

New Ministries Mentorship (NMM)

Annual Report

This year NMM sponsored a two-session grant writing webinar focusing on grant writing for churches. Nineteen people registered for the workshop.

We are currently working on setting up a resource page within the RMC website that will: provide names of foundations and governmental agencies that provide grants for congregations; resources for effective grant writing; and grants received by churches in the Rocky Mountain Conference.

The primary responsibility of NMM is the facilitation of the In the Mud grants. This year we received 18 applications for In the Mud Grant funding. A total of \$24,000 was dispersed to fund 13 projects. Churches who did not receive a grant were supplied with other funding resources that were appropriate to their projects. Below is a list of the projects funded and a summary of their mid-term reports.

In the Mud Grants

1. Columbine UCC – Children’s Table at Littleton Big Pride Event. The Children’s Table was designed to provide fun activities for children and families attending the event. Over 200 families came by the

booth to engage in craft activities, play games and listen to the Drag Queen Storyteller. Approximately 20 volunteers participated in organizing and conducting the event.

2. Hayden Congregational Church – Technology Upgrades and Podcasts. Grant enabled the church to upgrade sound equipment and commission original music to accompany the upcoming podcasts. “I greatly appreciated the chance to do this work in partnership with the Conference. This is a tangible sign of mutual support for congregations.”

3. Mountain View UCC – Holiday Karaoke. Grant was used to fund four Karaoke events for young adults in the community.

4. Provo Community UCC – Crossroads of the Community. Grant was utilized to enrich the lives of community members through cultural and artistic experiences. Events included three arts strolls, a” Fall Fun Faire” and a concert showcasing the history of the church’s building. Funding also supported the Annual Carols by Candlelight, student recitals and choral concerts. The events were designed to create opportunities to connect and share their talents as well as form relationships. Additionally, the funds were used to strengthen the Church’s outreach by supporting more inclusive events and welcoming

more community members while serving as a space that provides a beacon of hope and hospitality in downtown Provo. “We value the committee’s commitment to supporting local projects that foster inclusiveness and engagement, and we hope to continue collaborating with similar initiatives in the future.”

5. Mayflower UCC -Improve Delivery of Online Worship Services. Purchase of additional technology and Zoom subscription in order to improve the quality of worship services delivered via Zoom. “Pastors, Church Council members, and congregants who attend Zoom worship have been very pleased with the improvements in the sound quality.”
6. Kirk of Bonnie Brae – Soul Sessions. A quarterly event designed to provide art-based spiritual gatherings.
7. Berkely Community UCC – Provide Nutritious Meals for the Unhoused. Funds were used to provide nutritious meals for the unhoused in their community.
8. First Congregational Church Longmont – Improve El Comité Building. El Comité serves the LantinX community in the Longmont area. The funds were used to construct an enlarged reception desk, enlarge kitchen counters and storage space, repaint interior and install blinds. As a result of this project, “We have

developed a deep relationship with the El Comité staff and we are better able to understand the issues they face. ...We have plans to support El Comité community event work through sharing some of the church's spaces – there is a need to assist the LatinX community to understand their rights and for everyone in the community to have an opportunity to learn how they can productively support the special needs of the LatinX community right now.”

9. Northglenn UCC – Potlucks with Neighbors. Twelve monthly potlucks for families of Stukey Elementary School. Foods from the families' countries of origin were shared. The project provided a potluck and small stipends for families to purchase food from their cultures. The potlucks also provided opportunities for families to share their stories.

10 . Parkview – Hydroponic Food Growing, Over 300 plants grown, plants and cutting distributed, food harvested and given to Food Pantry. The project provided educational opportunities regarding hydroponic growing for the community.

11. First Plymouth UCC – Creating a Blessing Box. Working with teenagers in the congregation to establish a food pantry. As part of an Eagle Scout project a Blessing Box was designed and a plan

developed for collecting and dispersing food to those in need.

12. Black Forest Community Church – Support Youth

Grant helped increase the Sunday School program and participation of children in the life of the Church. A Children's Prayer Ground in the sanctuary has been created and includes a table, soft rug and supplies. Children now participate in worship planning once a month. A pen pal program was established for children to write to church members who cannot attend worship in person. Further plans include the launching of an OWL program for middle school students. "We really appreciate the financial support to get this program off and running. We really missed having families and kids after COVID and feel blessed that they have started to come back. This financial gift has really allowed our Youth Team and teachers to get the ball rolling and offer lots of fun opportunities.

13. Plymouth Congregational Fort Collins – Student

Support Ministry. Youth and staff at the church partnered with LuMin's Student Housing Security Initiative and focused their annual event on Youth for Change on student housing insecurity at Colorado State University. The group hosted a major event to raise awareness about CSU student housing insecurity and to

fundraise for LuMin's Housing Initiative. Over 136 people attended the event including CSU staff. The event raised \$17,000. Plymouth also partnered with Rams Against Hunger that is attempting to address the fact that 67% of CSU students experience either food or housing insecurity. The church has provided a safe space in their parking lot for students living in their cars.

Future Plans: Increase the resources to support grant writing for the Conference including a cohort of individuals with grant writing experience who can serve as resources for congregations seeking grant funding.

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Rocky Mountain Conference Board of Directors.