

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Owensboro This Little Light Mini-Grant Program Information

Introduction:

The Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Owensboro is an interfaith church that was founded in 1987 as a place where "faith and reason meet." It is formed around a covenant written by its founders which says:

*We come together in fellowship and love open to each other's beliefs.
As a congregation, we create a place for open dialogue,
search for truth, meaning, spiritual growth, and justice.
To these ends we commit to each other and to the larger community
our selves and our talents.*

In 1988, UUCO affiliated with the Unitarian Universalist Association. The denomination has its roots in two separate Christian traditions (Unitarianism and Universalism) but has been an interfaith denomination since their merger in 1961. The Association is united by seven principles:

We affirm and promote:

- *The inherent worth and dignity of every person;*
- *Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;*
- *Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;*
- *A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;*
- *The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;*
- *The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;*
- *Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.*

In 2008, the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Owensboro received a UU Heartland District grant called a Chalice Lighter Grant. Chalice Lighter Grants come from a self-funded District program. Members in regional UU churches pledge 8¢ a day to help worthy projects elsewhere in the District. We began to dream about how we might be able to do something similar for worthy projects right here in Owensboro. This seemed a natural way to offer 'our selves and talents' to the 'larger community' and to live out our principles. So later in 2008, our Board of Trustees approved a mini-grants program for Owensboro-Daviess County. It is based on members pledging 5¢ a day to the program and it is called *This Little Light*.

Through these mini-grants, we want to partner with other dreamers in Daviess County who are invested in improving the quality of human life. Recipients of *This Little Light* grants can expect certain things from us in our life together in the 'larger community:'

- *We will always try to do no harm.*
- *We will stand ready to help each other.*
- *We will present a united front by participating together publicly on social projects.*
- *We will work for the Daviess County community to have enough.*
- *We will promote equality and equity.*
- *We will promote and engage in lifelong education and healthy growth.*
- *We will protect our children and strive to keep our environment clean.*

General information:

- Total funds available for annual disbursement are \$500. At least one grant is to be made each year. Grants can be made to individuals, non-profit organizations, churches, school clubs, charity or civic groups in Daviess County who present an application for a project that improves the quality of human life in Owensboro-Daviess County. (N.B. Individuals are responsible for any tax liability that may be incurred by receiving grant funds.)

- Projects should address one of these issues: Bullying, Domestic Violence, Hunger, Homelessness, or Literacy. Preference will be given to projects that enhance the self-sufficiency of those served or that have an extended reach into the community. Preference will also be given to projects with sustainable or repeatable plans. Please note, grants are not for general operating expenses, salary, or personal relief.
- Applications will be accepted from Martin Luther King Day through 1 March each year. Application materials can be obtained online @ www.uuowensboro.org or by contacting: *Rev. Dr. Claudia A. Ramisch @ 270-683-1462* or hermitstuff@bellsouth.net (Subject line: GRANT APP)
Completed applications are to be submitted to:
*Unitarian Universalist Congregation
ATTN: This Little Light Committee
1221 Cedar St.
Owensboro KY 42301*
- Assistance in preparing materials is available to applicants with special needs. This may include applicants without experience in preparing grant materials.
- *Applications must maintain the original pagination of the packet to be considered.* The online packet is not click and type so this may require you to type the questions/categories yourself.
- Grants will be made once a year after the Assembly votes on the recipient at the Congregation's Annual Meeting on the last Sunday of April. Grants are to be made in person on the 1st Sunday of May at the 10:30 morning service. Although no religious affiliation of any kind is necessary to apply, criteria for acceptance of a project includes the preparer's willingness to attend this service so that the Congregation may meet and encourage the recipient personally.

Application Process

- Complete all forms and submit them no later than midnight on 1 March.
 - Basic contact information
 - Evidence of character or competence (Résumé and total of three letters)
Character: Letters of personal reference
Competence: Résumé and letters of professional reference
 - Description of need you are trying to address
 - Goals of your project
 - Plan for reaching your goals
 - Budget for the grant
 - Questions or tools for evaluation: How will you know if the project worked?
 - Statement that you understand requirement to attend disbursement ceremony
- Applications will be evaluated in a two-round process by a committee comprised of three voting members of the Congregation, the President-Elect, and the Minister.
 - Round One: Review of all written materials by 15 March. Initial choice of five projects for deeper review.
 - Round Two: Invitation to five applicants to participate in a 30 minute interview with the opportunity to include a personal presentation of 7-10 minutes.
- *This Little Light Committee* will make final choices of Round Two applications by 15 April. Successful applicants will be notified on 15 April. Projects that are approved for a grant will be presented by the President-Elect to the Assembly at the Congregation's Annual Meeting on the last Sunday of April. The Assembly will affirm the Committee's choices.
- Grants disbursements will be made in person on the 1st Sunday of May at the 10:30 morning service.
- All applicants will receive a written acknowledgement of completion of the process and the outcome regarding their projects.