



Reynolds Missionary Emergency Fund  
Grant Distribution  
Policies & Procedures  
2019

## Introduction

Major A.D. Reynolds established the Missionary Emergency Fund (MEF) on January 20, 1920, as a Virginia non-stock corporation. According to *The Recollections and Will of Major A.D. Reynolds*, “A substantial part of Major Reynolds’ time, interest and money was devoted to the work of the Methodist church, both in Bristol and in the mission field” (61).

In pages 55-57 of his *Recollections*, Major Reynolds describes his experience of conviction and conversion in an 1875 revival in Bristol. He writes, “providentially their was a revival going on at the 1st Presbyterian Church,” and he goes on to say that he responded to the altar call each evening. A few days later, “The meeting about that time was transfered to the Methodist Church,” during which time, “I rose to thank God for Conviction and while Standing on my feet he gave me the witness of the Spirit which I Cherish as the most precious gift Ever bestowed on mortal man.”

Because the Presbyterian and Methodist congregations of Bristol were so fundamental to his own faith journey, Major Reynolds chose to entrust them with stewardship of the Missionary Emergency Fund. So, each year, the Fund distributes the greater of (a) 3.5% of its twelve-month average of securities and cash or (b) 85% of its adjusted net income to its three “supported organizations,” the Presbyterian and Methodist congregations Major Reynolds loved so dearly, First Presbyterian Church, Reynolds Memorial United Methodist Church, and State Street United Methodist Church.

First Presbyterian Church receives one-half of the annual distribution, and Reynolds Memorial United Methodist Church and State Street United Methodist Church equally divide the other half of the annual distribution after making educational grants from their combined allocation.

## Purpose

According to its Articles of Incorporation, the Missionary Emergency Fund’s purpose is:

*to support home and foreign missions engaged in propagating the Christian Faith; to provide scholarships and other aid for students preparing for Christian service work, to aid the active and retired clergy directly and by assisting in the education of their children and by providing for the comfort and care of members of their families; generally to aid the propagation of the Christian Faith and to aid in Christian education at home and abroad; to advance education including providing support and assistance to educational institutions and to students and teachers; to carry on such charitable, religious and educational activities either directly or by contributions to organizations duly authorized to carry on charitable, religious, or educational activities.*

Any grant from the Missionary Emergency Fund must fulfill some part of this statement of purpose.

## Priorities

### Support of Home and Foreign Missions

In its efforts “to support home and foreign missions engaged in propagating the Christian Faith,” especially as it makes “contributions to organizations duly authorized to carry on charitable, religious, or educational activities,” State Street UMC will strive to fund projects, ministries, and organizations with which the congregation has an existing or potential partnership beyond the relationship of grantor to grant recipient. The congregation will seek grant opportunities connected to volunteer or service opportunities for its members and constituents.

### Aid and Scholarships for Students

State Street UMC and Reynolds Memorial UMC have traditionally distributed student grants from the combined United Methodist half of the fund’s annual proceeds *before* dividing the remainder of that amount between the two congregations. The congregation understands this practice to be its primary means of providing support to students. However, if/when the congregation provides student grants from its portion of the fund, it will give priority to requests from “students preparing for Christian service work” over students who are preparing for other vocations.

### Clergy Aid and Support

The United Methodist Church has developed more thorough compensation and pension systems over the past century “to aid the active and retired clergy,” and to “provide for the comfort and care of members of their families.” Since there are fewer instances of need for these kinds of care, State Street UMC will prioritize “assisting in the education of their children” over the other types of clergy support mentioned in the MEF purpose statement.

### Educational Support and Assistance

Since many educational institutions receive public financial support or can influence or even control income from tuition and other fees, State Street UMC will prioritize ministries and grant opportunities that use funds “to aid in *Christian* education at home and abroad,” over grant requests that would merely “advance education” in a more general, sectarian sense.

### Direct Activity and Contributions to Organizations

Because it is a large congregation with many ministries “engaged in propagating the Christian Faith,” State Street UMC will strive to find creative, entrepreneurial ways “to carry on such charitable, religious and educational activities . . . *directly*.” This congregation believes that it can partner most fruitfully with Major Reynolds in “Evangeliseing (*sic*) . . . the world,” including his beloved Bristol, by using the monetary gifts he so generously provided to fund ministry opportunities that engage and utilize this church family’s God-given gifts.

Certainly, there are many organizations, missions, and agencies better equipped to carry on some of the “charitable, religious, or educational activities” Major Reynolds envisioned. It is equally true, however, that State Street United Methodist Church is uniquely equipped and situated to carry on some of these activities and to “propagate the Christian Faith” here in our community.

This congregation feels honored and blessed to have offered and hosted what proved to be a life-changing ministry in the life of Major A.D. Reynolds. We feel equally blessed to be entrusted with this part of his estate to continue that life-changing ministry in Bristol and beyond today.

## Process

During the first quarter of each calendar year, State Street United Methodist Church will learn of its anticipated allocation of the Missionary Emergency Fund's annual distribution.

State Street UMC's church council will receive grant proposals until April 30 of each calendar year. Each proposal shall specify (a) how the grant will be used, (b) how this use fits into and satisfies the criteria specified in the fund's Articles of Incorporation, and (c) how the grant amount fits or will fit into the overall funding of the project, program, or ministry.

In May of each year, the congregation's Worship, Invite, Nurture, Grow, and Serve ministry groups will review the grant proposals and give their chairpersons a sense of priority about which proposals should be honored and to what extent they should be funded.

In June, the grant recommendation committee, consisting of:

1. Senior Pastor
2. Associate Pastor
3. Church Council chairperson
4. Lay Leader
5. Worship ministry group chairperson
6. Invite ministry group chairperson
7. Nurture ministry group chairperson
8. Grow ministry group chairperson
9. Serve ministry group chairperson
10. Finance Committee chairperson

will review the proposals and form recommendations for the church council. In its June or July meeting, the church council will receive a report from this grant committee and will approve grants based on the committee's recommendations.

Unless requested or arranged otherwise by the grant applicant, grants will be disbursed immediately after approval by the church council and no later than December 31.

By December 31, the senior pastor will make a final grant report to the Missionary Emergency Fund board of directors.