

AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES USA
Mission Resource Development
Matthew 25 Grant

For several years, ABCUSA has been receiving financial gifts from a generous donor who asked that the funds be used to help address needs of “housing, education, food and health with regard to the less fortunate.” This specific direction came to us upon our request in June, 2011. In 2013 alone, his gifts are \$133,500 as of May 30.

In the spring of 2012, MRD began a process to explore the creation of a grant process to distribute these funds. We believed that such a process would allow for a wider distribution of gifts throughout the ABC family, rather than by the process of selecting from well-known ministries within the denomination. The Executive Committee of the BGM approved the Grant in their meeting in September, 2012. In consultation with and through the direct involvement by members of our MRD Response Group, we initiated the first, experimental distribution of funds through the Matthew 25 Grant in the spring of 2013. While there are several minor adjustments needing to be made in this process, we believe that the distribution was a success and should be continued.

We received from inside and outside the United States a total of 58 applications, most of which came from individual churches. We were able to grant funding to 53 of these, although almost none received the full amount they requested. The five not receiving funds represented either a second request from a single church, a ministry with tenuous relationship to ABC, or a ministry that did not meet the stated guidelines of the grant. A total of \$110,170 was distributed in April, 2013.

Our next step will be to refine the process with the Response Group before the fall distribution cycle. The Matthew 25 Grant proposal also needs the approval of the Board of General Ministries to continue its operations.