

## Benevolence Planning

The goal of creating a solid benevolence plan should be to reach the lost and lead individuals financially struggling to self-sufficiency. We can do that by connecting individuals to local programs and organizations better equipped to meet their need and assisting when we find a need falling within the gaps of our systems or in temporary crisis.

Creating plans and a budget will keep you consistent and financially responsible. Our leadership approved of a monthly budget for external and internal benevolence. This does not include the percentage we give towards local organizations. We respect when we reach our monthly budget; however, if we have a need arise after we have used our benevolence funds for the month, we can bring special cases to our leadership to approve if funds are available. We do not financially assist families more than once within six months' time. Again, we want to lead them to self-sufficiency, therefore we want to plug them into programs that help them long-term. We do not trade assistance for work or volunteer hours.

Helpful tips when dealing with benevolence:

- When taking a benevolence call or walk in it will be important to track as much information about the individual/family as possible. Take their name, phone number, address and see if children are within the household. Document their situation. This will make it easier to identify if anyone seeks assistance again after you have already assisted them. This will also be important to know if they are located within your community. If they are located outside of your community, they likely will not be eligible for local resources and they have likely exhausted all their own local resources and churches. If children are in the household, they have many more resources available and they are likely eligible for more.
- Never put yourself in a situation where you are alone with anyone seeking assistance.
- Avoid handing out cash and/or checks. Pay bills directly online or over the phone. If you must go somewhere to pay a bill, do not go alone.
- Reach out to your local United Way Agency or Social Services to get a directory of local resources.
- Do you have anyone in your congregation with connections to any local organizations or agencies? Seeking volunteers with knowledge in these areas could help you tremendously.

- Create a follow up plan. We want to share the love of Christ with everyone we help externally or internally. We send a follow-up card to those we serve just to let them know they have been prayed as well as sending some encouraging scripture.