



Episcopal Diocese *of* Washington

2017 Congregational Growth Grants

The diocese believes passionately in the mission and ministry of the Episcopal Church and is committed to the revitalization and growth of our local congregations and creating fresh expressions of Episcopal worshipping communities. To that end, the 2017 Congregational Growth Grants offer an opportunity for parishes and ministries to dream. It can be difficult to imagine possibilities when budgets are tight. These grants are designed to explore new ways to grow congregations and meet the needs of a changing world by developing and strengthening collaborative models of ministry with grants of up to \$20,000. We encourage applicants to think of the grant as a leverage for ministry, helping to galvanize or encourage an endeavor for which there is existing energy and support.

The diocese also believes that it is imperative to reimagine and better utilize the time, talent, and treasure of its parishes and people, and collaborating on initiatives can help harness the best of what the diocese has to offer. We encourage individual congregations to reach out to their neighbors or other potential collaborators before submitting a grant.

Unfortunately, these funds cannot be used to make-up for budget shortfalls, building maintenance and/or capital improvements. They are not intended to supplement existing staff salaries, although if hiring personnel for a new ministry is necessary, that information should be included in the application. Finally, these grants will not be awarded for one-time events or music series that are not part of larger strategic effort, as there is little data to suggest that such events by themselves promote congregational growth.

What might be possible if congregations worked together to engage a changing world to bring about an enduring faith in Jesus Christ? What might be transformed if congregations had seed money to leverage new possibilities and if that seed money could even galvanize matching donations? We pray these grants help congregations and ministries answer those questions.

Important Information

2017 Congregational Growth Grants are intended to provide funds for initiatives that foster congregational growth through collaborative models of ministry.

There are two application deadlines in 2017: March 31 and September 29.

Grants are awarded in amounts up to \$20,000 and will be distributed during a twelve-month period, with potential for reduced or expanded time according to circumstances.

All grants are considered one-time grants unless explicitly indicated in the application, and multi-year grants must include a strong evaluative process and decreasing dependence on diocesan funds in successive years. The diocese reserves the right to withhold funds in successive years without demonstrated progress. That said, re-application is welcome in those circumstances where a worthy idea has been incubated and further partnership with the diocese would be helpful.

Consideration will be only given to applications that

- Remain consistent with the priorities of the diocese,
- Demonstrate a clear need for which other funds are not available,
- Have received commitment from parish leaders, and
- Include a financial contribution, though not necessarily matching, from the applying parish(es).

The diocese will be especially pleased to consider applications that

- Foster collaborative ministry by harnessing the potential of two or more parishes, and
- Focus on growing congregations through evangelism, mission and/or justice work.

Preference will also be given to parishes with demonstrated interest in the collaborative regional gatherings and are tithing or consistently increasing their diocesan pledge towards a tithe. Grant applications with profit as outcome—no matter the motive—will not be considered.

Diocesan Council will review applications based on recommendations from a committee of diocesan staff and members of Council.

Recipients must accommodate two site visits from diocesan representatives during the lifecycle of the initiative to assess progress.

Please direct questions to Elizabeth Gardner, at egardner@edow.org or 202-537-6542.