



**Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

# New and Renewing Congregational Grants

## **1. Purpose.**

The Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod encourages and supports congregations in our synod to undertake new and creative initiatives that will:

- Make God's grace through Jesus Christ known to their surrounding community.
- Grow congregations by working with the Holy Spirit to increase the number of people who experience the gospel and share the sacraments, thereby strengthening communities of faith for mission in the world.
- Help everyone learn what mission strategies will and will not work in our context.

## **2. Focus.**

- Congregationally based.
- Local in scope.
- Evangelical in purpose.
- Relational in nature.

Grants are more likely to be awarded to fund mission strategies that are innovative and more interactive with a congregation's neighbors in a way that is contextually appropriate for the recipient congregation. Proposals *must* include a demonstrably new mission strategy in support of the congregation's mission. As a result, proposals that consist solely of advertising, websites, signs and other similar tools are not likely to be awarded to help fund such initiatives alone. Similarly, while social ministry activities can help make a congregation known in its community, these grants are not likely to be awarded to fund such activities either. Proposals may include collaborative work with other congregations, whether Lutheran or ecumenical.

## **3. Rationale.**

Our synod's dynamic and changing mission context invites congregations to seek new ways to reach out in mission to their surrounding neighborhoods and communities. Often, congregations have ideas for how to do this, but find themselves lacking financial resources to do so. The New and Renewing Congregational Mission Table of our synod has set aside a generous, but limited, amount

of financial resources for making grants to congregations in our synod that share our commitment to trying new things for the sake of mission and ministry. The hope is that these grants will encourage new thinking, risk taking, and innovative mission planning, all for the sake of the gospel, which will foster new strategies and programs started in congregations, helping to renew and revitalize their commitment to mission.

Congregations will normally be asked to provide a portion of the funding required for their new strategies and programs, with the synod providing the rest of the funding. If new strategies and programs are found to be successful and worth continuing, it will be up to the congregations to continue funding them past the initial grant period.

In addition, an outcome of these grants should be that congregations receiving them will grow – in their discipleship, in service to their communities, in the number of people participating in the life of their congregation, and in faith.

#### **4. Eligibility.**

All congregations in the synod are eligible to apply for a grant, except for those congregations that are under mission redevelopment.

#### **5. Grant Awards.**

Funding is limited to budgeted amounts and funds that are designated for these purposes. The members of the New and Renewing Congregational Mission Table will review proposals and determine which ones best support the purpose and goals of this grant program. Some funds also require Synod Council approval. In these cases the New and Renewing Congregational Missions Table will make a recommendation to the Synod Council for action.

#### **6. Synod Partnership.**

The New and Renewing Congregational Mission Table and the Director for Evangelical Mission (DEM) wants to work with you to be sure your proposal, budget and budget narrative are accurate, achievable and successful. Our synod's DEM and other members of the New and Renewing Congregational Mission Table are available to respond to your questions and to work with you as you plan and write your proposal. We urge you to discuss an idea with others from the synod before submitting a proposal. Then please direct initial inquiries to our synod's DEM. See section 10 for contact information.

## **7. Proposal Preparation Guidelines.**

Congregations may apply for grants that span up to a three year period. Please write no more than three pages in length (excluding budget related materials) and contain the following kinds of information:

- Description of your overall mission strategy and its purpose, goals, timeline and expected outcomes.
- A brief assessment of what has already been taking place in terms of your congregation's mission strategy and how your grant will enhance, improve, or expand upon that overall strategy.
- A plan to evaluate the initiative's success (and failure) that includes a plan for submitting a final report at the end of the grant period.

## **8. Budget.**

Your budget should contain two parts, 1) a detailed line item budget and 2) a budget narrative that explains how you have calculated specific line items. Your budget and narrative should correspond to your new mission strategy and serve as a realistic tool for executing the grant.

## **9. Timeline.**

Grant requests are received anytime.

## **10. Process.**

The grant will be reviewed by the Director for Evangelical Mission, the New and Renewing Missions Table and possibly the Synod Council, depending on the source of funds and the size of the request.

## **11. Questions, Additional Information and Consultation.**

The Reverend Dr. Philip C. Hirsch  
Director for Evangelical Mission &  
Assistant to the Bishop  
Metropolitan Washington DC Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
305 E Street NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
Office: 202.822.1901  
Cell: 703.598.3758  
phirsch@metrodcelca.org