

Whitehorse Church of the Nazarene

Benevolence Fund Policy

September 2015

I. Purpose

Scripture reminds us:

- *"Bear one another's burden and thus fulfill the law of Christ, and give to the people in need"* Galatians 6:2.
- *"Whoever has the world's goods and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?"* 1 John 3:17.
- *"I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."* Matthew 5:40.

As God's people, we are commanded to care for one another, as well as to care for others in our community or even those who are passing through. As an integral part of the ministry of our church, the Benevolence Fund provides financial assistance to individuals or families who are experiencing financial or material needs.

II. Levels of support

The church board is responsible for administering the Benevolence Fund within established guidelines. There are three levels of approved benevolence ministry:

- Basic** (up to \$100.00 per situation)
Any pastor may approve this level of assistance in each single situation.
- Intermediate** (\$100.00 to \$300.00)
Any pastor, with the support of another pastor or two board members may approve this level of assistance in each single situation. A report is to be given at the next board meeting (who initiated the request, and who supported it).
- Advanced** (over \$300.00 or support that is monthly)
This level of assistance may be approved by a two-third majority of the board, subject to meeting all specified criteria.

Any pastor or board member whose relation to the proposed recipient of distributed funds is that of a close family member or close personal friend shall not participate in the decision making of that support.

III. Guidelines

The Board will only provide assistance as resources are available.

All assistance will accord with the requirements of the Income Tax Act and Regulations. The assistance must be charitable under the law. Token assistance (\$40 or less) may be provided as a tangible demonstration of moral support without meeting all of the eligibility criteria.

Support will not be restricted to members of the church, however we do recognize our responsibility to support first those within our own community of faith.

When financial assistance is provided consideration should also be given to meeting the spiritual, physical, mental, emotional, and other needs of the party receiving assistance. This will be done in consultation with the pastoral staff and/or the care team and/or other qualified professionals.

The church will provide assistance for a specific need that is not expected to involve a long-term commitment. When a major need arises, other possible sources for assistance will be explored with the party in need (e.g., community and/or government programs).

These guidelines should be reviewed in 2017 or 2018.