



Small Church Fund for Urgent and Emergent Needs

The Presbytery of the James has approved a limited amount of funds to be allocated each year to smaller congregations (with 100 or less in average Sunday attendance) to assist them in meeting *urgent* or *emergent* financial needs. The Small Church Ministry reviews the applications and evaluates whether the request meets the relevant criteria and, if so, decides the size of the grant.

Both *urgent* and *emergent* requests must represent costs that a congregation could not cover itself without financial hardship. Ordinarily, congregations will be expected to bear a portion of the project expenses themselves.

- *Urgent* needs typically include immediate repairs to buildings or equipment on the church property which affect the normal flow of ministry (e.g. HVAC or roof repair).
- *Emergent* needs refer to outreach into perceived new areas of ministry and growth within the parish. Funds for this could go toward new staffing, building modification, program materials, etc. (e.g. outreach to a specific community group, modifying a building to make it more accessible, etc.)

(Note: The Synod of the Mid Atlantic offers a similar grant program. Please visit their website, www.synatlantic.org, or call their office, 804-342-0016, for more information.)

Application

The application process begins with the completion of the POJ Small Church Fund Application which may be obtained at the Presbytery office or on-line at www.presbyteryofthejames.org.

A completed paper copy of the application may be submitted to the Presbytery by sending it to Presbytery of the James, Attn: Small Church Urgent/Emergent Grant, 3218 Chamberlayne Ave., Richmond, VA 23227 or the application materials may also be sent via email to office@presbyteryofthejames.org.

Note that the person who completes the application will become the “contact person” for the Small Church Purpose Group regarding the application.

Presbytery Application Deadline

Applications for *urgent* or *emergent* requests may be submitted to the Presbytery at *any time*. Upon receiving the formal request from a congregation, members of the Small Church Ministry will convene as soon as possible (possibly via email) to review it and make a decision. A liaison from the ministry will be appointed who may contact the congregation for more information if necessary. Once we have received all the necessary materials, a decision will be made on the grant within 30 days of receipt of the application.

Criteria for Evaluating Small Church Grant Requests

The Small Church Ministry will use the following criteria to consider whether to approve requests for funds and to determine the amount of the award:

- 1) the amount of funds remaining in the Presbytery Small Church Grant Account for the year (if funds run low at some point, priority may be given to urgent vs. emergent requests);
- 2) the perceived appropriateness of the project described in the request to further the ministry of the congregation;
- 3) the ability of the congregation to fund the desired project (we ask that a congregation be prepared to use up to 10% of its reserve or “rainy day” account before an award will be considered); and
- 4) the extent to which the congregation supports mission beyond the local church, especially to the Presbytery and Presbyterian-related ministries.

Applying for Both Presbytery and Synod Grants

If a congregation seeks to apply simultaneously for help from both the Synod and the Presbytery (e.g. advisable for amounts over \$5,000, the limit of the Presbytery’s help), application should be made first to the Presbytery with submission to the Presbytery office by **January 1** or **July 1** of the calendar year. The Synod application deadline is one month later, February 1 and August 1. After a decision is made by the Presbytery, the congregation’s application will be forwarded to the Synod for consideration by their deadline date. (Note: A separate application requiring similar information is required by the Synod.)

Documentation Required

In preparation for the Presbytery Small Church Grant application, the following information is required:

- A copy of current year’s “line-item” congregational budget including projected expenses & income (not just “bottom line” totals)
- A current balance sheet including funds in checking and savings accounts, CD’s and other investments, endowments and also outstanding obligations (mortgage, loans, etc.)
- If funds are for a repair or renovation, at least two commercial quotes of estimated expense to complete the project
- If an “emergent” project, a cost projection of how funds will be used over time and an explanation of how the project or ministry will be sustained in the future after the initial grant.

Please note that all information submitted will be held in confidence and not shared outside the Small Church Ministry.

Amount of Funding

Ordinarily, the maximum grant to one congregation for a single request to the Presbytery is \$5,000 with the understanding that if the grant is approved the congregation may not be eligible to apply for another grant for three years.

After Receiving a Grant Award

Awarded funds may be spent *solely on the need described in application*. The beginning of the urgent repair or emergent project needs to take place within 90 days of the date of the receipt of the check from the Presbytery. After 90 days, if work on the requested project has not begun, funds may be requested to be returned to the Presbytery, and an additional application may be necessary. The remainder of any grant funds beyond actual expenses should be refunded to the Presbytery's small church grant fund account. After the completion of the repair or project, the congregation will be asked to submit a report to the Small Church Ministry describing how the funds were spent.

For More Information Contact

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