

## **BENEVOLENCE POLICY**

The benevolence ministry of Praise Assembly is designed to provide temporary financial assistance for members and regular attendees of the church during times of serious need and especially after other options for assistance have been explored and are found to be unavailable. Such causes stemming from serious or long-term illnesses, unemployment or short-term underemployment, and acts of nature are deemed as reasons to provide assistance. Those requesting assistance will be asked to reveal to the Benevolence Committee other potential sources of financial help (i.e. family members, community and/or government resources, etc.) and will typically be asked to seek such assistance whenever possible. Those requiring longer-term help including, but not limited to, widows, single parents and orphans, may also be considered as candidates for benevolence.

### **Please consider the following:**

-Only those who are members and adherents of Praise Assembly are deemed as candidates for benevolence. Others will be referred to social and/or government agencies in the local community. Adherents must have previously attended Praise Assembly consistently for a 3 month period. At no time should the benevolence ministry be viewed by members and adherents as "insurance" for future, untoward financial circumstances.

-Praise Assembly may offer assistance for necessities such as food and utilities, but will not assist with nonessentials such as cable and telephone. In most cases, the church can only assist with partial payments. Payments are made directly to agencies, not to the individuals requesting assistance. Under special, needful circumstances, non-financial assistance may also be provided through resources coordinated by the benevolence committee (i.e. plumbers, carpenters, roofers, electricians, appliance repair, mechanics, and other services or skills).

-Praise Assembly is not a lending institution, and therefore, will at no time "loan" money to anyone.

-All requests for benevolence will first require the completion of a Benevolence Request Form. Each request for financial benevolence is then handled as being in one of the following three categories:

1) Up to and including \$100.00: All first-time requests up to and including \$100.00 during a calendar year are handled by the Senior Pastor. If a second request is made during a calendar year, it will be handled by the Benevolence Committee. If an additional request is made, it will be brought to the Church Board since this circumstance may represent the need for longer-term help.

2) Up to and including \$1000.00: All first-time requests for amounts over \$100.00 and up to and including \$1000.00 during a calendar year are handled by the Benevolence Committee. If a second request for this amount is made during a calendar year, the request will be brought to the Church Board for evaluation and

action.

3) Over \$1000.00: All requests for amounts over \$1000.00 are offered to church members and adherents only upon official, Church Board action. The congregation shall also be made aware of such need so that they may actively share the burden through an offering and through prayer for the one in need.

-Benevolence requests requiring the involvement of the Benevolence Committee and/or the Church Board cannot be granted immediately, and therefore, applicants must give sufficient advance notice to allow time for Benevolence Committee or Church Board evaluation and action.

-Families who request assistance more than once and those who continue to experience financial difficulties will be asked to meet with the benevolence committee for financial counseling. We desire that individuals learn "how to plant their own wheat, rather than just receive bread."

-Individuals within the church body may not take it upon themselves to organize benevolent fund drives or to solicit funds for benevolent needs within the church. This leads only to confusion and division.

### **PROCEDURAL ITEMS FOR THE BENEVOLENCE COMMITTEE**

1) Persons requesting assistance must reveal to the Benevolence Committee other potential sources of financial help (i.e. family members, community and/or government resources, etc.)

2) The Benevolence Committee should compile a list of other benevolence organizations as well as governmental agencies for referral.

3) The Benevolence Committee shall compile a folder of printed resource materials whereby persons in need may learn how to budget themselves through their crisis

4) The Benevolence Committee shall submit a proposed budget for each approaching year

5) The Benevolence Committee and Pastor shall report to the Official Church Board monthly concerning all benevolence requests and also whether or not they were granted.