

**Policies and Guidelines**  
**GREAT COMMISSION FUND**

*“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.” Matthew 28:19*

**1. What is the history and background of this fund?**

In 1978 “The Bequest Fund” was established by the Board of Global Ministries of the Iowa Annual Conference. This umbrella fund consists of 11 separate accounts. Each account is a bequest gift bearing the name of its Iowa United Methodist donor. All funds in the Great Commission Fund were designated for missions, and therefore, administered through the Iowa Annual Conference Board of Global Ministries. The name, “Great Commission Fund”, was adopted in 2000.

**2. What is the purpose of the Great Commission Fund?**

The purpose of the fund is to provide financial resources for United Methodist churches, districts and Iowa Annual Conference Boards and Agencies to fulfill the Great Commission. To that end this fund receives, administers and disburses all gifts, bequests and devises given to the Iowa Annual Conference for mission outreach.

**3. What is the goal of the fund?**

The goal of the fund is to increase the response of the churches of the Iowa Annual Conference, and the Conference Board of Global Ministries to the area of missions. The Great Commission Fund supports;

- Mission Projects
- Volunteer in Mission (UMVIM) projects (see restrictions below)
- Innovative ministry
- Ethnic minority ministry
- District, Conference and UMW mission outreach
- *Short term missionaries* (see Section 7)

In general the fund does not assist with capital improvements, new staff positions (unless in the area of mission coordination), personal attendance at a mission conference, continuing education or community programs which do not promote the mission of the Iowa Annual Conference and its Board of Global Ministries. One helpful question to ask regarding local church projects is, “How is the mission team involved in this project?”

**4. Where does the funding for the Great Commission Fund come from?**

The source of funding is the accrued interest on all accounts held in the “Great Commission Fund.” The corpus of any gift will not be invaded by the Board of Global Ministries, and specific prohibitions and conditions of the donors will be respected. The custodian of the “Great Commission Fund” is the Iowa United Methodist Foundation, which shall manage and make all disbursements upon written direction of the Great Commission Fund Coordinator representing the Iowa Annual Conference Board of Global Ministries.

**5. How much can I apply for?**

Each individual, project or church may apply for two grants. The first grant is not to exceed \$3,000 and the second funding request is not to exceed \$1,500.

*Individuals will be considered for grants only as Short Term Missioners.* (See Section 7)

Additional amounts may be granted any current-year application provided the funds are available and the stated need satisfied the fund’s coordinator and the board’s Executive Committee.

**6. What are the fund’s guidelines regarding United Methodist Volunteer in Mission project?**

- 1) **Outside of the United States.** All UMVIM projects, regardless of sponsorship, which are outside the continental limits of the United States will be considered for funding up to an amount equal to one half of the total needed for materials, not to exceed \$3,000.
- 2) **Sponsored by local church.** UMVIM teams being organized or sponsored for the first time from a local church will be considered for funding, for projects outside the United States, up to the entire amount needed for materials not to exceed \$3,000. If the same sponsoring or organizing local church takes a second UMVIM team, the request is not to exceed \$1,500.
- 3) **Emergency Relief Work.** All UMVIM teams engaged in emergency relief work in or outside the United States will be considered for funding for materials in an amount up to \$1,500.
- 4) **United States UMVIM teams.** It is expected that all UMVIM teams serving within the continental limits of the United States—not engaged in emergency relief work—will be self sufficient.
- 5) **Great Commission Fund doesn't cover travel or lodging.** In general the fund does not cover travel or lodging expenses for mission trips.

#### 7. **What are the fund's guidelines regarding Short Term Missioners?** (See application form)

**Definition:** A Short Term Missioner is a member of an Iowa United Methodist Church (Iowa Conference, if clergy) who indicates the reception of a call to be in mission in a particular country or area for a specified limited length of time. A Short Term Missioner is one who goes to serve individually rather than as part of a team.

**Recommendation:** The person's call shall be affirmed by recommendation of three persons familiar with the applicant, including the applicant's pastor (District Superintendent, if clergy). These recommendations should be in the form of letters mailed with the application form. The application form will also need approval of the District Superintendent and a Representative to the Iowa Conference Board of Global Ministries.

**Determination of need for assistance:** A person seeking to serve as a Short Term Missioner with support of the Great Commission Fund must complete an application which clearly indicates the financial resources of the person, the full cost of the mission, a list of other financial resources being obtained for the mission, and the amount needed from the Great Commission Fund.

**Great Commission Fund Grant:** A grant from the Great Commission Fund shall not exceed \$3,000. This Short Term Missioner grant may be used for travel and/or lodging. The grant shall not exceed 50% of the total cost of the mission. A grant for a second or successive Short Term Mission by the same individual will not exceed \$1,500.

#### 8. **How do I apply for funding?**

1. Secure an application from the fund coordinator. All Matthew 25 applications referred to the fund coordinator will be reviewed without further paperwork.
2. Complete the application with any supporting documents.
3. Sign the application and secure the recommendation and signatures of your District Superintendent and your district representative to the Board of Global Ministries
4. All applications must be approved by the Board of Global Ministries. The Board meets in January, April, and September. Applications must be received by the fund coordinator one week prior to the meeting of the Board.
5. Emergency requests received by the fund coordinator must be approved by the Executive Committee of the Board of Global Ministries.

**9. When will I learn if I received the grant?**

Within one week after the meeting of the Board, the fund coordinator will notify you and send a written request to the Conference Treasurer releasing the money. Typically you will receive the grant within 30 days.

**10. Do I need to send in an evaluation?**

Yes, by December 1 of the year of the grant, please send a brief summary to the Great Commission Fund Coordinator indicating the results of your mission project. These evaluations are reported to the full board. *Any further grants will be contingent upon receiving evaluation reports.*