

**The vision of Churches Planting Ministries is to see:
...every congregation planting ministries of compassion and justice,
...every ministry seeking God's transformation for the poor and those at risk,
...every congregation finding renewal as it reaches out with the love of Christ.**

Financial Grant Cover Sheet

As we begin the 21st century, the Evangelical Covenant Church and our Conference are encouraging local churches to engage in new ministries of compassion and justice to address the needs of the poor and at risk in their communities. Reaching out with the love of Christ revitalizes the life of congregations as members follow Jesus' teaching and example and build relationships with the poor in our community.

Biblical passages such as Isaiah 58:6-14, II Corinthians 5:17-19, and James 1:27 give voice to how compassion and justice ministries manifest God's love to the poor and at risk. Throughout the Bible, encouragement, commandment, and warning are given regarding showing mercy and attending to the rights of the poor, the widow, the orphan, the alien, the prisoner, the leper, the refugee, the chronically sick, and others on the *margin* of society.

Ministry incorporates word and deed, social action and evangelism. God seeks the best for others, which means transformation for both those who are in need of God's healing love and for his church. So our ministries seek more than mere maintenance. Churches Planting Ministries supports ministries of compassion and justice; churches may decide which category their ministry falls under. Compassion ministries work to help hurting people. Justice ministries work to end that which hurts people. Compassion addresses the needs of people and alleviates suffering. Justice works to right wrongs, or to do advocacy. Transformation also becomes our own story as we extend ourselves in the love and power of Jesus. Our vision for ministry expects that God will bring revitalization and renewal to our churches as we become faithful to ministering with "the least, the last, and the lost." (Matthew 25) Therefore, Churches Planting Ministries grants are given with a priority on increasing relationships between people from the congregation with poor and at risk people in the community.

Grant Application Guidelines

- Grants are available to help start a new compassion and/or justice ministry through a Covenant Church for transformational ministry to poor or at risk people in the community.
- These are one-time grants, but the ministry should be planned as a long-term effort.
- Approval for funding includes a visit from a Conference representative sometime during the year.
- The Conference also offers consultant services to assist in the ministry. A consultant may visit with you at your request or at the suggestion of your Conference representative.
- Funds will be sent to individual Covenant churches selected to receive grants. The funds are intended to mobilize Covenant people toward ministry and are not intended primarily for individuals, other not-for-profit organizations, or agencies.
- Churches that receive grants will receive a report form that is to be completed and returned to the Conference office. These reports are critical for evaluation.
- Please complete the accompanying form with concise and clear language. Submit the application form, all additional pages requested, and a church brochure or a one-page description of the church and the community. *Please submit all items together to the Conference office.*