

## The New England Synod Mission Development Fund

### Governing Principles

#### Purpose

The New England Synod Mission Development Fund exists to support the development of new congregations, redevelopment of existing congregations<sup>1</sup> and developing of new synodically authorized worshipping communities on the territory of the New England Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

#### Guidelines for Utilization

Proposals for use of the Mission Development Fund are received by the synod Mission Strategy Table on an ongoing basis, and may come from any individual or unit within the synod. The Office of the Bishop, in consultation with the Executive Committee and Mission Strategy Table, will review completed proposals and accompanying recommendations and submit them to the Synod Council. The expectation is that the Synod Council will receive proposals one meeting prior to required action on any proposal, in order to provide adequate time for review. The Synod Council will be informed each meeting of current proposals in the pipeline, and receive completed copies of any proposals recommended for approval at least 30 days prior to any action to insure adequate time for review.

The Synod Council reviews the proposals and recommendations, and grants final approval for the release of funds to mission development projects in the synod.

#### Proposals for Funding

All grant proposals must include the following

- 1. Cover Letter:** This should present a concise summary of the project. It should be no longer than one page, include the need for the project and the population it will serve, a brief description of the project and its goals and objectives. If the project is a redevelopment also include a brief background of the congregation. Make sure you include the amount of funding being sought. Finally, summarize how the project will be evaluated to measure the success of the program(s). This page should be the last section you write.
- 2. Statement of need:** The statement of need should describe the problem that the project will attempt to address. Also, describe the population that will be served.
- 3. Goals and objectives:** This section outlines the specific goals (programs, outcomes, objectives, indicators of success) that you hope to achieve as a result of the project.

#### **4. Strategic ministry plan**

a. Describe the ministry plan and the capacity of the local leadership team (or existing congregation) to carry out the program and who will benefit from the project. This includes an outline of your strategy/ methodology and timeline to be used in the development and implementation of the project.

b. Include a detailed budget for at least three years. Typically, grants are awarded based on the church reaching certain benchmarks rather than being given out in one lump sum. Be sure to include how the church will fund this project beyond the grant money received (pledges, building use fees, other grants, etc.) Specifically, describe plans for ensuring continued funding after the grant period.

#### **5. Evaluation:**

- Briefly describe the evaluation process and how the results will be used. • Explain how the organization will measure the effectiveness of the program.
- Describe the criteria for success.
- Describe the results expected to be achieved by the end of the funding period.

**6. Local and Synodical Support-** The following letters of support are required: Local Leadership Team (or church council if a redevelopment); Conference Dean or Synod Staff member responsible for the area (Bishop's Associate / Director of Evangelical Mission)

Additional letters of support from partnering agencies, organizations and congregations are encouraged.

All proposals are reviewed by the Mission Strategy Table of the New England Synod. Proposals that receive an initial positive review by the Mission Strategy Table are then forwarded to the Office of the Bishop and the Synod Council for action. Proposals that are approved are then returned to the Mission Strategy Table for ongoing review, including assignment of appropriate tracks for development as defined by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America i.e. a SAWC – Synodically Authorized Worshipping Community, etc.

#### **Accountability for Projects**

Throughout the above process, semi-annual reports are filed with the Mission Strategy Table, and reviewed by the Office of the Bishop and the Synod Council. The following guidelines inform that review:

1. The Mission Strategy Table reviews each project on an annual basis
2. The review is based on the criteria as outlined in the proposal
3. The Mission Strategy Table makes recommendations for adjustments to the project

4. The synod council receives annual status updates from the Mission Strategy Table

### **Receipt of Funds, Investment & Stewardship**

The New England Synod Mission Development Fund is funded by gifts from individuals, congregations, synod-wide appeals, planned giving, and assets from congregations that have disbanded.

All Funds received will be placed into the Mission Development Fund and managed by the Synod Council Priority will be given to new or existing congregations that serve a geographic region where a church has been closed or other underserved population groups reside.

A schedule for disbursement and appropriate systems of accountability for use of the funds are established by the Finance Committee of the Synod for each grant, and regular reports shall be issued to the Synod Council. Funds shall not be released to an approved recipient until a Fiscal Agent or other appropriate management structure is in place.

The investment policy adopted by the Synod Council for this fund shall guide the investments. Earnings generated by interest are returned to the Fund as undesignated income. The investment and use of the fund will factor in a practice of wise stewardship to ensure resources are used wisely.

**Revised by New England Synod Council March 23, 2013**

---

<sup>i</sup> See appendix A for definitions  
Appendix A Definitions

Redevelopment of congregations refers to congregations that enter a critical stage in their sustainability for future ministry. They agree to a radical redefinition of their ministry that includes:

- a defined redevelopment process under the supervision of the Office of the Bishop, and in collaboration with the Mission Table and the Director for Evangelical Mission
- This includes the calling of a new mission redeveloper
- The development of a mission plan consistent with this document and other resources of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America redevelopment plans and/or other ecumenical partner resources.