

 **Issue 9 *News and Notes* Fall 2021**

***Faith in Action through some of the 2021 Grant Awards***



The Foundation’s mission is *To Stimulate Life-Changing Ministry*, to encourage and equip the Conference and its affiliates to identify what the Lord may be calling us to achieve and then supporting that work.

The Foundation provides two granting streams. As part of the normal annual grant cycle, in 2021 The Foundation awarded fourteen grants totaling $179,775. The other stream awards a maximum of $5,000 in matching funds as Micro-Grants to reach into the community with the Gospel or to develop disciples in the congregation. To date $18,600 has been awarded through Micro-Grants. We are thrilled with the response to this micro grant program and would encourage congregations to reach out to The Foundation and to submit an application which may be found on the website at [www.Foundationglc@cggc.org](http://www.Foundationglc@cggc.org).

We are devoting a portion of this newsletter to report on the work that the Lord is doing through several of the 2021 grants:

The Michigan Youth and Family Camp is committed to developing and raising up the next generation of leaders. As part of its multi-generational family camp, the program specifically targets leaders in training (LIT). This past summer the Camp invited a team from Crossroads Church near Cincinnati to help provide an intentional focus on equipping young people as leaders who can serve the church and the camp well into the next generation.

As a result of Covid, Camp Otyokwah made a commitment to hold as much of its programming outside as possible. The Camp wrote a grant to purchase a large tent for worship and small groups, and in inclement weather, recreation. Unfortunately, the tent was not completed in time for camping season and a rental was substituted. It was affectionately dubbed “the circus tent,” but worked quite well, nonetheless.

Mt. Tabor was awarded a matched grant for food and equipment to sponsor a worship service and picnic at the park in Celina. As a result, several families began attending the congregation, leading to a decision of individuals to follow the Lord in baptism at Mt. Tabor’s end-of-summer baptismal service.

Wonder Ministries sponsored a back-to-school outreach to the community, providing games, food, Bibles, and backpacks to those who attended.



Wharton’s back to school blitz drew nearly twelve hundred persons who enjoyed a wide range of activities including haircuts, face-painting, dunk tank, food, and games. They gave away over 360 backpacks and hope eventually to provide all 900 children in their school district with a backpack.

Seville Community Church has partnered with a Christian licensed professional counselor to provide therapy sessions for folks in the community who are struggling with mental health, loss, and grief issues. More than fifty sessions have been utilized.

Overflow Ministries interacts with students from both Tiffin University and Heidelberg University and participated in a community-wide scavenger hunt to welcome new college students to the Overflow worship space. They also provided an outreach event specifically focused on non-believers and those who may be searching for truth. Pastor Giorgio reaffirmed how important it is to “create a space where non-Christians can experience Christian fellowship, kindness, and love and realize that Christians are ok—not judgmental, hypocrites, and mean.” In November they will sponsor a dinner church for individuals to invite their non-believing friends as an opportunity to experience the love of Christ.

This Fall College First began sponsoring Upward Football and Cheer and has 127 youth involved in the program. A brief devotional is provided at each game in which several hundred parents and  Kindergartners through 6th graders hear the Gospel. About one third of the youth did not list a home church, which gives College First significant opportunity to build relationships with the unchurched.

The Foundation is grateful for the partnership with congregations and the Conference in sharing the Gospel. We look forward to continued opportunities to serve and encourage congregations to reach out with ideas and an application for grant support. Please call or connect with us at the contact information below!

**A Stewardship Meditation**

The Lord’s Supper is specifically recounted at only four places in the New Testament. Each account contains the same fourfold rhythm: Jesus took bread, gave thanks to the Father, broke the bread, and gave or distributed it to the disciples (Mt. 26:26, Mk. 14:22, Lk. 22:19, 1 Cor. 11:23f; “gave” is not stated but implied in Paul’s 1 Cor passage). In addition, the same fourfold rhythm is found in the feeding of the five thousand (Mt. 14:19), four thousand (Mk. 8:6), and the experience of two disciples on the Emmaus Road (Lk. 24:20).

That this fourfold rhythm of taking, blessing, breaking, and giving was recorded so frequently suggests a profound meaning for the Gospel writers. In his book, *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places,* Eugene Peterson cites Dom Gregory Dix’ work “The Shape of the Liturgy.” These four verbs not only shape our worship but form our spiritual lives as well.

Is it fair to suggest that Jesus takes who we are and what we offer him: our hopes and dreams, and gifts and skills, and voices and hearts and hands, to say nothing of fruit and meat, or time and treasure that we and the early church would bring to our common life? Whether a young boy’s lunch or widow’s mite or a fisherman’s words, there is nothing too small when freely offered to Jesus that he does not graciously receive. Taken.

He blesses it: lifts it to the Father without criticism or judgment. To “bless” is to ask God’s favor. The gift rightly given is honored by a good, good Father. Blessed.

But then something interesting happens: he breaks it. He does not leave the gift as it is. He allows no pride nor self-sufficiency. The gift belongs to him. Peterson reminds us that God destroys any whiff of self-help or works righteousness. The Lord—and not we—is glorified in this formation and worship. Broken.

And then he gives it back, different, transformed, that we may use it for greater purpose. It’s the same bread, or gift, or skill, yet all is different because it has been transformed by Christ. Given.

It is my prayer that all that I—and we--do is offered to the Lord with no strings attached, a gift that he may use as he chooses. I believe he blesses because he is a good Father. I find also that when he breaks, we are not diminished, but rather transformed for the sake of others. And when our gift is given back, we find it carries blessing—God’s favor--within. Peace!

Pastor Bill

This *News and Notes* is brought to you by The Foundation of the Great Lakes Conference, 700 E. Melrose Ave, Findlay, OH, and its staff, William Reist, President and Robert Stephenson, Financial Controller. For more information, contact us at [www.foundationglc@cggc.org](http://www.foundationglc@cggc.org) or call (419) 425-9602 or (419) 957-2661.