

Special Needs Fund Policy

Purpose:

The Special Needs fund is a discretionary care fund established to assist in meeting the immediate needs of people in our church and our community. Such funds may be used to cover direct services (i.e., housing, clothing, personal care items, transportation, utilities, medication, and food) or other needs as approved by the church board. All Special Needs fund transactions will balance the need for financial accountability with the immediate need of an individual or family.

Accountability:

Situations of need should be made known to the pastor (or head elder in the pastor's absence). For requests in excess of \$200, the pastor (or head elder) is responsible for bringing the individual's name to the church board for consideration. Any names brought to the board will be kept confidential. The treasurer is responsible for maintaining the financial records and the bank account of the fund.

Donations:

Donations can be received anytime in tithe envelopes and in special offerings at the conclusion of communion services.

Disbursements:

Disbursements are made by check, to an entity other than the individual, typically to a landlord or utility company. In emergency situations, the pastor may purchase food, gas, or medicine for an individual and be reimbursed from the fund. Disbursements up to \$200 may be made at the discretion of the pastor with approval from two of these three church officers: head elder, head deacon and head deaconess, without church board approval. Disbursements greater than \$200 must be approved by a vote of the church board at a monthly meeting. In an emergency situation, a telephone vote may be taken or an emergency board meeting may be held after the Sabbath worship service.

The church shall provide financial assistance from the Special Needs fund no more than once a year to any one household or group, except in extreme circumstances as determined by the church board. In order to ensure that contributions to the Special Needs fund are tax-deductible, no contribution to that fund may be earmarked for the benefit of any particular recipient.

Distributions from the fund may be made to provide confidential assistance to non-members as well as members of the church facing emergency financial need. While there is no maximum amount, any disbursements shall be made in consideration of the financial situation of the individual or family, the current funds available, and the need to maintain a balance in the fund should other needs arise.

The decision to approve or deny assistance is based solely on the circumstances surrounding the need and the financial capacity of the church to supply these funds.

The decision to assist individuals or families is made without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion or political beliefs.

There is no guarantee that assistance will be granted.