
Meeting assets for Social Justice Advocacy Working Group _GABKY Meeting 1 of 2 are ready!

From Zoom <no-reply@zoom.us>

Date Thu 2026-03-19 8:12 PM

To Garry M. Spotts <gmspotts@garrymspotts.com>



Meeting assets for Social Justice Advocacy Working Group _GABKY Meeting 1 of 2 are ready!

Meeting summary

Quick recap

The meeting focused on discussing a potential \$8 million state appropriation for church safety and security grants in Kentucky. Rev. Wanda Mitchell Smith, leading the Social Justice Advocacy Working Group for the General Association, presented details about the proposed funding, which would be administered through the Kentucky Office of Homeland Security and distributed among eligible faith-based organizations for physical security enhancements, security personnel, and security risk training. Dana Harvey, a grant writer from First Gethsemane, provided guidance on the self-assessment process churches would need to complete to apply for the grants, emphasizing the importance of being honest in applications and gathering community data. The meeting also addressed questions about federal oversight of grant funds and timelines for application, with Wanda noting that while the grant period was not yet open, they would provide updates once the funding was appropriated and the application process began.

Next steps

- [Dana Harvey: Send the link to the blank grant application to Wanda \(to be distributed via General Association email after the second meeting\).](#)
- [Garry: Send out the link to the blank grant application and other relevant resources \(including American Community Survey data links and legislative message line\) to all participants via General Association email after the Saturday morning meeting.](#)
- [Garry: Include in the next General Association email information about the legislative message line, Legislative Research Commission details, and instructions for contacting legislators to support the Interfaith Coalition safety and security appropriation request.](#)
- [All churches/participants: Begin collecting community data \(crime rates, racial makeup, poverty level, police stations in area, etc.\) in preparation for the grant application process.](#)
- [All churches/participants: Review and study the assessment guide document distributed by Elder Spotts, and use it to prepare for the grant application.](#)

- [Garry: Send out, after the Saturday meeting, a summary email including all discussed resources, sample grant information, and answers to common questions raised during the meeting.](#)
- [All churches/participants: Subscribe to updates on the General Association website \(GABKY\) by providing name and email address to receive future communications and critical information.](#)
- [All churches/participants: If not already a member, ensure church membership with the General Association to be eligible for grant information and support.](#)
- [All churches/participants: Call the legislative message line \(1-800-372-7181\) to urge legislators to support the Interfaith Coalition safety and security appropriation request.](#)
- [Garry: After the grant window opens, send out information on the timeline and deadline for grant applications to all participants.](#)
- [All churches/participants: Once the grant application period opens, submit applications within the specified window to be considered for funding.](#)

Summary

Technical Meeting Setup and Updates

The meeting began with technical checks and introductions. Garry confirmed there was no registration required and mentioned they were a few minutes from starting. The discussion included a brief mention of a call from moderator Moore regarding church situations, though details were not provided. The meeting appeared to be in its early stages with participants still joining, and Garry noted they would not penalize anyone for being on time.

Welcome and Session Instructions

Garry opened the meeting and welcomed the 12 participants, noting that the session would be recorded and posted on the General Association website. He announced that Dr. Rev Wanda Mitchell Smith would be presenting, and this was one of two similar sessions to be held. Garry provided instructions for muting audio and using screen controls, and mentioned that AI notes would be generated during the session.

Church Advocacy Funding Opportunities

Garry welcomed 17 participants to a meeting about church advocacy and introduced Wanda Mitchell-Smith, who leads the Social Justice Advocacy Working Group for the General Association. Garry explained that Wanda is a political lobbyist with experience at state and national levels, and she will be sharing important information about potential funding opportunities for churches. The meeting included participants from various Baptist churches across Kentucky, who were asked to share their church information in the chat.

Kentucky Faith-Based Security Grants

The meeting focused on a discussion about safety and security grants for faith-based institutions in Kentucky. Rev. Wanda Mitchell-Smith explained that the General Association is part of a coalition seeking \$8 million in state funding for security enhancements at churches and other faith-based organizations. The proposed funding would cover physical security improvements, security personnel, and activities of the Kentucky Center for Interfaith Security, with a maximum award of \$150,000 per application. The meeting was transitioning to a presentation by Dana Harvey about the self-assessment process required for churches to apply for these grants.

Church Grant Application Strategies

Dana advised churches to complete a preliminary grant application honestly and thoroughly, suggesting they involve 2-3 people in the process and gather neighborhood statistics to strengthen their applications. Wanda noted that smaller churches may have an advantage in this competitive grant process, particularly as many larger churches already have the necessary equipment. Wanda also updated the group that Amy Hess, the new director of Kentucky Homeland Security, is supportive of the church grant initiative and may provide additional training if needed.

Federal Security Grants for Churches

The meeting focused on discussing federal security grants available to non-profit organizations, including churches. Wanda confirmed that leftover funds from Homeland Security are available, and Garry mentioned additional money working through the legislature. Glenn Gordon from St. James Missionary Baptist Church asked about federal oversight of grant usage, to which Wanda explained that while the federal government requires documentation of how funds are spent, churches can use the money for approved purposes like physical security enhancements and security personnel as long as it doesn't go toward ministerial salaries.

Grant Preparation for Faith-Based Organizations

The meeting focused on discussing grant applications and safety funding opportunities for churches and faith-based organizations. Wanda and Garry emphasized the importance of staying within grant contract requirements and collecting community data, including information on crime rates, racial makeup, poverty levels, and local police presence. They clarified that while the current grant period is not yet open, participants should begin collecting community data in preparation, and the timeline for application will be shared once the grant period opens. Garry committed to sending out additional resources and information via email, including links to the American Community Survey and legislative contact details, by Monday afternoon following the Saturday meeting.

AI can make mistakes. Review for accuracy.

Please rate the accuracy of this summary.



Edit summary

Thank you,

Zoom Support Team
<https://support.zoom.us>



[Zoom.com](https://zoom.us)
55 Almaden Blvd
San Jose, CA 95113

+1.888.799.9666

© 2026 Zoom Communications, Inc.