

Benevolence Fund Policy

At West Church, we aspire to help meet the needs of people in our church community to the best of our ability. We consider it a privilege to serve the spiritual and practical needs of others. The Benevolence Fund is intended as a last resort, to be used when the individual or family requesting assistance has explored all other possibilities of help from family, friends, savings, or investments. This fund is to be used for temporary help during a period of crisis. The Benevolence Team will exercise an appropriate level of discretion regarding confidential issues.

As Galatians 6:10 states, *"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."* With this in mind, we strive to be wise and generous stewards of the resources that God has given us so that we can help care for those in need (Gal 2:10; 1 Cor 4:2; 2 Cor 8:1-7).

Guidelines For Financial Assistance

The following guidelines explain our (1) process for determining who is eligible to receive financial assistance; (2) which needs are covered and which are not; and, (3) how to apply for financial assistance.

1. THE PROCESS

- Members and regular attendees of West Congregational Church, and their immediate family are qualified.
- Those seeking assistance are required to complete a written Benevolence Fund Request Form.
- The Benevolence Team will review the request form, and **a decision will be made within 2-4 weeks.**
- If an application is approved, a check will be issued to vendors. No checks will be made out to individuals seeking assistance.
- All assistance will be recorded for future reference.

2. ELIGIBLE NEEDS

Eligible needs under the Benevolence Fund include: housing, utilities, heat, medicine, medical emergencies, emergency auto repairs, and professional counseling (if recommended by a Pastoral Staff member). Needs that are ineligible include credit cards, taxes, student loans, cable TV, bottled water, cell phones, high speed internet, gym memberships, optional lessons (e.g. music), and public storage. Discretionary spending categories will not be funded by the Benevolence Fund.

3. HOW TO APPLY

Submit a Benevolence Fund Request Form. We have provided numerous ways to submit a form:

- 1) fill out & submit it electronically online - www.westchurch.org
- 2) download & print a copy at www.westchurch.org or;
- 3) obtain a copy at the Connection Center, or church office

If submitting a paper copy, return completed form to the church office (can be mailed or dropped off). Once the application has been reviewed, you will receive notification via email or letter. Please allow 2-4 weeks for the team to pray, consider and respond to your request. **If you have any questions regarding your request, please do not contact the Pastoral Staff, but contact the team directly via email at benevolenceteam@westchurch.org**