



Churches Improving Communities

19 South 2nd Avenue
Highland Park, NJ 08904
ImprovingNJ.org
ChurchesImprovingCommunities@gmail.com

April 5, 2016

Dear Pastor and Members of Consistory:

Classis New Brunswick and Churches Improving Communities are pleased to announce the **Focus Church Campaign**: a new opportunity for central NJ churches to receive assistance to expand their reach into the community, thereby increasing potential membership and congregational vitality. The Focus Church Campaign will concentrate on one Classis New Brunswick church for a period of one year to help them identify and carry out a plan that responds simultaneously to both the needs of the church and of the community. The desired result will be a deeper understanding of how a congregation can be God's hands and feet in the world, an expanded view of the possibilities for their ministry, and positive growth of their congregation in the community.

Churches Improving Communities (CIC), a non-profit community development corporation, provides expertise and support to the churches of Classis New Brunswick to expand or begin justice and mercy programs that serve both the church and the larger community. CIC's programmatic and administrative support are key to helping programs successfully obtain and administer grants, conduct communications and fundraising efforts, grow their support base, and employ program personnel – resources that will be made available through the Focus Church Campaign for an entire year, and that will strategically amplify the resources that the church already has in order to begin or expand effective community service and justice projects.

To apply for the Focus Church Campaign, please review the program materials attached here or via download on the CIC website at www.ImprovingNJ.org. Fill out and return the application to the address below, or scan and send your application via email to ChurchesImprovingCommunities@gmail.com.

Churches Improving Communities
C/o Focus Church Campaign
19 South 2nd Avenue
Highland Park, NJ 08904

All applications must be received by June 1, 2016 to be eligible for consideration in 2016. One applicant will be chosen for the 2016 program cycle. CIC contributes administrative skill and time to the FCC projects, including assistance in securing outside funding, however, the selected church is responsible for the material costs associated with their particular campaign (i.e., advertising, building renovations, program staff, supplies, etc.).

2016 Timeline:

April - May 2016: FCC answers church inquiries about program and application

June 1, 2016: Applications due

June 15, 2016: FCC will announce the selected focus church

June 15 - July 31, 2016: Formation of Local Focus Church Campaign Committee and preliminary work

August 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017: Program implementation

Please direct all questions about the program or application to ChurchesImprovingCommunities@gmail.com. An FCC committee member will be happy to guide you through the application process.

We look forward to hearing from you and to reviewing your application!

In Peace,

Carrie Dirks Amodeo

Carrie Dirks Amodeo
Executive Director
Churches Improving Communities

Norma Coleman-James

Norma Coleman-James
Classis President

CHURCHES IMPROVING COMMUNITIES
FOCUS CHURCH CAMPAIGN (FCC) APPLICATION 2016

Church Name: _____

Church Address: _____

Website: _____ Pastor Name: _____

Application Contact Name and Position:

Contact Email: _____ Contact Phone: _____

Signature of Pastor: _____

Please review the program materials attached here or via download on the CIC website at www.ImprovingNJ.org. Fill out and return the application to the address below, or email to ChurchesImprovingCommunities@gmail.com.

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*****CIC-FCC is made possible by an anonymous grant from a church in Classis New Brunswick. We thank you!*****

APPLICATION NARRATIVE

Please provide brief 3-4 sentence answers to each question in Sections I – V below.

I. Describe the community in which your church is located:

- What are the demographics? How are they changing over time?
- Who is the majority? Who are the people on the margins?
- What do different groups and individuals in the community look for in a church?

II. Describe your church:

- Who are you in terms of members, buildings, and finances?
- In what areas and ministries is your church really strong? Please provide details, anecdotes, etc.
- What draws people into your church?
- What groups would you like to draw in?
- What concerns has Consistory identified for your church? (Please use Annual Report to General Synod, Part 2.a.)
- Please attach a copy of your annual report.

III. **What DREAMS do you have for your congregation? If your church were chosen for CIC's Focus Church Campaign, what things would you like to see happening at your church?**

- **IN-Reach:** What programs would you like to see developed, grown or expanded at your church to better serve people in your congregation, and to enrich education, worship and fellowship at your church?
- Please describe how the CIC Focus Church Campaign might help you develop potential ideas and why. Here are a few examples; please add ideas of your own.

EXAMPLES:

Jr. High Youth Group
Sr. High Youth Group
Sunday School
Incorporating the Arts into Worship
Praise Band
Children's Choir
Vacation Bible School
Women's Group
Men's Group
Young Adult Group
Prayer/Meditation Groups
Social Justice Ministry Group

Effective Church Website
Social Media Presence (FaceBook, Twitter, etc.)
Paperless E-Newsletter
Bilingual/Multi-lingual Worship Service
Start a 2nd Sunday Service
Adult Religious Education
Small Group Bible Study
Church Committees
Stephen Ministers
"Greening" Your Church – Environmentally
Friendly Practices

Other: _____

- **OUT-Reach:** What programs would you like to see developed, grown or expanded at your church to better serve people in your community, and to provide opportunities for members of your congregation to be involved in ministries of compassion, justice and love of neighbor?
- Please describe how the CIC Focus Church Campaign might help you develop potential ideas and why. Here are a few examples; please add ideas of your own.

EXAMPLES:

Repair/Create Shelter or Housing for Homeless
Food Pantry or Soup Kitchen
Childcare for Low-Income Parents
Afterschool Programs
Preschool
Transportation
Employment Counseling
Elder Care
Job Training

International Partnerships with Churches
GED Classes
English as a Second Language Classes
AA
Bereavement Support Group
Disaster Relief
Inter-Religious Dialogue
Community Thrift Store
Community Garden
Environmental Group

Other: _____

IV. Describe your church's capacity in the following:

- Experience & Skill – What experience and/or skills will your congregation bring to the Focus Church Campaign?
 - Cultural awareness and competency – How will you ensure appropriate cultural sensitivity and competency in reaching out into the community with programming or ministry?
 - Financial – What financial resources can you commit to the Focus Church Campaign?
 - Please list two individuals from your church who will represent your church on the CIC Focus Church Campaign (FCC) Steering Committee:
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V. Describe the vision for your church:

- What is your overall vision for your church relating to CIC's Focus Church Campaign?
- In what way might this application process already be helpful?
- What results would you consider successful if your church were to be selected?

**Churches Improving Communities (CIC)
Focus Church Campaign Program Administration & Reporting Structure**

Focus Church: The successful Focus Church Campaign applicant church and its target community.

Local Focus Church Campaign Committee: A committee made up of volunteers from the Focus Church and 2-3 members of the CIC Focus Church Campaign Steering Committee, including the CIC Executive Director.

CIC Focus Church Campaign Steering Committee: A Steering Committee charged with the creation, implementation, and oversight of the Focus Church Campaign, a program of Churches Improving Communities. The FCC Steering Committee is comprised of members of the Board of Directors of Churches Improving Communities, the Executive Director of CIC, the Classis New Brunswick Administrative Council, two members of the chosen Focus Church, and the Classis church supplying the initial funding for this program.

Churches Improving Communities (CIC) Board of Directors: A board of directors made up of representatives from Classis New Brunswick churches, and charged with the administration and oversight of CIC, a 501c3 non-profit community development corporation, and its programs: FCC, NeighborCorps Re-Entry Services, Churches Accomplishing Long-Term Recovery (CALTR), and Church-Based Mental Health Services (CBMHS).

Classis Administrative Council & Congregational & Pastoral Care Committee: The Classis New Brunswick administrative structure that partners with CIC to implement the Focus Church Campaign program.

