BASIC INFORMATION

Name of Grant: Meeting our Neighbors' Needs

Grant Applicant Name: Martin Luther

Grant Applicant Email Address: metrodcelca@metrodcelca.org

Application Date: 11/1/2026

Requested Funding Amount: $3,000

DATES

Proposed Implementation Start: 1/1/2027

Proposed Implementation End: 6/30/2027

Tentative Events: 1/3, 2/7, 3/7, 4/4, 5/2, 6/6

PROJECT SUMMARY

In the greater Washington region, there are a growing number of households experiencing food insecurity (2026 Hunger Report, Capital Area Food Bank). Rising costs of housing – especially in our church's neighborhood in Southwest DC – federal lay-offs, and changes to social safety net programs, like SNAP Benefits exacerbate these challenges, even though recent development has increased food access. Our congregation has observed a growing number of neighbors seeking assistance through local food pantries and other community support organizations.

We would like to support our neighbors experiencing food insecurity by hosting a series of monthly shared meals on the first Sunday night of each month (1/3, 2/7, 3/7, 4/4, 5/2, 6/6) for our congregation and community residents in our church's neighborhood. We will collaborate with local schools, food-assistance programs, and other local community organizations to invite participants and identify individuals who may benefit from increased access to support. We would like to emphasize relationship-building and community engagement, inviting all of our members, staff at the local organizations, and local representatives, in addition to community participants.

At each event, we would like to provide a free meal held in our fellowship hall. We will have enough volunteer engagement to fully host the event, but, on invitations to community members, we would like to invite community members to join us in preparing the meal at 3:00 PM to eat at 5:00 PM. We plan to have information about available community resources, informal opportunities for conversation and fellowship, and opportunities for participant feedback. We will also have volunteers to provide child care if necessary so parents can take part in learning about resources. We hope these events will not only feed our neighbors, but also build community and relationships between participants and support networks.

We plan to advertise on social media of the church and our partner community organizations. We will print flyers to post in the neighborhood and our church windows, and for our partners to give out (~$75). We will also print inserts for our A-frame signs (~$75). We anticipate hosting six community meals with approximately 50 participants at each (~$500-$600). While our church has reusable serving utensils, we will need to purchase disposable plates, cups, napkins and utensils (~$150), in addition to foil pans and takeout containers (~$150), in addition to name tags, markers, and coloring sheets for children (~$50).

Item	Approx. Cost
Food and Drinks	$3500
Hospitality Supplies	$350
Outreach Materials	$150
SUM	$4000

We plan to share our outcomes on our church's social media, as well as through photographs and a paragraph write-up, as requested by the synod. If turn-out from the first six months of our monthly meal series is successful, we would aim to continue this program by requesting funding from our community partners, as well as applying for grant opportunities from the ELCA and synod.



Fellowship Hall