

First Parish Church of Stow and Acton

Plate Sharing

Policy # 017

Revision # 001

I. POLICY STATEMENT

The First Parish Church Place Sharing Policy was first approved by the Board of Trustees 01.12.2014. This revision states that Plate Sharing decisions are voted on by the entire congregation.

II. SCOPE

This policy covers the distribution of non-pledge donations, usually collected weekly at the Sunday service, but includes all non-pledge donations that are marked "plate".

Each week, one half of the non-pledge offering of cash and checks received in the plate is given to a worthy local, national, or international charity previously chosen by the congregation. FPC keeps the second half.

Charities are chosen through a survey sent to the congregation by the Social Justice Council.

The nine organizations who receive the most votes on an online survey are given a month during the church year, that is September through May. The remaining organizations will split the total of the summer offering.

There will be an announcement from the pulpit and/or in the Sunday 'Order of Service' as to which charity is being supported in that specific month.

When writing a check, it would be helpful to write in the memo line how the gift to be applied (pledge, split, church only).

III. RESPONSIBILITY

The Social Justice Council (SJC) oversees plate sharing charity decisions.

The Social Justice Council primarily receives suggestions for charities from Social Justice Task Forces, although any church member can be a sponsor. The SJC reviews suggestions for a charity as presented by an FPC sponsor who is actively involved with the charity. The sponsor must be willing to provide educational and promotional support material.

A 'worthy charity' proposal should include:

- 1) a name and a stated purpose or mission.

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- 2) explanation about how this project relates to social justice priority criteria established by the Council. Initiatives should accomplish one or more of the following:
 - a) Increase awareness of social justice issues within the church community and beyond;
 - b) Grow the Church's denominational connections;
 - c) Act locally but seek far-reaching effects;
 - d) Involve some kind of hands-on, direct service;
 - e) Involve youth; increase their awareness of social justice issues.
- 3) description of specific activities involved in what's proposed.

The SJC recommends a list of charities to the congregation. The congregation votes on which charities to support in the upcoming year. (Currently, a Survey Monkey survey is emailed to the congregation.)

The minister assigns a specific month to each selected charity and notifies the charity.

The Treasury Team (TT) deposits into a special account income from the previous Sunday Collection Plate sources: ½ of the cash and ½ of the undesignated non-pledge checks, split checks, plus checks or cash specifically designated for the charity. Additional checks from donors may also be deposited.

At month's end the Treasurer gives the minister a check, which they will send with a cover letter to the charity.

The Treasury Team will contact the donors of larger non-pledge amounts to determine the donor's intention if there is no indication in the check memo line.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Plate collections are defined as non-pledge donations. The term plate refers to the passing of the collection plate during the church service, but it also includes all non-pledge donations marked "plate."

Plate Sharing is defined as 50% of the plate collection provided to the charity approved for that month.

V. REFERENCES

None

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VI. APPROVAL SIGNATURES



06/10/2021

Originator / Date

On behalf of the Board of Trustees



06/13/2021

FPC President / Date