

# The John 3:16 Innovation for Ministry Fund

## Mini-Grants Program of First Baptist Church on Fifth, Winston-Salem

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### Frequently Asked Questions

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#### What is the John 3:16 Innovation for Ministry Fund?

The John 3:16 Innovation for Ministry Fund is First Baptist's primary source for resourcing Christian creativity and innovation to serve the kingdom of God through the ministries and mission of First Baptist Church on Fifth. Begun through an anonymous gift of \$250,000 to the church in 2019 that followed a grant proposal for this type of work, the John 3:16 Innovation for Ministry Fund was celebrated in its announcement to the congregation on June 2, 2019.

#### What are the Innovation for Ministry Mini-Grants?

First Baptist Church on Fifth's Mini-Grant Program provides one-time funding of up to \$1500 to for new ministry initiatives and partners in ministry projects, all whose purpose aligns directly with one or more of First Baptist on Fifth's four mission and ministry priorities: (1) cultivating the well-being of children; (2) mitigating poverty in our community; (3) becoming a teaching and learning church; and (4) growing in number and faithfulness.

The Mini-Grant program serves as the core of the John 3:16 Innovation for Ministry Fund. As a "community in the heart of the city called by Jesus to practice bold love of God and neighbor and boundless compassion for all people," First Baptist Church on Fifth in Winston-Salem is called to embody and enact Christian ministry in the heart of Winston-Salem. To this end, our congregation is filled with energy and ideas for new short-term ministries and partnerships that can connect us more deeply to our community and may help us envision longer term plans for ministry and missions at First on Fifth. The John 3:16 Innovation for Ministry Mini-Grants will enable and empower us to respond faithfully to the Spirit's beckoning as we seek to live into our vision for life together and with our neighbors. Together the mini-grants signal that we are in a new season as a beloved community, transitioning from major decisions about our facilities to a renewed and enlivened focus on our continuing ministry in the city we love and among the people whom we are called to serve.

#### How have previous gifts helped the church imagine and innovate?

A recent gift in 2016 enabled a clear expansion of imagination and innovation in our church's outreach efforts by empowering every family in our congregation to take \$50 and their best ideas to 'go and live neighborly'; allowed us to create a new logo and various pieces to help to tell our story to our community; funded our presence at public events like the Bookmarks Festival and the Habitat for Humanity Hammerbird 5K; helped us design and install banners in between our front columns and on the construction fencing to share with the community our core identity and vision; enabled us to have a refreshed website and a clear social media strategy to engage the public; and is allowing us to plan a large event in fall 2019 to invite our neighborhood to help us celebrate the end of our construction.

### **How might the Innovation for Ministry Fund Mini-Grants help the church realize its vision?**

The John 3:16 Innovation for Ministry Fund Mini-Grants exist to:

- Move innovative ideas from thought to action, particularly around the church's four priorities for mission and ministry: (1) cultivating the well-being of children; (2) becoming a teaching and learning church; (3) mitigating poverty in our community; and (4) growing in number and faithfulness.
- Cultivate the church's long-standing spirit of creativity in ministry by supporting new ideas and initiatives. These would be innovative ideas from members and others about ways to serve our community within the focus of one of our four priorities for mission & ministry. These initiatives would unfold in teams of three or more people, potentially funding 30-40 projects over the next two years.

### **What kinds of ideas could be funded by a Mini-Grant?**

The Mini-Grants will fund new short-term ministries and new short-term partnerships with other churches or local organizations whose aims align with our mission and our four priorities. In 2018, our Deacons generated several ideas that could serve as the basis of a Mini-Grant proposal.

These ideas included:

- A coffee station on our corner or in the lobby of the GMAC building in the morning to engage downtown folks walking to work.
- A mobile food pantry that travels around downtown and Forest Park, providing direct access to food for those who are hungry.
- A summer camp or children's reading festival or underserved kids and teens to keep the stream of their education alive while school is on break.
- Literacy education opportunities for under-resourced parents.

- A community-wide lecture series on topics within the realm of these four priorities.

In keeping with the Johnson Amendment and First Baptist's Church's status as a Section 501(c)(3) organization, mini-grants cannot be awarded for proposals that pertain to partisan political events or activities of any kind.

**How do we know what needs are most pressing in our community, which are already being addressed, and who potential partners might be?**

We don't have to reinvent the wheel at First Baptist on Fifth; we can use good information and data available to us to plan effective proposals. For information on pressing needs in our community, as well as ministries and services that are well underway, and organizations working hard at partnering with people in need in Winston-Salem, see the following resources:

Love Out Loud is a local 501(c)(3) organization that works with and connects churches, not-for-profits, and local leaders to address the needs of our community. They are an incredible resource for learning about both the needs in our community and efforts of churches and not-for-profit organizations to address them. See these webpages:

Data on Winston-Salem: <http://www.loveoutloudws.com/local-data>

Local organizations and churches: <https://volunteer.loveoutloudws.com/agency/>

Trainings and workshops: <https://volunteer.loveoutloudws.com/grow/>

Existing volunteer opportunities: <https://volunteer.loveoutloudws.com/need/>

Forsyth Futures is also a local 501(c)(3) organization that researches and shares key data about the causes of systemic challenges in our community. For data and reports on a range of topics relevant to ministry and missions at First Baptist on Fifth, including "education," "health and wellness," "environment and sustainability," and "community briefings," and more, see <https://www.forsythfutures.org/>.

### **Who can apply for a Mini-Grant?**

Members and people active in the life of First Baptist on Fifth are eligible to apply for First on Fifth New Ministry Initiatives Mini-Grants and First on Fifth Partners in Ministry Mini-Grants. Any church staff or members of the Grant Advisory Group who are also participants in a proposal will recuse themselves from all discussion and deliberation concerning the grant application.

Applications will be submitted by a team leader, who must be a member of First Baptist on Fifth and at least 18 years of age, along with at least two other team members committed to participating in and implementing all aspects of the project throughout the grant period, and who meet the following qualifications: (1) active in the life of First Baptist; (2) not from the same household as the team leader or one another; (3) at least 18 years of age. Once these requirements are met for a project team, teams can expand to be as large as the team leader would like and to include members under the age of 18. Proposals for a First on Fifth Partners in Ministry Mini-Grant should include, in addition to the three or more team members from our congregation, at least one team member from the partner organization.

**When can I apply for a Mini-Grant?**

Mini-Grant proposals will be received and considered by the Grant Advisory Group in accordance with a series of up to 7 proposal periods, as funding allows. Members may submit up to one grant application per granting season (see below). Members may participate in more than one grant proposal at a time, but may serve as team leader for only one proposal. Successfully completed grants may possibly, in special circumstances, be eligible for one renewal, though proposals will typically be funded just one time. Proposals will be received and grants will be completed according to the following timeline:

Granting Season	Deadline for Proposals	Notification of Decision	Grant completion; assessment & report due
Fall 2019	October 1, 2019	October 31, 2019	April 30, 2020
Winter 2020	February 1, 2020	February 28, 2020	August 31, 2020
Spring 2020	May 1, 2020	May 31, 2020	November 30, 2020
Fall 2020	October 1, 2020	October 31, 2020	April 30, 2021
Winter 2021	February 1, 2021	February 28, 2021	August 31, 2021
Spring 2021	May 1, 2021	May 31, 2021	November 30, 2021
Fall 2021	October 1, 2021	October 31, 2021	April 30, 2022

Decisions will be communicated to the proposal team no later than 30 days after each respective deadline. Please note that *the proposal process will close as soon as*

*funding has been exhausted*, so in actuality there may be fewer than 7 rounds of proposals.

### Who makes the decisions about grant applications?

The John 3:16 Innovation for Ministry Fund's Grant Advisory Group was formed in the summer of 2019 to oversee this work. This group consists of the following members of First on Fifth:

John Baxley  
Justin Chandler  
Mary Foskett  
Joy Gambill  
David Hughes  
Jessica Moses  
Lynn Rhoades  
Emily Hull McGee, pastor

### Upon receipt of the grant, how will the money actually be disbursed?

Before any dollars are actually disbursed, each grant recipient team leader, community partner, or organization will be required to sign an acceptance form that agrees to the outlined terms and conditions. The preferred method of paying for mini-grant expenses will be direct bill-pay or reimbursement. Further details will be made available in September.

### How is the long-term sustainability of projects being considered?

While the mini-grants are conceived as short-term, one-time endeavors, the committee encourages proposals for activities that can inform, help shape, or advance First Baptist on Fifth's vision for missions and ministry. Proposals for New Ministry Initiatives mini-grants may seek to enrich or expand an existing ministry or they may implement something completely new. In either case, funded activity should contribute to First Baptist on Fifth's sustained engagement of the four priorities that our congregation has named and which are outlined above.

Similarly, proposals for Partners in Ministry mini-grants should explain how the activity that is being proposed for funding will be sustained by the partner organization or will directly contribute to the partner organization's ongoing work in the community.

Funded activity whose success reveals significant potential for longer term ministry cannot be sustained by the Mini-Grants Program, but they can be brought to the

attention of the Missions Committee for consideration for ongoing support and implementation by the congregation.

Where will I find more information about these Mini-Grants and how to apply for funding for a new ministry idea that I and others have?

The call for proposals and application forms are posted online at:

<http://firstonfifth.org/innovation>

Who can I contact with questions or suggestions I have?

Please share questions and suggestions with the Grant Advisory Group by emailing

[innovation@firstonfifth.org](mailto:innovation@firstonfifth.org)

