Benevolence Fund Guidelines

What is the benevolence fund at Harvest Ridge?

Benevolence means kindness. At Harvest Ridge, our benevolence fund is used to reflect God's kindness and generosity to those in need.

Basic beliefs regarding benevolence:

All people are blessed with dignity by God.

We extend unconditional respect to all who seek help from this fund. We seek holistic understanding and exercise confidentiality as we learn the stories of those in need.

We are all broken and in need of God's grace.

At the heart, those who receive benevolence and those who give to the fund are no different. In a spirit of brother and sisterhood, loving others as we love ourselves, we will care for those seeking benevolence.

Freely we have received, so freely we give.

We will keep the generosity of God before us as we exercise generosity to others. We will apply as few conditions as possible on those who participate in our benevolence program.

How is our fund financed?

On the first Sunday of the month, all loose cash given to the offering is allocated to the benevolence fund. Individuals can also designate their gift to this fund either by writing "benevolence" in the memo line of a check or electing "benevolence" through our online portal.

How is benevolence money distributed?

The first purpose of HRCC's benevolence fund is to ensure that no one among our congregation lacks basic needs. (Galatians 6:2,10, 1 John 3:16-17) Accordingly, members of HRCC's body in good standing and demonstrating need will be prioritized if a prioritization is necessary.

HRCC congregants may access funds by:

1. Contacting a pastor or accessing the benevolence form online.
2. Meeting with a pastor.
3. Demonstrating faithful use of funds given.

Secondarily, as a church we exist to be a blessing in the world. We ultimately accomplish this by helping people know God. Extending financial assistance is a way we tangibly point people to the grace of Jesus and proclaim that our God is a God of redemption and reconciliation. Benevolence funds are therefore available to community members in need.

Community members may access the funds by:

1. Completing the benevolence form online.
2. Meeting with a pastor.
3. Working with a pastor to utilize the funds; provide documentation as agreed on a case by case basis.

How do we decide benevolence awards and awardees?

The pastors have discretion over this fund up to $250. Any needs that are greater than $250 are discussed with the leadership team chair.

After receiving a request, the pastors speak with the person who submitted the request. In that meeting the pastors seek to discern the following in order to determine next steps:

1) Will providing financial assistance help or hurt this person?
2) What would they do with the financial assistance? What would they do if they did not receive this assistance?
3) What is the most wise way to assist this person? Are there other community services that are more appropriate or that could enhance the benevolence help we extend?
4) Is this person trying to take advantage of or abuse the grace of God?
5) Is this person open to counseling and other means of ministry through Harvest Ridge? Do they have an existing connection to Harvest Ridge that can continue to minister to them?
6) What follow up mechanism is reasonable and beneficial for this person? In this case, how can we dignify and empower the requestor and remain accountable stewards of the fund?