



The *South Georgia* Conference
of The United Methodist Church

The Golden Cross Fund

Golden Cross began in 1908 with the commitment of Methodists in Dallas, Texas to provide the first health care to persons who could not afford it. They began to receive offerings for the expenses of the poor patients at Methodist Hospital in that city. By 1930, the concept was officially adopted throughout the predecessor denominations of The United Methodist Church.

Today **Golden Cross** is a ministry that reaches out in love to the laity in our Annual Conference who are experiencing financial difficulty due to excessive medical expenses. Through Golden Cross, United Methodists care for members of our local churches in time of emotional stress and financial need.

The South Georgia Conference has designated the second Sunday of July to be the Sunday to receive a special offering for Golden Cross. **In 2015, Golden Cross Sunday is July 12.** Each church is asked to observe Golden Cross Sunday to receive an offering and send it to the conference treasurer.

Guidelines for the South Georgia Conference Golden Cross Fund

Our goal is to communicate to the conference the existence of the funding. We would like persons to know that monies are available based on need and also to let persons know how to contribute to this ministry.

- Any individual in need qualifies for assistance under the Golden Cross Fund, regardless of age, gender, race, or national origin. The only qualification is need, as determined by the Golden Cross Fund Committee upon receipt of application of a local United Methodist Church or other full connection clergy serving in the South Georgia Conference.
- If possible, the applicant's church should consider helping defer costs by paying a portion of the amount requested prior to submission to the Golden Cross Committee. Documentation or explanation of the church's support should accompany the request.
- Priority will be given to first-time applicants and those who do not have health insurance. Applicants who have health insurance but are unable to make large deductible payments or payments not covered by insurance may be considered. All applicants must include an explanation of need and will be reviewed by the committee for final approval.
- Golden Cross assistance will be provided for payment of (non-elective) medical expenses, (non-elective) dental expenses, prescription medicines, and health aides. Golden Cross monies will not be paid directly to the applicant to cover out-of-pocket expenses. Checks will be mailed directly to medical facilities or providers of care. Applicants will not be reimbursed for payments already made.
- The applicant may be asked to call providers to give approval to review the bill with the Golden Cross Chairperson.
- Golden Cross monies will be paid after all assistance from other sources (Insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, workers compensation, etc.) has been obtained.
- Within the limitation of available funds, Golden Cross assistance will be provided up to \$2,000 per individual in need. (In cases of extreme need, limited additional assistance may be provided.)
- Written application must be made for Golden Cross assistance. (Applications may be obtained through the district superintendent or contact the chair of Golden Cross.) Documentation of expenses (original or photo copy) must be furnished with the application.
- Individuals cannot receive funds within 12 months of a previous grant.
- The South Georgia Conference Treasurer's office receives funds. The Golden Cross Funds Committee reviews applications for funds and requests payments from the South Georgia Conference Treasurer's office. An annual audit is conducted on all South Georgia Conference Accounts, which includes the Golden Cross Fund.

For more information, please contact Golden Fund committee chairperson Shirley Thigpen at 478-552-6335 (h), 478-521-2010 (c), or shirleyt@nlamerica.com.