



Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Care of Creation Ministry Microgrant Application

Purpose:

In order to encourage congregations to actively participate in the stewardship of God's creation, a total of nine microgrants of up to \$1000 each will be offered. Microgrants will be awarded to congregations over up to 2 rounds for projects that conserve God's resources, reduce climate emissions, improve habitats, improve climate adaptation, or reduce pollution. These projects may include lighting upgrades from incandescent and fluorescent lighting to LED, energy audits, planting shade trees, planting rain gardens, projects that reduce food waste, setting up a cooling center, reducing consumption of high greenhouse gas emission food, solar installation, etc.

A Virtual Information Session will be held on May 6, 2025 at 7:00 pm to describe the microgrant process and will include a demonstration of how to complete the application using a lighting upgrade to LED as an example.

Eligibility:

All congregations within the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod are eligible.

Timelines:

The timeline for the microgrant process is as follows:

First Round Deadline: June 30th, 2025

First Round Selection Date (on or before): Aug 31st, 2025

Second Round Deadline: December 31st, 2025

Second Round Selection Date (on or before): January 31st, 2026

We recommend that congregations submit their application as early as possible in the submission period so that we can work with them to resolve any issues with the application before the deadline.

Submission Process:

Congregations seeking a microgrant should complete the attached application form including an attached quote and email to: CreationCareTeamSite@sepa.org, Care of Creation Ministry Team, Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod.

Selection Criteria:

The following criteria will be used by the Care of Creation Ministry Team:

- 1) The project must fit within the mission area of the Care of Creation Ministry as defined by the Mission Statement of the Care of Creation Ministry (see page 3).

- 2) Priority will be given to lighting upgrade projects from incandescent or fluorescent lighting to LED. These projects produce quick returns on investment and can be coupled with subsidies available to small businesses from both PECO and PPL utilities.
- 3) Priority will be given to the projects with the highest reduction in annual energy usage. (See sample application)
- 4) Consistent to the realities of our synod's diverse ministry, at least 20% of congregations selected will have the majority of the congregation's membership identifying as BIPOC (black, indigenous, people of color) or whose primary language is not English or whose leadership represents historically underrepresented communities.
- 5) Preference will be given to congregations that have not yet received a Care of Creation Ministry microgrant.

Results of Selection Process:

- 1) Microgrants of up to \$1000 will be offered each half year, while funds remain.
- 2) All applicant congregations will be notified that their project has been either:
 - a. Selected and awarded a microgrant.
 - b. The application does not meet the Selection Criteria of the microgrant program.
 - c. Meets the selection criteria. However, the application was not selected in the current round and can be resubmitted in the next funding round.
- 3) Checks will be sent to congregations at the time of the award unless otherwise arranged between the Care of Creation Ministry Team and the congregation.

Reporting Requirements

Each congregation receiving a Care of Creation microgrant must submit a report (see page 7) explaining how funds were used within 30 days of completion of the project (unless otherwise arranged by the Care of Creation Ministry Team). The report should be emailed to the Care of Creation Ministry Team:

CreationCareTeamSite@sepa.org

If all approved funds are not spent, unused funds are to be returned to make them available for microgrants to other congregations. (The remaining amount needs to be returned with the final report to the Care of Creation Fund. Please write a check payable to "SEPA Synod" and on the Memo line write, Care of Creation Fund ATTN: Mr. Martin Schwab, Senior Accountant.)

Mission Statement of the SEPA Synod's Care of Creation Ministry Team

To equip congregations and individuals for active participation in the stewardship of God's creation, utilizing what God has put before us in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, so that we may live out our baptismal calling to care for others and the world God made.

The Care of Creation Ministry does this by the following means listed in no particular order (sample actions are in *italics*):

1. Fostering Connections and Communication

- a. **Develop networking opportunities for congregations to share ideas**, experiences, and resources and to inspire action.
- b. **Serve as a contact for funding opportunities** from foundations, corporations, governmental agencies, and the church that support congregational care of creation projects.
- c. **Recommend external partnerships** for the Synod, congregations, and individuals to join and/or partners' resources to utilize.

2. Providing Resources

- a. **Provide resources to enrich our understanding of the Biblical basis of our calling and responsibility to care for God's creation.** Resources to be identified from Churchwide materials and other relevant sources.
- b. **Promote and provide educational resources for implementing creation care actions in church facilities and properties.**
Energy conservation; switching to renewable sources of energy (e.g., solar panel installation); reducing consumption of high greenhouse gas emission foods; reducing use of resources, including food waste; reducing local pollution; engaging in climate resiliency measures (e.g., planting shade trees; reducing flooding potential; cooling centers)
- c. **Provide congregational worship and children/youth/adult education resources.**
Accessed via partnerships (e.g., Lutherans Restoring Creation; Blessed Tomorrow; Creation Care Ambassadors; PA Interfaith Power & Light)
- d. **Act as a resource for congregations** wishing to create or enhance their creation justice ministry.
- e. **Advocate and provide educational resources for congregations to develop action plans for their facilities to meet the goal of net-zero carbon emissions (i.e., become carbon neutral) by 2050.**
Best practices in benchmarking current emissions; implementing plans for emissions reductions; carbon offsets.

3. Foster public policy advocacy and identify advocacy opportunities on behalf of creation

*Partnership with Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Pennsylvania (LAMPa;
<https://www.lutheranadvocacypa.org/>)*

4. **Nurture hope in youth** who are troubled by the prospects for our planet by providing a beacon of hope.

Emissions reductions are achievable and consistent with our calling to care for God's creation.



SEPA Synod Care of Creation Ministry Microgrant Application

Complete and submit to:

Care for Creation Ministry Team

Email: CreationCareTeamSite@sepa.org

If you would like assistance completing this application, please contact CreationCareTeamSite@sepa.org

Congregation:

Name:

Address:

Phone Number; ____-____-_____ Email:

Conference (include county if different than the conference):

Pastor (Name, Pronouns, Email):

Project Name:

Project Leader(s):

Person 1 (Name, Pronouns, Email, Phone):

Person 2 (optional) (Name, Pronouns, Email, Phone):

Project Timeline:

Start: ____/____/____ End: ____/____/____



Project Description:

Please attach the quote for this project, and any additional information, as needed. Only projects with quotes will be reviewed.

1. Please describe the project for which a microgrant of up to \$1000 is requested. *[Note: priority is given to lighting upgrade projects with the highest percentage reduction in electricity usage (kWh), which can be determined by a free PECO/PPL energy audit.] [100 words or less]*

2. Please describe the environmental/sustainability impact of your project. [Note: please email CreationCareTeamSite@sepa.org to ask questions. It is not desired that this section be a barrier for application.] [100 words or less]

3. If an energy reduction project, how much energy will it save (kWh, ccf of natural gas, or gallons of fuel oil)? What is the percentage of energy usage of the same type that would be saved?

4. How will this project impact your church community or the wider community? [100 words or less]

5. Are other partners involved in this project? Yes No If so, please identify them and their role:

6. Are you applying for or have you received other funds for this project? Yes No If so, please specify amount(s) and source(s):



**SEPA Synod Care of Creation Ministry
Microgrant Funding Determination**

Status: Approved

Approved by: _____

Approval Date: ____/____/____

Approved amount: \$ ____.

Needs Modification

Please make the following Modifications and resubmit:

Not selected, eligible for the next round

Ineligible for funding



**SEPA Synod Care of Creation Ministry
Microgrant Report**

Date Report Submitted: ____/____/____

*(This report is to be submitted **within 30 days of the completion of the project, this date can be extended depending on project and approval by the Care of Creation Ministry Team.**)*

Church Name and Address:

Contact Name, Phone Number, and Email:

Project Name:

Explanation of How the Funds Were Used:

(attach additional information as needed and include receipts for purchases or services performed, photos of work accomplished, etc.)

Additional Information:

Microgrant Funding Received: \$ _____.____

Total Amount Used: \$ _____.____

Amount of Grant Remaining, if any: \$ _____.____

(The remaining amount needs to be returned to the Care of Creation Fund. Please write a check payable to "SEPA Synod" and on the Memo line write, Care of Creation Fund ATTN: Mr. Martin Schwab, Senior Accountant.)

[Email this report to the Care of Creation Ministry Team: CreationCareTeamSite@sepa.org.]