



Rochester Mennonite Fellowship

A congregation of
Mennonite Church USA

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SHARING FUND

Rochester Mennonite Fellowship has in recent years allotted some money to be used at the discretion of the Pastoral Care Team to attend to urgent financial needs of members of the congregation. This fund is not a budgeted line item. The money is replenished as needed by a special collection. Everence (formerly Mennonite Mutual Aid) has a program which will match our gifts to individuals if certain criteria are met. Kathy Kern is our liaison with Everence. When the Pastoral Care Team identifies a specific need, Kathy Kern should be contacted to determine if Everence will be involved. Kathy also takes care of the paperwork that Everence requires.

Everence has published some information to help congregations create and manage a benevolence fund. This is how they describe the reasons for this type of fund.

As the body of Christ, congregations want to exemplify Jesus by lovingly and compassionately sharing their resources with others. As stewards of these resources, congregations also want to model Jesus' example of discerning what the real needs are, which may go beyond cash. People needing money may also need financial counseling or mentoring.

Pastoral Care Team members in the past have identified some reasons for having a sharing fund: it helps to foster generosity, to remind and help us to hold things lightly; it fosters a sense of a real connectedness within the body.

Specific Guidelines

- The recipient should share a connectedness with our church but not necessarily a member of Rochester Mennonite Fellowship.
- All church members are encouraged to be sensitive to individual's needs and may identify a likely recipient and approach the Pastoral Care Team. Or a church member in need may approach the team for assistance. Pastoral Care Team will address each giving opportunity on a case-by-case basis.
- Three people from Pastoral Care Team must agree to the gift. This is to balance the desire for consensus and shared responsibility with the need for ease of use.
- The church treasurer will handle all contributions and disbursements from the fund.
- Confidentiality will be upheld and people other than Pastoral Care Team, Treasurer, Kathy Kern and the recipient will not be informed unless deemed necessary by Pastoral Care Team.
- Gift amount will be a maximum of \$500 per household per year. The Fund might accommodate \$1,000 to \$2,000 per year in total.
- The recipient may be asked to prove that the gift was used for the intended purpose.