

Faith Covenant Church

Benevolent Fund Policies and Guidelines

Oversight and Accountability

- The policies and guidelines set forth in this Benevolence Fund Policy shall be guided and directed by Biblical principles.
- The Church Financial Secretary shall be responsible for the deposit of Benevolent Fund donations and the Treasurer and/or Financial Officer of the Leadership Team shall be responsible for the management and disbursement of monies from the Benevolent Fund.
- The Congregational Care Team Lead, under the oversight of the Lead Pastor, shall have responsibility for identifying appropriate occasions for disbursement of funds according to the policies and guidelines below.
- The anonymity of anyone requesting assistance will be preserved with the exception of the Lead Pastor, the Congregational Care Team Lead and the Treasurer/Financial Officer. Exceptions may apply if there are concerns beyond finances.
- The Lead Pastor/Congregational Care Team Lead shall determine who will receive disbursements from the Benevolent Fund, in what amount, and for what duration (if applicable).
- The Lead Pastor/Congregational Care Team Lead shall give an accounting on request to the Leadership Team of all disbursements from the Benevolent Fund.

Source of Funding

- The Benevolent Fund shall receive income from the receipt of special contributions by individuals and/or families wishing to make a donation to the Fund via Benevolent collections.
- In order to comply with IRS regulations concerning charitable contributions, all gifts to the Benevolent Fund must be unconditional and without personal benefit to the donor.
- Contributions to the Benevolent Fund may not be earmarked or otherwise designated for particular purposes or recipients.
- The leadership of Faith Covenant Church may choose, at its discretion, to decline certain contributions that are designated or earmarked.

- The leadership of Faith Covenant Church recommends that donors consult their tax advisor concerning the appropriate tax treatment of contributions they make to the Fund.

Benevolent Fund Policies and Guidelines

Recipients of Assistance - In order of priority, recipients of assistance shall be:

- 1. Members of Faith Covenant Church
- 2. Regular attendees of Faith Covenant Church
- 3. Members of the community

Intended Purpose and Limits of Assistance

The stated purpose of the Benevolent Fund is to minister to individuals or families during a time of hardship or crisis by temporarily assisting them with their basic needs.

Depending on the circumstances and if the request is for \$500 or greater, assistance will also include financial counseling, training in household budgeting and/or debt management, or other financial education that would help the individual or family avoid potential hardships or crises in the future.

Generally, assistance from the Benevolent Fund is intended to cover an individual's or family's basic needs. The Benevolent Fund is not designed or funded to support multiple requests from a single individual or family. More than one annual request, or multiple requests over time will be considered at the discretion of the Leadership Team.

Needs that may not be met by the Benevolent Fund include¹:

- Business investments or anything that brings financial profit to the individual or family.
- Paying off credit cards. Exceptions can be made when an individual has had to use a credit card in a crisis or emergency (e.g., hospitalization, death, etc.).
- Individuals who are wanted by the law or for paying fines as a result of breaking the law.
- Legal fees arising from criminal behavior.
- Gambling debts.
- Penalties relating to late payments or irresponsible actions.
- School tuition or fees.

Guidelines for Disbursement

The Benevolent Fund is intended as a source of last resort, to be used when the individual or family requesting assistance has explored all other possibilities of assistance from appropriate

¹ This list is not intended to be exhaustive; instead, it is intended to provide general guidelines in determining the type of expenses not covered by benevolent assistance.

sources (i.e., family, savings, investments, etc). It is intended to be a means of assistance during the time of a crisis or other hardship.

Disbursements from the Benevolent Fund may not be made in the form of a loan.

Those requesting assistance must be willing to receive financial, family, or other appropriate Biblical counseling. The Lead Pastor/Congregational Care Team Lead will not provide help to anyone who, in their estimation, will have negative or irresponsible behavior reinforced by the financial assistance.

Those requesting help must be willing to grant the Lead Pastor/Congregational Care Team Lead permission to follow up on any of the information provided to them. The Lead Pastor/Congregational Care Team Lead will be sensitive to confidentiality issues.

All disbursements from the Benevolent Fund shall be made directly to the party or entity to whom payment is due and not in the form of cash given directly to the individual or family requesting assistance (e.g., if assistance with rent or mortgage payment is needed, payment shall be made directly to the individual or family's landlord or mortgage holder).

Application and Approval Process

Individuals or families seeking assistance from the Benevolent Fund shall follow the steps below:

1. Obtain and submit an Application for Assistance from the Faith Covenant Church Benevolent Fund (along with all supporting documentation).
2. Complete interview(s) and/or appropriate counseling with the Lead Pastor/Congregational Care Team Lead.
3. Provide all additional documents and information requested by the Lead Pastor/Congregational Care Team Lead.

Review and approval of the Application, as well as communication of the amount and form of assistance, shall be done by the Lead Pastor/Congregational Care Team Lead at the earliest possible date.

BENEVOLENCE ASSISTANCE APPLICATION

Faith Covenant Church
475 8th Street, Manistee, MI 49660
www.faithcovmanistee.org

FULL NAME: _____

PHONE #: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

HOME STREET ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE: _____

EXPLANATION OF NEED: _____

AMOUNT REQUESTED: \$ _____

DESTINATION OF REQUESTED FUNDS (NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE #, ACCOUNT #)

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

APPROVED BY (PRINT NAME): _____

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____