

 **Issue 4 *News and Notes* Summer 2020**

**Foundation Board Meetings**

The Foundation held two special board meetings to consider applications for grants in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Throughout the Spring, 13 grants totaling $48,285 were awarded to Conference churches and Camp Otyokwah. These grants fell into two main categories: food for individuals in need and various technologies to live-stream online worship. Congregations provided “bags of blessings” for first-responders, gift cards for frontline workers, meals for school-aged children and seniors, and contributions to food pantries. In addition, one congregation is supporting its sister churches in Mexico ravaged both by wildfires and the coronavirus, and Camp Otyokwah is using its grant money to host work teams throughout the remainder of the year to provide significant care for the Camp property. The Foundation is grateful for these opportunities to invest significant resources in local endeavors to meet specific needs.

At its scheduled meeting on May 16, the Directors awarded ten grants totaling $188,788 as follows:

Wonder Ministries $27,000

 Replace HVAC, front doors, and electrical circuits.

Sugar Ridge $13,500

 Replace roof on church building.

Sugar Ridge $5,775

 Purchase and install a generator for the building to shelter people during a disaster.

Wharton $35,257

 Complete Fellowship Hall construction.

GLC – Missions Comm $18,000

 Sponsor teaching/video trip to India and Bangladesh.

GLC – Executive Board $15,000

 Consultant to resource GLC leader transition.

Mendon $4,500

 Provide weekly outreach to unchurched men in community.

Camp Otyokwah $7,756

 Purchase a zero-turn mower.

Wooster $12,000

 Purchase and install digital sign.

Together, the pandemic grants and the awards above total $237,073. We are so grateful for the opportunity to engage in such fruitful Kingdom work.

In addition to grants awarded in response to the pandemic and as part of the annual grant cycle, the Foundation took action to redirect the resources of two previously awarded grants. The GLC Missions Commission requested that the remainder of a grant approved in 2019 as well as a grant which could not be carried through be redirected to CGGC Global Reach in support of cross-cultural emergency needs resulting from the pandemic. More than $18,000 was released to the GLC to be forwarded to Global Reach for distribution in cross cultural settings.

**Grants for the Greater Good**

The Foundation exists to **stimulate life-changing ministry.** One of its vision statements is to “award transformative grants,” i.e., encourage grants that transform both secular and faith communities (*out* and *in*) that develop people. For example, GLC pastors are asking,

* Who is ministering to the migrant workers for the weeks they are laboring in our region? Could or should we begin a Latino ministry?
* If “those who are stretched most are most engaged,” how can we involve more people in cross cultural mission trips?
* How do we reach the men in our community who otherwise would not attend activities inside the church building?
* The glory days of our church in this community are gone. Will we knock on doors to listen to and then genuinely serve the people who now live in our community?
* Can we develop people who will mentor young adults in a meaningful, sustained way?
* How can we develop leaders who will serve our children?
* Can we cultivate cell groups in which young parents can develop Christian community?

Each of these ideas came from conversations with GLC pastors who are thinking about innovative ways to develop people.

The Foundation would love to receive grant requests that put these ideas into practice. We would encourage congregations to use the second half of this year to think, pray and dream about innovative ways in which you can work out the gospel in your communities (both faith and geographic), and then write a grant that will help you move closer to realizing that God-given, people-developing vision.

**Planned Giving Ideas**

The Charitable Gift Annuity and Charitable Remainder Unitrust are planned giving vehicles that return a portion of the gift to the giver while also benefiting a charity. An annuity is a contract that pays a fixed amount to the donor and/or other beneficiary for life. A unitrust returns a percentage of the trust to the donor for a specific term up to 20 years.

Both the annuity and the unitrust may be funded with appreciated stock or cash and provide income tax savings as well as capital gain and estate tax advantages.

If you have interest in exploring a charitable gift annuity or a charitable remainder unitrust, consult your tax advisor or financial planner. For more information, contact The Foundation by phone (419 425 9602) or email (FoundationDirector@cggc.org).

**Stewardship Moment**

A recent conversation with a friend about financial instability reminded me of my own anxiety about money. My friend experienced the perfect storm of job change involving a significant decrease in salary, evaporation of a potential moonlighting gig, and the unexpected need to replace one of the family cars. And I had flashbacks of two different anxiety-producing experiences wondering why I overextended our family finances and how we were going to weather the storm.

Most of us can relate to these seasons of inadequacy and scarcity. Whether we have made poor spending decisions or haven’t created enough margin to accommodate for emergency, we know (or knew) what it feels like to come to the end of the month short of our need.

As my friend and I talked through the issue we mentioned idols, dependency, and trust. An idol is anything save Jesus that captures and masters us, from which we cannot walk away. Haddon Robinson imagines a fly saying with some confidence, “My flypaper,” while the flypaper says more truthfully, “My fly.” It is worth asking whether any of our possessions has such a hold on us that we are in its grasp. It is worth asking whether we bow the knee to any idol.

Dependency is making good, godly decisions and then learning how to live on God’s just-in-time resources, like Israel awaking to daily manna that could not be stored or accumulated; like praying honestly “give us today our daily bread,” in a circumstance when we don’t know how our needs will be met.

Trust acknowledges a good, good Father who wants to give good gifts to his children (Mt. 7:11). I think of 19th century evangelist, George Mueller who began the Bristol orphanages in part to teach trust in God’s daily provision.

My friend and I circled back to the story of deep famine and runaway inflation in Samaria under siege (2 Kgs 6:24-7:20). Elisha promised by the morrow overwhelming abundance. “Could this really happen?” questioned a doubter. But by tomorrow report had come to a desperate city that the enemy had fled camp, leaving behind an abundance far beyond what anyone could imagine.

We asked, could we trust God sufficiently to name, confess and shed any idol so that we would live wholly dependent on him?

And then my friend began to review the past month, to discover that the Lord really had provided some extra work days; that the stimulus checks had arrived; that a replacement car well within their means might serendipitously become available. It quickly became evident that needs were met. Surveying the coming month, there seemed to be quite enough provision on the horizon for those needs to be met as well.

A pattern was developing: the good, good Father was giving sufficient gifts to his children, even in times of scarcity.

Certainly, in this world people are hungry and die for want of daily bread. But the biblical witness is true: God is a generous God who cares for his children, often in the most serendipitous ways.

Pastor Bill