

ABC/WI News Release

2019 *New Wineskins* Grant Recipients & Continuing Progress



a grant program administered by ABC/WI

NO ONE PUTS NEW WINE INTO OLD WINESKINS; OTHERWISE, THE WINE WILL BURST THE SKINS, AND THE WINE IS LOST, AND SO ARE THE SKINS; BUT ONE PUTS NEW WINE INTO FRESH WINESKINS.

MARK 2:22

The New Wineskins Grant Program seeks to nurture the birthing of new ministry initiatives within ABC/WI by planting seeds through training, coaching, and financial support.

The New Wineskins Grant Program is up and running!! We launched our program with our *Day of Missional Innovation Event* in March 2019. We had over two dozen people in attendance and over a dozen organizations represented. Those gathered were inspired by stories from church planters and pastors building community and pursuing mission both inside and outside the physical walls of the church. Participants also had opportunities to share about their own vision for Christian community and attended workshops on funding mission, current trends of the Christian landscape in the US, and how to articulate what is at the heart of their missional vision. The day ended with more information about the grant program for those who were ready to start their new projects. It was a day that beautifully represented the vastness of our God, underlined with the urgent call to reach the vastness of God's people all around us in relevant and meaningful ways.

Throughout April and May the New Wineskins administrative team, made up of both regional staff and representatives of the Commission on Finance, reviewed the applications from churches and individuals seeking to build new faith communities. It was difficult to know that we were not able to fund all applications as each had promising elements for Christian mission work; we hope that all will continue to pursue their vision. However, there were three applicants that most clearly exemplified the New Wineskins ideals of: *New means new, new relationships, "with and among" not "to and for," alignment with ABC/WI mission, collaboration with others, and innovative approaches.*

We are so excited to announce the three inaugural projects receiving a 2019 New Wineskins Grant:

Miracle, Inc. (birthed by Milwaukee, Progressive Baptist Church): BLESSS—(Building Love Equipping shepherds around shame, stigma, suicide, and self-care). BLESSS aims to meet the challenges of clergy mental health and suicide by dispatching a faith-based, pastor-centric curriculum and developing a community of practice during the process.

Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Madison: Mt. Zion Campus Ministry—Campus Ministry holds a monthly worship service entitled Relevant Worship and events in reflection of the needs of the campus. Our mission is to inspire college students to grow personally and spiritually by inviting them to deepen their values and their relationships with themselves, others, and God. Lastly, our vision is to be an Acts 2 church – expanding our support to college students through obedience to God's Word with the help of the Holy Spirit through worship, discipleship, evangelism, fellowship, and ministry.

Underwood Memorial Baptist Church, Wauwatosa: Bricks—In response to the absence of safe spaces for liberation/healing for trans people, Bricks has been organized *by* intersectional trans people *for* intersectional trans people. The group utilizes liberative pedagogies to view trans history – past, present, and future – through a critical counter-narrative lens to found a group identity built upon the tenets of solidarity, liberation, and the power of trans people. Through learning this identity, we seek to create a space/dialogue where trans people can know God's love and have space to heal, grow, and thrive in their bodies, families, and communities.

While the New Wineskins program does focus on its grant giving aspect, we also intend to follow the growth and development of the ministries that we have partnered with. We anticipate bringing updates and stories from these three ministries. Our hope is that they will serve as an inspiration to other new ministry ventures within the ABC/WI family.

This program is made possible through the partnership of the American Baptist Foundation, where the New Wineskins Endowment is managed. To learn more about the New Wineskins program, click [HERE](#).

