



# Annual Report 2021

*Gathering Together, Nurturing Innovation, Strengthening Communities*

## OUR MISSION

*We are called to provide unencumbered spaces for the Holy Spirit to move among us, breathing new life into us and strengthening us to work for the realm and reign of God.*

We Strengthen Presbyteries

We Cultivate Leaders

We Advocate for Social Justice

We Fund Theological and Social Innovation Opportunities for Reconciliation

We Support Campus Ministry and the Presbyterian Youth Triennium

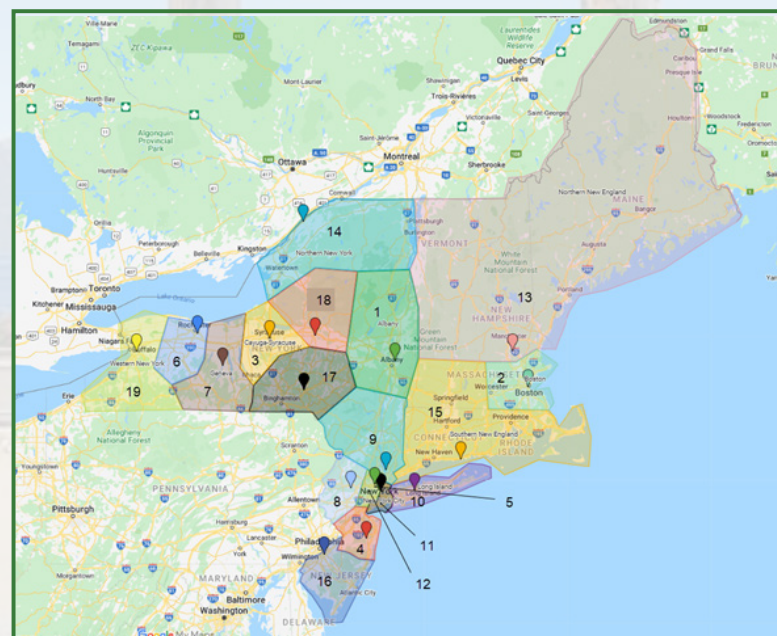
We Build and Sustain Networks of People

We Organize Gatherings to Share Best Practices



The Synod of the Northeast is the regional community of Presbyterians in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont, worshiping in and witnessing to these states in 19 presbyteries with over 1,130 gospel communities.

- Albany
- Boston
- Cayuga-Syracuse
- Coastlands
- Eastern Korean American
- Genesee Valley
- Geneva
- Highlands of New Jersey
- Hudson River
- Long Island
- New York City
- Northeast New Jersey
- Northern New England
- Northern New York
- Southern New England
- Southern New Jersey
- Susquehanna Valley
- Utica
- Western New York



[Click Here To View Presbytery Locations](#)



## Transitional Synod Leader Report

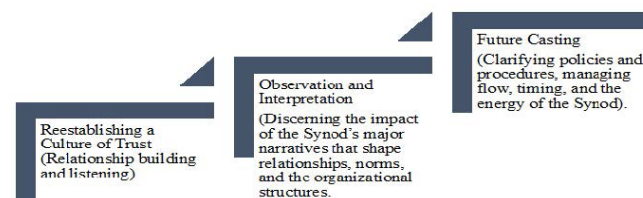
*Rev. Dr. SanDawna Gaulman Ashley*

On March 1, 2021, amid one of the most devastating pandemics in recent United States history, I began my service to the Synod. The call would include both challenges to overcome and great ministry opportunities. I fully offered my yes to the Synod in a willingness to lead the next phase in the New Way Forward transition process. In reflection of the mission statement “We walk alongside gospel communities to provide unencumbered spaces for the Holy Spirit to breathe new life into our ministry and mission,” admittedly, I was intrigued by the bold vision and the subsequent value statement “the Synod is called to be witnesses to the ever-expanding Body of Christ.” After serving in the larger Church on three denominational levels, I wondered how a governing council would truly embody radical inclusiveness, justice, capacity building, and a shared spiritual identity. For such a time as this, God was doing a new thing. The question of Isaiah 43:19, “See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?” is before us. The 21st Century Church yearns for the Body of Christ to pivot its focus from maintaining institutions to an effort on expanding the Kindom (Kingdom) of God. A nimble Synod ready for self-assessment and making necessary changes germane to deep transformation is the work ahead.

The Synod’s vision requires significant paradigm shifts that will take time. The Journey includes letting go of what we think we know and assuming a new learning posture. The Church is not alone in what feels like wilderness wondering. Scholars predicted this time in history when shifts in religion and the relationship among the Church and society would dictate what the Church becomes. As best said by Susan Beaumont, “We have one foot rooted in something that is not yet over, while the other foot is planted in a thing not yet defined.” Yet, we persist onward.

The year 2021 was simultaneously a year of experimentation and, oddly, a time of renewal. Amid COVID-19, we learned new ways of doing ministry. Congregations and presbyteries used technology for mutual learning and support. We took personal and corporate assessments of essential aspects of ministry that should continue. We began letting go of the things that no longer serve us well. The two shifts in our mode of operation became a healthy way of living and persevering over the last two challenging years.

### The New Way Forward 2.0 Phase One Objectives







My first year included engaging with presbytery leaders, listening, and learning about our mid councils. One-on-one Zoom conversations and attendance at presbytery meetings facilitated my learning. Preaching, leading workshops, resourcing, and joining times of celebration were key moments in year one.

#### Ministry to Mid Councils included:

- Establishing monthly Mid Council Gatherings for both presbytery leaders and clerks.
- Synod-wide regional training focused on transformation, leadership development, capacity building, COVID-19, Committees on Ministry, Committee on Preparation for Ministry, and partnerships.
- Training mid council search committees and the on-boarding of new presbytery leaders.
- Trained presbytery leader search committees and on boarded new mid council leaders for Albany, Coastlands, Geneva, Northern New England, and Susquehanna Valley Presbyteries.
- Provided guidance and consultation for the Synod ACs.
- The Synod supported first-time mid council leaders with a \$1,500 per year three-year commitment to coaching through the Presbytery Leader Formation Program for Northeast, Cayuga-Syracuse, Coastlands, Utica, and Northern New England presbyteries.
- The Synod gifted pastors with a recorded Sunday After Christmas Service. The collaborative effort included participants from across the Synod. The video was downloaded 283 times, it was watched 597 times on Vimeo, 66 times on Facebook and 62 times on YouTube.

In collaboration with the Connectional Ministry Working Group, we began the process of living into what it means to be a Matthew 25 Synod. Our “Come to the Table” event is one example of this effort. Representatives from the Ramapo Lenape, Mohawk, and Shinnecock Tribes and film-maker Treva Wurmfield – Conscience Point, spoke to the Synod community. The foremost step in becoming a Matthew 25 Synod started with a delegation visiting the Shinnecock Nation. The impact of the Doctrine of Discovery on the laws of the land and American identity began deep conversations about race that will continue among the Synod community. <https://www.synodne.org/cttt>.

In faith and hope, we are moving forward, hopeful that God is journeying with us. Together we will arrive at the place of God’s will. Through prayer and steadfastness, we are opening ourselves to what the Spirit will do through us next.

#### MY 2022 SMART GOALS



Reuniéndonos Juntos  
다같이 모이기  
Gathering Together





## Stated Clerk Report

*Rev. Nancy Talbot*

---

As for many in PC(USA), the Covid year of 2021 seemed as busy if not busier than usual. During the first two months of the year, I continued to serve as the Acting Synod Leader as well as the Stated Clerk. In this capacity, I advised the New Jersey Missional Community Working Group and its co-moderators through the process of determining the final reorganization plan and the process developed for the seven presbyteries to approve it. As Stated Clerk, I recruited and trained the New Jersey Missional Communities Administrative Commission (NJMCAC) to operate with limited original jurisdiction as the governing body to work with the seven New Jersey Presbyteries as they prepared to reorganize into four new presbyteries. In February the Synod Mission and Ministries Commission approved the New Jersey reorganization plan and on March 1st the General Assembly Mid Council Administrative Commission approved the plan making it official. Although there had been much work done over the previous years that included a working group that designed an invitation of a new vision for the presbyteries to consider and a second working group that created designs and suggestions for getting the presbyteries to implementation, once all seven presbyteries voted to move forward and the approvals were in place, there was still a major amount of work to be done. March 1st began a “transition year” during which time the four new presbyteries worked on designing and/or living into their new infrastructure while working on plans to close out the seven “legacy” presbyteries. There was much to be addressed including the development and signing of legal agreements among officers of all the presbyteries allowing this reorganization to take place, the creation of federal and state legal documents, the division of former presbytery assets to be sent to the new presbyteries which was assisted by staff at the Presbyterian Foundation and New Covenant Funds, and creation of policies for legacy presbytery staff who would not be included in the new structures. During this intensive time, I staffed the NJMCAC often meaning that I had three to five meetings a week including evening meetings as well as daily phone calls and extensive emails. Much has been learned along the way that hopefully can be of assistance to other presbyteries that may consider reorganizing with neighboring presbyteries. We plan to have a meeting with New Jersey Presbytery Leaders and Stated Clerks in 2022 to discuss progress after one year, lessons learned, what we all could have done differently and current and future plans.

At the request of the Susquehanna Valley Presbytery Cabinet and after the synod had created a special administrative review committee to better understand the issues within the presbytery, the Synod created an Administrative Commission with original jurisdiction. With synod commission concurrence, I recruited and trained the AC and have served as staff/advisor since then. During this Covid time the AC has met



monthly over Zoom, divided their work among various committees, moderated presbytery meetings and made decisions on behalf of the presbytery. After approximately six months the AC concluded that the presbytery should hire a transitional leader to assist the presbytery in determining the best path forward. Once a person is selected, the AC will remain in place for a time to support the new person while it begins to give responsibilities back to presbytery committees and the cabinet.

When the Transitional Synod Leader, Rev. Dr. SanDawna Ashley arrived, I spent many hours in her first two months sharing how the synod works, primary issues and concerns, important policies, and the nature of various relationships. I also set up several meetings with key groups and leadership around the synod in her first week. Since then, I have continued to provide historical and background information and context when new issues or questions arise.

During the year the Synod Mission and Ministries Commission held three stated meetings and three special meetings via Zoom. In consultation with staff and synod officers, I planned the meetings and set the docket. This included reaching out across the synod to make sure that needed documents and speakers were prepared and in place. The Leadership Team which consists of Synod officers and the Transitional Synod Leader also serves as the Nominations Committee. I coordinated our leadership team and staff search for four new COR members, two new personnel team members, and six new members to the Early Ministry Institute Design Team all elected by the Synod Commission.

In August the Synod began to receive multiple court summons concerning Boy Scouts of America and clergy abuse cases. I was tasked to receive all information from the synod's lawyer, share appropriate information with the Synod Leadership Team, sign notarized affidavits, and answer questions from presbytery leaders and stated clerks who were also being served. In some cases, the synod and presbyteries were able to share the same lawyer. Currently, the synod is named in twelve suits.

In preparation for the 225th General Assembly in June 2022, we began work on two overtures. Synods can send overtures as well as presbyteries. They do not need a concurrence, however, because the Synod Mission and Ministries Commission that votes on the overtures is made up of representatives from all presbyteries within the synod.

The Synod has presented the first overture twice before -- [On Amending G-2.0301 to Allow Congregations to Elect Members as Ruling Elders for Service to the Larger Church \(POL-08 in PC-Biz\)](#). We believe that passing this amendment to the Book of Order is urgent now as we all begin to consider how the post Covid church will differ from what we have known. The overture addresses the idea that there are many people who are gifted and ready to serve the church as a Ruling Elder but are often shut out because of specific decisions churches make to protect the integrity of their sessions. The Rationale lays out what these obstacles are and why it is important to amend the Book of Order now to allow these gifted people the opportunity to serve the larger church. I convened a working group consisting of a presbytery stated clerk, the synod GACOR member, teaching elders, rulings elders, and synod officers to review the rationale language from the past and write a new rationale that addressed the concerns of past assemblies. The new rationale speaks clearly to the necessity



of our church moving forward.

The last Synod Assembly voted to overture the General Assembly to begin the process of adding “A Confession for Such a Time as This” to the Book of Confessions. This confession was written by young ministry leaders throughout the synod. As determined by the assembly, we created a working group of original signers and Synod Assembly Commissioners to craft the overture -- [On Initiating the Process to Add a New Confession to the Book of Confessions \(TWE-13 in PC-Biz\)](#).

On behalf of the synod, I submitted these overtures within the required time frame.

### My 2022 SMART GOALS

- Schedule a Synod COR training session with OGA staff and create a 2022 COR work plan.
- Participate in the Synod Assembly minutes review with other synod stated clerks for presentation of our minutes to the 225th General Assembly.
- Assist NJMCAC in bringing to completion their work with the legacy presbyteries.
- Plan the 2022 Synod Assembly and assembly pre-event with a synod-wide planning committee in consultation with synod officers and staff.
- Staff the Synod Permanent Judicial Commission following all deadlines related to remedial or disciplinary cases that come forward and work with nominations to identify five new PJC members.
- Coordinate the Boy Scouts of America and Clergy Abuse cases engaging synod leadership.

This has been a Spirit led year. We have much work to do by the help and grace of God.



## Administrative Coordinator Report

*Lori Hylton*

In 2017, I joined the Synod as its Administrative Coordinator. As the Administrative coordinator, I am responsible for a wide variety of projects, from managing the Synod's technology platforms and producing the newsletter to webinars and meeting planning and coordination for all of the Synod's events. I have a broad set of responsibilities, and the common vein that runs throughout my work and the work of all Synod staff is collaboration. The work of the Synod is collaborative and therefore my work is built upon my connection to others in the Synod community. Each program and meeting or event of the synod is produced in conjunction with groups of others from around the Synod, so that it reflects and responds to the needs and goals of the broader community. Three key examples of that collaboration in my work during 2021 are the Early Ministry Institute, Come to the Table, and the Christmastide worship service. Each of these was produced in consultation or direct collaboration with design teams, planning committees or other partners. Below I will outline results of those collaborations and their impacts on the Synod Community.

### Early Ministry Institute (EMI)

Early Ministry Institute (EMI) is a three- year program designed to support pastors and commissioned ruling elders within their first five years of ministry. Participants set aside one week each year for three years, to participate in a program of shared learning and mutual support. The curriculum is designed to assist them in gaining skills that are often omitted in traditional seminary education. In 2020 EMI was canceled due to COVID-19, and in 2021 EMI returned as a virtual program. The design team which consisted of 5 members from around the Synod plus 6 cohort facilitators, worked together for many months to create a program that would meet the needs of the moment by giving those new to ministry both a place and opportunity to seek support and respite in during some of the most intense moments of the pandemic. EMI has provided critical support via the cohorts and other relationships, that was different than what could be found in alternative programs. Overall, the time spent at EMI was seen as a time of respite and self-care for participants, as well as a time for learning and networking despite its virtual nature in







2021. In this collaborative process the design team works ensure that the program is flexible and adaptable, particularly in regard to addressing hot button issues such as systemic racism inside and outside the church, supporting new styles of ministry, or responding quickly to changing needs i.e. everything related to the pandemic.

In 2021 there were 17 Year one participants – largest group in several years which attests to the need that currently exists for this type of support for those new to ministry, especially in a time when so many were/are experiencing tremendous isolation. In 2021 EMI also completed a review process with a team made up of members of the EMI Design Team, Presbytery Leadership, and Mission and Ministries Commission Representatives to examine the program strengths as well as, identify areas for improvement. The review which was conducted via the use of surveys, listening sessions and interviews, concluded that EMI was of great value to those who participated, but that better communication was needed to clarify who was able to participate, what was being taught. It was also recommended that a Presbytery Leader or Stated Clerk sit as part of the Design Team to give further insight into the needs and challenges that new pastors have in the early years of ministry. It is a goal that in 2022, we can bring a Presbytery Leader onto the Design Team.

### Come to the Table

In October 2021 the Synod held the fourth Come to the Table gathering. The theme for the event was Standing in the Breach: Rooted in Our Faith. In that time together we reflected on ways to that we as a community can continue to support one another through seasons of brokenness and grief. Much of the focus was on the Doctrine of Discovery and its impacts on Native Communities, particularly within the bounds of the Synod of the Northeast and we hosted a series of workshops and discussions where we elevated the voices of native people around the Synod.

The process for putting this program together was again a collaborative one, bringing in the voices of Native partners and congregations from three different regions of the Synod.

### Christmastide Worship Service

In December, I produced a worship service for the Synod, that was available for congregations to use starting the Sunday after Christmas, December 26th. The worship service featured choirs and worship leaders from around the Synod. The service which was designed to give pastors an opportunity for rest during the Christmas Season was streamed nearly 700 hundred times. While produced within the staff the worship is a key example collaborative nature of my work with the Synod, it could not have happened without the participation of the Synod community.



*"They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit."*

Jeremiah 17:8, NIV

## MY 2022 SMART Goals

Develop safety guidelines for the return to in-person Synod Gatherings in conjunction with the Transitional Synod Leader

Facilitate the review and evaluation of the Robert Washington Scholars Program and the Servant Leadership Institute by the Connectional Ministries Working Group

Expand the capacity of the In-C database, with a goal of enhancing targeted communications; and increasing direct church contacts by at least 200 to amplify the reach of Synod communications

Further the redesign of the Early Ministry Institute's curriculum and expand the capacity of the program for a in-person relaunch with a new cohort of at least 10 pastors and/pr CRE's





## Manager of Finance Report

*Frances Klaiber*

---

**AUDIT:** The Synod of the Northeast's 2020 Audit was completed by Lumsden & McCormick, LLP in June of 2021. The Audit was unqualified, meaning that there were no material misstatements or weaknesses identified. The Synod Mission and Ministries Commission has secured the 2021 Audit engagement with Lumsden & McCormick, LLP at its January 2022 meeting. The 2021 audit will begin in April.

**FINANCIAL WEBINARS:** On October 28, 2021, the Synod of the Northeast invited Rev. Dr. Rose Niles, Presbyterian Foundation's Ministry Relations Officer for the Northeast Region, to conduct a webinar on Narrative Budgets: How to? You can view the recorded webinar on the Synod's website at [Synodne.org/webinars](https://synodne.org/webinars). Since this webinar was so successful, we have asked the Rev. Dr. Rose Niles to plan with us to do 4 more webinars in a Financial Series for 2022. On February 1, 2022, the webinar, The Joy of Stewardship: Tell Your Ministry Story took place, and a recording is also available on the Synod's website. Please watch our website for more information on the following three webinars and make sure to register for free.

**INSURANCE:** The Insurance policies (Commercial, Travel, Umbrella, Unemployment, Workers' Compensation, Business Auto, Short-term Disability, and Paid Family Leave) were reviewed and approved at the January 2021 and 2022 Synod Mission and Ministries Commission. The Synod's Workers' Compensation policy was audited by GuideOne Insurance in both January of 2021 and 2022.

**BUDGET:** The Synod's Budget Working Group will begin working on its 2023-2024 budget this Spring. In addition, a Narrative Budget will be developed for 2023-2024. We are committed to supporting innovation, ministry networks and creating strong congregations and mid councils. Thank you for your special gifts and Per Capita contributions in support of our various ministry efforts. Letters have been sent out to the presbyteries to confirm their 2021 mission and per capita sent to the Synod in 2021. The Synod received 2021 mission income of \$85,733. This was just over the anticipated budget amount. The 2021 per capita income received was at budget in amount of \$502,332 with fourteen presbyteries taking advantage of the 2.5% early payment discount for savings to the presbyteries in the amount of \$9,769. Twelve presbyteries have taken advantage of the savings in 2022 for savings totaling \$8,366. The 2023 and 2024 per capita rate will be established during the budget process starting this June. The recommendation will go to the September meeting of the Synod Mission and Ministries Commission for approval and then to Synod Assembly in October for ratification. The per capita billing for 2023 will be sent out in early November to presbyteries.

혁신을 키워나가기  
Nurturing Innovation  
Animando Innovación





## Innovation Grants

### Presbytery of Geneva

First 1,000 Days | \$9,200

### Presbytery of The Highlands of New Jersey

Hope's Table | \$12,000

### Presbytery of Northeast New Jersey |

Enlightened Pathways | \$16,800

Institute 2.0 | \$10,000

School to Life Readiness Program | \$5,000

### Presbytery of Hudson River

Adopt-A-Prison | \$9,000 |

### Presbytery of Northern New England

McCleary House Transitional Housing | \$15,000

Neighborhood Day Ctr & Outreach Ministry | \$18,000

### Presbytery of Southern New England

Godly Play - Woodbury Union Church | \$2,300

## Emerging Gospel Communities

### Presbytery of Boston

Shekinah - Abington \$7,000

Shekinah - Marlborough \$7,000

### Eastern Korean American Presbytery

City on a Hill Church | \$20,000

The Moving Church within College Campus | \$20,000

### Presbytery of Long Island

Mission Emmanuel | \$7,000

### Presbytery of New York City

Cross Street Community of NYC | \$14,200

Freedom Church of the Poor | \$20,000

### Presbytery of Utica

The Community Garden - Little Falls \$5,000

# Campus Ministry

## Presbytery of Albany

*Russell Sage College (and RPI)*  
Troy Area United Ministries | \$2,500

*University at Albany*  
Protestant Ministry | \$2,500

## Presbytery of the Coastlands

*Rutgers University*  
Rutgers Protestant Campus Ministries | | \$2,500

*Princeton University*  
Princeton Presbyterians of the Westminster Foundation | \$5,000

## Presbytery of Genesee Valley

*University of Rochester*  
Genesee Area Campus Ministries | \$5,000

## Presbytery of Long Island

*Stony Brook University (SUNY)*  
Protestant Campus Ministry at Stony Brook University | \$8,000

## Presbytery of New York City

*Columbia University (and others)*  
LaMP Campus Ministry | \$2,500

*New York University (and others)*  
PriSM Student Ministry | \$2,500

## Presbytery of Northeast New Jersey

*Bloomfield College PC(USA)*  
Provides the College Chaplain | \$40,000

## Presbytery of Northern New England

*Plymouth State University*  
United Campus Ministry | \$2,500

## Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley

*Cornell University*  
Protestant Cooperative Ministry | \$2,500

*SUNY - Cortland*  
Protestant Ministry at SUNY Cortland | \$2,500

## Presbytery of Western New York

*SUNY Buffalo*  
Campus Church ConneXion | \$2,500

## Youth Leadership Development

### Presbytery of the Highlands of New Jersey

Emerging Leader Internship | \$7,500

### Presbytery of New York City

Emerging Leaders Service - Mission Development Expedition | \$7,500

### Presbytery of Northeast New Jersey

CommUNITY Service | \$7,500

## Ecumenical Relationships

The Labor Relations Coalition of New York | \$5,000

Maine Council of Churches | \$1,500

Massachusetts Council of Churches | \$2,500

New Hampshire Council of Churches | \$2,500

New Jersey Coalition of Religious Leaders | \$2,000

## Connectional Ministries

Mediation Network | \$1,978

Shinnecock Nation Visit | \$504

Coaching Network | \$6,600

Hispanic Caucus | \$2,000

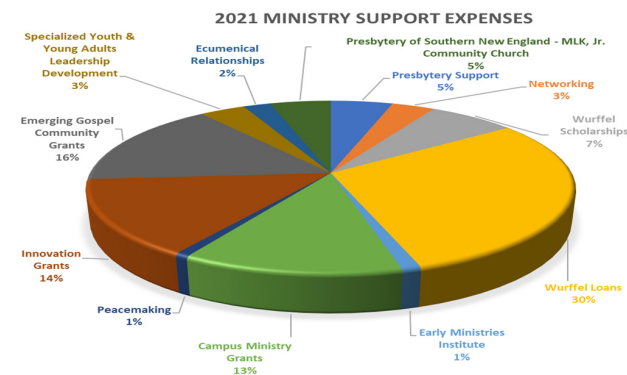
New England GLOW Network | \$10,000



# 2021 Funding

The Synod of the Northeast continued to work on providing support throughout 2021. A total of \$640,888 has been expensed to support the ministries of all 19 of Synod's presbyteries in some way.

Presbytery Support (Presbytery Leadership Formation, Coastlands Presbytery Consultant, NJ Reorganization Lawyers, and Church/Presbytery Media Webinar)	\$ 30,257
Networking	\$ 21,082
Wurffel Scholarships (49 Students in 13 Presbyteries)	\$ 43,500
Wurffel/Sills Loans (38 Students in 13 Presbyteries)	\$ 190,000
Early Ministries Institute	\$ 7,049
Campus Ministry Grants (10 Grants in 8 Presbyteries)	\$ 80,500
Peacemaking (1 Grant)	\$ 5,000
Innovation Grants (9 Grants in 6 Presbyteries)	\$ 97,300
Emerging Gospel Community Grants (8 Grants in 5 Presbyteries)	\$ 100,200
Specialized Youth & Young Adult Leadership Development (3 Grants)	\$ 22,500
Ecumenical Relationships	\$ 13,500
Presbytery of Southern New England, MLK, Jr. Community Church	\$ 30,000



Strengthening Communities  
Fortaleciendo Comunidades  
공동체를 강화하기



# Grant Projects Around the Synod

## Northern New England Presbytery

## Eliot Presbyterian Church

Eliot Presbyterian Church in Lowell, Massachusetts has a long history of relating to neighbors experiencing homelessness. The church building is located in a neighborhood with two shelters, public housing, group homes, and other agencies that serve people living in poverty. An independent “soup kitchen” has operated out of the church hall for 15 years. Before the pandemic, homeless neighbors occasionally visited the congregation on Sunday mornings to take shelter from the weather, have a cup of coffee, or join worship.

When the coronavirus pandemic struck in March 2020, many people experiencing homelessness found themselves with no place to spend their days. Shelters reduced their capacity, and libraries and fast food restaurants were closed. Eliot Church responded by opening their doors to operate a daytime shelter for people who are unhoused. With the support of the city and partner agencies. The Day Center at Eliot Church opened on May 11, 2020 as a place of safety and hospitality for anyone with nowhere else to go. Guidelines for masks and social distancing were put into place to keep the community, staff, and volunteers safe. When it became clear that the pandemic would not be short-lived, Eliot Church reached out to the Synod of the Northeast for an Innovation Grant.

With the Day Center running smoothly five days per week, Eliot envisions strengthening the connection with neighbors experiencing homelessness so that they are fully welcome in the life of the church including worship, fellowship, and leadership. Many of these newcomers struggle to belong in traditional, liturgical church settings. Therefore, Eliot is considering faith formation opportunities that are appropriate and inclusive for those who are uncomfortable in a formal worship setting. This may include individual prayer, a contemplative space in the church hall, or guided livestream of our sanctuary service in a more informal setting. With the synod’s support they have hired a chaplain and are developing a volunteer hospitality team to guide this aspect of the ministry.

One key role for Pastor Heather Prince Doss and the new chaplain is to guide the congregation in wrestling with hard questions about faith, identity, and bias as



newcomers make their way from the weekday program into the community of faith. Pastor Heather wrote in their grant application: "As a community, we must ask whether our traditions and expectations (from the clothes one wears on Sunday to the form of our liturgy) expand our welcome or narrow it. The congregation has not always been in agreement on these questions, but we know that we cannot send our neighbors away. . . We are humbly committed to this work even as it represents a growing edge for us."



**Neighborhood Day  
Center & Outreach  
Ministry**

**Innovation Grant  
Recipient : \$18,000**

## Eastern Korean American Presbytery

## Fellowship Church of New Milford Formerly known as City on a Hill Church

Emerging Gospel  
Communities  
Grant Recipient :  
\$20,000

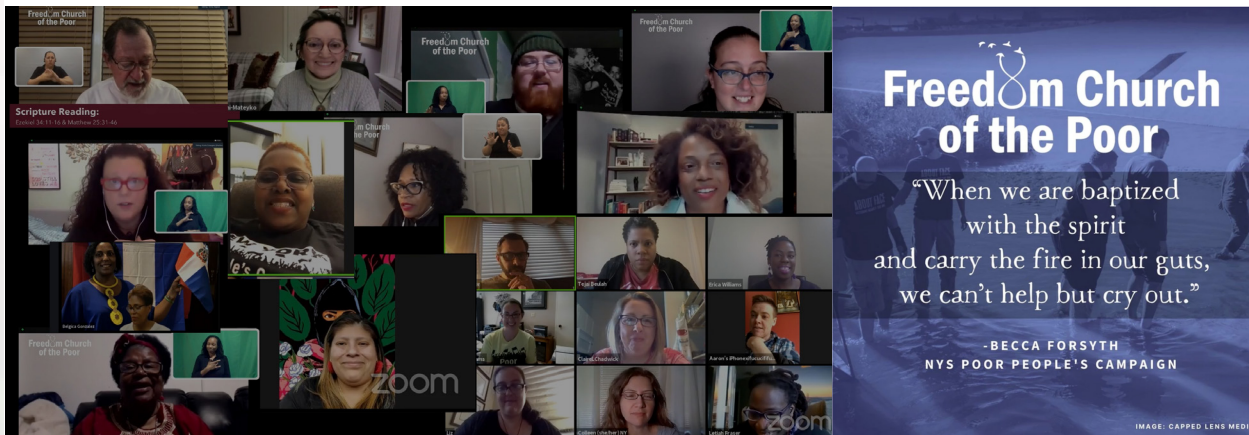
Our Emerging Gospel Community started in my living room in 2017. Since then, we have gone through many trials, tribulations, and TRANSITIONS. We recently exited a larger church that hosted us and partnered with us for about two years. Even though we are in the Eastern Korean American Presbytery, the leadership of the Presbytery of Northeast New Jersey (particularly Rev. Jeremy Campbell) helped us greatly. They found an amazing new location for our ministry. On February 13 of 2022, we had our first Sunday Worship at New Milford Presbyterian Church. With this new chapter, we re-branded our name to be "Fellowship Church of New Milford". Please pray for our new chapter of ministry in New Milford! The grants we received from the Synod of the Northeast reminded us of the weight and importance of what we are doing. On a practical level, the grants took a lot of stress off of paying our staff salaries. We are grateful for the ways you have encouraged and validated our ministry





Formed out of a network of leaders through the Kairos Center, and especially our Reading the Bible with the Poor cohort, Freedom Church of the Poor began meeting as an online church in March of 2020, just as the COVID-19 pandemic was breaking out in the US. And we come together in these times out of necessity to help end a system that is killing us. We are inter-faith, inter-spiritual, and non-religious and come from every region of the country. As a community of activists, scholars, preachers, and grass-roots justice organizations, we welcome all who wish to be a part of the movement, and all victims of empire. Many of the founders of the Freedom Church are leaders in grass-roots justice organizations including: The National Union of the Homeless, NC Raise Up! Fight for \$15, Chaplains on the Harbor, Unión de Vecinos, Put People First! PA, and Greater Birmingham Ministries.

Folks gather regularly as a community in a variety of ways: each Sunday for worship; multiple times a week for service planning; for Bible study on Wednesdays; and throughout the week for prayer. We gather as a community to support and educate each other in the movement work and to provide a spiritual space for movement leaders to reflect, mourn, and find solidarity in our work.



## New York City Presbytery

## Freedom Church of the Poor (Kairos Center)

## Emerging Gospel Communities Grant Recipient : \$20,000



## Wurffel-Sills Scholarship and Interest-Free Student Loan Program

The Wurffel-Sills Scholarship and Interest-Free Student Loan Program of the Synod of the Northeast is a combination of two memorial funds established to assist “needy” students financially with their higher educational goals. The Allie L. Sills Memorial Fund began in the early 1960’s with a bequest of \$15,000 from Mrs. Flora M. Sills, to honor her late husband. She bequest that the funds be used to offer student loans to students in financial “need”. The endowment restricted the maximum award amount to \$800, per person, per year. With a limited amount of interest available each year, awards were made infrequently and with little formality. In 1989, another bequest was received from the estate of Mr. Karl J. Wurffel. His bequest be that the Synod of the Northeast establish a fund to be known as The Karl, John, Elizabeth Wurffel Memorial Fund and be used to offer student loans to students in “need”. When the Wurffel bequest was received, a process was set up to administer both funds, with provisions from each fund being honored. In 1991, a common set of policies and principles was approved.

Since the combining of the two funds, the Synod of the Northeast has assisted over 1,000 students with an interest-free student loan, scholarship, or both. Applicants must be a member of any Presbyterian Church within the Synod of the Northeast, PC(USA) boundaries. The application is open to full-time undergraduate students, full and part-time seminary students leading to a Master of Divinity (MDIV) or Master of Religious Education (MRE), and those seeking to obtain their CRE credentials.

The Wurffel-Sills Application Review Working Group is happy to announce that we were able to provide scholarships and interest-free loan offers last year to members from 15 of our now 19 presbyteries of the Synod of the Northeast.

Cayuga-Syracuse - \$8,500	Highlands of New Jersey - \$18,500	Northeast New Jersey - \$48,500	Southern New Jersey - \$6,000
Central New Jersey - \$6,000	Hudson River - \$31,000	Northern New England - \$500	Susquehanna Valley - \$11,000
Genesee Valley - \$10,000	Long Island - \$12,500	Northern New York - \$6,000	Western New York - \$56,500
Geneva - \$6,000	New York City - \$11,500	Southern New England - \$6,000	

It is our goal to streamline the application process and make applying easier for all applicants who are seeking scholarships and interest-free loans through the Wurffel-Sills program. With increased costs associated with higher education, we understand that every bit helps and our goal is to do the most good for all that apply. Our interest-free loans are repayable after graduation when the graduate is financially able to begin payments, with no interest accrued, and never any fees associated with this loan. All repayments received are returned directly back into the fund for the next year’s applications.

We believe this is a great way to reach out across the Synod community and help our members grow into their potential.



## Wurffel-Sills Recipients



*"The Wurffel-Sills funding has been a blessing in my life, assisting with my school tuition over the past two years. It has alleviated a significant financial burden for my parents and me, allowing me to focus on my academics and pursue other personal interests that help me work towards my dream of becoming a physician"*

**- Shalom Agbiji '24**  
**Presbytery of Northeast New Jersey**

*"I am very appreciative of receiving the Wurffel-Sills Scholarship over the past four years while pursuing a dual-master's degree at Union Theological Seminary in New York City (M.Div.), and at Columbia University School of Social Work (MSW). I will be graduating in May 2022, finally! I was fortunate that Columbia granted permission for me to use my field placement hours to discern and create a ministry at Cross Street Community of NYC, a New Worship Community, that serves LGBTQIA+ youth and young adults who are seeking the peace, love and compassion of Jesus Christ in the NYC area of Queens."*

**- Daniel DeBrucker-Cota '22**  
**Presbytery of Cayuga-Syracuse**



*"I am very grateful to the Synod and the Wurffel-Sills program for the enormous help in funding my higher education. Because of the interest-free loan and scholarship, I can focus all my energy on my college performance instead of worrying about how I will pay for the next term bill. Additionally, it allows me to have a more fulfilling college life because I have time to take advantage of all the clubs and activities offered by my college instead of picking up a part-time job."*

**- Samantha Choi '24**  
**Presbytery of The Highlands of New Jersey**





SynodNE



SynodNE

Synod of the Northeast  
5811 Heritage Landing Drive  
2nd Floor  
East Syracuse, NY 13057  
315-446-5990  
[www.synodne.org](http://www.synodne.org)

