

THE AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF MASSACHUSETTS
Relationship Ministries Team

Application Procedure for the George Wright Fund

For further information on the George Wright Fund,
contact the TABCOM office
at (978) 448-1445 or email Maria Reilly (mariareilly at tabcom.org)

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I. ASSUMPTIONS

- A. As a beneficiary of the will of the late George R. Wright, The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts receives a share of income from a fund held in trust by a commercial banking institution. This income, named by The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts, as the “George Wright Fund” provides grants to be used to support churches in the following ways: reduce the principal amounts of mortgages for church buildings, assist in the repayment for student loans for pastors and church staff, assist with stipend positions for growing ministries, support new churches meeting in other buildings, support for collaborative ministry partnerships between TABCOM churches, and fund building projects to improve accessibility and energy efficiency.
1. Through the Relationship Ministries Team, the Massachusetts American Baptist family attempts to exercise responsible and careful stewardship of these limited resources. This responsibility is based primarily on the Biblical concept of responsibility for Christ’s Church. Laws governing fiduciary accountability provide a legal basis for this responsibility.
 2. Some churches related to The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts have occasion to need financial assistance in the form of grants and may be expected to seek such assistance from The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts. A significant element of historic Baptist polity, “the associational principal,” more lately known as “partnership in ministry and mission,” requires mutual support.
 3. George Wright Funds are understood to be supplemental to the usual tithes and offerings and/or other income of a local church. These funds are meant to provide occasional assistance but not to become part of the continuing financial maintenance of recipient churches.
 4. The primary focus of the mission and ministry of The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts is through local, affiliated congregations. The purpose of these policies is to facilitate mutual support and care for the member churches.

II. GUIDELINES

A. Application & Substantiating Data

1. Churches requesting assistance from the George Wright Fund must make application in writing, using the application form provided by the George Wright Fund Committee. These forms may be obtained by calling the TABCOM office (978-448-1445) or are available for download as a PDF file at www.tabcom.org.

Only churches giving a total of at least one percent (1%) of their current operating budget to United Mission Basics, the Massachusetts Ministry Fund or the America for Christ offering will be considered.

2. The Relationship Ministries Team of The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts wants to affirm churches which apply for and receive support. In order to do so, churches requesting assistance should give evidence of their viable ministry(ies).

3. Churches requesting assistance from the George Wright Fund must give evidence of financial need. Substantiating data required:
 - Previous year's treasurer's report (line item report of income and expenses)
 - Current year budget
 - Statement describing the church's financial stewardship campaign
 - Extenuating circumstances which mandate the request of assistance
 - Statement of other (if any) funding being applied for or received from outside the church (i.e. M&M Strategic Premium Assistance, the Boston Baptist Social Union, New Church Development Funds, or any other external funding)
 - Complete mortgage information if applying for a mortgage
 - Other information may be requested by the committee

4. Churches requesting assistance from The George Wright Fund must be in "good standing" with The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts and their Association. Criteria to determine "good standing" may include, but are not limited to such matters as:
 - Participation in TABCOM and Association meetings and events
 - Responsible level of financial support of American Baptist mission which is defined as at least five percent (5%) of the total budget for American Baptist missions (excluding loan repayments for capital expenses).
 - Churches giving less than a total of one percent (1%) of their current operating budget to United Mission Basics, Massachusetts Ministries Fund or the America for Christ offering will not be considered
 - Recommendation by the Area Minister and Moderator of the Association of which the Church is a member
 - Current in-payment of Association dues
 - Regularly inviting regional representatives to worship or to other church events

5. No church may receive assistance from the George Wright Fund for more than five (5) successive years. Churches requesting assistance for more than five (5) of any nine (9) year period should show special extenuating circumstances requiring assistance. Any requests for exceptions will be subject to review by the George Wright Fund Committee.

- B. The George Wright Fund Committee may also consider initiating contact with churches that the committee thinks might meet the application criteria.

- C. The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts may retain an administrative fee not to exceed ten percent (10%) of the total monies awarded to offset administrative expenses.

THE AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF MASSACHUSETTS
RELATIONSHIP MINISTRIES TEAM

APPLICATION FOR GEORGE WRIGHT FUNDS

Name of Church _____

Address _____

City _____ Town _____ ZIP Code _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Mailing Address if different than above _____

Pastor

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Town _____ ZIP Code _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Church Moderator

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Town _____ ZIP Code _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Church Clerk

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Town _____ ZIP Code _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Church Treasurer

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Town _____ ZIP Code _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please use additional pages to convey your answers as necessary.

- 1. Give a statement of your church's vision for ministry?** For example: What are the ongoing ministries of your church? What do you hope to accomplish in the next 3-5 years? How do you intend to implement these hopes and accomplishments?
- 2. Why are you applying for financial assistance?**
- 3. Describe the Stewardship campaign of your church, including dates of activities?**
- 3. In what way(s) is the church membership aware that this application for financial assistance is being made?**
- 5. Has the church requested or is it receiving any funding from outside the church (such as M&M Strategic Premium Assistance, grants from the Boston Baptist Social Union, New Church Development Funds, etc)? Please list.**

6. **Indicate the amount requested:** _____ *Typical range is from \$1,000-\$3,000)*

If applying for a mortgage, please provide the following data.

**Approved funds will be paid directly to lender*

- A. Lending Institution: _____
- B: Institution's Address _____
- C. Year mortgage was taken out _____
- D. Terms of mortgage, including length and terms _____
- E. Amount of principal owed _____

7. **Attach to this form the following:**

- A. A copy of the Church Treasurer's report for **the previous year**. *This should be a line item of all income and expenses.*
- B. A copy of the Church Budget for the **current year**. *This should be a line item of all income and expenses.*

8. **Fill in the following information, based on the reports included:**

- A. Projected income for this year: _____
- B. Total church income for previous year: _____
- C. United Mission Basics support for previous year: _____
Massachusetts Ministries Fund support for previous year: _____
America for Christ Offering for previous year: _____
- D. Total mission giving to ABC-related ministries for previous year: _____

9. **How many of your members participated in meetings or activities during the previous year?**

- A. At the Associational level _____
- B. At the regional level _____
- C. At the national level _____

10. **How much money was contributed as Association dues in the previous year?** _____

Name of Person Completing Form _____

Daytime Phone _____

E-mail _____

Date: _____

Please return this application with all necessary forms and attachments to:

The American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts
167 Prescott Street
Groton, MA 01450
Attn: Relationship Ministries, George Wright Fund