

FUND YOUR VISION PROPOSAL SUMMARY

Renewal of Ecumenical House Campus Ministry

Submitted by: **Old First Presbyterian Church Session Approval: January 19, 2021**
Seventh Avenue Presbyterian Church January 12, 2021

Amount requested: **\$50,000**

Categories addressed by this proposal: **Youth and College Ministry, Food Insecurity, Systemic Racism**

This proposal is the second year of the multi-year grant submitted to Fund Your Vision in early 2020. It supports the continuation of the chaplaincy outreach through Ecumenical House Campus Ministry (EcHouse) at SF State. Covid restrictions have had a significant impact on outreach activities. Nonetheless, 60-90 students and young adults have met in small groups via Zoom throughout last year.

Topics of discussion have focused on anti-racism, wellness/group spiritual direction, Lectionary study, LGBTQIA+ theology, and pop culture and theology. Two of the small groups are focused on the issue of systemic racism and are making plans for action.

Goodworks Café is a draw for 90-100 SFSU students who drop by for free coffee and sandwiches and access to the food pantry, a model of Christian living and giving that does not involve words. This type of no-strings-attached outreach combats food security issues for students and often leads to opportunities for further engagement with the young people.

The main use of funding from the grant will be the support of the full-time chaplain who will work with other ministry participants to explore and shape what the church will look like in the 21st century, unfettered but supported by long traditions.

Maintenance of the EcHouse property at SF State is also a component of the proposal, with funds from the proposed new rental program directed to overall support of the house and the program.

Recommended by Fund Your Vision Panel: ☒ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Amount recommended: **\$40,000** (The FYV Grant Panel is recommending a reduction of \$10,000 from the original amount requested due to the elimination of the covenant community living component from this second-year grant proposal.)

West Bay Region, San Francisco Presbytery
FUND YOUR VISION
Grant Application
March 1, 2021

Opening comments

Last year, we made this application for three years of funding, not realizing we would have to re-apply each year. We had hoped for a \$90,000 grant over three years. Therefore, we did not apply for the full \$50,000 allowable each year. Realizing now, that this will probably be our last chance for funding, we are requesting the full \$50,000 allowed in hopes to continue our redevelopment plans with less funding than the full \$90,000 we were originally requesting. In order to have full transparency, we have also requested a grant from the presbytery for Covid relief, but we see that as an emergency grant to help us through this crisis so that we can continue the exciting plans we have outlined here.

General Information

1. Project Name: **Renewal of Ecumenical House Campus Ministry (second year renewal)**

Primary Contact Person: Hannah Cornwaithe, Chaplain

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Secondary Contact Person: The Rev. Erwin C. Barron

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Name of Church(es) Submitting Grant: Old First Presbyterian Church, November 27, 2019

Reaffirmed January 19, 2021

Clerk of Session: Tom Culp

Seventh Avenue Presbyterian Church, January 12, 2020

Project Description

Designated ministry areas for Fund Your Vision:

1. **Youth and College Ministry**

The Covid lockdown and the university moving to only online learning has greatly affected our ministry as it has all of us. But we have continued and adapted remarkably well. We have six small groups that continued meeting through zoom with 60-90 students and young adults throughout the summer and now into the fall and spring semesters. These have served as a support network and community in the midst of the chaos and uncertainty the pandemic has brought. The respective groups have specific focuses such as anti-racism work, pop-culture and theology, wellness/group spiritual direction, LGBTQIA+ theology, and Lectionary study. We frequently gather virtually to play interactive games (ex. Pictionary, Among Us) and trivia.

Since SFSU is online through the 2020-21, the student body and how we were able to connect with students in the past has changed. We rely a great deal on word of mouth to get the message out to new people. While challenging, we are still deeply connected to most of the students we got to know through the café. Food insecurity and pastoral care are still significant aspects to our ministry, and we will continue using these as ways to connect to and serve the SFSU student body.

We know that as long as the pandemic lingers on, our ministry will have to continue adapting and moving where the spirit pulls us. The Board of Directors just had a visioning retreat and begin work on some exciting new plans to do a different kind of ministry that includes a much stronger online presence building on the strong groups we already have going.

2. **Food Insecurity**

In January, Ecumenical House was ready and prepared to open our Goodworks [free] Café, which has been the hub of our ministry for the last two years. The beginning of the semester was looking

a lot like the fall, with 90-100 students stopping by for coffee, sandwiches, and our pantry. We were actively working with churches to keep the pantry stocked, and our café was busy helping meet the needs of San Francisco State University students. When the pandemic hit and Shelter-In-Place went into effect, we didn't stop. While the café was shut down, and remains shut down, we quickly adapted and began dropping off pantry bags and grocery store gift cards to students.

We continued offering pantry bags and gift cards to students throughout the summer, which we did not do in the past. Due to many lay-offs (many of which are still laid off) it was a great assistance to our students and has helped them through this financially unstable time. There have been many students who have left San Francisco due to cost of living, and we have remained in contact with them and continue to support them with pastoral care. These students represent a diverse group, with over 75% students of color, and 30% first generation. Each month we pass out 25 pantry bags and 5-10 (\$20) gift cards.

3. Systemic Racism

Two of our small groups are studying this issue and making plans for action. We hope to join with the university and the presbytery to make this a major focus of the ministry in the coming year.

The Ec House board and staff are deeply thankful for the support from the Presbytery and the Fund Your Vision Grant. It has given us the ability to adapt and change how our ministry serves our community.

Additional criteria described in the guidelines

- Sustainability:
This has become an absolutely essential concern for the ministry during the Covid crisis. Much of our denominational support and rental income has been lost. And our fund-raising and fund-development plans have been delayed. We have applied for Covid-related loans and grants to get us through this period of uncertainty. But this crisis has forced to reconsider our covenant community living in the house. In November, we decided to end that part of our ministry. We are now making plans to rent much of the housing at market rates to provide a larger income stream to support the ministry. While we regret the loss of our live-in covenant community, this new model will help make us much more financially stable going forward when FYV grant money ends.
- Creativity:
Ec House is poised to find creative new ways to do ministry in 21st century America and to show a new generation that the Christian Church really does offer something meaningful and good to them and to the world. Our new chaplain and ministry participants are all younger people who are exploring what church will look like in the 21st century, and they are trying out new models. Campus ministry is uniquely positioned to help the rest of the church discover what it means to be church in a new millennium, unfettered but supported by long traditions.
- Existing resources:
Our greatest resource is a five-bedroom house across the street from the main entrance of the SF State campus. We are making plans to start a new rental program in the house for sustainable income and still keep our program and ministry facilities in the chapel portion of the house. In addition, a vital resource is our good relationship we have with the local judicatories of four mainline denominations. We have board members and volunteers from all four denominations and financial support from two of them. This relationship also provides us with over 400 nearby congregations with which we would like to share ministry. Ec House provides a natural place for local churches to make contact and to do ministry with young adults. This grant will help us to develop volunteers and funding from local congregations.
- Regional Impact:
SF State has students of all races, ages, and religious affiliations from across the state and world, but most of them are from the Bay Area. We can almost certainly say that every church in our region already has some connection to the faculty, staff or students of the university. Spreading good news among this group will have a major impact on our region and our state.

○ Partnerships:

This grant is being sponsored by two local congregations with members serving on the board of directors. We want to develop partnerships and volunteer opportunities with those and many other congregations. We have a plan in place to develop a volunteer program to involve congregational groups in projects, and regular support of the food ministry. It has been delayed by the Covid crisis. Ec House is an excellent example of different Christian groups working together, and it can be expanded. We hope to reach out to other Christian groups from different theological and ideological perspectives to share our common goal of serving Christ. And we have plans to develop interfaith campus groups. We have begun working with the Muslim Student Organization and the Jewish Hillel groups on campus.

Key needs we are looking to address with this proposed project.

This grant will be incorporated into the annual operating budget of the organization. In doing so, it will primarily support the salary and continuing ministry of our full-time chaplain as we develop our funding base to make sustainable our risky leap of faith in hiring a full-time chaplain. In doing so this grant will help to meet these key needs by funding important ministries:

- Food insecurity: Continuing and expanding the food ministry
- Bringing the love of Christ to young people in a secular and lonely world: outreach to more students on the SF State campus by the chaplain and community members
- Congregational involvement with young people: Developing relationships with local congregations and establishing a volunteer opportunity program
- Systemic racism: We are uniquely positioned to work with the academic community to study these issues and provide a justice-based and action-oriented program that cannot always be carried out in an academic setting.
- Sustainability: Intensive work by the board to establish sustainable funding support

Project Timeline

The board of Ec House began this leap-of-faith project of a full time chaplain and expanded ministry two years ago with the plan to have it be sustainable within two to three more years. This grant will help make that possible. We are requesting \$50,000 to help carry us through the next two years of our redevelopment as we work to establish our sustainable funding.

Financial Description

Amount requested

We are requesting \$50,000 which would be about 20% of our budget for the next two years.

Budget justification –

Our FY 20/21 budget is attached, but this budget has almost become void due to the Covid crisis. The biggest problem was a cut by more than half of contributions from the Methodist Church. We have just learned that they will go back to a grant of about 2/3. We are working to build our 21/22 fiscal year budget now, incorporating the new loans and grants we expect to receive.

Project Impact

We have continued to do ministry with about 100 students and faculty and local congregations online during the Covid lockdown. The board is in the process of setting measurable goals for the next two years. They include doubling the number of contacts with students, increasing the numbers of volunteers, establishing an individual donation database and contact system, and at least doubling the number of local congregations sending funding and volunteers. In addition, we have a goal of reaching sustainable funding by the end of FY 22/23.