

Maine Conference United Church of Christ
P.O. Box 966
Yarmouth, Maine 04096-1966

Application Form for Grant to Churches for 2010

As administered by the
Small Church Mission Team
of the
Commission for Community Life

*If you should have any questions about the process
of filling out this application or
about specific information that is requested, please contact Rev. Linda
Smith, 469-3333 or doemeadows@roadrunner.com*

Application Deadline: October 1st, 2009

Return to:
Grant Application
Maine Conference UCC
P.O. Box 966
Yarmouth, Maine 04096

August 2009

POLICY FOR FINANCIAL AID TO CHURCHES

Presupposition For Financial Aid to Churches

1) There are more small-membership UCC churches in Maine in need of financial support for a full-time or part-time ministry than there are funds available through the Small Church Mission Team to aid such churches.

Policy For Financial Aid to Churches

- 1) Financial aid from the Conference can be used only for supplementing the compensation of a pastor. Please note that a pastor must have standing in a UCC Association.
- 2) Churches are encouraged to develop plans for financial self-sufficiency over a one to five year period, with the financial aid of the Conference. The Team is available to consult with a church in the development of such a plan. **A program which may help your church toward the goal of self-sufficiency is sponsored and recommended by the Team. It is called Parishes of Promise. Information is available through the Team.**
- 3) The Small Church Mission Team will honor a bias toward financial aid to UCC churches in isolated or unusually difficult situations.
- 4) The Small Church Mission Team may offer annual financial grants to a church for a period of up to five consecutive years. After this the Team will hold a serious conversation with church leaders, during which alternatives will be discussed.
- 5) An annual review of the church's progress toward meeting its goals will be conducted. For this purpose, a copy of the reports prepared for your Annual Meeting should be forwarded to a designated Team member.
- 6) Financial reports from your Treasurer should be submitted to a designated Team member on at least a quarterly basis, so that the Team can monitor your financial progress during the year.
- 7) The Team would like to receive a copy of your church's By-Laws.

The Biblical-Theological basis for the work of the Small Church Mission Team is as follows:

The Small Church Mission Team is the agency of the Maine Conference, United Church of Christ, which is entrusted with the responsibility for mission in the State of Maine. We affirm that God works for wholeness in the world through those persons who, under the guiding direction of the Holy Spirit, are, as part of the visible Body of Christ, called to witness to the saving work of Jesus Christ. We seek to be faithful to this call by enabling ministry to take place through support of churches with special needs, by making available resources to nurture emerging ministries, by advocacy in response to the needs of society, and through the promotion of fellowship among the many parts of the church. One of our goals is "to project with the church, movement toward a fuller range of ministry." On the basis of this statement, and this goal, the Team is ready to make available resources in areas other than financial, i.e. church growth, Christian education, church administration, to name a few.

A Description and Interpretation of the Application Forms

This Application Form has been designed to enable the applicant church and members of the Small Church Mission Team to assess the needs and the opportunities for mission in your community. We request information that will help the members of the Team to better understand your congregation, and assist in its decision making process. A member of the

Small Church Mission Team will be assigned as a liaison and, if agreeable will meet with the church to assist in completing the application forms.

The first section asks for statistical information related to your congregation. The second section is designed to help you and the Team understand your community, and provide you with an opportunity to share with the Team some of your plans in fulfilling your mission. The third section of the form asks for financial information

The "Expenditures" part of the form is divided into three groupings: Pastoral Ministry, Church Program, and Church Properties. In each are sub-headings which are, we hope, self-explanatory. There are three columns to be filled in by you.

- The first column can be filled in by your treasurer, using the annual report of the preceding church year.
- The second column should be done in committee with the treasurer, and should basically report the figures from the current year's budget, with any adjustments that seem appropriate for the time of your church year in which you are completing the application. You will have at least some idea of how close you have come in budgeting for the current year, and this is the time to make adjustments in order to finish the current year in a stable condition. The figures in column two should be your best projections of what will actually be the dollar figures at year's end.
- Column three gives your projections for the year for which you are requesting aid. Make your projections as realistic as possible.
- You will, of course, do the same thing for the income side of your budget—last year, current year, expected needs for next year. **You will note that there is no place under anticipated income for you to include any amount from the Team. This is done because a request for funds from the Team is only determined after you have considered all other sources of income, and committed yourselves to raising as much as possible locally.**
- After you have determined your anticipated deficit for the coming year on the budget form, you should evaluate whatever reserves you have available, and determine if any of those funds should be used to help offset the deficit. A reasonable operating reserve and building/repair reserve is advisable; however, excessive reserves held apart from the anticipated budget will affect the Team's consideration of your request for aid.

After determining if any part of your reserves should be pledged to cover part of the deficit, THEN determine the amount you will request from the Maine Conference for financial aid to enable competent pastoral ministry in the coming year.

Ministerial Standing - We believe that the Small Church Mission Team's purpose is to undergird and strengthen the ministry of local churches in the Maine Conference, and that this purpose is best fulfilled under the leadership of pastors who possess the gifts and training which our denomination recognizes in the process by which ministerial standing is granted. Financial aid is granted to churches only where the pastor has UCC standing. In Care, Licensure, Ordination and Privilege of Call are the usual categories of standing.

Application Form

On the following page we describe two new policy decisions which have been made by the Small Church Mission Team, and which need your careful attention.

**NEW POLICIES FOR CHURCHES TO WHOM GRANTS ARE MADE BY THE
SMALL CHURCH MISSION TEAM**

- 1. When a grant has been approved, each congregation thus aided is expected to make use of an assessment tool called the Parish Profile Inventory, developed by Hartford Seminary. Questionnaires are provided for the number of persons who make up the congregation; these are to be distributed and retrieved after about a month, and sent to Hartford for tabulation. A complete report is prepared and returned to the Team and to the congregation. The Team undertakes to provide a visit to the congregation by a Team member or other person who can assist in interpreting these survey results. The costs for this one-time congregational survey are paid by the Team; however, the mileage cost at 50 cents per mile for the Team visitor's travel is requested.**
- 2. When grants have been approved for three to five consecutive years, the Team requests that the congregation give serious consideration to participating in the Parish of Promise program which the Team makes available. This program is an asset assessment and long-range planning effort led by a Facilitator provided by the Team, working with a group of congregation members for six extended sessions over a period of a year or more. Financial grants are scheduled on a diminishing basis for the five-year term of the program. This experience has proved to be one of exciting and illuminating growth in vision, purpose and energy for several congregations in the Maine Conference.**

More information on the above policies is available by contacting the Secretary of the Small Church Mission Team and Coordinator of its Parish of Promise program:

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