

Report of the Support Committee

The Synod Support Committee exists to assist retired called workers of the WELS and/or their surviving spouses who do not have the financial resources to meet their cost of living needs. The committee is comprised of five first vice-presidents of the WELS with Pastor Philip Zarling of Overland Park, KS, serving as chairman. The first vice-president in every district is the contact person for the Support Committee. The committee works to identify those individuals that have need and provide them with the level of financial support that allows them to live with dignity and in reasonable comfort. Application forms are used to determine the level of need when requests are made.

The following considerations affect the financial assistance the Support Committee provides.

- The fund is not an entitlement program;
- The fund is not an extension of the Synod's pension plan. The financial assistance received is a charitable gift from the Synod to those in need;
- The fund is not established to provide temporary assistance for those who resign from the ministry;
- The fund does not grant financial assistance to those who need to live in assisted living and nursing home care, and
- The fund is not intended to be the main source of income. Assets and other means of income are expected to be used first, with Support Committee income supplementing those resources.

At the beginning of 2010 there were 32 family units receiving support calling for a monthly expenditure of \$21,753, and an annual budget for approved requests of \$262,116. Budgetary constraints required the Synodical Council to approve an annual budget of \$265,000 leaving only a minimal amount to consider requests for assistance that are made during the course of the year. Total disbursements for the year depend on increases or decreases in monthly payments. If funds are available, new requests add to the total and deaths and moves to assisted living arrangements end the assistance received from the Support Committee. In 2010 the Support Committee was not able to pay for periodical subscriptions to recipients as has been done in the past. The Support Committee thanks Northwestern Publishing House for their generosity to cover the costs of the subscriptions this year.

The Support Committee requests that local pastors, Circuit Pastors and district officers in each district be alert to possible circumstances of need on the part of retired called workers or their surviving spouses living in their district. If there appears to be a circumstance of need, please inquire about the situation. Inform the retired called worker/spouse of possible financial assistance from the Support Committee and if needed, communicate the situation also to the chairman of the Support Committee.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Philip E. Zarling, Chairman