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**Purpose of this Document**

1. Establish and outline an objective, unbiased process for the evaluation of requests for assistance from the Good Samaritan Fund.
2. Provide written eligibility requirements and criteria for receiving assistance from the Good Samaritan Fund.
3. Describe the request, approval and disbursement process.

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**Oversight and Accountability**

The Associate Pastor for Christian Education and Discipleship in conjunction with the Director of Finance and Administration, under the oversight of the Session, shall have responsibility for overseeing the administration of the Good Samaritan Fund and its disbursements according to the policy and guidelines set forth herein.

The Associate Pastor for Christian Education and Discipleship will provide to the Session the amount of contributions and disbursements from the Good Samaritan Fund on a regular basis.

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**Source of Funding**

The Good Samaritan Fund shall receive income from two sources:

1. Through the receipt of special contributions by individuals and/or families wishing to make a donation to the Good Samaritan Fund (members of the church are not encouraged to contribute to the Good Samaritan Fund in lieu of regular giving to the General Fund of the church); and
2. Through the “Undesignated Cash Offerings” on the fifth Sunday of any given month throughout the calendar year.

Contributions to the Good Samaritan Fund in the form of a check should be made payable to “First Presbyterian Church”, with a notation that the funds are to be placed in the Good Samaritan Fund.

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**Contributions to the Fund**

In order to comply with IRS regulations concerning charitable contributions, all gifts to the Good Samaritan Fund must be unconditional and without personal benefit to the donor. Contributions to the Good Samaritan Fund may not be earmarked or otherwise designated for particular purposes or recipients.

Donors making contributions to the Good Samaritan Fund subject to these conditions may be able to deduct their contributions if they itemize deductions on the federal income tax return. It is recommended that donors consult their individual tax advisor or CPA concerning the appropriate tax treatment of contributions they make to the Good Samaritan Fund.

**Recipients of Assistance**

In order of priority, recipients of assistance from the Good Samaritan Fund shall be:

1. Members of First Presbyterian Church and
2. Regular attendees of First Presbyterian Church which is defined as someone attending services or some other weekly ministry on a regular basis for a minimum of three months.

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**Intended Purpose and  
Limits of Assistance**

The stated purpose of the Good Samaritan Fund is to minister to individuals or families during a time of hardship or crisis by temporarily assisting them with their basic needs. The Good Samaritan Fund may not be applicable for cases which need long-term financial support. A maximum of \$1,500 is available for assistance during a 12 month period after assistance has been approved.

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

- lodging
- food
- clothing
- medical treatment
- transportation to or from a place of employment
- funeral expenses
- initial evaluation and professional counseling appointments

Needs that may *not* be met by the benevolence fund include<sup>1</sup>:

- business ventures, business investments, or anything that brings financial profit to the individual or family
- paying off credit cards. Exceptions can be made when an individual has had to use a credit card in a crisis or emergency (e.g., hospitalization, death, etc.)
- needs of individuals who are wanted by the law or for paying fines as a result of breaking the law
- legal fees
- penalties relating to late payments or irresponsible actions
- private school fees or tuition and school expenses of any nature

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<sup>1</sup> This list is not intended to be exhaustive; instead, it is intended to provide general guidelines in determining the type of expenses not covered by benevolent assistance.

### **Guidelines for Disbursement**

The Good Samaritan Fund is intended as a source of last resort, to be used when the individual or family requesting assistance has explored all other possibilities of assistance from appropriate sources (i.e., family, savings, investments, etc.). It is intended to be a means of assistance during the time of a crisis or other hardship.

Under no circumstance is assistance from the Good Samaritan Fund to be considered a loan. No gift may be repaid, either in part or in full, in money or in labor.

Those requesting assistance must be willing to receive financial, family, or emotional counseling.

All monetary disbursements from the Good Samaritan Fund shall be made directly to the party or entity to whom payment is due and not in the form of cash given directly to the individual or family requesting assistance (e.g., if assistance with rent or a mortgage payment is needed, payment shall be made directly to the individual or family's landlord or mortgage holder).

Assistance may be given in the form of gift cards for needed household items and food.

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### **Application and Approval Process**

Individuals or families seeking assistance from the Good Samaritan Fund shall follow the steps below:

1. Obtain an Application for Assistance from the Good Samaritan Fund. Applications are located at the church in the front office and on-line at [www.fpclakeland.org](http://www.fpclakeland.org)
2. Submit an Application for Assistance (along with all supporting documentation) in a sealed envelope made to the attention of the Associate Pastor of Christian Education and Discipleship.
3. The Associate Pastor of Christian Education and Discipleship will review the request in conjunction with the Good Samaritan Fund Policy and Guidelines and the availability of funds and will schedule an appointment within three working days. At that interview, the applicant will be made aware of the action to be taken. If monetary assistance is approved, funds will be available in three working days.
4. The applicant will be notified when and where the monetary assistance will be available for pick-up.