

2019 Mission Endowment Fund Recipient – Four Mile Lutheran Church – Mabank Supporting High School Seniors with Caps and Gowns



In 2019, the Mission Endowment Fund granted \$80,000 to 29 ministries. This is one of the ministries..



What if you live in a small Texas city and feel your congregation cannot make an impact in your community? If you are thinking that, you should ask the members of Four Mile Lutheran Church in Mabank. It takes the idea of only one person who enlists the help of others to put a successful outreach ministry in place. That is exactly what happened with the help of a Mission Endowment Fund grant in 2019. This church members were able to supply caps and gowns to graduating seniors and pay for college entrance tests for those who would have hardships to pay the fees. . How did Four Mile make this happen?

The following story was submitted by Christie Beene of Four Mile Lutheran Church. Applying for a grant from the Mission Endowment Fund began with our newly acquired pastor, Pastor Joan Iker. She informed Maudine Ruebman, WELCA President, that such an opportunity existed. We immediately began to research what we could support in our area.



The research revealed that in 2017, Mabank, TX had a population of 3.16k people with a median age of 35.6 and a median household income of \$41,122. Between 2016 and 2017 the population of Mabank, TX declined from 3,415 to 3,159, a -7.5% decrease and its median household income declined from \$41,410 to \$41,122, a -0.695% decrease. Mabank is a small community and as you can see; the median household income isn't like larger cities. We know that members of our community are struggling financially. So, what can we as a small congregation do to help?

We at Four Mile Lutheran Church are fortunate to have Kathy Norman, a Mabank High School counselor, as a member. We asked her if there was an opportunity for our church to assist students. She told us there was a need to help disadvantaged students who are not financially able to purchase their caps and gowns for graduation and/or to pay for college entrance exams. What an excellent project! Cap & gowns cost about \$80; tests can run about \$55 per test. Our support would eliminate stress for parents and students who would struggle to pay for these items.

Outreach is a very important goal for our congregation—“God’s Work, Our Hands.” We constantly look for ways to share our resources to help our communities. Knowing that we could help disadvantaged seniors to participate in graduation ceremonies and take tests to get accepted into college is our way of giving back to the community. We could assist graduating seniors to become productive individuals in the future.

Four Mile is truly thankful and grateful to the Mission Endowment Fund for accepting our application and awarding us funds to accomplish our outreach goals. Four Mile Lutheran Church also received a grant in 2019 to support a community-wide free Vacation Bible School, which served 24 children.

So, don’t ever think you are too small to serve. Four Mile Lutheran Church in Mabank is an example of dedication and creativity.

Thank you for, Christine Beene, for sharing this information.

