



Holgate Church of Christ

Benevolence Ministry Protocol

Sometimes bad things happen to good people and when they do we want you to know what Holgate Church of Christ can do to help. We may not be able to bail a family out of the situation they're in, but working together there are some things we may be able to do to help.

Benevolence Defined

For the purpose of this protocol The Holgate Church of Christ defines benevolence as meeting the immediate need of a family or individual. Food, Shelter and Home energy are the areas to which we generally give assistance. This policy takes into account the various community organizations who offer assistance to families that have need.

What To Expect The process for request may include sharing information of a confidential nature. All information will be kept confidential and shared on a limited basis with those who have a bona fide need to know, e.g. Elders, Minister, the person(s) involved in a finance distribution or assistance in distribution of food.

When a need arises here's what you can expect:

- ✓ A prompt concerned response from the Elder in your zone.
- ✓ Prayer with the Elder, the head of household and the family members.

Every request goes through a process; prepare to have a sensitive, respectful but candid talk with an elder regarding your situation.

- ✓ The Elder will complete a needs assessment by talking with the head of household to determine the family's level of need.

- ✓ Please share with the Elder the resources being used to meet the need.
 - Family, friends, reputable lending institutions; e.g. Banks, credit unions.
 - Savings, short-term loans against retirement plans.
 - Community resources that have been contacted for assistance.

- ✓ The Elder will share the request and the assessment with the rest of the leadership to determine the best course of action to take for the request.
 - We cannot help everyone, the congregation is on a budget and funds are limited.
 - There are a limited number of times we can help a family or individual because of the multiple needs regarding the work of the church.

We understand every situation is unique to that family; meaning a family may not have been in the situation of having to ask for help before. We know how hard it is to ask for help in the first place. Getting through the difficulties associated with finances isn't easy, but it can be done. Here are a few suggestions a family might discuss to keep things moving in the right direction.

- ✓ Share What plans to protect the family from reoccurrences; a plan might include the following
 - Prayer of thanksgiving
 - Establishing and following an agreed upon budget
 - Getting financial counseling
 - Taking a financial management class
 - Working extra hours
 - Getting a second job

A family may be able to think of other moral and legal ways to get out of their financial bind.

The Responsibility Of The Church

Scripture is clear where financial priorities are to be placed when it comes to benevolence.

- Widows and orphans; I Timothy 5:1-15
- Members of the body; we consider members at the local congregation (*Holgate*) our first priority.
- Members of Sister Congregations; after consulting with leadership from their home congregation a determination will be made on how best to proceed.
- Strangers or nonbelievers

There is never a need for anyone to go hungry. If the need is for food the Church will do her best to accommodate families and individuals.

Holgate Food Services

- Food can be provided through the Holgate pantry.
- Other consumables, e.g. disposable diapers may be available from time-to-time.

Car Repair

The Church knows a member who owns and operates an auto body shop and has agreed to do car repairs and body work at a discount. It's not free, it is a business, but every dollar saved is a dollar saved.

This protocol is intended to serve as a guide for those who need assistance and to help families think of ways to maintain financial health. Let's work together to maintain our spiritual and financial health.

Spiritual Reading

The Leadership will recommend an approved book for those seriously seeking to become a better Steward of the Lord's *Time, Treasure* and *Talent* that He has so richly blessed us to manage. Please see any of the Elders or Minister for your family's copy.

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