



LifeSource

CHURCH

COMPASSION FUND

POLICY & PROCEDURES

Purpose

The Compassion Committee exists to extend mercy throughout Life Source Church and its community by offering both financial help and the message of the Gospel. This ministry includes:

- Using the resources God has given us to actively demonstrate the love of Christ
- Meeting the immediate financial needs of those in our church body
- Help the residents of West Caldwell & the surrounding towns of Suburban Essex County by stepping in to help families experiencing an emergency need of financial assistance.

1 Compassion Fund

Life Source Church's Compassion Fund is funded from gifts received and/or donated to the ministry and from monthly designated offerings. God often provides for the fund through individuals giving toward a specifically known need. The Compassion Fund's financial balance is carried forward from year to year. Having a balance allows us to respond more generously to those coming to us with significant needs.

1.1 Compassion Committee

The Compassion Committee at Life Source Church consists of members chosen from the deaconry. The team will meet on a rotation as needed to approve requests.

2 Whom Do We Serve

"So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are the household of faith." Galatians 6:10

2.1 Serving the Body & Community

Life Source Church seeks to meet the needs first of those within our church body, and then those in our community. The Compassion Committee aims to minister in such a way that Life Source Church be known by those inside and outside our fellowship as a discerning, yet caring, compassionate, responsive congregation. We want to use the resources God had given us to attract the unsaved and to introduce them to the love of Christ.

2.2 What Are Primary Needs

Recognizing that God is provider of all that we need, the Committee strives to handle God's resources within Life Source Church and the community to insure that the primary needs of every member are met. Primary needs are those necessary for physical, emotional, and spiritual survival: food, shelter, clothing, transportation, etc.

3 Financial Assistance

3.1 When We Will Help Financially

Monetary help will normally be given for specific needs rather than for ongoing general needs.

The Compassion Committee will consider the following criteria in helping financially:

- Those who are facing an emergency situation and are in need of one time assistance (An emergency situation is defined as but not limited to: job loss, emergency medical care, household fire, death in the family, etc.)

3.2 Time Line for Financial Assistance

Many are hoping to have help within hours of presenting their need. However, due to church procedures, those requesting help are to be told up front that they should generally not expect to hear how their request will be resolved for approximately 7-10 days.

3.3 Ongoing Financial Assistance

The Compassion Fund should not be viewed as a means to meet an ongoing chronic financial need. The Committee will work to advise individuals on meeting ongoing long-term needs.

3.4 Forms & Amounts of Financial Assistance

Currently, Life Source Church will be giving a maximum of \$200 to an individual(s). Gifts will be distributed in the form of a gift card appropriate for each need. (Ex: Supermarkets, Gas Stations, Clothing Stores, etc.)

4 Decision Making

All compassion requests will follow this process:

- 1) An individual fills out a Compassion Request Form* requesting assistance for themselves or on the behalf of someone in need
- 2) The form is then passed along to the Compassion Committee for review
- 3) The Compassion Committee will meet to discuss approval by holding a physical meeting or corresponding through telephone or e-mail
- 4) The Committee will notify the Pastor and the Pastor will notify the applicant
- 5) The financial gift will be presented to the recipient within 7-10 days of the application

*Compassion Request Forms can be obtained at Life Source Church on Sunday mornings, on the Life Source Church website, or by contacting the church office and requesting that a form be mailed to the applicant.

All information provided by the applicant will be kept confidential by the Compassion Committee and Pastor of Life Source Church. All completed Compassion forms will be kept on file at the church office for follow up or for future reference.

5 Biblical Guide to Finances

As stated previously, the Compassion Fund cannot meet the **ongoing** needs of those requesting assistance. For those who struggle with ongoing needs and come to the committee for guidance, we can offer the following Biblical truths that may help them:

- God owns everything and we are only stewards of the resources he has given to us (1 Chronicles 29:11-12)
- God gives and knows what's best for us (Matthew 7:11)
- Tithing serves only as the training wheels of giving and can be augmented by generous giving which yields eternal rewards (Malachi 3:7-11, 2 Corinthians 9:6-8)
- Entering into debt is a serious decision and individuals should heed the Biblical warnings against it (Proverbs 22:7; Hebrews 13:5)
- Budgeting is a tool toward good stewardship

6 Giving to the Compassion Fund:

“And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belonging and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.” Acts 2:44-45

6.1 How To Give Financially

Every 2nd Sunday of the month will be Compassion Sunday. This is an opportunity for members & attendees of Life Source Church to contribute to the Compassion Fund. Donations may be made by writing a check to Life Source Church with a designation for the Compassion Fund. Note that the monies coming in must be designated as a compassion gift and should not be confused with regular tithes and offerings. Donations to the Compassion Fund can be made at any time; Compassion Sunday is simply a consistent monthly reminder to those in the congregation to give to this ministry.

A financial gift given to the Compassion Fund without any further designation of how that money is to be spent is eligible for tax deduction. According to the IRS, gifts specified to meet a particular need are not eligible for tax deduction. Individuals may designate their contributions to this fund to be used to meet a specific need. However, the Committee, under the direction of the Pastor, retains ultimate authority to designate how any fund is distributed. In this case, the individual will not receive a tax-deductible receipt from the church

CONCLUSION

The Compassion Committee and Pastor of Life Source Church seek to be the arms of Christ extended to those in need.

Daily we remember to:

- **Pray for the applicants**
 - For faith that God will provide for their needs
 - That they will be good stewards of the resources God has entrusted to them
 - That they will feel supported and encouraged as they apply for assistance
- **Pray for the Compassion Team**
 - For the discernment and wisdom regarding the collection, distribution, and management of the money contributed
 - For unity and productivity throughout the benevolence process
 - For the Lord's mind and discernment about the best way to meet a particular need
- **Pray for the Congregation**
 - For a spirit of compassion, generosity, and caring for those in need

“Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account, the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake.” Deuteronomy 15:10

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