



Missional Church Committee Report

Members: Anton Flores-Maisonet (Atlanta), Julia Gingrich (Eighth Street), Elizabeth Kelly (First Bluffton), Gary Martin (Faith), Xaris Martinez (Chapel Hill), Brian Sauder (First Urbana), David Voth (Grace), Matt Pritchard (Atlanta, Staff, ex-officio), Emma Hartman, Staff, ex-officio)

During the 2023-2024 year, the Missional Church Committee asked ourselves the following question: Listen! Wisdom is calling --- How do we listen and learn from those we are listening to, not operating within our echo chambers or with eagerness to fix or mold others into our image?

Missional Church Committee offers three grants which we hope you will consider applying for:

- Anti-racism Grant: For CDC member congregations whose congregants are committed to engaging in anti-racist work together.
- Reign of God Grant: To encourage and resource two or more CDC congregations to follow God's Spirit and be missional people in God's world.
- Emerging Communities of Faith Grant: Designed to encourage the growth of emerging communities of faith in our conference.

Associate Conference Minister for Emerging Congregations Matt Pritchard brings a wealth of experience in church planting and emerging church development. Matt's fresh eyes on policies, procedures, and grant applications led us to make changes that aligned the various grant application processes, clarified information and expectations for applicants, and developed practical mechanisms to support grant recipients through the process and across the funding timeline. Critical areas of practical support relate to insurance, safe church policies and protocols, and financial organization for fledging congregations.

Before a grant comes to the committee for discussion and decision, two committee members/staff talk with the applicant(s) about their hopes and expectations, as well as soliciting information about their most pressing needs and thinking forward toward long-term sustainability. We want to minimize groups re-inventing the same wheels that others have already invented, help them make connections with other congregations that are further along the path, and provide coaching when helpful. Initial feedback from applicants indicates that they find these conversations helpful and welcome the developing connections.

We have discussed the differing needs of new emerging communities versus the needs of established congregations wishing to reimagine or revitalize missions and ministries in their changing communities. There is a need to support both, but the tools and processes are different.

In response to a request from CDC Executive Leadership, we developed a draft proposal for the development of a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion/RER program. One that supports education and training of Conference and local leaders and aligns CDC values across the conference.

Missional Church funded the following grants during the past year:

Emerging Communities

- *Grand Rapids Mennonite Fellowship - \$8000
- *Moveable Feast - \$8000
- *Imagine Cincinnati - \$8000
- *Intention Church - \$8000
- * Ministerio Jehovah Luz y Esperanza - \$8000

Reign of God Grant

- *Assembly/Faith - \$758
- *Ministerio Jehovah Luz y Esperanza, Atlanta Mennonite Church, Americus Mennonite Fellowship, Emmanuel Mennonite Church - \$2500

Submitted by Elizabeth Kelly