

# Glenstone Chapel Benevolence Fund Procedures

## **Purpose**

The purpose of these procedures is to facilitate financial assistance from the Benevolence Fund according to the Benevolence Fund Policy as approved by the Elder Board. Benevolence Fund disbursements for the services of a licensed counselor, psychologist or psychiatrist are governed by a separate set of procedures "Benevolence Fund Procedures for Counseling Financial Aid".

## **Qualifications & Guidelines**

1. Assistance is limited to individuals and families that are either Partners of Glenstone Chapel or active, regular attendees that have been a part of the church for at least 3 months. In addition, neighbors of Glenstone Chapel can be considered for support from the Benevolence Committee. In order of priority Benevolence Funds shall be distributed in the following order:
  - A) Partners
  - B) Regular Attendees and Employees of Glenstone Chapel
  - C) Family of Partners
  - D) Neighbors of Glenstone Chapel / Members of the community
  - E) Ministries and Christian agencies that serve people with the same needs as those which fit the Glenstone Chapel Benevolence Fund criteria, but which provide services Glenstone Chapel does not.
2. The control of disbursements lies with the Benevolence Committee, with oversight from the Elder Board. Neither the Benevolence Committee nor Elder Board can be bound by the requests of any donor.
3. The fund is intended to provide encouragement to people facing short-term financial difficulty, and is not intended to provide a long-term subsidy. Generally assistance from the Benevolence Fund will not exceed \$2,000 per individual or family in any 12 month period without additional input from the Elder Board. In unusual circumstances individuals and families who are in need of substantial funds (in excess of \$2,000) can continue to be assisted up to whatever limit the Elder Board deems appropriate.
4. Contributions to the Benevolence Fund must be made at "arms length" in order to be considered tax-deductible charitable contributions. If an individual or family gives to the Benevolence Fund for the benefit of their close blood relatives, the donor's gift will not be considered tax-deductible.
5. Contributions to the Benevolence Fund must be undesignated in order to be considered tax-deductible charitable contributions. The Benevolence Fund can be utilized for designated gifts to a specific recipient or family (for anonymity purposes), but the donor's gift will not be considered a tax-deductible contribution.
6. The fund is to be replenished periodically at the direction of the Senior Pastor, or the Elder Board through a special offering, restricted gifts and/or other church accounts.

## **Procedures for Disbursements**

1. When a pastor, Elder Board Member or Benevolence Committee Member becomes aware of a financial need, they are to request the individual/family complete a Financial Assessment Sheet and submit the application to the Benevolence Committee. Additionally anyone who does not regularly attend Glenstone Chapel must also provide proof of identification and current residence. Failure to provide this additional information will result in the application being rejected.
2. The Benevolence Committee will meet and review the request, generally within one week, and gather additional information from the applicant(s) if necessary. Once all the information has been received and reviewed, the Benevolence Committee will inform the applicant(s) of its decision. The Benevolence Committee shall make every effort to be timely in reviewing and

processing each request.

3. Should the Benevolence Committee give approval, the Benevolence Committee Chair will submit the approval to the Finance Committee for processing. Written Benevolence Committee approval must be attached to the check request. Every effort should be made to direct the payment to a third-party vendor, such as a hospital, landlord, mortgage company, creditor, etc.
4. Copies of the request, approval, and check stub will be filed in a secure, locked file.
5. These procedures may only be by-passed in the case of an emergency at the discretion of the Senior Pastor or the Elder Board. In each instance, the disbursement must be reported to the Benevolence Council and/or Elder Board, as appropriate, for approval after-the-fact, and the appropriate information documenting such exception and approval must be stored in a secure, locked file.

## **Procedures for Counseling Financial Aid**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of these procedures is to establish qualifications, guidelines and responsibilities for the Benevolence Fund to provide financial assistance to those Partners and regular attendees of Glenstone Chapel for the services of a professional counselor, psychologist, or psychiatrist. Neighbors of Glenstone Chapel may be considered for support under this policy, however additional information may be required.

### **Qualifications:**

1. Aid is limited to individuals, families and their dependents who are partners of the church or are active, regular attendees that have been part of the church for at least 3 months. In addition, neighbors of Glenstone Chapel may be considered for support from the Benevolence Committee.
2. Request for aid must come from a Glenstone Chapel pastoral staff member, Elder Board Member, or Benevolence Committee member.
3. The counselor must have a belief system that is in harmony with the principles of Glenstone Chapel as outlined in its constitution and by-laws.

### **Guidelines & Procedures:**

1. When a pastor, Elder Board member or Benevolence Committee member believes that a person would benefit from the services of a professional counselor and that the need for financial assistance exists, a referral shall be made to the Benevolence Committee.
2. The prospective counselee or guardian shall submit the application for financial assistance to the Benevolence Committee.
3. Upon written approval, the Benevolence Committee will submit the application form and substantiating documentation to the Finance Committee.
4. Financial assistance is limited to twelve (12) sessions at fees and rates acceptable to the Senior Pastor, Finance Committee Chair and Elder Board. Every effort will be made to require the counselee or guardian to participate alongside the Benevolence Fund in funding the cost of the counseling sessions.
5. The Senior Pastor, his designate from the pastoral staff or designated Benevolence Committee member will notify the counselor and the counselee confirming the fee, the counselee's portion and the number of sessions approved.
6. The counselee must sign and return a copy of the letter acknowledging their acceptance of the terms and conditions set forth prior to beginning to any financial disbursements.
7. Requests for financial assistance above the initial twelve (12) sessions must be resubmitted for approval to the Benevolence Committee according to the procedures outlined above. In addition, the Executive Pastor and/or the Benevolence Committee or Senior Pastor will seek input directly from the counselor substantiating the need for additional counseling, and may request a comprehensive financial disclosure, if necessary, from the counselee or guardian.

8. The Benevolence Committee may approve a second gift of twelve (12) counseling sessions to a single recipient. Any requests for assistance beyond the second twelve (12) sessions must be approved by the Elder Board.

**Confidentiality**

The staff, Benevolence Committee, and Elder Board will make every effort to protect the identity and dignity of those who receive aid.

Note: The word "counselor" has been used herein and is meant to include professional counselors, psychologists and psychiatrists. Counselee is used to mean client, patient or the one under the care of a counselor, psychologist or psychiatrist.