

## Minister's Discretionary Fund Policy

Requester: Geoff Sanders

Date Requested: 4/22/2020

Voted and Approved by the Board on : April 23, 2020

### Purpose of Policy:

Tapestry UU Church of Houston has created a Minister's Discretionary Fund ("MDF") to assist members and friends of the congregation and members of the larger community in meeting their basic living needs (such as shelter, food, utilities, medical) and other exigencies (such as transportation, fees). Funds may be given as a loan or a gift, depending upon the person's ability and the circumstances. The minister has discretionary and confidential use of these funds in accordance with the following policy.

### MDF Policy:

1. The funds in the Minister's Discretionary Fund are to be spent:
  - a. In accordance with the mission and vision of the Church as interpreted by the Minister;
  - b. Only for needs and purposes in keeping with the Church's tax exempt status;
  - c. As part of the Church's ministry to members and beyond; and
  - d. As deemed appropriate by the Minister.
2. Although the Church expects that the Minister will exercise due diligence in making decisions about expenditure of funds from the Minister's Discretionary Fund, the Minister has sole discretion over expenditures, with the following restrictions:
  - a. Funds may not be used for the direct or indirect benefit of the Minister and/or the Minister's family.
  - b. Funds may not be used to provide compensation, benefits or gifts to staff.
  - c. Funds may not be solicited for specific purposes (e.g. to support a specific person in need or to provide scholarships for a designated purpose).
  - d. Funds may not be spent on any line item already covered in the Church's operating budget or for standard programming for which budget coverage would normally be provided.

- e. Disbursements or reimbursements must be requested through regular Church channels. Without violating the confidential nature of the disbursement, the Minister shall provide a general description of the purpose for which the funds are requested.
  - f. If cash or gift cards are disbursed, the recipient will need to provide a signed acknowledgment of the receipt, including the date and amount of the gift.
  - g. The minister should provide semiannual reports to the board with all amounts paid out by the fund, listing dates and purposes of the payments (but not the names of recipients).
3. The Treasurer should review the canceled checks and receipts to confirm adherence to the written policy, and will keep confidentiality around any details.
  4. Funds in the Minister's Discretionary Fund shall be maintained as a reserve in the Church's financial records and totals reported according to the Church's standard reporting procedures. Monies retained in this Fund shall not lapse at year end and shall be retained in the Minister's Discretionary Fund for subsequent fiscal years.
  5. Records should be kept in a locked file by the church treasurer.
  6. In the event of a Minister's departure from Tapestry Unitarian Universalist Church of Houston, all monies in the Fund remain with the Church. The Fund belongs to the Congregation and not to the past, current or any future Ministers.

This MDF Policy has been adapted from documents and recommendations provided by the Unitarian Universalist Association and First Unitarian Universalist Church of San Antonio.