



**Report by the
Covenant Canadian Reformed Church at Grassie**

**To
General Synod 2025**

**Regarding the
Committee for Needy Students' Fund 2021-2023**

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Section 1 - Executive Summary

Background

General Synod Burlington 2010 founded the *Committee for Needy Students of Theology* (cited herein as the Committee for Needy Students' Fund CNSF) as a centralized federal body responsible to work with all member classes of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches. The CNSF was tasked to administrate financial support for all members of these churches who are enrolled as students at the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary. (See Section 2 – Synodical Mandate and Support Guidelines) Synod Burlington appointed the CNSF to operate under the direction and counsel of the Covenant Canadian Reformed Church at Grassie. (Acts of Synod 2010 Art. 91.4) The CNSF has since endeavoured to fulfill this mandate, and reports back to each successive General Synod. The CNSF also reports annually to all member churches regarding funds dispensed and assessments per communicant member for the upcoming calendar year. The last report submitted by the CNSF to Synod was to General Synod Guelph - Emmanuel 2022. This report included CNSF activities from 2018 – 2020. Synod Guelph – Emmanuel thanked Grassie-Covenant for its work as the Committee for the Needy Students Fund, discharged Grassie-Covenant from duties completed 2018-2020, reappointed Grassie-Covenant as the CNSF to look after extending financial aid to the students of theology who are in need, and to provide General Synod 2025 with recommendations to remain in compliance with the ITA & CRA, as well as Church Order Articles 20 & 75. (Acts of General Synod 2022 Art 157)

Current Situation

i) Funds Dispensed & Students Supported

This report will outline developments and funds dispensed inclusive of the years 2021 – 2023. The Committee has financially supported a total of **twelve (12)** individual students since during this time. Between 2021-2023 a total of **\$293,249** was disbursed for costs relative to student grants and administrative costs. This is up \$161,033 from the previous triennial total of \$132,216 reported to Synod Guelph-Emmanuel 2022. We believe this was due to higher amounts of students, students with larger families & higher living costs in Ontario. Upon review and discussion within the committee in previous years, \$40,000 was withdrawn from the account and an investment was made with surplus funds into an account with Christian Stewardship Services at the end of 2020/early 2021. As our assets were previously held solely in a chequing account at a local Credit Union, we felt the fund was missing an opportunity to take advantage of interest accrual with fund surplus amounts at times when the fund was supporting less students than anticipated. This investment was made use of in early 2023 when the fund did not have sufficient funds in the Meridian account. Money was withdrawn from CSS to help over the period of time when the assessment cheques were coming in from the churches. We were very

grateful that the we had been so blessed in the past and that these funds were available. The Committee has now recouped some of this money and the CSS balance is back to where it needs to be. Recently, the Committee has decided to leave more money in the CSS account, because making the transaction to the Meridian account was quick and efficient. The Committee endeavours to maintain an account surplus to address emergent or unexpected expenditures as students present them. All funds are held in an account with the Meridian Credit Union and an investment with Christian Stewardship Services. The Committee maintains fiscal accountability by means of dual signatories. Annual audits are performed on year-end Committee financial statements, and reported to the Covenant Canadian Reformed Church Council.

ii) Assessments

Churches continue to be assessed annually based on projected enrolment and anticipated fees. The church assessment is calculated on the membership base of the previous year as listed in the annual yearbook of the churches. The Committee sends assessment notices to member churches by November of each year. Typically, follow-up correspondence is required to ensure payment. Churches are encouraged to respond to assessments in a timely fashion. Rates per communicant member were \$4 in 2021, \$6 in 2022, \$18 in 2023, and \$12 in 2024. This upcoming year, the rate will be around \$7-8. After the sudden need of money in 2023, we thought it best to try to keep a more even rate, instead of such large ups & downs. It is noted with great thankfulness that most member churches were able & willing to fulfill their annual assessments during the period reviewed by this report.

iii) Grant Application Process and Student Relationships

Students who are eligible for financial assistance are made aware of the Fund and application process by means of the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary (CRTS) website. An electronic link directs applicants towards the registrar where they are able to secure appropriate forms and contact information for the CNSF. The Committee operates an email account that serves as the primary communication tool with students. Upon receipt of budget requests for aid, visits are scheduled for each student to ensure that giving is conducted in a spirit of humility and brotherly love. This process assists the Committee with confidence that the funds dispensed are being granted to men that are convicted in their path to the ministry. With thankfulness the Committee can report that there is good cooperation and harmony between students and members of the CNSF.

iv) Charitable Status Designation & Income Tax Act Compliance

Previous to 2021, the CNSF had made legal inquiries to ensure that the collection and disbursement of funds on behalf of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches is in compliance with the Income Tax Act (ITA) and the Canadian Revenue Agency. General Synod Guelph – Emmanuel then instructed the CNSF to seek advice, to determine what is required to ensure that they remain in compliance with the ITA & the CRA. (cf. GS 2022 Art. 157 – 3.4) To instruct the CNSF to determine if in ‘owning the activity of the CNSF’ it remains in compliance with CO Art. 20 & 75. (cf. GS 2022 Art 157 – 3.5) To forward the letters from Willoughby Heights & Calgary to the CNSF for its consideration. (cf. GS 2022 Art 157 – 3.6) To provide GS 2025 with recommendations, supported by clear grounds, for any changes to the bylaws of the CNSF, which must be made in order to be in compliance with the ITA and the CRA, as well as CO Art. 20 & 75. (cf. GS 2022 Art 157 – 3.7)

As the CNSF, we took Synod Guelph – Emmanuel's instruction to seek advice on whether we were in compliance with the ITA & CRA, as well as with Church Order Articles 20 & 75. We as a committee struggled with much of the language of the issue at hand, so we reached out to others. The Committee truly enjoys the task that we have been given, *but did struggle in dealing with the ‘legality’ issues we have been presented with in the past number of years (this began with Synod Dunville 2016 requesting that the NSF looked into the matter.) At this point in time, all of the committee members throughout the years would love to see this matter resolved. Through many more meetings and large costs, we have had the following letter made up.* This letter was written by Teresa Douma from ‘Douma Law.’ We have had our own minister, Rev. Louwse and also our contact at the theological seminary, Dr. denHollander read over the letter for input and advice.

DOUMA LAW

Teresa Douma, B.A., LL.B. 568
 Brant Waterloo Road
 Ayr, ON, NOB IEO
 (519)212-9444 teresa@doumalaw.ca

September 30, 2024

To: Covenant Canadian Reformed Church o/a Covenant Canadian Reformed Church of Grassie Attention:
 Matthew Jager & John Joosse
 PO Box 641
 Smithville,
 ON, LOR2AO

Via Email: matthew.iager22@gmail.com; iohnioosse64@gmail.com

RE: Committee for Needy Students of Theology

Dear Mr. Jager and Mr. Joosse

This letter has been prepared specifically for Covenant Canadian Reformed Church of Grassie (the "Church"), and may only be relied upon by the Church, and not by any other church, entity or person.

You asked whether the Church's administration of the "Committee for Needy Students of Theology" was/is in compliance with the Income Tax Act Canada (ITA), and whether the administration of the Committee for Needy Students of Theology and the related fund were/are in compliance with the Federation of Canadian and American Reformed Churches' Church Order Article 75.

I will provide an opinion on the first question, but will only provide comments and observations on the second question as I am not knowledgeable or an expert on the application or interpretation of the Federation's Church Order.

1. Background

As I understand the facts, the 2010 General Synod of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches adopted a mandate for the Committee for Needy Students of Theology (the "CNSF") for students enrolled at the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary, and chose the Church (referred to as being a 'Committee') to set up and maintain the related fund. The work of the CNSF is reviewed by the Federation's churches and approved at every General Synod. Given the fact that the Church has accepted and carried out this role since 2010 and is willing to do so for the foreseeable future, the underlying assumption is that the Church will continue to administer the CNSF until it asks for another church to be the CNSF and administer the related fund.

With respect to the fund, the Church is the Trustee of the charitable fund (trust) created for the charitable purpose of providing financial assistance to eligible needy students of theology. The churches of the Federation chose at the 2010 General Synod (and subsequently confirmed the choice) to have a single church act as the Committee to set up and maintain the fund, over the option

of a Committee comprised of individuals with membership in different churches, largely due to the sensitivity of the work. Practically, the proximity of the Church to the students, and the ability to meet in person with students is also very helpful in administering the CNSF.

Further to the general mandate adopted by the 2010 General Synod, the Church developed a "Committee for the Needy Students of Theology Mandate" document which outlines at a high level how it will operate, how funds will be obtained, how it will report to General Synod, and how it will report annually to the Federation churches. This was presented to General Synod in 2019.

The Church also developed more detailed support guidelines setting out the eligibility requirements, the process for applying for support, the necessity of the Church council's approval, and the requirement for applicants to acknowledge the terms.

Concern has been expressed by a church regarding the Church's position that it needs to 'own the activity' to comply with the ITA, as well as with the perceived conflict this creates with Church Order Article 75.

The tension seems to arise from:

- a) the fact that the Committee or "trustee" is a charitable entity, and not individuals operating the fund as a joint ministry activity of the churches collectively; and
- b) the fact that a charitable organization needs to carry out its own activities and the concerned church's understanding based on the Church Order Article 75, that the Federation's churches retain ownership of the funds and that the fund activity remains an activity of General Synod.

2. The Church as a Canadian Registered Charitable Organization:

The Church as a charitable organization is required by the ITA to use its resources (which includes funds, property, personnel) in activities which are carried out by the Church itself, and which advance the Church's purposes¹. The Church would generally carry out its own activities through its employees and volunteers, and may also use agents or intermediaries who are not registered charities. The key is that however it carries out its own activities, the Church must maintain direction and control of the activity so that the activity is always the charity's own activity.

¹ ITA s. 149.1(1)(a) ... charitable organization, at any particular time, means an organization, whether or not incorporated,

- (a) constituted and operated exclusively for charitable purposes,
 - (a. 1) all the resources of which are devoted to charitable activities carried on by the organization itself or to making qualifying disbursements,
 - (b) no part of the income of which is payable to, or is otherwise available for, the personal benefit of any proprietor, member, shareholder, trustee or settlor thereof,
 - (c) more than 50% of the directors, trustees, officers or like officials of which deal at arm's length with each other and ...

The ITA has a long-standing exception to the 'own activities' rule in that it deems a transfer from one registered Canadian charity to another registered Canadian charity (now called a qualifying disbursement to a qualified donee), to be its own activity.²

In 2022 the ITA was amended to allow a Canadian charity to make a grant to a non-qualified donee to support the non-qualified donees activities, so long as the granting charity ensures that the grant is used for something that falls within the granting charity's own charitable purposes, and so long as the granting charity ensures that the grant is only used for the purpose given and documents this well (a new qualifying disbursement, to a non-qualified donee) ³.

In summary, with the exception of qualifying disbursements (a transfer to a qualified donee or a grant to a non-qualified donee), Canadian law requires that a Canadian charity carry out its 'own activities'. This means having direction and control over its resources and activities, ensuring that the expenditures/activities further or advance the charity's stated purposes. Failure to do so exposes the Church to revocation of its charitable status.⁴

For purposes of complying with the Income Tax Act and charity law in general, in accepting the responsibility and role as the Committee for Needy Theological Students, the Church had/has to ensure that this activity falls under the umbrella of its purposes and that it has sufficient direction and control over it, so as to be able to say the activity is its own activity.

² ITA s 149.1(6.001) amount of transfer to a qualified donees limited to 50% of a charity's income in that year.

³ ITA s. 149.1(1)(a) ...qualifying disbursement means a disbursement by a charity, by way of a gift or by otherwise making resources available,

- (a) subject to subsection (6.001), to a qualified donee, or
- (b) to a grantee organization, if
 - (i) the disbursement is in furtherance of a charitable purpose (determined without reference to the definition charitable purposes in this subsection) of the charity,
 - (ii) the charity ensures that the disbursement is exclusively applied to charitable activities in furtherance of a charitable purpose of the charity, and
 - (iii) the charity maintains documentation sufficient to demonstrate
 - (A) the purpose for which the disbursement is made, and
 - (B) that the disbursement is exclusively applied by the grantee organization to charitable activities in furtherance of a charitable purpose of the charity;

⁴ ITA 149.1(2) ...Revocation of registration of charitable organization. The Minister may, in the manner described in section 168, revoke the registration of a charitable organization for any reason described in subsection 168(1) or where the organization

- (c) makes a disbursement, other than
 - (i) a disbursement made in the course of charitable activities carried on by it,
 - or (ii) a qualifying disbursement.

It is my opinion that the Church is demonstrating adequate direction and control in administering the CNSF. Facts supporting this opinion include:

- a) the Church chose to accept the activity of setting up and maintaining the needy student fund as per Synod's mandate in 2010;
- b) As discussed in prior correspondence, it is reasonable to consider that the activity falls under the umbrella of the Church's purposes;
Note: the purposes could be strengthened, and it is recommended that the Church consider amendments to the purposes in the Declaration of Trust to expressly provide for the provision of bursaries to advance the education of eligible theological students and/or to relieve poverty;
- c) the Church demonstrates that this activity is its own activity by direct engagement and active oversight of its board (council) and volunteers. For example, it has developed its own administrative guidelines, (copy being provided to Synod 2019) which clearly set out the eligibility for bursaries and the process for application and it is active in the application process, engaging personally with applicants to confirm money from the fund is properly disbursed. Also, the Church's governing body (i.e. council) has delegated the day-to-day work relating to the fund to a sub-committee, with the Church council retaining ultimate decision-making authority when it confirms or rejects recommendations made to it by the sub-committee regarding the disbursement of money from the fund; and
- d) Legally, the Church has a fiduciary duty as a trustee to use the funds received by the Church for only the charitable purpose of the fund. The Church annually demonstrates appropriateness of disbursements through its financial reporting to the churches of the federation, its 'audit' and the annual Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) T3010 filing.
Note: as per Section 3 of the Ontario Charities Accounting Act's Regulation 4/01¹ (CAA), designated funds such as the CNSF fund, should be kept in a separate account from the Church's general funds. The CAA does permit the Church to hold money for multiple designated funds in one account — but it does not permit general and designated funds to be mixed in one account.

3. The Committee for Needy Theological Students and Church Order Article 75

Is the structure of the Committee for Needy Theological Students and the administration of the related fund in compliance with Church Order Article 75?

I am not an expert on the Federation's Church Order, nor am I aware of the history behind Article 75, nor am I familiar with its conventional use. As such I will not provide a legal opinion on this question. However, I will provide comments, questions and observations based on a plain reading of the Church Order's Articles.

a) Church Order

The Church Order states:

Article 20 Students of Theology

The churches shall endeavour that there be students of theology, extending financial aid to those who are in need of it.

Article 75 Property of the Churches

¹ See Charities Accounting Act O. Reg. 4/01: Approved Acts of Executors and Trustees, Section 3,

All property, both real and personal, which belongs to the churches comprised respectively in classes, regional synods, and general synods in common, shall be held in trust for such churches in equal shares by deputies or trustees appointed for that purpose from time to time by the appropriate classis, regional synod, or general synod, and such deputies or trustees shall be bound by the terms of their appointment and instruction and are subject to being discharged by a subsequent classis, regional synod, or general synod.

In simplified terms, Article 75 says:

All property which is owned by all of the churches of a ... general synod in common² shall be held in trust for the churches in equal shares by a trustee appointed by the ... general synod, and the trustee shall be bound to the terms of appointment and can be discharged at a subsequent ... general synod.

b) Observations:

- i. The topic of "Committees", their use, the authority of Synod to appoint and terminate Committees, etc., are not addressed in the Church Order. Without understanding the importance of these terms, it seems odd and a bit forced that the Church is referred to as a Committee;
 - ii. The mandate from Synod in 2010, and the related mandate developed by the Church do not directly deal with some key points. For example, it may be helpful to articulate who appoints a replacement trustee (committee) and what happens to any remaining funds if the current Church/trustee resigns. Legally, designated funds must be used for the purpose they were given for, unless in accepting the funds, there was a clear policy that allowed for other uses. For example, it may be helpful to have a designated giving policy that all churches are aware of, that states that the Church (or a successor church/charity) will use the money for the purpose of the fund, unless the fund is oversubscribed, or no longer needed, in which case the fund may be used for a charitable activity as directed by the Church [or perhaps "by General Synod"] ;
 - iii. On a plain reading of Article 75, it simply provides that if the churches of the General Synod own property in common, they all beneficially own an equal share of that property;
 - iv. Article 75 does not include language that requires when property is or must be held in common;
 - v. There is no Article stating when property held in common by the churches must be used. For example, the Church Order does not expressly require that an activity required or endorsed by the Church Order or General Synod, such as extending financial assistance as per Article 20, be paid for out of property held in common and therefore subject to Article 75. Article 20 simply states that the churches shall endeavor that there be students and extend financial aid to those in need. And Article 75 simply says when property is held in common, the churches of the particular body own the property in common in equal shares;
 - vi. There is no Article that prohibits a Church Order or General Synod endorsed activity, from being funded by individual transfers of money from the churches of the federation to the entity that is carrying out the Synodically endorsed activity (e.g. support for Seminary or CNSF);
 - vii. Classes, Regional Synod and General Synod are not continuing bodies, and have no legal status — they are only ecclesiastical bodies which deal with ecclesiastical matters. As a temporary body, they have no legal ability to own real or personal property. It makes sense that ownership of property contributed by the churches of the temporary body for use by the

² Owning property in common refers to the co-ownership of property by the churches where the churches have an equal interest and share in the property.

temporary body, be owned in common by the churches of that body. In such a case, collectively pooling funds in an account held by deputies/appointed trustees is practical for covering the expenses of the temporary ecclesiastical body. If for example there are 100 churches that are part of General Synod, and each church contributes \$500 into the account for general operating expenses of General Synod (for \$50,000), and after the General Synod concludes money in the amount of \$10,000 remains, it makes sense that the account is owned in common and in closing out the account, each church owns/gets an equal share of \$100;

viii. There is no Article in the Church Order that requires that an activity endorsed by the Church Order or by General Synod be carried out by the collective of churches jointly, via committee or any other method. For example, the Seminary is endorsed by the Church Order and the General Synod, but is legally run by the Seminary board, not by the churches of the federation. Similarly, it is not obvious to me that Article 75 or any other Article requires that the CNSF be run by the collective of federation churches or by General Synod. Legally it is in fact being run by the Church and its Council. In co-operation with General Synod, it is an activity carried out by the Church for the benefit of the theological students of the federation; and

ix. The use of property held in common does not seem practical, legally necessary or always feasible, particularly where the endorsed activity is being carried out by an independent entity such as the Seminary or the Church administering the Needy Student Fund.

In summary, in this situation where:

- a) there is a statement in Church Order Article 20 requiring the churches of the federation to provide financial support to needy theological students;
- b) there is a decision of General Synod to fulfill this requirement by appointing a consenting church as the "Committee for Needy Theological Students" to set up and maintain a related fund; to be funded by the churches of the federation;
- c) the Church accepted the role of Committee/administrator and to set up and maintain the fund; and
- d) the assessed contributions are made directly by churches to the Church, designated to this fund; it is not clear that the Article 20 based activity at hand, triggers or is subject to the application of Article 75, as the contributions are not property held in common.

The contributions are held in trust by the Church for charitable purpose of assisting needy theological students of the Federation's seminary. The fund only collects money as needed. The charitable purpose fund owns the funds for the future beneficiaries. The new 2024 requirement (which was later scrapped) that all trusts file a return, exempted such designated funds. As the fund is held by or under the Church, the Church currently includes the amount of the fund in its T3010.

Should a General Synod be unhappy with the Church's administration of the CNSF, it could arguably appoint a new consenting Church as trustee (provided this is not clearly stated in the documents establishing the CNSF), or at a minimum request that the Church find a new consenting Church to act as trustee. Should the Church wish to resign as the trustee/administrator of the fund, Synod has asked the Church to find its own replacement. In the event of a change of trustee, the fund carries on, and another consenting charity becomes the trustee/administrator of the CNSF.

In conclusion, based on a plain reading of the Church Order it is not clear on what grounds the current manner in which the Church operates the CNSF would bring it into non-compliance with Church Order Articles 20 or 75.

I trust these comments are helpful.

Yours truly,

Committee for Needy Students' Fund Report – General Synod 2025

June 23, 2025

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Teresa Douma". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Teresa Douma, B.A., LL.B.
Lawyer

Summary

The *CNSF* continues to be blessed with the requisite financial means to support students preparing for ministry in our Lord's church. We are thankful for God's providing hand, and delight in our task to assist in equipping future pastors and shepherds for His flock. All Praise for these gifts is due to our faithful Father in heaven!

Section 2 – CNSF Mandate and Support Guidelines

Committee for the Needy Students of Theology **Mandate**

Introduction:

1. The Committee for the Needy Students Fund (Background):

- a. The Covenant Canadian Reformed Church at Grassie, Ontario (“Grassie Church”) was originally appointed by General Synod Burlington 2010 as the “Committee for Needy Students of Theology” (the “Committee”), responsible for extending financial aid to Canadian and American Reformed students of theology who are in need of financial support, and are enrolled at the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary (the “Seminary”).
- b. The Consistory with the Deacons (the “Council”) of the Grassie Church has appointed a committee consisting of four members of the church plus a liaison to the Council. The Committee will tend to all the day-to-day affairs of the fund.

2. The Mandate of the Committee is as follows:

- a. To propose to the Council a mandate for administering the Fund, and procedures for governing this Committee, within the mandates given to the Grassie Church by the General Synod’s of the Canadian Reformed Churches,
- b. To propose to Council guidelines for the support of needy students (refer to Synod’s recommendations).
- c. To establish the need for the support of students prior to each school year. Eligible students are encouraged to contact the committee by September 1st outlining the specifics of their request,
- d. To annually (each Fall) assess the churches in the Canadian and American Reformed Church federation (the “Federation”) , based on the number of communicant members in the current yearbook, in order to anticipate funding required for the upcoming calendar year,
- e. To report all activities on an ongoing basis to the Council via the Council liaison, and
- f. To report annually to each church in the Federation of the activities of the Committee. The report to the churches will be completed in the Spring, and will include an audited financial statement. In addition, the Committee will report tri-annually to the General Synod its activities and situation.

3. Committee Structure

- a. The structure of the Committee shall consist of a Chairman, a Vice-all, a Treasurer, a Secretary, and a Council member as liaison.

4. Duties of Committee Members:

- a. The Chairman is responsible for directing the activities of the committee in fulfilling its mandate. The chairman will call a meeting at regular intervals and as required.
- b. The Vice-All acts as Chairman and Secretary in their absence, and assists the Committee with carrying out its mandate.

c. The Treasurer is responsible for managing the receipts and disbursements of funds, and, together with the Chairman and Vice-All, is a signing officer on the bank account. In addition, the Treasurer

- i. Will be responsible for managing supporting documentation for all expenditures
- ii. Is to submit a bi-monthly statement of receipts and expenditures to the committee
- iii. Sets the annual assessment to be submitted to the churches in the Federation, with the Committee
- iv. Prepares the annual statement in January of each year, and presents it to the Committee for approval, and
- v. Assists the church appointed auditors in their task.

d. The Secretary is to keep minutes of all meetings and to distribute them electronically shortly after the meeting. The secretary shall manage and retain all incoming and outgoing communications. Outgoing communications shall be approved by the committee; urgent matters of communication must be reviewed and approved by the Chairman or Vice-All. The approval of out-gong communication does not apply to the matter of miscellaneous correspondence.

e. The Liaison is to keep Council informed of the activities of the Committee, to relay requests by the Committee for appointments and other matters, and to inform the Committee of decisions of Council that apply to the Committee.

5. Appointments:

Committee members are appointed by the Council, and will generally serve a four-year term, with the option of one additional term at the discretion of Council. Members will generally retire in rotation.

6. Auditors:

Council shall appoint two auditors to examine the books of the Treasurer at the end of each fiscal year.

7. Report to General Synod:

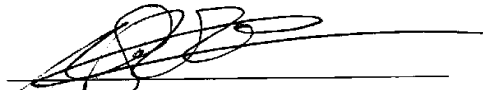
The Committee shall tri-annually submit a report to the Council (eight months prior to the next scheduled General Synod of the Federation), detailing its activities and outcomes, for Council review and submission to Synod in the appropriate timeframe.

October 18, 2017



Date: Dec 25 2017

K. Harink
Council Liaison



Date: Dec 6 2017

W. Vis
NSF Chairman



Needy Students Fund
PO Box 641
Smithville ON L0R 2A0
needystudentsfund@gmail.com

April 13th, 2017

RE: Needy Student Fund Guideline Amendments

Dear Brothers,

The Grassie-Covenant CanRC Committee for Needy Students Fund (NSF) has recently reviewed its operating guidelines in response to recommendations from General Synod Dunnville 2016. These recommendations can be found in the Acts of GS Dunnville 2016 Article 108. The acts note that the NSF has completed its mandate, and has done its work faithfully. Synod has reappointed the Grassie-Covenant CanRC NSF and mandated it to consider a review of guidelines in context of letters received from Winnipeg-Redeemer CanRC, Abbotsford CanRC and Willoughby Heights CanRC.

The NSF thanks the churches for their feedback and duly notes the concerns that were expressed. Our review has resulted in updating the guidelines to more accurately reflect the actual practice of the committee. These revisions will continue to ensure that the NSF exercises financial stewardship balanced with rendering charitable aid for theological students in need.

The guidelines changes include the following hi-lights and clarification;

- Additional unbudgeted student expenses will be funded if submitted with a proper accounting of need and receipts.
- Budget applications are *encouraged* to be submitted by Sept 1st, (late applications are discouraged but not excluded in recognition of individual circumstances)
- Elimination of provisions relating to extensive record keeping for pre-budgeted costs
- Deletion of reference to repayment with interest in cases of dismissal
- Monthly vehicle maintenance funding is exclusive of any repairs, replacements or unanticipated expenses (removed from guidelines and referenced in budget form only)
- General formatting of the document to reduce duplicity and enhance clarity and purpose of provisions

Please find the new approved guidelines attached for your information and reference. We remain available for further clarification if required and encourage any questions or comments to be directed to the committee via the undersigned.

Yours in Christ's service,

Br. Martin Schulenberg - Secretary
Grassie-Covenant Needy Students Fund



SUPPORT GUIDELINES
for the
Needy Students Fund of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches

Providing financial aid to students of the
“Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary”

Preamble

The primary purpose of financial aid for theological students is to assist in their educational preparation for ministry, by providing aid to those students who demonstrate financial need.

In light of our human nature and that we all need God’s Grace and Spirit to guide us, the giving and receiving should be done in a spirit of humility and brotherly love.

Financial aid is administered by the Committee for the Needy Students Fund (the “Committee” and “the Fund”, respectively), a committee appointed by the Council of the Covenant Canadian Reformed Church of Grassie. Synod Burlington 2010 and Synod Dunnville 2016 have both appointed the Grassie church to administer this Fund.

Section 1 Principles

The following principles are basic to the administration of the Needy Student Fund of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches:

- 1.1. Financial aid shall be restricted to theological students of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches who are enrolled at the Theological Seminary of the Canadian Reformed Churches and who desire the office of minister in these churches.
- 1.2. The student has the primary responsibility for his educational and living expenses. The Fund will augment the student’s resources where requested by the student, and approved by the Committee. Students are expected to utilize existing personal assets (RRSP’s, equity, other savings) and family support, either prior to or in concert with any assistance from the Fund.
- 1.3. Students receiving support are expected to show good Christian stewardship of the funds provided to them, and organize their lifestyle and purchase choices accordingly. Additional expenses beyond submitted budget requests should be properly accounted for by way of receipts.
- 1.4. Financial aid will be administered in such a way as to affirm financial responsibility and integrity of both students and fund administration.
- 1.5. The administration of financial aid shall be individual, personal, pastoral, and confidential.
- 1.6. Applicants may request assistance on an annual basis. All requests must reflect all costs associated with realistic and anticipated living expenses. Students are encouraged to submit their budget application by September 1st to assist the committee with setting assessments for the next calendar year.

Section 2 Application Process

2.1. A student must apply to the Committee substantiating their request for support. The submission shall include a letter of request, as well as a completed Budget Request form.

2.2. Students are to submit requests by September 1st of the school year, and provide any other information requested by the Committee.

2.3. This document may be reviewed and amended as required upon approval of the Council of the Covenant Canadian Reformed Church of Grassie.

Section 3 Acknowledgements

To the Applicant:

3.1. I have read and am willing to abide by the Support guidelines for the Needy Students Fund as outlined in this document and adopted by the Council of the Covenant Canadian Reformed Church of Grassie on March 6th, 2021.

3.2 I declare that the information provided herein and listed on the attached Budget Request Form, accurately describes my financial position.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Section 3 – 2021-2023 Financial Statements

Needy Student Fund Committee Statement of Receipts and Disbursements (CAD)						
	Notes	2024-07-31	2023	2022	2021	
Receipts						
Assessments		156,267.00	207,963.00	70,021.00	49,748.00	
Prepaid Assessments						
Refunds to churches for overpayments		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Bank credit	1					
Returns from students	2	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Total Receipts		156,267.00	207,963.00	70,021.00	49,748.00	
Disbursements/Expenses						
Student support		43,864.06	122,831.42	102,173.00	68,090.00	
Bank charges		71.45	19.75	118.00	16.65	
Committee administration	3					
Committee investments	4	80,000.00				
Total Disbursements/Expenses		123,935.51	122,851.17	102,291.00	68,106.65	
Surplus / (deficit)		32,331.49	85,111.83	-32,270.00	-18,358.65	
Assessment per Communicant Member		12	18	6	4	
No. of students Jan-May		6	8	6	4	
No. of students Sept-Dec			6	8	6	
Needy Student Fund Committee Statement of Financial Position as of Dec 31 (July 31 for 2024)						
Assets (CAD)						
Cash		182,317.84	87,521.57	22,409.71	56,175.83	
Accounts receivable			26,321.31	2,113.00	1,531.00	
Advances to students	5		8,574.97	23,725.00	8,618.00	
Total Assets		182,317.84	122,417.85	48,247.71	66,324.83	
Liabilities and Surplus						
Accounts payable			5,882.00	1,778.00	812.00	
Assessments received in advance						
Accumulated surplus			116,535.85	46,469.71	65,512.83	
Total Liabilities and Accumulated Surplus		0.00	122,417.85	48,247.71	66,324.83	
Notes						
						1 Membership share payout from CU
						2 Support cheques stale dated or funds returned from students
						3 Pre-certified cheques and office supplies
						4 Investment with Christian Stewardship Services (CSS)
						5 Regular support issued in Dec of current year for Jan of next year

Section 4 – Committee for Needy Students’ Fund Membership

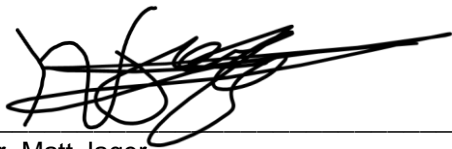
Since 2022 the CNSF has experienced a turnover of five members due to tenure expiration. Outgoing members, br. Klass Harink (council liaison 2021-2022), br. Andy Schipper (vice chair 2023-2024), br. Jeff Tenhage (chairman 2019-2022), br. Tyson Blokker (secretary 2020-2023), br. Kevin Hoeksma (Treasurer 2020-2023). We are thankful for their dedication and labor in their respective Committee roles.

The committee meets monthly or on an *as needed* basis. There is good cooperation and harmony between all members of the CNSF and the Covenant Canadian Reformed Church Council.

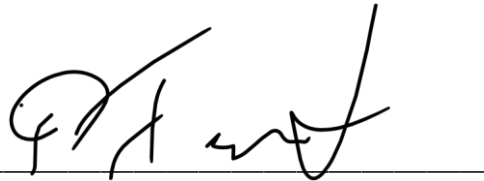
2024 Needy Student Fund Committee Membership	
Chairperson	Br. Matt Jager
Vice Chairperson	Br. Stan Tenhage
Secretary	Br. Mark Deboer
Treasurer	Br. Justin Stel
Council Liaison	Br. John Jousse

For the Committee and Council;

DATE: Oct 10, 2024



Br. Matt Jager
Chairperson CNSF



Br. Peter Feenstra
Council Chair – Covenant Canadian Reformed Church

