

Supporting new churches

The United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance (UCBMA) of the Pension Boards, UCC in partnership with the UCC's Local Church Ministries has committed to the support of new ministries of the United Church of Christ by creating a grant program designed to help cover the cost of benefits for pastors during the first crucial years of a new church start.

The UCBMA's mission is to support initiatives that foster spiritual and emotional maturity, physical well being, financial responsibility and effective leadership among ministers and lay employees of the UCC to ensure healthy leadership leading to healthy churches.

This program has made a significant difference in the lives of new church planters and their families. It has provided relief to young congregations with limited funds, struggling to provide fundamental benefits of health, dental and pension benefits for their pastors. It has enabled pastors to partner with their new congregation and fully focus on the hard work of establishing a new plant without the worry and distraction of inadequate benefit coverage for themselves and their families.



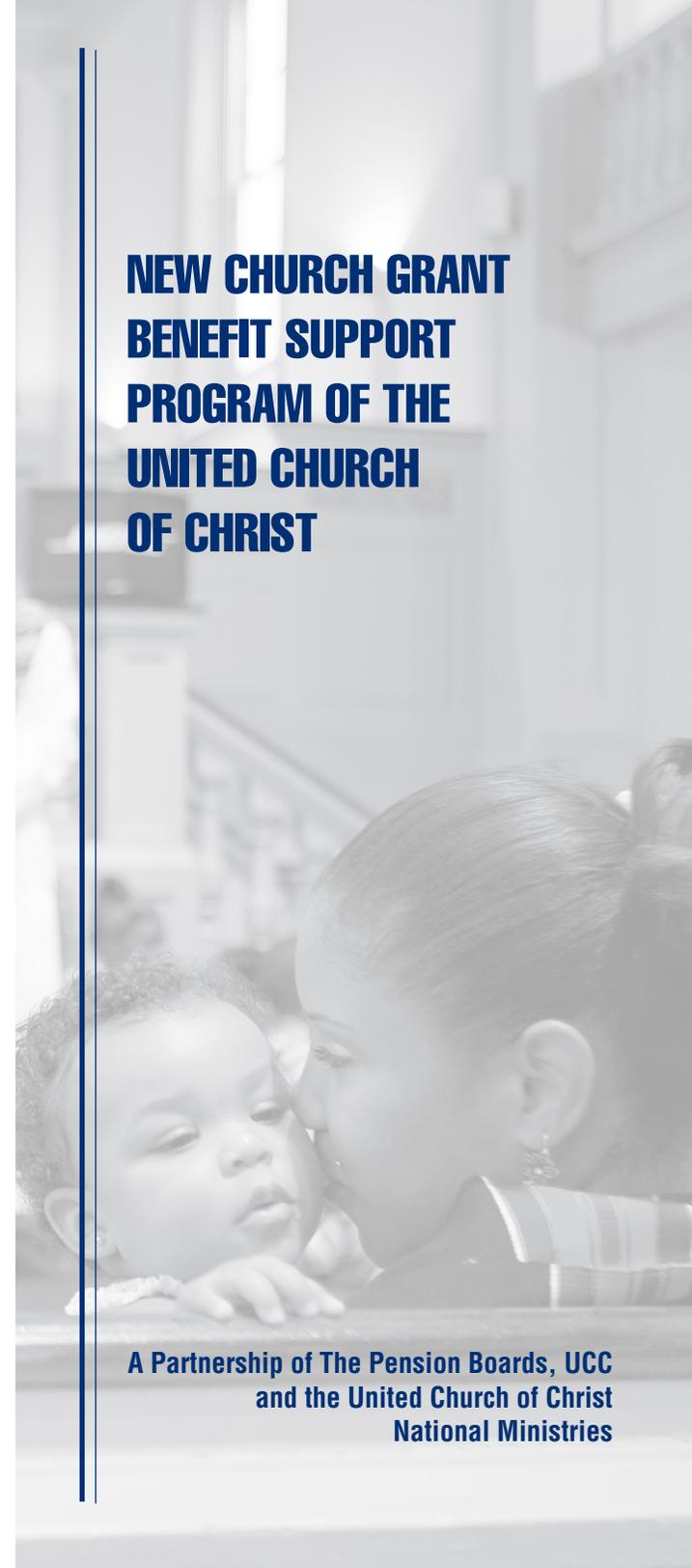
God is still speaking,
**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



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NEW CHURCH GRANT BENEFIT SUPPORT PROGRAM OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**A Partnership of The Pension Boards, UCC
and the United Church of Christ
National Ministries**



About New Church Grants

In 2008, the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance approved a grant of \$100,000 per year to be administered by the Congregational Assessment, Support and Advancement Ministry (CASA) of Local Church Ministries to award grants assisting new church starts with the cost of health, dental and pension benefits for their called pastors.

These grants are disbursed by The Pension Boards in the form of credits directly to the benefit accounts of clergy employees of new UCC congregations. The grant program is subject to annual evaluation and renewal by the UCBMA.

CASA determines who receives the grant(s) and qualifies those who will receive the grant(s), subject to the following criteria:

1. The minister must have ministerial standing in an Association or Conference of the United Church of Christ.
2. The congregation must enroll the minister in the UCC Life Insurance and Disability Income Benefit Plan at the expense of the congregation (1.5 percent of pastor's annual salary basis).
3. The minister must qualify for enrollment in the various benefit plans, subject to the normal enrollment criteria of the Pension Board-UCC.
4. The minister has the option to choose to enroll in all the benefit plans (health, dental, and pension) or may opt to choose any combination of the benefit plans.
5. New Church Start grants last for three years. The amount of the grant awarded is at the discretion of Local Church Ministries, with a maximum of \$10,000 awarded in the first year of the grant. The amount of the grant will decrease each subsequent year of the program. A typical grant of \$8,000 for the first year, will likely decrease to \$6,000 in the second year and \$4,000 in the final year of the program.
6. Upon conclusion of a minister's employment, the grant will end for that pastor; however pastors are eligible to continue in the benefits plan at their own expense, or at the expense of their next church.
7. A Congregation awarded a New Church Grant for a pastor who leaves the church can apply to continue the grant for its new pastor. Only one New Church Grant is awarded per congregation.

Application Process

Congregations apply for New Church Grants on behalf of their pastors through their Conference Office. The Conference must endorse the application. Endorsed applications are forwarded to CASA, who makes the final decision of eligibility.

Applications are accepted yearly from January through August, with a deadline of September 1.

For applications, contact:
Ms. Karen Koza
(216) 736-3837
kozak@ucc.org

For other information, contact:
The Rev. David Schoen
(216) 736-3827
schoend@ucc.org

Once approved, the pastor must be enrolled in Life Insurance and Disability Insurance (LIDI) through The Pension Boards, UCC at the expense of the congregation (1.5 percent of the pastor's annual salary basis) to receive the grant.

Pastors who have not yet established a Pension Boards Benefits Account must do so before any benefits can be awarded.