

### **Annual Report for 2021 Synod of the Covenant Grants Committee**

In 2021, the Synod's Grant Committee continued to refine its grant-awarding process for higher education and church/parachurch grants. In alignment with the Synod's mission to reflect the ministry of the Matthew 25 Initiative, each of these award categories focused on providing grants that helped students, churches or ministries thrive, address structural racism, and/or engage issues of poverty. Awards totaled \$88,250. The Committee also developed and implemented reporting procedures for 2020 grants with the goal of sharing the good news that was generated from these awards in sharing the gospel.

#### **Higher Education for Christian Leaders**

For 2021, the Grant Committee approved 56 higher education awards totaling \$38,250. The awardees demonstrated their ability to provide Christian leadership in conjunction with the Matthew 25 aims. Four students received awards toward associate's degrees, forty-four for bachelor's degrees, and eight for master of divinity degrees. Students represented ten of the Synod's presbyteries.<sup>1</sup> Twenty-seven students (48%) were BIPOC students. A majority of the students received an award for the first time (n=33/59%), with two students (4%) receiving an award for the fourth year. Videos of a portion of the awardees expressing their gratitude were shown to their home presbyteries.

#### **Church/Parachurch Matthew 25 Grants**

During 2021, the Grant Committee approved eleven Matthew 25 awards to eight churches, one camp, one college, and a consortium of Korean churches totaling \$50,000. All awards were first-time recipients, representing five presbyteries.<sup>2</sup> With the majority of the grants addressing more than one of the identified aims, nine of the grants addressed congregational vitality; six grants included a focus on dismantling structural racism, and seven aimed at eliminating poverty. With twenty-two applications to review, the Synod is blessed with an abundance of creativity, innovation, and ministry potential. In 2022, the Committee hopes to offer video instruction and coaching to help with application completion.

#### **2020 Covenant and Racial Ethnic Grants**

Throughout 2021, the Grants Committee communicated with the thirteen 2020 recipients (eight New Covenant Grants and five Racial Ethnic Grants), seeking follow-up at six- and twelve-months post-award reports. With submissions continuing to be received, a portion of the grants were successfully completed, while many sought extensions due to the extenuating circumstances of the pandemic. The goal for 2022 is to share the resulting stories of transformation and revitalization.

I am grateful for the dedication of the committee members who worked diligently and prayerfully, participating in fulfilling the mission of the Synod through this generous budget. Committee members included Teaching Elders Amy Duikers, Skip Jackson, and Fran Lane Lawrence; Ruling Elders Lisa Allgood, Jackie Humphreys, and Georgia McCall. Teaching Elder Chip Hardwick, Interim Synod Executive Director, served ex-officio and provided thoughtful leadership. This group represented leadership at the church, presbytery, and synod levels.

Respectfully submitted,  
Betty Angelini, Teaching Elder, Chairperson

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<sup>1</sup> Presbyteries represented were Cincinnati, Detroit, Lake Huron, Lake Michigan, Mackinac, Maumee Valley, Miami Valley, Muskingham Valley, Scioto Valley, and Western Reserve.

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