

Church Relief Proposal

Current Situation: Many of the churches in the Desert Southwest Conference are experiencing a season of hardship due to the financial strains caused by the Covid 19 pandemic, rising inflation, and the loss members. Some of these churches are falling into disrepair as a result of diminished funding from member contributions but are still called to provide critical ministries of care for their congregations and communities.

Proposed Solution: The Extended Cabinet is proposing that the Annual Conference CFA allocate \$200,000 in funds be made available for local churches to request up to \$15,000 for the purpose of funding facility upkeep and maintenance projects. The proposed grant cycle will be for 6 months, at which time a review and assessment will be made to determine the general need of the Annual Conference churches.

Rational: The DSC is currently operating with an excess of reserve funding which can and should be used in good stewardship for the support of our local church ministries.

- a. Book of Discipline ¶ 613. *Responsibilities*—The council shall have authority and responsibility to perform the following functions:
 - a. 2. To receive, consider, report, and make recommendations to the annual conference regarding the following prior to final decision by the annual conference: (a) any proposal to raise capital funds for any purpose; (b) **funding considerations related to any proposal that may come before the conference**; (c) any requests to conduct a special conference-wide financial appeal, whether by special collections, campaigns, or otherwise in the local churches of the conference.
 - b. 7. To advise local churches about making their church buildings, facilities, and programs accessible.
 - c. 3. *Conference Benevolences Budget* - 4. *Other Apportioned Causes*—The council shall include in its budget recommendations specific amounts recommended for all other funds properly apportioned to the annual conference for the support of duly authorized general or other connectional funds. The budget recommendations shall likewise include any other amounts to be apportioned to the districts, charges, or churches by the annual conference for conference or district causes of any kind.
- b. District Superintendents have been receiving request for conference support to fund building/facility projects throughout the Annual Conference.

Steps Involved:

1. Application - Churches are required to complete an application detailing the need for funding and the scope of the project which they intend to complete with the money. (The application is attached to this email)
 - a. One application may be submitted annually for each church. The funding request can only be made for one project (i.e. Roof repair, AC Repair/Replacement, Critical Maintenance etc.)
 - b. If a church has received funds and spent them, and there are funds remaining after all grant requests have been processed, churches may reapply for additional funding in the same grant cycle.
 - c. The application will include the submission of quotes for work completed by professionally licensed companies or individuals. (ideally 3 quotes)
2. Review - The application will be reviewed and approved by a standing committee consisting of the Director of Connectional Ministries, Director of Justice Ministries, Conference Trustees Representative, Conference CFA Representative, and others as deemed necessary by the extended cabinet.
 - a. The application review committee will consult with the DS of the requesting churches to insure the vitality of the church and viability of the project. The DS may also wish to add comment about the “connectional nature” of the church to the ministry of the Annual Conference.
3. Reporting - Churches will be required to provide quarterly reporting of the project, complete with an itemized listing of expenditures that will be provided to the application review committee.
 - a. A detailed list of expected timelines and cost analysis must be provided should the funding request be approved.
4. Support – The application review committee will receive and review the final report and make appropriate recommendations for the continued support of the church and it’s ministries.