



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

**To
General Synod Dunnville 2016**

**Regarding the
Needy Student Fund Committee 2012 - 2014**

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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 Needy Student Fund *Committee*) as a centralized federal body responsible to work with all member classis of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches. The Committee 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 Committee to operate under the direction and counsel of the Covenant Canadian Reformed Church at Grassie. (Acts of Synod 2010 Art. 91.4) The Committee has since endeavoured to fulfill this mandate, and reports back to each successive General Synod. The Committee 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 Committee to Synod was to General Synod Carman 2013.

Current Situation

i) Funds Dispensed & Students Supported - This report will outline developments and funds dispensed between the years Jan 2012 – Aug 2014. The Committee has financially supported a total of **ten (10)** individual students since 2012. Each year the Committee dispensed an average amount of \$120,416.00. Between 2012-2014 a total of **\$361,249.00** was granted to eligible students. 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. 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. Individual 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. On occasion, follow-up correspondence is required to ensure payment. Rates per communicant member have remained stable in between \$10.00 - \$12.00 over the past three years. It can be noted with thankfulness that all member churches were able 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 Committee. 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 Committee.

Summary

The *Needy Student Fund Committee* 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, equipping future pastors and shepherds for His flock. All Praise for these gifts is due to our faithful Father in heaven!

Section 2 – Synodical 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”) has been 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 mandate given by General Synod 2010 to the Grassie Church,

b. To propose to Council guidelines for the support of needy students (refer to Synod’s recommendations). These guidelines will be developed as we receive feedback from the different classis and will be published at a later date,

c. To establish the need for the support of students prior to each school year. Eligible students are to contact the Committee by August 1 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. The committee shall approve out-going communications; 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 Liason 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.

November 15, 2010

**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 2010 appointed the Grassie church to administer the 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. The Fund is to be used as a last resort. 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. The Fund will not support requests, either as a whole or for additions to a particular budget line item, where the request is deemed to be excessive and/or unnecessary. Students receiving support are expected to show good Christian stewardship of the funds provided to them, and organize their lifestyle and purchase choices accordingly, in a self-sacrificing manner.
- 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. Requests for additional funds after September 1 of the current calendar year may not be accepted and alternate sources of funds required to cover any shortfall would be the students responsibility.
- 1.7. Students who are supported by the Fund should keep comprehensive records of expenses in each of the categories noted in the application form. In cases of subsequent years of support, these records will validate and support the requested amounts in the student’s applications.
- 1.8. Vehicle maintenance will be supported at a monthly rate of \$25, as applicable. Any expenses above and beyond this amount may be reimbursed upon receipt of statement of invoices. Applicants are encouraged to use the most economical means of car repairs wherever possible.

1.9. Applicants are expected to take ownership for the cost of their studies. Applicants must recognize that the support for the students is from assessments to communicant members of our churches, many of which themselves struggle at times financially. In addition, all students of post-secondary education relying on conventional means of financial assistance (typically government) do assume the vast majority of the cost for their education. As such, while the Fund is charged with assisting the living needs of the students of the Seminary, it also has a responsibility to the membership.

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 Financial Assistance Application form.

2.2. Students are to submit a request (using the referenced forms) before the first day of August prior to the school year, and provide any other information requested by the committee.

2.3. If a student is dismissed from the Seminary, he is under obligation to repay the Fund the full amount of aid received with interest at a rate set by the Committee starting at the date of dismissal. In the case of withdrawal from the Seminary, aid received may be required to be repaid upon Committee review.

2.4. In cases for which this mandate does not apply, the Committee shall ask the advice of the Grassie Council.

2.5. This document may be reviewed and changed as needed.

2.6. Normal terms of support are for 9 months of the recognized school year (September – May).

Section 3 Acknowledgement

To the Applicant:

3.1. Have you read and are you willing to abide by the guidelines for application to the Needy Students Fund as outlined in this document and adopted by the Council of the Covenant Canadian Reformed Church of Grassie on July 9, 2013 and,

3.2. Do you allow the Committee to contact the Council of your home congregation for other personal information, where applicable, and,

3.3. Do you understand that you are receiving aid from your fellow church members for support and growth of the church, and that therefore you should endeavour to live economically, remembering your own responsibility in the stewardship of gifts received by the grace of God, and,

3.4. Do you agree to the terms and conditions outlined in this document? The undersigned hereby declares that the information herein given is correct, and accurately describes his financial position.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Signature of Committee Chairman, Date

Signature of Committee Clerk, Date

Section 3 – 2012-2014 Financial Statements

Needy Student Fund Committee Statement of Receipts and Disbursements for 2014, 2013 & 2012

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>
Receipts (CAD)				
Assessments		105,772	123,209	0
Investment Income	1			645
Refunds to churches for overpayments		-746	-3,254	-392
Returns from students	2	211	0	0
Total Receipts		<u>105,237</u>	<u>119,955</u>	<u>253</u>
Disbursements/Expenses				
Student support		119,858	143,426	97,530
Bank Charges		20	21	17
Committee administration	3	0	185	192
Total Disbursements/Expenses		<u>119,878</u>	<u>143,632</u>	<u>97,739</u>
Surplus / (deficit)		<u>-14,641</u>	<u>-23,677</u>	<u>-97,485</u>
Assessment per communicant member		10	12	0
No. of students Jan - May	4	6	8	5
No. of students Sept - Dec		6	6	8

Needy Student Fund Committee Statement of Financial Position as at December 31

Assets (CAD)				
Cash		28,101	42,109	53,264
Accounts receivable				
Advances to Students				
Total Assets		<u>28,101</u>	<u>42,109</u>	<u>53,264</u>
Liabilities and Surplus				
Accounts payable				
Assessments received in advance				7,040
Accumulated surplus		28,101	42,109	46,224
		<u>28,101</u>	<u>42,109</u>	<u>53,264</u>

<u>Notes</u>	1	GIC investment in 2011
	2	Disbursement given for estimated vehicle repair, surplus returned when repair completed under-budget
	3	Pre-certified cheques and office supplies
	4	Total 10 individuals supported

Section 4 – Needy Student Fund Committee – Membership


Since 2013 the Committee has experienced a turnover of three members due to tenure expiration. Outgoing members br. Adrian Dieleman (chairperson), br. Bart DeVries (secretary) and br. Bert Wanders (treasurer) are thanked for their dedication and labor in their respective Committee roles. Brother John Bosscher has moved from Council liaison to the function of chairperson, while br. Wolter Vis takes up the Council liaison position and br. Klaas Harink serves as Vice-Chair. Tenure replacement appointments are br's Ryan Kingma (treasurer) and Martin Schulenberg (secretary).

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

2015 Needy Student Fund Committee Membership	
Chairperson	Br. John Bosscher
Vice Chairperson	Br. Klaas Harink
Secretary	Br. Martin Schulenberg
Treasurer	Br. Ryan Kingma
Council Liaison	Br. Wolter Vis

For the Committee;

DATE: Oct 21, 2015



 Br. John Bosscher
 Chairperson NSF



 Rev. RJ den Hollander
 Council Chair – Covenant Canadian Reformed Church