

MISSION FUND PANEL ANNUAL REPORT 2017

The following grants were agreed during 2017.

NEW PROJECTS

Gainsborough URC

Up to £30,000 for improvements to lighting, audio-visual equipment and signage in preparation for the 2020 Mayflower Anniversary Project (400th Anniversary of the sailing of the Pilgrim Fathers). The Church is one of the five designated 'Pilgrim Churches' working with Bassetlaw Christian Heritage and two local authorities to promote the churches and the area as a pilgrimage and tourist destination in 2020. It has been proposed and the Moderator and church have agreed that we hold a Synod celebratory service at Gainsborough in the autumn of 2020. The church's application to the URC Legacy Fund was unsuccessful.

Hope Nottingham

£30,000 over three years (2017 £15,000, 2018 £10,000, 2019 £5000). As Hope Nottingham is not a United Reformed Church, but an independent project renting the premises of the former Boundary Road URC from Synod, the grant is made from the Timson Fund (legacy) and not from the Mission Fund. The grant was only agreed after very careful discussion at the Panel meeting and a visit by the Mission Enabler, Revd Marcus Hargis, which resulted in a revised proposal focused on outreach consultancy and support for church projects in the Greater Nottingham area.

CONTINUING PROJECTS

Grants for the second and third years of three-year projects are only agreed after the Panel has received a satisfactory report from the grant holder. In some cases the Panel asks the Mission Enabler to visit to learn more about the project and advise project managers.

Bulwell URC Children and Families Outreach Worker

Third year funding of £5000.

The church's application to the URC Legacy Fund for a new Discipleship Project building on the work of the last 6 years was unsuccessful. The Panel agreed an ex-gratia grant of £5000 from the Timson Fund to ensure the church has match funding in place to support grant applications to other funders.

Lubbesthorpe Pioneer Worker, Leicestershire

Second year funding of £8000.

Bridge Centre, Gregory Boulevard Community service and outreach

Second year funding of £6000.

Well Street, Buckingham Student Youth Worker

Second year funding of £2,800. The church has since reported the resignation of their worker and will not claim the third year's funding.

ELM Pastorate (Eastwood, Langley and Marlpool) Children, Youth and Families Worker

Third year funding of £5000.

GRANTS AGREED AND NOT YET PAID

Building work at Fountain Square, Tideswell and the Mead Centre Newport Pagnell is expected to start in 2018. The grants will be paid on receipt of invoices for the work.

There has been no progress at Christ the Vine Community Church, Woughton LEP Milton Keynes since the grant was agreed two years ago. In line with Mission Fund policy the grant has therefore been withdrawn.

MOORGREEN FUND

(Capital grants only and only to the 5 churches in the area of benefit)

£20,000 to Marlpool URC for an extension to provide a theatre store and changing rooms.

PLAQUES

The Panel agreed to commission plaques to be fixed to the walls of all churches in receipt of a Mission Fund grant since the programme began in 2009. The wording under the URC name and logo reads "Mission made possible with funding support from the East Midlands Synod." This has been approved by Finance and Property, with the proviso that necessary permissions are obtained by churches in listed buildings and conservation areas.

PROMOTION

The Panel noted with concern that no new applications were received for the October meeting. The Fund has been promoted through the Synod E-letter twice since then. The Mission Enablers are asked to continue to encourage churches in their area to consider making applications to the Fund. We anticipate this will also be taken up by the new Mission Development Officer, Revd Robert Bushby, once he is in post.

Helen Lidgett
Mission Fund Panel Convenor