



Minnesota Conference

United Church of Christ

Minnesota Conference UCC Pandemic Relief/Recovery Immediate Assistance Grants

The Minnesota Conference UCC is making dollars available to provide immediate assistance to member churches and actively serving authorized ministers. Grants will be awarded in three separate categories on a first come-first served basis and based on priorities named below. Grants will be awarded until funds designated for this purpose are exhausted. Application forms for each grant category are available in the following pages. All applications should be submitted to Conference Minister Shari Prestemon by email: sharip@uccmn.org.

1) Counseling assistance for clergy

These grants are designed to address the immediate mental health and spiritual needs of *actively serving* authorized ministers during this extraordinary and stressful crisis, regardless of the setting in which they serve. Grants will cover up to three (3) spiritual direction or tele-therapy sessions per person (one hour each) with professional practitioners at [LeaderWise](#) within six months of the grant award. (Spiritual direction or tele-therapy from other providers cannot be supported at this time.) Priority will be given to authorized ministers who are not currently receiving spiritual direction or counseling services. Authorized ministers serving congregations that are also applying for a grant in either of the other two grant categories are still eligible for a counseling assistance grant.

2) Website Development for churches (including online giving capacity)*

In the immediate aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, those churches without a website or online giving capacity have faced additional obstacles. This grant program will have longer term benefit for awarded congregations. Grantees will work with the "UCC Everywhere" program of the UCC's national setting to develop or re-design their congregational website. All websites will include online giving capacity. The Conference will cover a three-year contract with "UCC Everywhere" for up to five (5) congregations. Website development will generally take 2-3 months and requires the full cooperation of congregational leaders to provide written content specific to the church as well as other input. Priority will be given to congregations who do not currently have any website, but congregations with only very basic websites currently will also be considered.

3) Emergency Grants for Congregations*

These grants will range from \$500-2,000 each. These requests may assist congregations in one of three ways:

- a) help cover immediate-term regular operating costs in churches that lack the current means to pay their essential bills (e.g. church staff salaries/wages, utilities);
- b) support a congregation's ministry to the wider community, either an existing ministry experiencing higher demand or a new ministry to address a new community need resulting from the pandemic; or
- c) purchase of basic technology needed to support virtual worship or meetings

*Churches may apply for a website development grant and an emergency grant but may not be awarded both grants. The Conference seeks to help as many congregations as possible with a limited amount of funding.

APPLICATION
Counseling Assistance Grant for Actively Serving Clergy*

1. Name of Applicant _____
2. Email address of applicant _____
3. Telephone number of applicant _____
4. Name of ministry setting where applicant is currently serving

5. Role/title in ministry setting where currently serving _____
6. Do you have a spiritual direction or therapeutic relationship you are currently utilizing?
Yes No
7. Briefly describe how you believe a spiritual direction or therapeutic relationship would benefit you during this time. (250 words or less)

8. I understand that, if awarded, I may only use this grant to support spiritual direction or tele-therapy provided by professional practitioners at LeaderWise. Billing for up to three 1-hour sessions in the next six months will go directly to the Minnesota Conference UCC. No personal information disclosed to spiritual directors or therapists during those three sessions will be shared with the Minnesota Conference UCC or with my ministry setting. My ministry setting will not be informed of my application for this counseling assistance grant.

Yes

No

Electronic Signature of Applicant

Date of Signature

Please email this application to Conference Minister Shari Prestemon, sharip@uccmn.org.

*If you have recently been furloughed by your ministry setting because of the pandemic, you are still eligible for this grant.