

MMC Compassion Fund Policy/Guidelines

INTRODUCTION:

The Elder team has been administering the Compassion Fund for many years to aid persons within MMC (and occasionally persons from the community) facing emergency financial need. This document explains how the Compassion Fund has been operated over the past number of years.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FUND:

Monies for the Compassion Fund come only from contributions that are designated "Compassion Fund". Because there are also matching funds available from the Mennonite Mutual Aid Association (MMAA), the goal is to maintain a minimum balance of \$3500.00 in the Compassion Fund.

AWARENESS OF FINANCIAL NEEDS:

The Elder team may become aware of needs in various ways. Many times the Pastor is aware of needs of members. Sometimes needs are made known by members—either needs of their own or of other members. Sometimes needs are made known by other organizations such as the Salvation Army. On occasion, needs of persons in the community are considered. Requests have come to the Church by phone and from drop-ins.

DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS:

Funds are disbursed by authorization of the Elder Team, after consideration of needs and/or requests. Written authorization is given to the Treasurer, signed by an Elder (usually the lead Elder).

In an emergency situation, there can be an exception to the above. After consulting with the Elders, the Pastor may authorize disbursement from the Compassion Fund, not to exceed \$100.00 for any one request.

PROCEDURE IN DISBURSEMENT:

The Pastor and/or Elders are many times aware of persons who have had, for example, unusually large medical expenses. The procedure has been to inquire about the financial strain such expenses may cause if there is reason to believe that such expenses would create a hardship. Sometimes persons feel that with the health insurance they have, there will be no burden. In other cases, where medical expenses have been quite high or cause a financial hardship, the need is communicated to the Congregation, so that gifts may be designated to assist with the need.

QUALIFICATIONS:

Gifts may not be designated through the MMC treasury to individuals, households, or causes unless prior authorization (i.e. a period of time whereby monies—designated "Compassion Fund"—will be received for a special individual or household or cause) has been given by the body that administers the Compassion Fund (at MMC, the Elder Team). This is an I>R>S> requirement that allows for charitable tax deduction.

Revised from a 03/09/93 Elders document by the MMC Elder Team, 06/28/01