



BENEVOLENCE POLICY

Introduction and Purposes

The purpose of the benevolence fund is to meet people's basic needs on a short-term interim basis.

Oversight and Accountability

The campus pastor leads the campus shepherding elders, who together have the responsibility and accountability for the campus benevolence fund and can make decisions to disburse funds from the benevolence fund—subject to these guidelines. Any decision for the distribution of benevolence funds must be approved by the campus pastor (or executive pastor in his absence) and at least two campus shepherding elders (or guiding elders in their absence).

General Guidelines

The benevolence fund is intended as a source of last resort, to be used when the family or individual requesting assistance has explored all other possibilities of help from family, friends, savings, or 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 per year. In certain circumstances, the elders may decide to help an individual or family more than once a year. However, under no circumstance is a gift from the benevolence fund to be considered a loan.

If the recipient desires to give to the church at a later time, this individual should be encouraged to give back to the campus benevolence fund directly.

Those requesting assistance must also be willing to receive financial, family, or emotional counseling. Benevolence will not be provided to anyone who, in their estimation, will have negative or irresponsible behavior reinforced by financial help.

Those requesting help must be willing to give the Campus Pastor and/or elder permission to follow up on any of the information provided. The parties involved will be sensitive to confidential issues.

An additional emphasis of this fund is to ensure that no student is prevented from participating in church-sponsored spiritual formation activities (such as Fall Camp) due to financial hardship.

Criteria

The stated purpose of the benevolence fund is to meet people's basic needs. Normally, these needs are defined as:

- Primary lodging (mortgage/rent)
- Utilities (electric/water/gas/sewer/trash)
- Necessary medical services
- Church-sponsored spiritual formation activities for students (such as Fall Camp) registration fees

Financial assistance for professional counseling will be considered if it is perceived that counseling would directly enable the individual to address a current financial situation. In most cases, this would be limited to an initial counseling appointment. Under special circumstances, additional financial help could be given.

Generally, assistance from the benevolence fund will be in amounts less than \$1,000 in order to help as many as possible.

Church-Sponsored Spiritual Formation Activities for Students (such as Fall Camp) Assistance Guidelines

- All requests must come through the Student Ministry Pastor or Student Ministry Director
- Financial assistance may cover all or part of camp fees
- Families are encouraged (when possible) to contribute what they can
- Student may be encouraged to participate in fundraising or service opportunities when appropriate
- Assistance requests will be handled confidentially to protect the dignity of the student and family
- No student will be excluded from Fall Camp solely due to inability to pay

Recipients

In order of priority, recipients of funds disbursed from the benevolent fund are at the direction of the Campus Pastor and are as follows:

1. church members
2. regular attendees
3. members of the community who are connected to our church family
4. members of the community at large
5. ministries and Christian agencies that serve people with the same needs as those that fit the criteria for assistance from the benevolent fund but which provide services the church does not

Procedure for Disbursement

Source of Request

A Benevolence Request Form may be filled out by the person requesting help or by an elder or another person designated by the campus pastor. If the request is from within the church family, the individual's shepherding elder will receive and oversee the process. The requirement for the Benevolence Request Form can be waived if the applicant is from within the church family and their situation is well-known to the Campus Pastor and/or their Shepherding Elder. If the request is from outside the church, the campus pastor or a campus shepherding elder that he designates will oversee the process and serve as the campus benevolence coordinator. They will take the request and obtain references and contacts to collaborate on the need by going over their financial situation.

Processing the Request

1. The Benevolence Request Form is returned to the campus admin, who forwards it to the campus shepherding elder or campus pastor, who will serve as the campus benevolence coordinator (see above).
2. In a meeting with the individual (in person or virtual), the designated elder reviews the request and then involves two other shepherding elders from his campus to discuss possible assistance. Normally, one of these three elders will be the campus pastor.
3. Once a decision has been made, the elder overseeing the need will send an email to our director of finance and CC the other two elders who were part of the decision. That email will spell out a summary of the need as well as the decision as to how the church will help.
4. The person making the request is informed of the decision.
5. Checks are written and disbursed. As much as possible, checks from the benevolent fund will be payable to vendors, utility companies, homeowners associations, etc., rather than to the individual requesting assistance.

Benevolence Q&A

1. Can an individual contribute (donate) money or possessions to Village Bible Church and ask that the money be dedicated or directed to a specific individual or family?
 - a. While this does not guarantee that the full and/or exact amount of the gift will be given to the named individual or family, if benevolence support for that specific individual or family has already been approved by the guiding elders, a tax-deductible gift can be given in this way.
 - b. If benevolence support has not already been approved by the guiding elders, a tax-deductible gift can be made to the benevolence fund, and the campus pastor be made aware of the potential need.
 - c. If an individual would like to give through the church to a specific person for whom support has not been approved, this may be done via a non-deductible contribution. This would need to be approved by the campus pastor, who would also inform the guiding elder chairman.
2. If a person donates money directly to an individual/family or directly pays a bill for an individual/family, can Village Bible Church provide the person who made the donation a receipt?

No. The donation is not the responsibility of Village Bible Church.
3. Will Village Bible Church help members outside of our immediate congregation with benevolence?

The decision is made on a case-by-case basis. The campus pastor and campus shepherding elders will consider the person's particular situation, supporting documentation, and the church's current financial situation.
4. Can a person be denied benevolence, and if so, what can that person do?

The decision of the campus pastor and campus shepherding elders is final.
5. Is support available for walk-ins requesting assistance?

When available, a \$25 gift card for either gas or groceries may be provided to a walk-in requesting assistance. This support will be provided no more than once per year and should be recorded in the church benevolence tracker. A copy of the individual's driver's license or state ID should be retained for our records. The pastor on-site should meet and pray with the individual.

VILLAGE BIBLE CHURCH BENEVOLENCE REQUEST FORM

The Benevolence Ministry of Village Bible Church is charged with determining who is needy and defining what constitutes a true need according to Biblical standards. Our decisions are made in accordance with the mandates of Scripture and the leading of the Holy Spirit. These funds come from the blessings that the Lord has given us. We are charged with being good stewards of God's money that was given by people living obedient, disciplined lives for the support of those in need of emergency assistance. We are concerned about your spiritual needs as well as your physical needs.

ALL QUESTIONS ON THE APPLICATION FORM MUST BE COMPLETED.

1. The primary objective of the benevolence ministry of Village Bible Church is to assist those in emergency need of assistance.
2. No benevolence is ever administered to relieve the consequence of sin.
3. All benevolence is given to assist the recipient to help himself/herself work through the problem, not to bail them out of the situation with no effort on their part.
4. All benevolence checks will be made payable to the debtor in cases of bills (i.e. landlord, electric co.) and only in rare circumstances to the recipient of the financial aid.
5. Requests for benevolence require review by the benevolence team of Village Bible Church, which **normally takes up to twenty-one (21) days**. All applications must have a signed authorization for release of information before processing can begin. **We will contact the applicant when the team has reached a decision.**
6. Village Bible Church will assist people in need only in obedience to the Lord's will and cannot be dictated by the urgency of circumstances.
7. Every case is CONFIDENTIAL. Violating confidentiality may result in disqualification of any request submitted, either currently being considered or in the future.
8. Proof of income is required, with copies of the last two pay stubs attached.
9. Copies of bills must accompany the request.
10. **All questions** on the application form **must be completed**, or the form will be returned to the applicant for completion before we will process the request.

VILLAGE BIBLE CHURCH BENEVOLENCE REQUEST FORM

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS MUST BE PROVIDED IN ORDER FOR APPLICATION TO BE CONSIDERED.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Date _____

Last Name _____ First _____ Maiden _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: Day # (____) _____ Evening # (____) _____ E-mail _____

Sex (M/F) _____ Birth Date ____/____/____ Age _____

MARITAL STATUS

☐ Single ☐ Engaged ☐ Married ☐ Separated ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed

INFORMATION ON SPOUSE

Last Name _____ First _____ Maiden _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: Day # (____) _____ Evening# (____) _____

Sex (M/F) _____ Birth Date ____/____/____ Age _____ SSN _____

PLEASE LIST SPECIFIC REQUEST NEEDED AT THIS TIME

Amount For

\$ _____ Food _____

\$ _____ Clothing _____

\$ _____ Utility/Which One? _____

\$ _____ Prescription _____

\$ _____ Rent/House Payment _____

\$ _____ Other _____

HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS – List ALL persons living at this address.

Name Date of Birth Relationship Income

Name	Date of Birth	Relationship	Income

Do you have a Social Worker? ☐ Yes ☐ No Social Worker _____

Agency _____ Phone _____

VILLAGE BIBLE CHURCH
BENEVOLENCE REQUEST FORM

APPLICANT'S EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Present/Most Recent Employer _____ Phone (____) _____

Supervisor _____ Phone (____) _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Employment Date _____ to _____

Position and Job Description _____

Reason for leaving (if not currently working) _____

SPOUSE'S (OR FAMILY MEMBER'S) EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Present/Most Recent Employer _____ Phone (____) _____

Supervisor _____ Phone (____) _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Employment Date _____ to _____

Position and Job Description _____

Reason for leaving (if not currently working) _____

HOUSING

☐ Own/Purchasing ☐ Renting How Long at Present Address _____ Other _____

Landlord/Mortgage Co. _____ Phone (____) _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

VILLAGE BIBLE CHURCH

BENEVOLENCE REQUEST FORM

MUST BE FILLED OUT COMPLETELY, INCLUDING TOTALS, TO BE CONSIDERED

WHAT I OWN (Today's Value)

Checking Accounts	\$ _____
Savings Accounts	\$ _____
Money Markets Funds	\$ _____
Certificates of Deposit	\$ _____
Mutual Funds/stocks/bonds	\$ _____
Life Insurance (cash value)	\$ _____
Home (market value)	\$ _____
Car (yr__ make__) approx.value	\$ _____
Car (yr__ make__) approx.value	\$ _____
Other Property Market Value	\$ _____
IRA(s) Retirement Funds	\$ _____
Other _____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____

Total \$ _____

MONTHLY INCOME

(If weekly, multiply by 4)

Employment	
Job 1 (actual take-home pay)	\$ _____
Job 2	\$ _____
Spouse	
Job 1 (actual take-home pay)	\$ _____
Job 2	\$ _____
Child Support	\$ _____
Retirement	\$ _____
Social Security	\$ _____
SSI or Disability	\$ _____
Food Stamps	\$ _____
VA	\$ _____
Unemployment	\$ _____
AFDC	\$ _____
Dividends/Interest	\$ _____
Other _____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____

Total \$ _____

WHAT I OWE (unpaid balances)

Mortgage (balance)	\$ _____
Home Equity Loan	\$ _____
Taxes-list city, real estate etc.	\$ _____
Insurance	\$ _____
Master Card/Visa	\$ _____
Dept. Stores	\$ _____
Gas Card	\$ _____
Other Credit Cards	\$ _____
Bank Loan	\$ _____
Finance Company	\$ _____
Furniture/Appliance	\$ _____
Car Loans	\$ _____
School Loans	\$ _____
IRS Debt	\$ _____
Other _____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____

Total \$ _____

MONTHLY EXPENSES

Rent	\$ _____
Mortgage	\$ _____
Real Estate Tax & Home Own Insur.	\$ _____
Car Payment(s)	\$ _____
Auto Insurance	\$ _____
Electric	\$ _____
Gas	\$ _____
Water	\$ _____
Food	\$ _____
Phone(s)	\$ _____
Cable TV	\$ _____
Child Daycare	\$ _____
Child Support	\$ _____
Life Insurance	\$ _____
Contributions	\$ _____
Credit Cards	\$ _____
School Loans	\$ _____
Bank Loans	\$ _____
Finance Co. Loans	\$ _____
Furniture/Appliances	\$ _____
Other _____	\$ _____
_____	\$ _____

Total \$ _____

VILLAGE BIBLE CHURCH BENEVOLENCE REQUEST FORM

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please answer the following questions on a separate piece of paper and complete the attached questionnaire.

1. What has occurred in your life that has led to the financial hardship you are now experiencing?
2. Describe your specific need at this time.
3. What steps have you taken already to remedy the situation?
4. Do you have family in the area? If yes, how would you characterize your relationship? If not, where is your family?
5. Has your family helped with your needs? If not, why?
6. Are you part of a local church family? If so, where? Have they helped with your needs? If not, why? How frequently? Are you a member?
7. How did you hear about this church?
8. Describe your relationship with Jesus Christ:
9. Who suggested that you contact Village Bible Church? _____
Relationship _____ Phone (____) _____
10. Have you previously received help from Village Bible Church? ☐ Yes ☐ No
When?/What? _____
11. Have you seen a financial planner/advisor within the last 6 months? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Who? _____
12. Have you contacted anyone else for assistance within the last 6 months? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Please specify amount(s) received _____
Family/Friends _____
Churches/Agencies _____

Reference

Names

Phone

Relationship

AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION

1. The undersigned applicant gives permission to Village Bible Church and any person or volunteer working with the church to release or receive any and all information without restriction or qualifications for the purpose of considering my request to the church for assistance.
2. The undersigned further authorizes any agency, group, or entity to release any and all information without restriction or qualification from the file or record of the undersigned to the church for the purpose of considering my request to the church for assistance.

Date _____

Applicant _____ Witness _____