COVID-19 Response – U.S. Churches
The staff at Brethren Disaster Ministries (BDM) requested an allocation of $60,000 from the Emergency Disaster Fund as initial funding of the domestic COVID-19 Relief Program.

According to the Johns Hopkins Center for Systems Science and Engineering COVID-19 tracking system (Johns Hopkins Dashboard), as of April 16, 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic had expanded to 185 countries and territories, causing governments of many countries to close borders, restrict travel, and order families and individuals to stay at home. These restrictions and the health crisis caused by the pandemic is impacting all sectors of life throughout of the United States, including Church of the Brethren congregations and districts.

In response, the Church of the Brethren is providing a broad COVID-19 relief program designed to assist Church of the Brethren congregations and districts, global Brethren congregations, and partners in providing relief activities in their communities. A COVID-19 relief grant program financed by the Emergency Disaster Fund is one of the proposed resources in the broader plan.

This domestic grant is designed to help Church of the Brethren congregations and districts in the U.S. provide humanitarian relief for vulnerable people in their congregations and communities. The plan provides grants of up to $5,000 for individual congregations and up to $25,000 for district-level relief programs.

Applications will be reviewed by Brethren Disaster Ministries and cross referenced with other denominational grant programs to prevent duplication. The appropriate district executive will be consulted prior to approval, as will Discipleship Ministries staff. Grants will be reviewed by the EDF review team, with affirmation required by at least three members of the BDM staff. Grant awards will be balanced among districts and the level of COVID-19 impact considered in order to spread resources where needed most. Additional grants to the same congregation will be considered beginning in July if funds are available.

APPROVAL for this allocation was given by Roy Winter, associate executive director, Brethren Disaster Ministries; Ed Woolf, treasurer; David Steele, general secretary; and Mission and Ministry Board members Lauren Seganos Cohen, Thomas Dowdy, Carl Fike, Lois Grove, Heather Gentry Hartwell, Dava Hensley, John Hoffman, Paul Liepelt, Diane Mason, John Mueller, Joel Peña, J. Roger Schrock, Paul Schrock, Colin Scott, Christina Singh, Patrick Starkey, and Carol Yeazell.

Nancy Miner, recorder

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