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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## First Presbyterian Church of Houston to Launch 2nd Annual “Project Flourish” to Renew the City

*Initiative offers a new round of funding, \$250,000, to focus attention on crucial issues facing Houston, cultivate new ideas and mobilize the community*

**HOUSTON – August 21, 2019** – First Presbyterian Church of Houston ([www.fpchouston.org](http://www.fpchouston.org)) has unveiled a second round of its “Shark Tank - style” program: Project Flourish, a creative invitation to the community to help bring fresh ideas to the issues that face a major metropolitan city like Houston. Through Project Flourish, First Presbyterian Church of Houston has set aside a new \$250,000 in seed money for a social-entrepreneurship contest that seeks to incubate new creative ideas from the community and mobilize Houstonians to seek city-wide renewal and transformational change.

Individuals and teams who reside within 50 miles of downtown Houston are encouraged to apply through the Project Flourish website at <http://projectflourish.org/>. Applications are open to both for-profit and non-profit ideas, and will continue to be accepted through November 1st. Applications will be reviewed and semi-finalists will be invited into an eight-week “acceleration” process designed to refine their proposal and receive consulting support, mentorship, and expertise from FPC congregants. At the conclusion of the eight-week acceleration process, semi-finalists will pitch their ideas to a panel of judges, supporters and prospective investors who will have the job of awarding funding from the \$250,000 pool.

“We want this to inspire innovation in addressing some of the greatest challenges we face as a community. We know it works, and in the fourth largest city in the country we are betting on finding a whole host of applicants with a vision for change and transformation,” said Austin Hermann, FPC’s Director of the Center for Faith, Work, and Innovation. “Our panel of judges will be looking for pitches that demonstrate a clear problem understanding, a thoughtful theory of change, and an explicit commitment to innovation: solving a problem in a new way.”

Last year, five Project Flourish award recipients were selected from a field of 19 semi-finalists. Last year’s biggest award (\$75,000) went to the non-profit organization now known as Every Shelter, which helps refugee communities through designing and deploying high-impact, low-cost shelter products. The organization’s founders credit Project Flourish with helping them decide to transition from a for-profit business model to a more flexible non-profit model.

Join us as we seek to Flourish the City!

To apply with your idea, or to learn more visit: <http://projectflourish.org/>

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### **About First Presbyterian Church Houston**

Established in 1839, First Presbyterian Church of Houston was the first church to organize and build in Houston. Today its congregation continues to worship and serve from its location in the heart of the city's museum district. Committed to providing opportunities to Gather, Grow and Go, the FPC Houston community continues to impact Houston and beyond through multiple worship styles, biblical teaching and strategic opportunities to serve through both local and global mission ministry opportunities. FPC is affiliated with ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians. Our relationship with the denomination is expressed in our participation in its local governing body, the Presbytery of Texas. Compelled by the love of Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, FPC Houston is committed to carry the gospel to Houston and to the world. For more information visit <http://fpchouston.org>.

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