

GRANT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

- The Chester County Community Foundation **connects people who care with the causes that matter**, so their philanthropy makes a difference **now & forever**.
- We are **a collection of Field of Interest & Donor Advised Funds** with **\$5M + granted annually** to nonprofits in Chester County & beyond.
- **99%** of our grants are made by our generous Fund Advisors, who make grant decisions all year.

Proposals submitted by nonprofits are considered for 2 types of grants:

Field of Interest & Donor Advised Funds (No Deadline)

- ◇ Grants **focus on Chester County** causes & issues, but are not limited to Chester County.
- ◇ Charitable nonprofits working **in all fields of interest** are considered for grant awards. (I.e. arts, culture, & humanities; education; community improvement; environment; religion; health; & human services)
- ◇ **General operating** grants are encouraged. Nonprofits should be specific about their mission, goals, & measurable outcomes.
- ◇ Proposals can be submitted **anytime all year**.
- ◇ Grant decisions are made **intermittently** all year, as Fund Advisors desire.
- ◇ Grant **awards** typically range from **\$500-\$7,500**.

Fund for Chester County Capacity Building Grants (Due 9/13)

- ◇ For eligibility in this grant program, nonprofits must be **located in & serve Chester County**.
- ◇ Nonprofits **budgets** must be **\$500,000 or less**.
- ◇ The goal of capacity building grants is to **strengthen the effectiveness of NPO's serving the region**, see page 4 for more details on the areas including:
 - Mission, Vision & Strategy
 - Governance & Leadership
 - Partnerships & Collaborations
 - Operations & Technology
 - Fundraising, Development & Marketing
- ◇ Proposals submitted between **July 1 - Sept. 13** are eligible for consideration.
- ◇ Grant **awards** typically range from **\$500-\$5,000**, with monies distributed by **February**.

- Use this form @ www.chescocf.org to apply online for grants from all Community Foundation Funds.
- **Email proposals to grants@chescocf.org**
- Proposals are considered "complete" when CCCF has **confirmed** receipt of the **Grant Proposal Summary Sheet, Narrative & Attachments**.
- Proposals are shared electronically and online with Fund Advisors, Donors & Grant Panels.
- Per IRS Regulations, applicants **must be** charitable, tax exempt organizations with 501(c)(3) certification & **cannot** be individuals.

Please contact Grants Administrator **Kevin Baffa** at **(610)-698-8211** or grants@chescocf.org with any questions.

I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

One page only. This page will be shared electronically with Grant Panel Members & Fund Advisors.

Note: If Philanthropy Network's Common Grant Application is used, CCCF's Summary Sheet MUST accompany application.

To obtain an electronic version of this application, visit www.chescocf.org

Date May 5, 2024

Contact Information

Organization Name: Tree of Life Church

ED/CEO Name: Rev. M. Courtenay Willcox (pastor)

Address: 933 Baltimore Pike, Springfield, PA 19064

ED/CEO E-mail: treeoflifepc@gmail.com

Phone: 610.543-9533

Board Chair Name: Bobbie Morrison

Website: <https://treeoflifepc.org/>

Board Chair Approval (check here): X

Year Incorporated: 1958

Primary Contact Name: Courtenay Willcox

FEIN: 23-1396783

Primary Contact E-mail: treeoflifepc@gmail.com

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

Arts, Culture & Humanities

Environment/Animal Welfare

Education

Health

Human Services

Religion

Mission:

Tree of Life Church's mission is to nurture a community where all are welcomed, supported, and encouraged to grow in leadership regardless of their physical, emotional, or intellectual ability. We especially strive to provide a safe, joyful, and accepting environment for people with disabilities to use their talents in service of their community.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served):

Delaware (primary), Chester, Philadelphia Counties

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:

Annual Budget \$ 195,232

2 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

55 % of budget for program expenses

5 # of Board Volunteers

45 % of budget for administrative expenses

20 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers

0 % of budget for fundraising expenses

60 hours/week # of Volunteer Hours

100 % total

Top 3-5 funding sources:

Presbytery of Philadelphia, \$25,000

Tree of Life, \$19,598

Is this grant proposal for: Capacity Building or General Operating ?

If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:

Mission, Vision & Strategy Governance & Leadership Partnerships & Collaborations

Fundraising, Development & Marketing Technology Other: _____

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$ 25,000

Proposal Summary: This proposal is to construct a new ADA-accessible bathroom and renovate existing bathrooms to meet the needs of the community with a wide range of disabilities and abilities which now

use the Tree of Life building. This is key to our purpose of “providing a safe...and accepting environment” with minimum barriers for all people.

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.

Nonprofit's history, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness

Tree of Life Church (Princeton Presbyterian Church) has existed since 1858. It was originally located in Philadelphia, serving the community around 39th and Powelton Avenue. In 1953, the church relocated to the developing community of Springfield, Delaware County, and built its current building. In addition to its primary purpose as a faith community, Princeton/Tree of Life has always engaged with the community around it, hosting Alcoholics Anonymous groups, scout troops, and other organizations so that the building is rarely empty. In the 1980s, the lower level of the building was rented, for the first time, as a daycare. Foreshadowing the church's current mission, the initial tenant was a school for children with cerebral palsy, and ramps were added throughout the building to make it accessible to people in wheelchairs. However, accessible bathrooms were never addressed. The school for cerebral palsy eventually moved to a new location, and the space was rented to the current childcare program.

From 2009 to 2016, the church engaged in a shared ministry with Chambers Memorial Presbyterian Church in Rutledge, sharing a pastor and working together on community outreach. In 2014, Rev. Pam McShane was approached by a neighbor, Jim Wurster, about starting a project to provide social engagement for adults with disabilities and their families and caregivers. In January 2015, Our Community Cup Coffeehouse began as a joint project of the churches and the New Avenue Foundation. Since that time, except for a break during the COVID lockdown of 2020 and 2021, Our Community Cup Coffeehouse has met almost every Friday night, providing a safe and accepting community for adults with all kinds of disabilities and abilities and their family members and caregivers.

Originally housed at Chambers Church, Our Community Cup moved to Princeton Presbyterian in January 2017. At this time, Princeton redefined itself as a congregation with a unique call to welcome all kinds of people, with particular attention to including those with disabilities. Reflecting this new identity, they adopted a new name, "Tree of Life Church," with the vision of many different kinds of fruit growing on its branches. Currently, in addition to weekly worship and other traditional church activities, Tree of Life Church and New Avenue Foundation continue to host Our Community Cup Coffeehouse each Friday evening. Every week an average of 45 adults with all kinds of disabilities and abilities from across Delaware County and the Philadelphia region gather with family members and caregivers. Attendees include people from group homes, those who live independently, and those who attend with family members.

Our Community Cup offers intentional welcome to everyone who comes and includes people of diverse faith backgrounds and racial and ethnic heritages. There is a paid leader and a staff of volunteers drawn primarily from the church. Each week, there are snacks, a social activity, which may be a game, a craft, or a service project, and live music provided for free by local performers. There is no admission charge. It is a give-what-you-can venue. Free admission is both important to those with limited income and different from most programs for folks with disabilities. Over the years, several participants who started as guests have become volunteers, empowering them to take leadership in their own community. As one visitor noted, "You can't always tell who the guest is and who the volunteer is. They're all having fun together." Our Community Cup serves a crucial need in the disability community. Many services and opportunities for adults with disabilities end abruptly when they turn 21. There are few places where they can just be themselves with no judgment and even fewer places where their abilities are recognized as being as important as their disabilities. Social environments are often uncomfortable or

unwelcoming. Our Community Cup provides a safe, welcoming, and accepting place to find friends, have fun, and for our guests to use their gifts.

Funding request

Description of key initiatives

Tree of Life Church and Our Community Cup Coffeehouse seek to celebrate the gifts of those who are often ignored, to deepen a sense of community both within our walls and with the broader community and share ownership in building this community of abled and disabled people. Here are three ways this happened over the last year.

- There is an increase in regular participation by people living in group homes at Our Community Cup Coffeehouse. Intentional efforts have been made to welcome these groups, who often come late or leave early.
- There is an increase in co-laboring, inviting guests from the disability community to become part of the team that runs Our Community Cup Coffeehouse. For example, one person loves to head to the kitchen to help. Another regularly shows up early to help set up. During the recent Ramadan celebration, another regular participant shared a Ramadan presentation and designed the craft activity. She's already planning what to do next year.
- Tree of Life Church is seeking to be more welcoming to people with disabilities by hosting other groups that serve the disability community. In the last year, Families CCAN, a networking group supporting young adults with disabilities and their families, and Delaware County Community Support Program, a county-run program that helps people navigate the governmental system for people with mental health issues and special needs, both began meeting in the Tree of Life Church building.
- As a community committed to welcoming all people, one of the biggest challenges we face is retrofitting a building designed and built in the 1950s to be accessible to all people with the limited budget available. The ADA bathroom will be a significant step toward accessibility.
- There is an ongoing financial challenge to support our work with people with disabilities. We have committed to being accessible to all people as we work to include those on limited incomes. That means those who participate in our community often have little in the way of financial resources to support the community. We are intentionally a "pay-what-you-can" place. That means that financial resources to pay staff and provide programming are often stretched thin.
- Our volunteer base is small and aging. An intentional effort is in place to build that base of volunteers. After talking to several contractors, we are working with Rendell Associates to help us develop plans and costs for this project. Rendell Associates is a well-respected general contractor with significant experience in the type of renovations proposed.

The total cost of the project is estimated to be \$69,598.00.

It will be funded as follows:

| | |
|--|----------|
| Capital Campaign – Tree of Life Church | \$19,598 |
| Capital Grant – Trustees of the Presbytery of Philadelphia | \$25,000 |
| Additional Grants (Currently applying for) | \$25,000 |

We have completed facilities projects, most recently including a new roof and several related to the heating system, including replacing the boiler. Those projects have been funded by capital campaigns supported by church members, grants, and short-term loans from the Presbytery of Philadelphia. Once the bathrooms are completed, ongoing maintenance will be funded through the church's general fund.

Specific needs & issues to be addressed

This request is for a capital improvement to the Tree of Life building, specifically for constructing a new ADA-accessible, gender-inclusive bathroom and renovating two other existing bathrooms. Serving those with disabilities is a mission of our church, and having a gender-neutral bathroom that accommodates people with disabilities is an imperative. People with a variety of disabilities use our building each week,

not only for worship and Our Community Cup Coffeehouse but also for Delaware County Community Support Program, Families CCAN, and participants in Girl Scouts and AA groups meeting in the building. The current bathrooms are original to the building, constructed in 1953, with only minor modifications since then. There is no existing ADA-accessible bathroom in the building, which is a significant issue for those with disabilities who attend activities at Tree of Life. It means they must either make sure to use the bathroom before coming or depend on incontinence products while at the church. Several people have told us they will not come to the church because of the inadequate bathroom facilities.

- **Why it is important to fund this now**

Tree of Life is losing the opportunity to impact individuals who are physically disabled because individuals are not able to attend OCC, groups have rejected Tree of Life as a viable option ,or ended the rental agreement because of the lack of an ADA bathroom. This ADA project has been discussed for eight years. It is time.

- **How impact & results will be demonstrated**

Once an ADA bathroom is installed, measurable outcomes will include a palpable sigh of relief from those who need this accommodation. We will also be able to welcome tenants who have rejected or left our space because there is no ADA bathroom accommodation available.

- *For capacity building grant proposals:*

- *How will this capacity building initiative impact your nonprofit?*
- *How will this impact be measured?*
- *Include a description of the expected activities; timeline & costs to implement the initiative. If external consulting services are required, include the anticipated costs & expertise of the consultants to be hired. Include external consultant proposals if applicable.*

III. ATTACHMENTS

E-mail or mail this support information

1. Copy of 501 (c) (3) federal tax-exempt letter
2. List of Board of Directors, with their affiliations
3. Most recent annual report & financial statement, audited if available
4. Itemized organizational operating budget with actual results for prior fiscal year & current fiscal year to date
5. If capacity building initiative, itemized budget (including external consultant's proposal, if applicable)
6. Current strategic plan. If your nonprofit does not have a current strategic plan, explain why.

- Use this form @ www.chescof.org to apply online for grants from all Community Foundation Funds.
- **Email proposals to grants@chescof.org**
- Proposals are considered "complete" when CCCF has **confirmed** receipt of the **Grant Proposal Summary Sheet, Narrative & Attachments**.
- Proposals are shared electronically and online with Fund Advisors, Donors & Grant Panels.
- Per IRS Regulations, applicants **must be** charitable, tax exempt organizations with 501(c)(3) certification & **cannot** be individuals.

Please contact Grants Administrator Kevin Baffa at (610) 696-8211 grants@chescof.org with questions.



*Connecting people who care with causes that matter,
so their legacies make a difference.*



WHAT IS CAPACITY BUILDING?

Capacity building helps bring a nonprofit to the next level of operational, programmatic, financial, or organizational maturity, in order to more effectively & efficiently fulfill its mission.

Capacity building may include (but is not limited to) projects which address:

- **MISSION, VISION & STRATEGY**
Organizational Assessment - Strategic Planning - Financial Planning
- **GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP**
Board Development - Executive Transition/Succession Planning - Leadership Development - Staff Training & Professional Development
- **PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS**
Coalition Building – Collaboration - Mergers & Acquisitions - Strategic Restructuring
- **RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING**
Major Gift Donor Identification, Cultivation, Development & Stewardship - Development Campaigns (Annual, Capital, Planned Giving) - Earned Income Development - Social Enterprise Feasibility & Development - Marketing, Branding & Communications
- **TECHNOLOGY & OPERATIONS**
Business Continuity Planning - Financial Management - Human Resources - Volunteer Management - Industry Certification - Risk Management - Technology Improvements