



For Immediate Release
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MDS, Everence and MCC launch COVID-19 Congregational Relief Fund

Over half a million dollars committed to support under-resourced Anabaptist and related churches

GOSHEN, Ind. – [Mennonite Disaster Service](#) (MDS), [Everence](#)[®] and [Mennonite Central Committee U.S.](#) (MCC U.S.) have joined together to launch a COVID-19 Congregational Relief Fund to aid churches facing financial crisis due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

The new fund was seeded with a combined \$550,000 commitment from MDS, Everence and MCC U.S. The fund will be administered by Everence Foundation. A special committee with representation from MDS, Everence and MCC has been formed to review requests and allocate grants based on need.

"The Anabaptist faith tradition has a long and well-known history of stepping forward to help those in our midst with extraordinary needs," said Kevin King, MDS Executive Director. "This is one of those times. The COVID-19 global health emergency is impacting society as a whole and will require a broad response to help neighbors and communities recover spiritually, physically and financially."

The fund will accept grant requests of up to \$5,000 each from churches that might not have means to recover from this unprecedented global situation. Recipient churches may use the grants to meet their congregational financial needs (such as rent, mortgage, utilities, staff salaries, etc.) or to assist families and individuals in their midst recover from COVID-19 hardships. Churches with [historic roots or relationships with the Anabaptist faith community](#) are eligible to apply for a grant. Priority will be given to racially and ethnically diverse churches serving in historically under-resourced communities, i.e. communities and households that are underbanked, underinsured and/or uninsured.

While primarily focused on domestic relief needs, a portion of the fund will support global partners through the [Mennonite World Conference Global Sharing Fund](#). Established in 1997, the Global Church Sharing Fund supports the ministries and mission of Mennonite World Conference member and associate member churches in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

"The coronavirus disease and its accompanying impacts will disproportionately affect the most vulnerable populations, particularly those who are part of racial or ethnic communities," said J Ron Byler, MCC U.S. Executive Director. "It's imperative that we recommit ourselves to caring for our neighbors, acting generously, and sharing God's love and compassion with all in the name of Christ."

To learn more and/or apply for a COVID-19 Congregational Relief Fund grant, visit everence.com/covid-19-congregational-relief-fund. Individuals, churches, businesses and organizations may also support the fund through charitable donations.

"As people of faith, we are called to serve the whole church and all those within the body of Christ," said Ken Hochstetler, Everence President and CEO. "Everence, MDS and MCC were all founded decades ago to extend mutual aid to others during a time of need, and we welcome the opportunity to work together in support of our shared faith communities."

About Mennonite Disaster Service

Mennonite Disaster Service is a volunteer network of Anabaptist churches that responds in Christian love to those affected by disasters in Canada and the United States. While the main focus is on clean up, repair and rebuilding homes, this service touches lives and nurtures hope, faith and wholeness. To learn more, visit mds.mennonite.net or call 800-241-8111.

About Everence

Everence helps individuals, organizations and congregations integrate finances with faith through a national team of advisors and representatives. Everence offers banking, insurance and financial services with community benefits and stewardship education. To learn more, visit [everence.com](https://www.everence.com) or call 800-348-7468.

About Mennonite Central Committee

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is a worldwide ministry of Anabaptist churches, sharing God's love and compassion for all in the name of Christ by responding to basic human needs and working for peace and justice. In 2020, MCC commemorates 100 years of relief, development and peacebuilding work, today in more than 50 countries including the U.S. To learn more, visit [mcc.org](https://www.mcc.org) or call 717-859-1151.

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