

**Mission Working Group
2025 Innovation Grant Recommendations**

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INV-25-01-04	Cook and Eat: Building Community Through African and African Diaspora Culinary Heritage	Year 1
New York City	Bethel Presbyterian Reformed Church	Request: \$20,000 Recommended: \$12,000

Cook and Eat: "Building Community Through African and African Diaspora Culinary Heritage" celebrates African and African Diaspora culinary traditions through intergenerational learning. Ghanaian elders will partner with Caribbean, Soul Food, and Afro-Latin cooks to teach youth and young adults in their congregation and interested neighbors in the Bay Ridge area of Brooklyn, NY, how to prepare nutritious, affordable meals. These hands-on workshops will build cooking skills while preserving cultural heritage, sharing stories, and addressing food insecurity in their community.

INV-25-02-04	Utica Presbytery Participation in Plentiful Gifts	Year 1
Utica	Churches of the Presbytery of Utica	Request: \$9,600 Recommended: \$9,600

Plentiful Gifts is a two-year process led by Dubuque Seminary and funded by a Lilly Grant. It provides discernment, gift identification, and leader training for persons in small congregations without pastors or with part-time leadership. Utica Presbytery is participating. They selected seven congregations. The grant has funding for mentors for only five congregations. Mentors are paid \$400 a month for two years. We need an extra \$9,600 per year to pay for two extra mentors.

They are serving small congregations with vital ministries. Still, these churches cannot afford installed pastoral leadership, and they need the cultivation of gifts within the congregation to continue to be vital communities of faith. The goal is to strengthen unique ministries and encourage small groups of people to continue their presence as a witness to the realm of God.

It trusts the promise that God provides gifts for the people to fulfill their ministries in partnership with Jesus (see Ephesians 4). It is an extension of the seminary into the presbytery to provide theological education and leadership training in local contexts rather than requiring people to come to the seminary

Recommended: \$ -0- Does Not Fit Grant Perspective

There hasn't been such a group in their area for 8 years, and then it was done by a pastor. Now we have three lay facilitators from our church working together and learning more about our community and bringing our community in. Also, they are excited about the vision of expanding to also run a group for teens. Currently, there are no programs for youth to process loss and discuss their faith together. They would like to offer such a program and bring more young people into the church, experiencing a sense of safety, trust, and belonging as they journey through their grief process.

Hudson River	Interfaith Prison Partnership	Request: \$20,000 Recommended: \$7,700
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The Well-Being Workshop is innovative because it offers a holistic, trauma-informed approach to healing and reintegration, specifically designed for formerly incarcerated women. Traditional programs often fail to address the deep emotional and psychological wounds that many of these women carry, which can impede their ability to re-integrate successfully into society.

INV-25-06-04
Utica

Transformational Trails
Niccolls Presbyterian Church

Year 1
Request: \$20,000
Recommended: -0-

Transformational Trails seeks to resource and support the Utica Presbytery and affiliate communities as they heal from stress and trauma.

Moved to assist spiritual communities in becoming improved sources for healing, they are inspired to share their knowledge and skill in trauma-informed care. They want churches to not only be a community that connects and worships but also one that heals together.

Transformational Trails is a long-term hike that they anticipate will take four to five years before the trauma-informed skills become the standard ministry in the lives of the Utica Presbytery churches and their affiliates. During the first year, the goal is to build trusting relationships, impart information, and develop a network of people who are committed to building and maintaining psychologically healthy communities.

Each month we will provide monthly emails, conversational interviews, bulletins, and resources for distribution to all of the churches in the Utica Presbytery. Monthly Zoom chats will be an opportunity for anyone in the public to engage in our ministry. These hour-long Zoom meetings will provide a structured space that includes mental health education, Christian prayer and worship from a trauma-based lens, time to ask questions, and the group practice of mental health skills (such as grounding, mindfulness, and writing exercises).

Direct care providers will travel to churches and affiliate organizations to serve mental health needs in the form of individual or group meetings (such as meeting with a church member in crisis or a session with communication issues) and to teach classes.

INV-25-07-04
Northeast New Jersey

Glo Girls Empowerment Club
Institute of Music for Children

Year 1
Request: \$20,000
Recommended: \$5,000

Guided by the Institute's vision of HARMONY – Helping Achieve Responsible, Motivated, Optimistic Neighborhood Youth – they are building a community of young arts lovers through instruction, mentorship, and family engagement.

Glo Girls, a 24-week empowerment program for middle school girls, aims to cultivate confidence, leadership, and community. Students explore topics like communication, self-care, body image, and professional etiquette and take part in discussions, events, dance, and team-building activities. Glo Girls emerge as leaders, representing the Institute and their broader community.

Glo Girls is more than just a class; it's a long-term vision that continues to grow. Today, it stands as a class with one of the highest enrollment numbers at the Institute with consistent attendance, with previous

students coming back semester after semester. As long as there is a need for safe, creative spaces for our young girls, Glo Girls will continue to grow, ensuring that no girl feels alone in her journey into womanhood.

This funding will enable the Institute to build on this incredible curriculum; provide additional oversight, training, and professional development for our Teaching Artist, Meli DeJesus; and provide supplies for weekly programming, events hosted by the Glo Girls, and travel for the Glo Girls to take advantage of leadership and performance opportunities.

INV-25-08-04
New York City

Firelight Community
First Presbyterian Church of Brooklyn

Year 1
Request: \$20,000
Recommended: \$12,000

Firelight Community is an experimental collective of mystics grounded in a liberating gospel. It is an apocalyptic interruption of “homelessness” — a term we understand to encompass all of the ways we have been cut off from place and people, unmoored from the relationality that constitutes our being. We join together to keep the flame of hope alive in one another, ministering to spiritual and material needs through community building, street care, theological education, and sacred space. The flame we keep is the Spirit that will inspire a revolution toward a new heaven and a new earth.

This is a long-term project meant to exist as a parallel formation to the institutional church. While conversational with the church’s wisdom, history, and traditions, it is vestibular to the four walls which have so often convoluted a core gospel message of God’s love for all people, and the call to return that love to God and neighbor and self. Yet as the church heals, on its way toward a better articulation and realization of its mission, a wash of humanity does not have the time to be convinced of the church’s repentance; they march forward into the false hope of a secular humanism that leaves religion behind with nothing meaningful to replace it, or they alchemize an individualized spirituality, so often shorn of the deepest truths that our traditions have carefully mediated into the present.

Firelight Community is an alternative and a bridge. It maintains the Christian tradition as an influence and constant conversation partner, but it does not require the adoption of these thought forms for the community to make sense. While based on more general affinities, welcoming a range of knowledge and practices, in time, the presence of so much Christian influence will offer members a new sense of what is possible through the ongoing, reforming, and revolutionizing project of being the church.

INV-25-09-04
Southern New Jersey

Calvary Presbyterian Youth Service Night
Calvary Presbyterian Church Riverton New Jersey

Year 1
Request: \$4,000

Recommended: \$4,000 Youth Leader Development

Youth Service Night is a monthly program for middle and high school students to volunteer in the community. Each month, students will prepare meals for Joseph's House, a homeless shelter in Camden, NJ. The program includes fellowship activities and refreshments for participants, fostering teamwork and relationships. Together, we strive to build a stronger, more engaged church community, united in service and love.

Calvary Presbyterian Church recognized a unique opportunity for their church to deepen its engagement with the local youth community. They saw the potential to create a program that not only serves the broader community but also provides youth with meaningful experiences to grow and give back. By partnering with Joseph's House, they can offer hands-on service opportunities that foster compassion, teamwork, and a sense of fellowship among our young members. This initiative aims to build stronger connections within their church and make a tangible impact on those in need. They envision this as an ongoing monthly event.

INV-25-10-04
New York City

Bedford Central-First Brooklyn P.C. Immersive Music Experience
Bedford Central Presbyterian Church

Year 1
Request: \$20,000

Recommended: \$5,000

Brooklyn has undergone a major diversification of culture and religion, and although it is rich in free and low-cost resources, they are largely undiscovered because of a lack of coordination. Their vision is that this program will unite people with the needed resources in at least two Brooklyn neighborhoods through food and immersive musical experiences, paving the first steps through intentional invitation and participation by local service providers in our weekly program. We envision a Brooklyn where every community member has access to the support and opportunities they need to thrive.

The vision for this program was inspired by a summer music program that was held in 2023. The summer music program in 2023 had a positive response in the community, and they saw that approximately 100 community residents not only drew near, but also stayed and attended the afternoon program. We had the opportunity to provide a variety of music with over 30 different performers who covered six different music genres. During the program, they also served food to those that were in attendance.

They were enthusiastic to see how the 4-week summer music program united the community with the singers, musicians, and church community. Yet, they were cognizant that though there was fun and enjoyment, they were not filling the needs of the attendees in areas such as ongoing food insecurity,

knowledge of neighborhood resources, and confidence in building new relationships to enable their access to those resources. For example, one of the most sobering realizations during their evaluation process was the fact that many participants required permanent housing and other social services to meet their needs.

They would like to offer this immersive experience during July and August of 2025. The goal is to have a successful launch this summer and then follow up with a similar experience in summer 2026 (July and August). We will offer a program for approximately 2 hours that has intermission, which will be used to hear from featured service provider(s).

INV-25-13-04	Trinity Community Wellness Center	Year 1
Coastland	Trinity Presbyterian Church	Request: \$20,000
		Recommended: \$4,500 For Feasibility Study

Trinity Presbyterian Church desires to build the Trinity Community Wellness Center, a new structure designed to provide integrative physical, mental, and spiritual care through a cooperative system in which financial availability is not an obstacle to receiving needed services. Understanding that health, healing, and wholeness are at the core of the Christian mission, the Trinity Community Wellness Center will provide opportunities for preventative care, counseling in various areas of mental health, and spiritual support, focusing on underserved communities and non-neurotypical individuals.

In June of 2024, they began engaging in a very intentional assessment of the needs of the community trying to decide how Trinity can fulfill its mandate to follow Christ in ministry. Trinity is a midsize church with an illustrious past, currently engaged in various small mission projects, but like many mainline Protestant churches, also trending downwards in terms of membership and finances. However, rather than focusing on our institutional survival, we want to be a missional church, responding to the call to invest ourselves and our resources in supporting the needs of the community. The issue of accessible holistic health has surfaced as the most pressing need in our community, and we intend to respond.

Trinity Church sits on a large property, with about three (3) acres of underutilized land being available for the project. A purpose-built structure will make use of the land, generate volunteer opportunities, contribute to the financial health of the church by absorbing some of the maintenance costs, and, most importantly, shift the narrative. Churches that struggle tend to "circle the wagon", slash spending, cancel ministries, and largely operate as a private club for the benefit of the current dwindling membership. Engaging in a project such as this will redirect the energy of the congregation away from survival in a state of scarcity to an "others-oriented" ministry. We envision a three to four-year timeline, beginning with a feasibility study conducted in Q3 2025, culminating with a grand opening in the Fall of 2028.

In order to support the effort, their pastor has enrolled and has been accepted as a Doctoral Candidate at St. Mary's Ecumenical Institute DMin program, committed to acquiring the knowledge base and skills necessary to lead the congregation and the community in such an endeavor. The timing of the degree coincides with the timing of the project.

INV-25-15-04	People & Place --Reclaimed Worship Project	Year 1
Coastland	SueAnn Shiah	Request: \$20,000
		Recommended: \$5,000

This collaborative audiovisual album continues SueAnn Shiah's exploration of post-colonial and post-traumatic worship with other LGBTQ artists and people of color. This sequel to her 2018 album tells a story of what is possible in gathering people and non-human creation after alienation from the earth and one another by recording outdoor live performances in harmony with the natural soundscape. At the literal sites of colonial wounds, worship songs are being reimagined and reclaimed by those historically marginalized and harmed by the church to sing a new song again to the Lord.

This project primarily serves the LGBTQ Christian community. SueAnn Shiah has been actively participating, serving, and leading in the LGBTQ Christian movement in North America and Asia for the last decade and a half. Some members of our community enjoy traditional high church worship music and are served by the many affirming churches that worship in that style. But many of the other LGBTQ Christians I work with tell me how they miss worshipping in the more contemporary style that they feel affinity and culturally at home with but the resources (both recorded and congregational) for that are almost all exclusively white normative, patriarchal/non-egalitarian, and queer/transphobic. Almost everyone I ask tells me the thing they miss the most is the worship, and this project is a direct response to this need that comes up again and again in my pastoral ministry. While there is no lack of individual queer worship leaders, these individuals do not have the resources or infrastructure to record music projects.

INV-25-03-04	Reconnecting Community: Uniting Through Arts and Music in A Welcoming Space	Year 1
Southern New Jersey	Memorial Presbyterian Church of Wenonah	Request: \$19,880
		Recommended: \$5,000

Since the pandemic, feelings of loneliness and isolation have grown, reducing church attendance and highlighting the need for meaningful connections. To help bridge this gap, Memorial Presbyterian Church has partnered with the Wenonah Arts Collective to create a safe, welcoming space for community and fellowship. Together, they host coffeehouse-style acoustic sessions where musicians and attendees can

connect through music, conversation, and support. Looking ahead, we plan to expand with more diverse arts-focused events, enriching our congregation and strengthening our bonds with the community.

Their project brings together people from all walks of life who share a need for connection, creativity, and community. Their ministry serves a diverse group, including church members, individuals facing loneliness or disconnection in our community, partners in the Wenonah Arts Collective, and local musicians and artists who benefit from creative exposure and camaraderie.

For church members, this ministry extends our faith beyond Sunday worship, allowing deeper engagement with the broader community. As the foundation of this initiative, our congregation experiences the fulfillment of living out our mission—creating a space where love, hospitality, and service thrive.

Within the wider community, their services provide opportunities for interaction, creativity, and meaningful connection. Through music, conversation, and shared artistic experiences, individuals find a safe, welcoming space. Ultimately, this ministry is more than a series of events—it is a movement toward a more connected, compassionate community. By bridging social gaps, promoting artistic expression, and creating a safe space for authentic engagement, we address the growing need for human connection in a way that is both spiritually enriching and deeply impactful.

INV-25-21-04	The Great Adventure at Central Young Family Ministry Initiative	Year 1
Northeast New Jersey	Central Presbyterian Church	Request: \$20,000
		Recommended: \$5,000

The pastor’s tenure at Central Presbyterian Church Montclair began on July 1, 2024. One of the first ministry tasks he decided to embrace was getting to know the community by walking the streets, visiting schools, going to community meetings, such as Montclair Interfaith Clergy Association, and visiting the business, local parks, and community fairs. He realized that of the young families living in the community, few young families attend church on a regular basis or are connected in any meaningful ways with my church or any other house of worship.

Their church is home to two schools; one is a Pre-K, and the other is a daycare center. However, no families of either school are connected to their faith community. One of the reasons for such disconnect is that Central Presbyterian Church Montclair has not been intentional and proactive in the community, making its presence known and fostering programs to attract these young families to their campus to share with them what they have to offer, chief among them, the love of Christ manifested in concrete and tangible actions. Even though similar efforts were made in the past, the pandemic (COVID-19), the lack of permanent pastoral leadership, and the absence of a dedicated staff assigned to this ministry initiative prevented the church from making meaningful inroads with the community

INV-25-14-04
Coastlands

Cemetery Project
First Presbyterian Church of Cranbury

Year 2
Request: \$20,000
Year 1 Grant: \$10,000
Recommended: \$17,600

The First Presbyterian Church of Cranbury's Cemetery Project was launched in 2023 to learn more about the historically African American portion of their Brainerd Cemetery, where 90% of the 252 graves are unmarked. As a historic church, trying to do both church and history honestly, they understand that they will always be learning, atoning, and transforming. They endeavor to sustain an economy of atonement learning, inviting other congregations into the generative work of honest history telling. A key component of their work is to apply those lessons to their contemporary context to vigorously apply those lessons to their contemporary context to further the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Connections: One group they connected with is those buried in their cemetery. They have learned not only their names but also aspects of their respective life stories. We have been moved both by grief and by joy. We seek to connect further with them and to present opportunities for others to connect with them as well. They hope to eventually connect with some of their descendants.

They have also connected with various local organizations. From the beginning, they worked closely with one of our neighbors, the Cranbury Preservation & Historical Society. They have graciously provided numerous documents and guidance in regard to further research.

Other churches in their area have shared similar histories and a desire to do a similar project. Many churches in their presbytery have similar histories to Cranbury and are eager to take on their own research and memorialization. They remain committed to helping other churches begin similar work. They seek to provide a blueprint or scaffolding for churches in our presbytery, synod, and beyond to begin reconciling their congregations' history with slavery, segregation, and anti-Blackness.

INV-25-12-04
Susquehanna Valley

Jeremiah Pottery
United Presbyterian Church of Walton

Year 2
Request: \$5,000
Year 1 Grant: \$5,000
Recommended: \$5,000

Through Jeremiah Pottery, the United Presbyterian Church of Walton endeavors to continue to offer multiple hands-on pottery experiences to initiate energy, intelligence, imagination, and love for the 2 Presbyteries (Susquehanna Valley and Cayuga Syracuse) as they are about to begin merging their mission resources crossing the geographical boundaries.

"Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand," the LORD says in Jeremiah 18:6. The invitation is to visit a local potter (or invite one to the community), play with clay, and experience what God is doing in their personal life as well as learning from each other in building community in a new perspective.

Innovative opportunity presents another opportunity for greater things. The art-making process creates community. And its spiritual connection helps make a new worshipping community. At the given

opportunity of each gathering of presbyteries, the project hopes to offer a safe space and activity for healthy interaction and earthly conversations around the clay they are invited to work with.

On Pentecost Sunday, (6/8) and Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley Assembly at Walton United, Saturday, November 8, an outdoor gas Raku firing will be demonstrated featuring a guest ceramic artist. This special event will help focus on the firing process of ceramic art culminating all the works that preceded in the past 2 years of the Synod Innovation Grant period. As a moderator of the PSV in 2025, I hope to bring the message of God, who is at work for two presbyteries in merging and sharing their resources. May the Jeremiah Pottery project be an instrument to communicate God's master plan and the message as we find in Jeremiah 18:6.

INV-25-16-04
Coastlands

Trenton Microloan Collaborative (TMC)
Westminster Presbyterian Church

Year 2
Request: \$20,000
Year 1 Grant: \$15,000
Recommended: \$15,000

Trenton Microloan Collaborative (TMC) seeks to continue creating a community where entrepreneurs who are formerly incarcerated find connections, resources, and opportunities to thrive.

TMC provides zero-interest loans, accounting, and ongoing support to entrepreneurs who are formerly incarcerated for the purpose of fostering thriving businesses.

Through this program, they look forward to connecting and working with additional organizations offering complimentary services that will benefit our participants. They have requested Year 2 funding to expand in-house accounting consultation and assistance because they have found this to be of extreme importance to several of their previous recipients. Instead of requiring microloan applicants to use some or all of their \$2,000 loan for expert accounting consultation, they would be able to subsidize the tax remediation as well as award the full loan amount (once they demonstrate full arrears repayment).

They also want to explore a new in-house business plan development service and have requested funds in our Year 2 budget for this purpose. Only 1 of our 12 participants completed a business plan before their business was launched. Without a plan, business owners are more prone to "fly by the seat of their pants," and their businesses have a greater risk of failing. From research conducted on business planning, it's never too late to develop this type of road map, especially if our sponsored entrepreneurs wish to expand. We believe an investment in this kind of consultation will produce both short-term and long-term benefits.

TMC's board also expects to extend board membership invitations to at least three people who represent racial and ethnic diversity and bring desired skill sets, including financial management, marketing, legal expertise, and lived experience with the criminal justice system. Board expansion will serve to enhance their learning and success.

INV-25-17-04
New York City

Asylum Support Clinic at Rutgers Presbyterian Church
Rutgers Presbyterian Church

Year 2
Request: \$20,000
Year 1 Grant: \$10,000
Recommended: \$12,600

The Asylum Support Clinic at Rutgers Presbyterian Church helps fill a big gap by assisting asylum seekers who lack legal assistance to file asylum applications that reduces the challenge and trauma of the process while giving them the best chance at prevailing in court. ASC, a volunteer-driven, free clinic, involves a series of in-person meetings over 6 or 7 weeks. During each cycle, we build trust; draft thorough applications using the asylum seekers' own words, and better prepare them to continue on their own. They also help them apply for work authorization once eligible.

NYC saw a reduction in asylum seekers this summer, and the recent rhetoric of fear and punitive enforcement policies may only accelerate that trend. ASC will continue discussions about ways they might shift or expand the services they provide if fewer individuals turn to the clinic for help applying for asylum. So far, this hasn't been the case. They helped a full cohort of asylum seekers during Cycle 11. They are in the midst of conducting intakes for the Cycle 12 cohort, so it is too early to tell whether they will see a drop-off. Nevertheless, they want to be ready with alternatives. Here are a few examples of ways they have started and may continue to pivot:

They helped 2 participants prepare Change of Venue motions. In both cases, the hearing was scheduled in another state, which would have been burdensome for the asylum seeker to get to.

They admitted an asylum seeker into Cycle 11 with only 3 clinic sessions to go because his end-of-year deadline precluded him from starting later, something we wouldn't have normally done.

They may offer support to ASC participants who have an upcoming individual hearing by helping them to prepare their affidavit and may help individuals in the US under programs such as Humanitarian Parole apply for asylum, even if they have been here more than one year.

A more significant pivot would involve expanding the clinic to a second night. Rutgers Church has already generously told ASC that they would make the space available on a second night. ASG is confident that they could mobilize the necessary volunteers. For now, however, given the high level of uncertainty and flux, they will continue to monitor the situation and assess the need before moving forward in this direction.

INV-25-18-04
Susquehanna Valley

Hospital Chaplaincy Outreach, Education, and Mentorship
Broome County Council of Churches

Year 2
Request: \$10,000
Year 1 Grant: \$6,000
Recommended: \$5,000

From the beginning of life in Labor and Delivery and the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit to the end of life in Palliative Care, all people matter in their most tender healthcare moments. With the connection of volunteers called to provide light to those in recovery within the Rehab center to provide gentle care to

those leaving this life for the next, it is this very spark that reminds us of God's love in all times and places, especially the hospital system. This project will build a team of volunteers and resources to care for one's spiritual needs while obtaining care for one's healthcare needs.

In Year 1, they were able to hold three informational sessions promoting the work of the spiritual care department. During this time, they learned that being transparent about their programming was helpful for the community to understand how they can connect. During these events, 100% of the participants showed a strong interest in the hospital ministry program.

With the connections made from the opportunities that arose from the Synod funding, they have now formed stronger partnerships that will continue to grow and enhance the programming available within the hospital ministries. The relationships formed will empower the hospital ministry to further reach patients, loved ones, and hospital staff with the comfort of God's hope.

INV-25-19-04
Coastland

Food Pantry Expansion
First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen

Year 2
Request: \$20,000
Year 1 Grant: \$11,000
Recommended: \$4,000

The vision of the First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen's Food Pantry Expansion Project is to uplift their community members in need with dignity and respect. Their food pantry goes beyond providing food; it connects clients with essential resources to achieve economic security, offers their congregation meaningful opportunities to live out their Christian values through volunteering, and creates joyful experiences for their clients, such as home-cooked dinners in a welcoming environment and holiday food baskets.

The depth of need in their community is staggeringly high. For example, this year, they more than doubled the funds provided through our "local assistance" program to community members in danger of eviction or utility cut-offs. As our Local Mission Director expands partnerships with service providers, more clients are referred to the First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen for financial and food support. This expansion requires her to spend more time vetting clients and coordinating with partners, necessitating an increase in her work hours, for which we are seeking funding.

They recently started a monthly lunch-packing program for their partner, Elijah's Promise, providing bag lunches to unhoused clients in the area. The response from their congregation was overwhelming. Similarly, for major holidays, they provide their food pantry clients with baskets filled with food for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter.. They are seeking funding to expand these programs.

Last year, they began monthly community dinners, which provide a homemade, free meal to our food pantry clients and anyone else who wants to join. These dinners have been enormously successful, growing to over 200 meals served each month. About 30 church volunteers fully plan, cook, serve, and staff the dinners. is program.

This grant will enable them to continue and expand these vital programs, ensuring they can meet the needs of our community. The Innovation Grant Year 2 will help provide essential services and foster a spirit of volunteerism and community connection.

INV-25-20-04
Hudson River

Drumming for the Soul
First Presbyterian Church of Ossining

Year 2
Request: \$9,125
Year 1 Grant: \$9,000
Recommended: \$5,000

First Presbyterian Church of Ossining understands that people want and need to experience new styles of worship. By bringing drumming worship styles, they will be fulfilling a need for people who are not necessarily connected with Sunday worship services. This will be an intergenerational program.

They would like children, youth, and adults to see all the colors of the rainbow. They hope to see people not connected or affiliated to any organization/institution find a source of spiritual guidance through our drumming sessions.

The core group of drummers has been energized by spreading the word of this program. They are in the process of being more intentional and strategic in spreading the word about the benefits of being part of this drumming community. People are getting energized to invite others so people feel and experience the benefits of belonging through rhythms and fellowship. Drummers are getting better in developing new skills and confidence while drumming. Every person has been able to integrate their skills and blend rhythms with other drummers.

INV-25-11-04
Southern New Jersey

Disability Ministry: Beyond Limits Ministry
First Presbyterian Church of Haddonfield

Year 2
Request: \$6,000
Year 1 Grant: \$5,000
Recommended: \$5,000

The Presbyterian Church of Haddonfield is committed to creating an environment that is welcoming and safe for ALL of God's people – inclusive of all abilities. They seek to be a fully inclusive body of Christ. In so doing, they are committed to being not just the kind of church Christ calls us to be, but also a model in the community where all people are welcomed, blessed, and fully included. For the second year, they would like to expand their social programming, continue with an annual workshop, the inclusive vocal and chime choir, and build a partnership with the church Mission Committee.

They have learned that true inclusion goes beyond providing a structured program; it means connecting on a personal and unique level with each participant based on their interests, strengths, differences, and communication styles. Having OT volunteers and those with lived experience has strengthened our program's impact not just for the participants, but congregation at large. The monthly consistency of offering service-related, hands-on projects is important to the participants. They appreciate the opportunity to 'give back', yet their opportunities are limited. This is a core component of their monthly program and their growing partnership with the church Mission Committee has been embraced by all.