

# **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

## **Benevolence Fund**

### **IN GENERAL**

These policies have been drawn up in an effort to protect the pastoral staff from the consequences of making financial decisions regarding benevolence.

### **PURPOSE**

To manage a benevolence fund and distribute said funds to needy individuals on a case-by-case basis.

### **PROCEDURE**

Maintain an Elder-appointed committee of people who shall:

- Manage the fund in an independent bank account entitled [Church Name] Fund.
- Deal with benevolence requests based on these written policies and procedures.
- Inform the Body about status of the Fund and to seek additional gifts that will keep the fund alive.

### **GUIDELINES**

The Elders will establish a start-up fund which will be replenished through designated offerings from the congregation.

When dealing with a benevolence request the team shall:

- Discern the difference between helping someone in difficult times and underwriting their irresponsibility or particular lifestyle.
- Discern the difference between “need” and “convenience”, e.g. if someone requests money for housing while they are currently housed with no threat of being homelessness, ask the question, “Is this really a need or is this for convenience?”
- Provide financial instruction any time money is provided, i.e. basic financial planning, reference a simple money management book, etc.
- Provide vouchers as opposed to money whenever possible.
- Not provide money to people who are not a part of this fellowship, i.e., non-members of those not in regular attendance. Those requesting assistance who are not members of the church shall be instructed concerning the importance of church membership.

- Consider assistance, other than the providing of money, to non-members and those not in regular attendance on a case-by-case basis.
- Have authorization to grant interest-free loans with payoff established before funds are disbursed.
- Counsel the applicant to seek assistance in the following order of priority:
  1. Family (Relatives)
  2. Home Fellowships
  3. Benevolence Committee
- If the Home Fellowship can help or should know of a need, communicate to pertinent Home Fellowship leader the name(s) of their members who are in need.
- Not, as a committee, refer any applicant to state or federal government agencies for financial assistance.
- Seek to counsel an applicant about terminating assistance from any state or federal government agencies as soon as possible if the applicant is receiving same.
- Make decisions based on a quorum of committee members. A quorum of committee members consists of any two committee members.
- Understand that all decisions made by the quorum of committee members should be made outside of the presence of the person(s) requesting assistance.
- Maintain complete confidentiality regarding benevolence discussions except for pertinent information to the Elders and or Home Fellowship leaders.