

**Issue 6 *News and Notes* Winter 2020**

**Looking Ahead: The 2021 Grant Cycle**

Preliminary Grant Requests for 2021 are due in The Foundation office on **Monday, January 25, 2021.** Links to the *Guidelines for Grant Seekers* and Preliminary Grant Application may be found in the footer on each page of the website (foundationglc@cggc.org) or by contacting The Foundation Office at (419) 425-9602 or (419) 957-2661.

The Foundation’s mission is to ***stimulate life changing ministry***. It looks for grant ideas from congregations and agencies of the Great Lakes Conference that develop people as followers of Jesus by raising up leaders, deepening Christian faith, reaching those far from God, and transforming communities.

Projects may include bricks and mortar but will likely also focus on ministry opportunities such as leadership development, local or global mission outreach, creating safe space such as a coffee shop to cultivate relationships, supporting students and staff at a local school, providing resources for an outreach program such as Alpha.

The Foundation has already received several applications. If you have ideas for a particular ministry do not hesitate to reach out to The Foundation for input.

**Looking Back: Grateful for the Opportunity to Serve**

Throughout this past year The Foundation awarded $240,073 to congregations and agencies of the Conference and disbursed an additional $18,000 through the Missions Commission to CGGC Global Reach for emergency response to the pandemic.

The **Ridgeway First Church of God** used their grant funds to purchase food and supplies for their weekly food pantry, serving 20-35 families each week, as well as supporting the Madison School District in their food distribution to students.



As a result of the vision numerous families at the church and in the neighborhood provided donations. The Ridgeway Food Pantry was one of the only area distribution points not to close during the initial pandemic restrictions.

In August **Wonder Ministries** sponsored a back-to-school event in a local mobile home park, enabling children and parents to spend quality community time outside after having been confined inside during the pandemic. Another church asked to join in this outreach; together the congregations constructed eight game stations at which they disbursed backpacks, school supplies and gospel tracts, and secured names for follow up. Pastor Dave Carpenter reported that the experience was an overwhelming success.



Earlier this year **Camp Otyokwah** was awarded a grant to replace its nearly 20-year-old mower. The new mower is much easier to operate and maneuver around trees and buildings. And the volunteers are grateful for use of a reliable piece of equipment.

**Year-End Giving**

The Foundation has been beneficiary of several cash and equity contributions this past year. In this rising stock market donors with appreciated stock can contribute the appreciated asset, forego capital gain tax, and receive credit for the entire value of the contribution. To contribute appreciated stock, contact your broker, financial planner, or The Foundation office. For credit in this 2020 tax year, transactions must be initiated by December 31.

**An Advent Meditation**

I write this in the midst of Advent-- the season of waiting--under the shadow of over 300,000 deaths to covid in the US and more than five times that worldwide, with lost jobs and long food lines and shuttered businesses and strained healthcare resources, with scattered congregations and disoriented students, all of us waiting and waiting for the recently released vaccine to spread its promised immunity.

In a recent devotional reading I encountered an unfamiliar word, *stroppy*. It’s British slang for *ill-tempered* and *irritable*. And I confess to feeling stroppy lately, grumpy and impatient, unaccustomed to limiting my comings and goings, uncharacteristically breaking appointments, and quarantining for health and safety. I am waiting like everyone else for this chapter to pass; and I confess that I’m not waiting very well.

Into this experience steps old Simeon, righteous and devout, waiting in Jerusalem for the

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“consolation of Israel,” the coming of the Lord’s Anointed (Lk 2:25f). I wonder what it took for Simeon to wait all those years. What does it take for any one of us to wait for what feels like forever? What does it take to wait well?

Waiting requires patience, an attitude of the heart that more is happening than I can control, that what is happening is out of my hands. Someone described Jesus as being too busy to be in a hurry, that he was thoughtful, intentional, patient and willing to bide his time for the right time, the mature moment. Pete Grieg suggests that God has two speeds, *suddenly* and *slow*! The slow must often feel interminable, like the 400 years before God heard the cry of his people and delivered them from bondage (Ex 12:40; Ac 7:6); like the 500 years between the promised “light for the nations” and the birth of Jesus (Isa 42:6; 49:6); like the thousand years between the promise to David that the Lord will build him an house without end (2 Sam 7:11ff) and its fulfillment in the Son of David; like the long years stretching from the promise in Gen 3:15 about bruising the serpent’s head to the Cross when that head was finally crushed. Waiting requires patience.

But waiting also requires confidence that something is happening, that the light will change, that the bread will rise, that the bulb will emerge, that in invisible places God really is at work. This kind of waiting requires trust, that what we cannot control Someone else is, that Someone good and much greater than we really is at work, that He who promises is faithful, and that while so much of life is out of our hands, it is held by One who is able. Waiting requires confidence.

And waiting requires surrender, releasing what is to come into the hand of the One who brings it, humbly yielding to the work of Another, committing your kids, your spouse, your work, your life, your whatever to the Lord, and yielding all to His hand. Take a breath: your worry will not add a stitch to your life (Mt 6:27).

In this waiting—patiently, confidently, yielding—Simeon was longing for the “consolation of Israel,” the comfort promised centuries before (Isa 49:13, 51:3, 52.9, 57:18) to God’s people through the ancient prophet. On that 40th day after his birth, Jesus’ parents brought him to the temple, the firstborn child presented to the Lord. And in the Newborn, Simeon saw more than met the ordinary eye: *a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel* (Lk 2:32), the long-expected One who would evoke welcome and woe from all the world. Simeon’s waiting was complete and he blessed the Lord.

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To borrow the phrase from Magrey deVega, we are *Awaiting the Already*. God has been faithful and He will continue to be faithful. So, we wait through the dark of the night and the delayed dawn. We wait with patience and confidence and surrender. We wait, knowing that the One promised is already among us, bringing redemption and comfort to all the stroppy and harassed who live with open hand and expectant heart and courageous spirit. May your wait be peaceful and holy and full of eager expectation.

Pastor Bill