



Funded By:

Bishop Quin Foundation

Episcopal Foundation of Texas

Great Commission Foundation



# STRATEGIC MINISTRY GRANTS Guidelines & Application

2016

# Strategic Ministry Grant Guidelines

## Overview (History & Future)

Strategic Ministry Grants are funds made available from the Bishop Quin Foundation, the Episcopal Foundation of Texas, and the Great Commission Foundation to directly support congregations in the Diocese of Texas with specific ministries aimed toward church growth. This grant program was formally known as Strategic Mission Grants. The name was changed in 2015 to more accurately reflect the purpose of the program; to fund unique and innovative ministries that reach out into the community to make our congregations known in a relevant way that will lead to growth.

The Strategic Ministry Grant program started in 2005 and since that time nearly \$3.0 million in grants have been awarded to congregations throughout the Diocese of Texas. 112 congregations in the Diocese have received grants since the program's inception. Until recently the program was jointly funded by the Bishop Quin Foundation and the Episcopal Foundation of Texas. In 2015, the Great Commission Foundation joined the Strategic Ministry Grant program to help fund grants directed toward second sites and missional communities (on a pilot basis).

The Strategic Ministry Grant Committee, made up of trustees from the Bishop Quin Foundation, the Episcopal Foundation of Texas, and the Great Commission Foundation reviews applications and will make the final decision to award grants. Strategic Ministry Grants are not grants to help support capital projects or operating budgets. These grants are designed to support church growth and evangelism. Grants will be awarded to congregations the committee believes to have a promising initiative in which ongoing monitoring, sharing of knowledge, and accountability will be essential parts of the process.

The Strategic Ministry Grant program acts like the “venture capital” arm of the foundations of the Diocese. Creative, innovative, and entrepreneurial ideas for how to make our churches more relevant in their communities and have a specific plan for growth are sought out for funding through this initiative. Congregations that awarded grants in this 2016 application will not only have these traits but will demonstrate how their funded programs will continue beyond the time of their grant.



## Targeted Areas for Funding

For 2016, The Strategic Ministry Grant Committee will be specifically looking to fund grant proposals that fall into one of the following areas:

### ***Creative Evangelism Endeavors (Taking the Church Out into the Community)***

These are efforts where a congregation, as part of a strategic plan, trains individuals and organizes outside of the congregation. This might entail holding services offsite. This may occur with community based research, door-to-door ministry, or participation in civic groups. It can include communication materials, training, and program underwriting. However, it should be focused on off-campus events which take the church out into the world and to the people. A key element to Creative Evangelism target area is to make a congregation relevant in the life community in which they serve. This effort must be part of a congregation's overall strategy for growth, mission, and strengthening its ties to the community by building relationships.

### ***Second Campus Sites***

These are efforts where a congregation or multiple congregations, as part of a strategic plan, investigate a new start either in the form of a second site or satellite. Examples of these expansion endeavors have been funded in the past with Strategic Ministry Grants. The idea is that a grant could fund a three-year cycle that will help a congregation or multiple congregations launch a new mission. The goal will be for the new mission to become fully a part of the original congregation(s). This makes particular sense if an emerging area of high population growth is identified in which there is not an Episcopal presence in that area. In some cases, congregations may want to work collaboratively on a grant proposal if a unique opportunity exists.

### ***Newcomer Ministries (Emphasis on Inviting)***

These are efforts where a congregation, as part of a strategic plan, learns how to attract newcomers by invitation. Over the past few years the Strategic Ministry Grant Committee

funding newcomer ministries focused on inviting, welcoming, and connecting. For this year's grant cycle, there will be a major change in how grants will be awarded in the Newcomer Ministry area. The focus will be on inviting. Congregations that will be awarded grants will have presented a detailed plan on how they will approach inviting people to their congregations. This will involve congregations preparing a specific plan regarding how people in their communities will be reached and how these congregations can be relevant in their lives. Assessing their current community and developing a specific plan to reach people in their respective communities in order to invite may be a part of this process.

### ***Innovative Ministries***

The Strategic Ministry Grant Committee will consider funding other ministries that don't exactly fit the three aforementioned target areas. These will typically be very creative concepts that will lead to church growth and relevance in the community. Entrepreneurial thinking is welcomed here and congregations are encouraged to "think outside the box" to develop an initiative that will not only lead to growth within their congregation but could be shared throughout the Diocese as an innovative model.

*For additional information on these target areas and other information please contact: Ms. Karla Randle-Schapansky, Chair of the Strategic Ministry Grant Committee at [karlarandle@gmail.com](mailto:karlarandle@gmail.com)*

*Please refer to Exhibit A (Idea Starters) that provides helpful information about from current grantees concerning the initiatives underway at their respective congregations.*

### **Seed Funding**

Strategic Ministry Grants are an important component of the overall vision and strategic mission of the diocese as they will directly invest in concepts in the "start-up" phase. These grants will provide the seed capital required to launch a concept. It is anticipated that grant proposals will have entrepreneurial characteristics, with some proposals having smaller, one-time funding requirements for research and development-type work while other more advanced concepts may need multi-year funding in larger amounts.

Grant requests can also come from multiple congregations seeking funding for a single collaborative project. Capital related expenditures are not eligible for funding. Grants will be paid over a three year period.



## Application Instructions & Deadline

It is very important to precisely follow the submittal format requested in the application. A fillable Adobe .pdf template has been provided for applicants to use. The application also asks for additional information to be submitted separately. In this separate attachment please provide responses **only** to what has been requested. **Providing additional information not requested or not following the format provided may result in the application being denied.** The Strategic Ministry Grant Committee cannot emphasize this enough so please just provide what is asked for.

Strategic Ministry Grant applications must be submitted by July 31, 2015. Applications should be sent to Ms. Angela Smith, Foundations Executive Assistant, The Episcopal Diocese of Texas, 1225 Texas Avenue, Houston, Texas 77002 or, preferably, by e-mail to [asmith@epicenter.org](mailto:asmith@epicenter.org)

## Selection Process

Applications received will be reviewed by the Strategic Ministry Grant Committee and passed through an initial screening process, mostly to make sure that the proposed concepts are consistent with the guidelines set forth by the committee. The Strategic Ministry Grant Committee will assign an interviewer (one of its own members) to each congregation that submitted an application which passed the initial screening. Applications will be considered in their entirety. If requesting funding for multiple initiatives, it is important to make sure that each component is crucial to the growth plan of the congregation.

The interviewer from the Strategic Ministry Grant Committee will meet with representatives of the congregation on a site visit and will prepare an assessment for the Strategic Ministry Grant Committee as a part of its final consideration. This will take place in the fall of 2015. The Strategic Ministry Grant Committee will award grants and notify all applicants at the end of November, 2015.

## Ongoing Monitoring & Participation

Congregations receiving grants will be required to provide periodic updates to the Strategic Ministry Grant Committee via their liaison. This ongoing evaluation will help in assessing the viability of the project to determine if future funding is required or if the project should be terminated.

**Congregations receiving a grant will be asked to participate in Diocesan sponsored events/meetings/conferences related to their area of focus for which grant funding was received. This especially includes the annual Strategic Ministry Grant Workshop held at Camp Allen.**

Questions - If you have any questions concerning Strategic Ministry Grants, please contact Ms. Karla Randle-Schapansky, Chair of the Strategic Ministry Grant Committee at [karlarandle@gmail.com](mailto:karlarandle@gmail.com)



## STRATEGIC MINISTRY GRANTS – IDEA STARTERS

Following are some thoughts from current grantees about their initiatives and how the support provided by Strategic Ministry Grants helps to advance these exciting projects. The focus areas below correspond to three of the targeted areas for grants.

### Creative Evangelism (Taking the Church Out into the Community)

**By: The Rev. Dr. Stephen Kinney, Executive Director of The Front Porch - All Saints', Austin, Texas**

The Front Porch serves as an outreach of All Saints' Episcopal Church for creative evangelism! At its core, The Front Porch embodies the Anglican ethos with a biblically grounded and theologically thought-out model for doing mission in our pluralistic Austin culture that helps churched, de-churched, and unchurched people alike to better understand and appreciate how the Gospel connects with different, other people across their various sacred and secular sub-cultures. The way of Jesus—and how he emptied himself to create space for others—revealed an enjoyment of the other that brought people together in non-defensive ways. This is our model, and we've found that when we approach others in this way, the risen Christ continues to emerge through unexpected people in unexpected places.

We foster conversation with others outside the church in singularly non-ideological ways through art, music, and myriad other means. Along the way, we've built bridges with lots of different people who've been shut out or made suspicious of "religion" for one reason or another. We've gathered in multiple venues—restaurants, pubs, churches, non-profit spaces, avant-garde theatres, and front lawns—to host conversations and events with artists, musicians, policy makers, chefs, film makers, philosophers, social scientists, journalists, rabbis, and so many others who bring creative and relevant perspectives into real dialogical interaction. Right now, for example, we host a regular Sunday evening "pub church" at Scholz Garten that features live music from one of Austin's best local musicians, a conversation with one of Austin's most innovative or noteworthy citizens, and a welcoming communion service that invites all to share Christ's table.

Happily, this mission has energized the All Saints' community itself by bringing in vital "outsideness" and has stirred parishioners to include and invite different groups and non-parishioners to both on and off campus events. For more information or questions, please contact Rev. Stephen Kinney ([steve@frontporchaustin.org](mailto:steve@frontporchaustin.org)) or visit the website ([www.frontporchaustin.org](http://www.frontporchaustin.org))

## Second Campus Sites

**By: The Rev. Jim Liberatore, Rector of St. Andrew's, Pearland**

Mosaic is a second campus of St. Andrew's in Pearland. It is an outreach/evangelistic campus where worship is present but secondary. Through the generous support of a Strategic Ministry grant, St. Andrew's was able to better serve the west side of Pearland, which is over 10 miles from the church. Mosaic also serves an area with different (a mosaic of) school districts, government and work destinations, and cultures. Our focus at the Mosaic campus is to seek and serve those who are unfamiliar with the Church, bored by church, hurt by church, or looking for a more outwardly focused church.

Mosaic's life centers around regular events offered to serve the local citizens. Our goal is to make friends, which we believe is at the heart of presenting Christ. With help of the grant, we procured a venue in a strip center and began offering these events as well as experimental Sunday evening worship. Our events have included or will include financial classes for both children and adults, a Medicare information night, a rescued dog adoption, a prom for the special needs community, the Daring Way™, night time Vacation Bible School for the entire family, a foster care presentation by Casa de Esperanza de los Ninos, the blessing of backpacks, Experiencing God classes for non-believers, a community food packing for the needy, and a monthly meeting of those in the diocese exploring missional communities. We will be centering home repairs for those in the Alvin Independent School District from Mosaic as well.

St. Andrew's hope through Mosaic is to build relationships in an underserved and somewhat ignored population and this would have been very difficult without a venue within the west Pearland area. Our Strategic Ministry Grant gave us the start we needed.


## Newcomer Ministries

**By: The Rev. Jimmy Abbott, Rector of Holy Comforter, Spring**

Holy Comforter Episcopal Church in Spring received a Strategic Ministry Grant for Newcomer Ministry that started in 2014. With the resources provided by this grant, and by using the Invite-Welcome-Connect method, Holy Comforter has experienced substantial growth in attendance, confirmations, and financial income.

First, using the Invite-Welcome-Connect framework, the grant has allowed us to reach out into our community for evangelism and invitation. Using meetup.com, Facebook, and Twitter, Holy Comforter has established an online presence in our community. The vast majority of our visitors





and newcomers first hear about us because of our digital evangelism. In a rapidly growing community in which new residents do not have traditional social networks, digital evangelism is an important tool to invite them to church.

Once a visitor arrives on our campus, we use an established method of welcome. One of the crucial pieces of this method is our Newcomer Minister, Faith Almond. A portion of her compensation is provided for by grant money. This staff position has been a tremendous asset as we welcome newcomers and visitors. Faith works on Sunday mornings to welcome newcomers and also throughout the week to follow up and connect with those who visited on Sunday.

Finally, using grant money, we connect newcomers to the life of our parish. Holy Comforter hosts a monthly Newcomer Cafe, quarterly Dinners for 8, and biannual Newcomers and Confirmation classes. This is a proven system that connects newcomers. All of these programs and ministries are made possible by Strategic Ministry Grant resources.

Congregation Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Episcopal Diocese of Texas Strategic Ministry Grant Application 2016

Funded by:

Bishop Quin Foundation, Episcopal Foundation of Texas, and the Great Commission Foundation

*If multiple congregations are collaborating on a single project, each congregation should complete Sections I and IV with one lead congregation applicant completing the other sections. Data inputted in this form can be saved. **Please use the requested format and do not include additional information not requested.***

### I. Contact Information

A. Name of Rector: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Contact Person (in addition to Rector): \_\_\_\_\_

C. E-mail Addresses for:

Rector: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

D. Street Address of Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_

E. City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

F. Church Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

G. Church Website Address: \_\_\_\_\_

II. Description of Request: Please attach answers to the following questions using 200 words or fewer for each query.

- A. Statement of Growth Plan: Describe your congregation's plan for growth and the needs that you are seeking to address by requesting this grant.
- B. Proposed Solution: What is expected to change because of this initiative? How will this impact growth? Has this plan been discussed with the Bishop or with a member of the Congregational Development staff of the Diocese?
- C. Components of Initiative: Specific growth or evangelism opportunity for which you will use funds, how much, when, etc.
- D. Goals of Initiative: How will success be measured? Be specific. Use numbers, percentages, expected outcomes, target dates, etc. *(Note: If your proposal is funded, ongoing reporting will be required and used to determine if future funding will take place)*

III. Grant Request & Other Information

A. Total Amount requested: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Year 1 amount: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Year 2 amount: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Year 3 amount: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Total Program Cost: \_\_\_\_\_

C. Amount Contributed by  
Congregation(s) if any: \_\_\_\_\_

D. Average Sunday Attendance in 2014: \_\_\_\_\_

E. Diocesan Participation:

Assessment – prior year \_\_\_\_\_

Assessment – actual paid \_\_\_\_\_

IV. Congregational Information: Please attach answers to application.

- A. Brief History of Congregation
- B. Description of Staff: (Organizational structure)
- C. Current Programs or Initiatives
- D. Prior Years' Financials (past 2 years – income statement & balance sheet)
- E. Current year's budget
- F. Year-to-date Budget to Actual
- G. List other sources of support for the program for which a grant is being sought
- H. Past History with the Bishop Quin Foundation or other Diocesan entities, listing funding received, date received, and status of repayment, if applicable.

Submitted by:

\_\_\_\_\_

Rector

\_\_\_\_\_

Senior Warden

Application deadline: July 31, 2015. Please send the completed application and attachments to the attention of Angela Smith preferably via e-mail to [asmith@epicenter.org](mailto:asmith@epicenter.org) or to her at the Diocesan Center, 1225 Texas Avenue, Houston, Texas, 77002.