

BENEVOLENCE POLICY

- I. Richland Lutheran Church, in carrying out our mission, offers financial support to ministries and organizations beyond the congregation.**
 - A. Though financial support is the focus of this policy, this congregation also promotes service, prayer, and material donations as important means of supporting outside ministries.
 - B. Financial benevolences are classified as “budgetary” and “beyond budgetary.”
 - 1. “Budgetary” benevolences are funded from regular, undesignated offerings.
 - 2. “Beyond Budgetary” benevolences are funded from designated gifts.
 - C. In addition to these two categories, the Congregation Council also may publicize “endorsed” benevolences composed of ministries or organizations which the congregation does not support through its budget or special giving, but which have been investigated and deemed worthy of support by individual members wishing to do so.
 - D. Benevolence to individuals with emergency needs is provided for in the budget. Funds are transferred into the Urgent Assistance Fund at the beginning of the fiscal year. The Lead Pastor (or designee, in his or her absence) is responsible for distribution of these resources in order to maintain the confidentiality of the recipients.

- II. To ensure good stewardship and faithfulness to our mission, the Council recognizes the need to monitor all recipients of financial support.**
 - A. Key criteria for benevolent support include:
 - 1. Compatibility with the congregation’s mission and values
 - 2. Financial propriety and transparency
 - 3. Tax-exempt status as defined by the Internal Revenue Service
 - B. The Council will assess the recipients of benevolences on an annual basis.

- III. In keeping with the biblical mandate of the tithe, at least 10% of undesignated offerings will be used for “budgetary” benevolences.**
 - A. Twenty-five percent will be used to support Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC) on a national and district level.

- B. Twenty percent will be used to support local ministries.
- C. Twenty percent will be used to support regional and national ministries.
- D. Twenty percent will be used to support international ministries.
- E. Fifteen percent will be undesignated, in order to allow some flexibility in support of ministries and provide for special needs that may surface during the course of the year.
- F. Benevolences approved by the congregation as presented in the annual budget will be distributed by the Congregation Council.
 - 1. Distribution may be adjusted in accordance with changing circumstances.
 - 2. “Changing Circumstances” can refer to our financial situation, emergent needs, or issues addressed in Section II above.

IV. “Beyond Budgetary” benevolences provide members with additional opportunities to support worthy ministries.

- A. “Beyond Budgetary” benevolences must be approved by the Congregation Council; or, at the Council’s discretion, by the Lead Pastor.
- B. “Beyond Budgetary” benevolences may be promoted in various ways such as temple talks, bulletin inserts, etc. at the discretion of the Lead Pastor.