

St Patrick's Church Compassion Fund

Information sheet and application form

St Patrick's PCC agreed in May 2020 to set up a fund to help members of the church family who may be suffering financial hardship. Considering the present crisis this seemed an urgent matter, and so a small team has fast-tracked development of the policy, and we are delighted to announce that the fund is now operational.

In principle, any member of the church family who has been attending for at least six months may apply to the fund for financial assistance if they find themselves in need. In Acts 2, we read that "all the believers were together and had everything in common... and gave to everyone as they had need". We see this fund as an opportunity for the church family to grow in offering and receiving help from each other in financial terms as we already do in other ways, and to better reflect the love of Jesus in practical ways to those around us.

The main points:

Why now? While the COVID-19 crisis has given the impetus to set up this fund, we envisage that the fund will continue indefinitely since financial crises may hit individuals and families at any time.

Where will the money come from? The church congregation will be invited to contribute specifically to this fund, and donations will be "restricted", so may only be used for this purpose.

Who can apply for help from the Compassion Fund? Anyone facing financial hardship who has been a member of the St Patrick's church family for at least six months, including

- those who regularly attended church services
- our mission partners
- members of Lunch Club, Toddlers, TGIs and other groups organised and led by the church

In exceptional circumstances, the wardens and treasurer have discretion to interpret the policy more flexibly.

How would someone apply for help? Requests should be made to the churchwardens using the form at page 3, which is also available from the church office. Other forms of request will also be accepted if for any reason the form is not available. Applicants may also wish to get support or sponsorship from a leader within the church; maybe their group leader, or a member of the staff or the PCC, and this will be welcomed. These leader will also have application forms.

How can I contribute to the fund? Please make a bank transfer to the St Patrick's church account at CAF Bank using the reference COMFUND. Sort code: 40-52-40. Account number: 00026638. Alternatively, you can send a cheque addressed to the Treasurer c/o St Patrick's Church. Please mark the envelope confidential and write COMFUND on the back of the cheque.

Further questions and answers:

Q1: Can someone make more than one request?

A. Yes.

Q2: Can someone make a request on behalf of someone else without their knowledge?

A. No.

Q3: What sort of things are eligible for financial support?

A. Many things, and the list could be endless. Gifts from the fund might include, for example, a lump sum to buy a washing machine or cooker; the cost of an air ticket to visit a dying relative; or monthly payments to help tide a family over a difficult period before longer term relief becomes available.

Q4: Who will make the decision whether to grant a gift under the Compassion Fund?

A. Applications will be assessed by at least two of three individuals; namely the two churchwardens and the Treasurer.

Q5: Will the Vicar be involved in the decision making?

A. No. However, the vicar will be informed of applicants and beneficiaries, for pastoral reasons.

Q6: What about confidentiality?

A. Applications will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Donors to the fund will neither be named to beneficiaries nor given any details about beneficiaries.

Q7: What if the fund runs out of money?

A. The wardens will decide when it is appropriate to go to the congregation to request further donations.

Q8: What happens to the money in the fund if it is not needed, and the fund is closed?

A. In that exceptional circumstance the PCC would decide what to do with any funds remaining. Donors will be informed at the time of donating that this is a theoretical possibility.

Q9: A warning appears on my screen if I try to transfer money to St Patrick's Church bank account – what should I do?

A. As CAF Bank is not very large, when making a bank transfer to St Patrick's from one of the six largest banks, you may see a warning on your screen saying that it does not recognise St Patrick's Church as a payee. This is a directive introduced in March 2020 and you should double check that you have entered the sort code and account number correctly. If you have, it is safe to proceed with the transfer.

If you have further questions please email our churchwardens, details at:

https://www.stpats.org.uk/Groups/326303/Staff_and_Leadership.aspx



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www.stpats.org.uk

Application Form for the Compassion Fund

NAME

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE

E-MAIL

Please explain your connection to St Patrick's Church:

Please outline below the assistance needed and the reasons for your application.

Please provide evidence to confirm the reason for your request.

(All details will remain confidential to the fund administrators)

Signature of Applicant **Date of Application**