

**For Release Time
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United Thank Offering Announces COVID-19 Grant Awards

The Episcopal Diocese of Arizona to receive UTO Grant to respond to COVID-19

Phoenix, AZ— December 1, 2020 — United Thank Offering announced the grant recipients for the 2021 granting year, and we are excited to share that the Diocese of Arizona will receive funding for streaming equipment for 13 congregations throughout Arizona. The focus of the granting process this year was ‘Recovering with Love and Gratitude: An Episcopal Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic in Local Contexts.’

Community Driven Streaming and Digital Ministry in the Time of COVID-19

Due to COVID-19, UTO funds will allow the Diocese of Arizona to support a minimum of thirteen congregations (eleven rural and two small suburban) to purchase equipment for recording and streaming of worship services, formation, educational sessions and pastoral care for now and beyond. Many parishioners will not feel comfortable worshipping in-person even when a congregation enters Phase II. The technology will also allow for needed pastoral care visits. Streaming services of all kinds is a primary method for staying connected.

“Choosing which grant applications to fund and not fund is always difficult, but during this extraordinary time of suffering in the global Covid-19 pandemic we had to prioritize mere survival over thriving. As always, if we’d had more money to grant we would have been delighted to fund more the excellent grant projects submitted, so please continue to be thankful and make your thank offerings to UTO.” Shared Sherri Dietrich, UTO Board President.

United Thank Offering Funding

Every penny given to the United Thank Offering is given away the following year to support innovative mission and ministry in the Episcopal Church. Through the gratitude and

generosity of those who contributed through Blue Box donations, UTO awarded about \$400,000 in grants during this first round and will do a second round in the Spring of 2021.

The United Thank Offering (UTO) is a ministry of The Episcopal Church for the mission of the whole church. Through UTO, individuals are invited to embrace and deepen a personal daily spiritual discipline of gratitude. UTO encourages people to notice the good things that happen each day, give thanks to God for those blessings and make an offering for each blessing using a UTO Blue Box. UTO is entrusted to receive the offerings, and to distribute the 100% of what is collected to support innovative mission and ministry throughout The Episcopal Church and Provinces of the Anglican Communion.

For more information on UTO:

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