

Leadership Grant Opportunities



New Church Start Benefit Support Grants

In partnership with the Conferences and Local Church Ministries (LCM) of the United Church of Christ, the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance (UCBMA), the philanthropic arm of the Pension Boards-United Church of Christ, has committed to support new local churches through **New Church Start Benefit Support Grants**. These grants are administered by Local Church Ministries' Faith INFO (Faith, Education, Innovation & Formation), and assist new church start pastors begin their participation in the Annuity Plan for the United Church of Christ or the UCC Medical Plan.

New Church Start grants typically last three years. The amount awarded is at the discretion of Faith INFO/LCM, with a maximum of \$10,000 awarded in the first year of the grant. The amount of the grant will decrease in each subsequent year of the program. A typical grant of \$8,000 for the first year will likely decrease to \$6,000 in the second year and \$4,000 in the final year of the grant.

Upon conclusion of a minister's employment, the grant will end for that pastor and congregation. The pastor may continue their participation in the benefit plans at their own expense, or at the expense of the next employing church. Congregations may apply to continue the grant with their new pastor.

Criteria

- The minister must have authorization for ministry in an Association or Conference of the United Church of Christ.
- The congregation must enroll the minister in the UCC Life Insurance and Disability Income (LIDI) Benefit Plan at the expense of the congregation (1.5% of pastor's annual salary basis).
- The minister must qualify for enrollment in the various benefit plans subject to the normal enrollment criteria of the Pension Boards.

Application Process and Eligibility

- Congregations may apply through their Conferences on behalf of their pastors. Applications are accepted from January through August, with an annual deadline of September.
- Once a candidate is approved by Faith INFO/LCM, they must then apply and be accepted into the applicable Pension Boards benefit plan in order to receive the grant.

For more information, visit Faith INFO at
https://bit.ly/UCC_FAITH_INFO

The minister has the option to choose to enroll in all of the benefit plans (health, dental, and pension) or may choose any combination of the benefit plans.

These grants are disbursed by the Pension Boards in the form of credits applied directly to the benefit accounts of the identified clergy. The grant program is subject to annual evaluation and renewal by UCBMA.

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Herring and Stark Memorial Fund Grants *Continuing a Legacy for UCC Ministers*

The Herring and Stark Memorial Funds offers grants to those who are ordained UCC ministers who have completed their seminary education to create an account in the Annuity Plan for the United Church of Christ and begin saving for a more secure retirement.

Eligibility

Persons are eligible to apply for a Herring and Stark grant if they:

- were ordained within the last three years of the application date;
- are authorized ministers with current UCC standing;
- serve in the United Church and are recognized by a UCC Association/Conference;
- have not received this grant in the past; and
- expect that their financial security in retirement will depend on the retirement benefits from the regular pension contributions from working in the United Church of Christ.

Current Herring and Stark grants usually range from \$2,000 to \$2,500 but vary depending on current funds available and the number of applicants.

Application Process

- Complete the Herring Stark Memorial Funds Application and the Pension Boards' Annuity Plan Membership Application and return both documents with a copy of your birth certificate, passport, or driver's license by July 1 (of each year) to the **Pension Boards-United Church of Christ, Attention: Ministerial Assistance, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 1020, New York, NY 10115.**
- Grants are awarded annually by November 1 to qualified applicants.