

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Northern Chautauqua

Policy on Minister's Discretionary Fund

Adopted by the Executive Board of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Northern Chautauqua, (UUCNC) in July 2020

The Minister's Discretionary Fund (or Help Fund) will be a separate checking account that the minister (or, in their absence, a designated member of the Caring Circle) can use to provide confidential assistance to members/friends of the congregation facing emergency financial need.

- Contributions to the fund will be made by donations from individuals.
- Once each fiscal year, congregants will be asked to contribute to this fund (similar to a "Share the Plate" collection, in lieu of collecting for an outside nonprofit organization that month). Additional gifts may also be made to this fund at any time. The existence of the fund may be announced/advertised to congregants throughout the year – including information on how to communicate emergency needs to the minister/Caring Circle – but there will be no additional appeals to request donations.
- In keeping with IRS regulations, no contribution may be designated for the benefit of any particular recipient; i.e. an individual donating to the fund may not specify that the gift is to benefit a particular person/family in need.
- The minister will be authorized to make disbursements from this fund at their discretion.
- One member the Caring Circle (who shall be a voting member of the congregation) will be designated to make disbursements from this fund. This individual will make such disbursements at their discretion, only in the absence of the minister (e.g. during the summer) or when no minister is under contract.
- The Caring Circle and/or its designee may advise the minister on potential disbursements from this fund.
- Gifts from the fund may be made only to members or friends of the congregation. Whether an individual is considered a "friend" of the congregation is at the discretion of the minister (or, in the absence of the minister, the designated member of the Caring Circle who is authorized to make disbursements).
- Disbursements may be made only by check to the recipient.
- No distribution may be made to the minister or to any member of their family, nor to any other employee or to any member of their family.
- The minister (or, when no minister is under contract, the designated member of the Caring Circle who is authorized to make disbursements) will provide an annual report to the board with all amounts paid out by the fund, listing dates and purposes of the payments (but not the names of recipients).
- The Treasurer will review the canceled checks to confirm adherence to the written policy and will keep confidentiality around any details.
- To maintain confidentiality, records will be kept in a locked file.