaluation process that will include but not be limited to a written final report detailing ministry outcomes, use of grant funding and an onsite visit. Evaluation teams will consist of members of the Congregational Development Committee, its sub-Committees and appropriate Conference staff.

Questions: Contact Rick McKinley at above listed address.