

Chillicothe Christian Church Benevolence Guidelines

The goal of Benevolence is to assist individuals in their times of need, help people rise above their financial problems, and ultimately lead them into a deeper relationship with Christ.

At Chillicothe Christian Church (CCC), we are committed to helping those who are in need. The CCC Benevolence Policy is hereby enacted to address those instances in which an individual arrives at our facility or contacts the church requesting material assistance. This ministry is designed to assist Christians within our church, Christians outside our church and those who are not Christians (Galatians 6:10; John 17:20-21). We intend to supplement existing channels of help, rather than to replace them, since every good source of help has God as the origin (James 1:16-17).

Biblical Basis

The policies and guidelines set forth in the Benevolence Policy shall be guided and directed by the Bible including the following principles:

1. But 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? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. (1 John 3:17)
2. They (James, Peter, and John) only asked us (Paul and Barnabas) to remember the poor -- the very thing I (Paul) also was eager to do. (Galatians 2:10)
3. And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. (Acts 2:44-45)
4. Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability, they gave of their own accord, begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the support of the saints. (2 Corinthians 8:1-4)
5. Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith. (Galatians 6:9-10)
6. Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world. (James 1:27)
7. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me. (Matthew 25:35-36)

The elders and missions/benevolence team affirm these principles and, by God's grace and for His glory, commit to be guided by them as we exercise faithful stewardship of the money entrusted to us for the purpose of ministering and providing benevolence to individuals or families in need of assistance.

Disbursement Guidelines

We seek to provide individuals with temporary assistance while directing them to more permanent solutions. We strongly encourage individuals to pursue long-term help through community organizations, identify goals and creative solutions, and develop sustainable plans to improve their situations. The Chillicothe Community Services Directory is available for anyone requesting assistance. Staff and leadership at CCC are also available for counseling, mentorship, and accountability. All individuals requesting assistance will be invited to participate with us in our Sunday morning worship.

- The benevolence fund is intended to be used when a family or individual requesting assistance has explored all other possibilities of help from family, friends, savings, and investments. It is intended to be a temporary help during a time of crisis.
- Assistance from the benevolence fund is intended to be a one-time gift. In unusual circumstances, the missions/benevolence team may decide to help more than once.
- Those requesting assistance must also be willing to receive financial, family, or spiritual counseling and prayer in order to avoid reinforcing any negative or unhealthy behavior.
- Those requesting assistance must fill out a benevolence request form. Help reading, writing, or comprehending the form is available.
- Those requesting help should expect the team to follow up with them directly on any of the information provided.

As a church, we have made a clear distinction between the way in which we process requests for **non-members** and **members**. Priority will be given first to CCC members, second to regular CCC attendees, and third to individuals within the community. The distinction and procedures for each of these categories is as follows:

CCC Member Benevolence (*Priority 1*)

CCC strives to offer material assistance to our members and their immediate family members that are in need. The type of assistance offered will vary based on the need and circumstances of the individual, but may include:

- Primary lodging (mortgage/rent)
- Utilities (electric/water/gas/sewer/trash)
- Necessary medical services
- Home repairs crucial to safe living
- Car repairs crucial to ensuring continued employment and family safety needs
- Professional licensed counseling

Generally, assistance from the benevolence fund will not be more than \$1,000 per year for members. If a need exceeds \$1,000, it must be presented to the elders for review.

CCC Non-Member/Regular Attendee Benevolence (*Priority 2*)

CCC strives to offer material assistance to regular, participating non-member CCC attendees. A participating non-member CCC attendee is defined as someone who has regularly attended CCC for a minimum of 6 months, attended CCC 101 class, and participated in church life such

as being involved in small group, Sunday school, etc. The type of assistance offered will vary based on the need and circumstances of the individual, but may include:

- Primary lodging (mortgage/rent)
- Utilities (electric/water/gas/sewer/trash)
- Necessary medical services
- Home repairs crucial to safe living
- Car repairs crucial to ensuring continued employment and family safety needs
- Professional licensed counseling

Generally, assistance from the benevolence fund will not be more than \$500 per year for non-members/regular attendees. If a need exceeds \$500, it must be presented to the elders for review.

Non-Member and Non-Attendee Benevolence (Priority 3)

CCC strives to assist non-member and non-attendees with referrals to local community agencies, including:

- Emergency utility assistance through Community Needs Agency
- Emergency clothing assistance through Helping Hands Resale Shoppe
- Various resources through Heart of Illinois 211

Procedures

Benevolence forms are available in the church office, from a benevolence/mission team member, and the CCC website. Once a request has been received, the following process will be followed:

1. The individual will be contacted by a member of the benevolence/missions team who will collect additional information as needed.
2. The team member will communicate the details of the request to benevolence/missions team for consideration and prayer.
3. The individual requesting assistance will be contacted regarding the team's decision within one week.
4. Any financial assistance will be disbursed via the church financial secretary. It is our intention to pay a bill or entity directly instead of cash disbursements to the individual requesting assistance. We do not make loans and we do not expect repayment.

Please Sign

As the individual requesting assistance, I have read and understood the above guidelines.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

If applicable, we ask that the spouse/partner of the individual requesting assistance also signs:

Signature: _____

Date: _____