



**DIOCESE of
CHRIST our HOPE**

January 8th, 2026

Dear clergy and lay
leaders of the Diocese of
Christ our Hope,

Greetings from the Diocesan Council and from Bp. Alan Hawkins! We are honored to serve you and the staff of our diocese. We thank the Lord for your faithfulness in ministry during 2025, and we await with expectation the Lord's leading in 2026.

We are launching the Ministry Grant Process for 2026 that allocates funds for 2027 and beyond. Resources for this process as well as the application link are on our website

A summary of the process and timeline for the Ministry Grants was sent with this letter. Please review it as guidance for the coming year. Here is some key guidance in the document:

- Ministry Grant Working Group: The grant process will be overseen by a working group consisting of two Diocesan Council members and 3-5 congregational members with experience in grant processes. This team will be evaluating all the requests and providing proposed funding to the Diocesan Council for final approval.
- Reporting on Approved Grants: Reports are required twice yearly (Jan and July)
- Funding Categories and Definition for 2026 grants: For the 2026 grant cycle, there will be four areas of emphasis for the diocese based on the amount of funds available for 2027. Details on the Residency and Internship grants can be found in the summary document.
 - Church plants standard funding will be \$210k over 6 years
 - Curacy Accelerator standard funding will be \$210k over 6 years

- Residencies standard funding will be \$120k over 3 years
- Internship standard funding will be \$30k over 3 years
- Guidance on 2027 Available Funds: A major learning from past years is that it is important to set reasonable expectations regarding the level of funding available for the coming year as well as how that will affect the criteria for funding applications. Due to a large amount of currently running grants, the expected 2027 funds available are:
 - \$215,000 of general funds
 - \$80,000 in Flexible Funds (which are occasionally used for general funding but preferred toward one-year grants)
- The available funds are estimated to be sufficient to support new grants for:
 - One or two church plants
 - One curacy accelerator program
 - One residency grant
 - One or two internship grants

There is also an overview of the grant process timeline which is largely the same. We are encouraging Deaneries to set aside a time outside their deanery retreats that is specifically for a peer review (not approval) of proposed grants.

We are excited to see where the Spirit is moving in our Diocese in the coming year and participate in His redemptive work.

It is a privilege to serve our churches through the Ministry Grant process, and we look forward to receiving your applications.

In Christ,

Alan Hawkins, Bishop Ordinary

Jerald Walz, Vice Chair, Diocesan Council

Lee Hilts, Chief Operating Officer (lhilts@adhope.org for questions)