



West Congregational Church

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. 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).

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. At the discretion of the Benevolence Fund Committee, those requesting assistance must be willing to receive financial, family, or personal counseling, and must be willing to give the Committee permission to follow up with each individual. In all cases, the Committee will exercise an appropriate level of discretion regarding confidential issues.

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

- Those seeking assistance are required to complete a written Benevolence Fund Request Form.
- The Benevolence Fund Committee will review the application and a decision will be made.
- Priority is given first to church members and attendees.
- If an application is approved, a check will be issued to vendors. In general, 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 food, lodging, clothing, medicine, medical treatment, funeral expenses, and professional counseling. 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. In general, discretionary spending categories will not be funded by the Benevolence Fund.

3. HOW TO APPLY

To apply for assistance from the Benevolence Fund, please submit a written copy of the Benevolence Fund Request Form, available through our church office, at the Connection Center, or by download at www.westchurch.org. Once the application has been reviewed, you will be contacted by a member of the Benevolence Fund Committee.