

**CHECK REQUEST PROCESS**  
**GENERAL FUND BUDGETED PROGRAM ITEMS AND SPECIAL FUND EXPENSES**  
**Updated August 6, 2018**  
**Updated February 11, 2019**  
**Updated June 9, 2020**

This document discusses the proper way to process all expenses for Advent Lutheran Church, ADVENTure PreSchool, and any groups associated with the church whereby reimbursement/disbursement is sought from an Advent checking account (Lutheran Men in Mission and the Peru Mission have their own procedure for paying expenses). Failure to follow these procedures will result in return of the unprocessed check request to the requesting party. Recurring approved monthly charges including, but not limited to, those following do not require a check request whether paid by bank draft or actual check: mortgage payments for church and Wubben-Smith House, all utilities including internet support, dumpster, Portico, Synod or ELCA payments, copier lease, lawn care, janitorial service, monthly eSpace debits for maintenance program, ~~monthly Planning Center debits for worship space~~, YouTube Premiere monthly payments, Zoom monthly payments, Praesidium charges for background checks, BREEZE monthly payments for data base software.

Unless it is established otherwise at any point in a fiscal year, all program expenses for Worship, Spiritual Development, Nurture and Support, and Outreach approved in the Plan of Ministry for that fiscal year may be expended without prior Council approval. It is understood, however, that if general fund contributions are not adequate to support this, a change to this policy may be made later in the year. APS is monitored by their Board and may make exceptions as required.

Expenses that are to be charged to special designated funds are not required to have council approval but it should be verified by the appropriate board that there are sufficient funds to cover the anticipated expense. Each council liaison receives a monthly report that shows the fund balances at the end of the prior month. It is the board chair responsibility to know what is being spent from the funds that are available to their board. All check requests require 2 approvals. These should be the requester and either Board Chair, Council Liaison, or Director of the ministry. Check Requests for \$5000 or greater also require the approval of a member of the Executive Board and the check must be signed by the Council President or the Vice-President in the absence of the President.

General check requests as well as ones designed for each quadrant and APS are available either on the Advent website or in the church office. (Property will use the General-Property Check Request). The check requests list the approved budgeted line items that have funds allocated to them and they also list current special funds applicable to that quadrant or group. Since it is possible that new special funds may be established at any time during the year, there are lines for "Other" in this category. A fund name should be given when "Other" is selected. Any requests for reimbursement that do not fit into a quadrant or property category should be submitted on the general check request and should follow the appropriate guidelines below.

Following are the processes for special designated funds and for budgeted general fund line items. Please ensure that your board is familiar with these processes and adheres to them. This will make bookkeeping much simpler with less follow up and will ensure we are in audit compliance.

Please note that during the “Shelter in Place” requirement for the church beginning March 13, 2020, an alternate check request approval process was put in place. Please refer to the procedure entitled “Emergency Measures – Processing of Check Requests and Payments”. No end date for this temporary procedure has been established but it is anticipated to run until at least August 31, 2020.

**Process for special designated funds: NOTE: All check requests should be submitted within 60 days of the expenditure except at the end of the fiscal year, all check requests must be submitted by July 15 of the new fiscal year.**

1. It is important that all areas of a quadrant be considered when funds are allocated by Council to the general quadrant. One check request should be submitted to the Church Administrator by the person coordinating the allocation for the quadrant detailing where each allocation should go. All board chairs of that quadrant should receive a copy for their information and records; however, it is not necessary that each board sign the check request.
2. Boards, quadrant, or organizations should give internal approval prior to expenditure that fund can be used. The only exception to this is for the purchase of wine for communion which is ordered and delivered as Cash on Delivery. Please see the details at the end of this process.
3. Confirmation should be made prior to submitting the check request that sufficient funds are available. Confirmation can be obtained through the monthly fund detail report provided to each council liaison or through a request to the Church Administrator for a current report of any Advent fund.
4. Complete the appropriate Check Request Form. A separate check request for each recipient must be completed except in the case of Wubben distributions which have a separate process.
5. Please ensure the full address of the recipient is provided if the check is to be mailed unless the address is clearly marked on an attached invoice. Do not assume the office has this information.
6. Complete the description so that it will be clear to anyone reviewing the check request why the funds are being expended.
7. On the Check Request, place an “x” or a dollar amount in the appropriate special fund line to charge for this expense. If a fund name does not show on the list, please add it on the “Other” line.
8. Two signatures MUST be on each check request. Each approver should apply the current date when their approval signature is given and should ensure the next person to approve the check request is aware that prompt attention is needed. (NOTE: Approver and requester cannot be the same)
  - Requesting party signs
  - Board chair, council liaison, program director, or other responsible party for the particular board or organization MUST approve. Someone associated with the group must approve. Once again, the requester and approver cannot be the same.
  - Check requests for Pastor must be approved by Council President, Vice President, or Treasurer.
  - At no time should a requester or approver be the same person who writes or signs the check.
  - Any check requests \$5000 or greater also require the approval of a member of the Executive Board and the check must be signed by the Council President or the Vice President in the event of the absence of the President.
9. Attach receipts or invoices to the check request form. Receipts should show the itemized charges for which reimbursement is requested and must be appropriately marked (example: If a receipt or bill has many charges on it but only a small segment is what the check request is for, that portion of the receipt or bill must be what is attached and appropriately marked.)
10. Make copies of the check request for the appropriate board or organization.
11. Submit the check request form to the Church Administrator by Wednesday noon for payment that week. NOTE: Do not submit any forms that do not have 2 approval signatures. The Church

Administrator should not be an approver. Requests that lack 2 signatures will be returned unprocessed to the requester.

12. The board chair or appropriate designee should keep track of expenses to verify that charges flow as appropriate and ensure that requested expenditures have been debited from the fund. This can be ascertained by the fund detail report available to council members and board chairs or a special report of any fund(s) can be requested from the Church Administrator.

**Process for expenditures to be charged to general fund program line item: NOTE: All check requests should be submitted within 60 days of the expenditure except at the end of the fiscal year, all check requests must be submitted by July 15 of the new fiscal year.**

1. Appropriate quadrant, property, APS, or general check request must be completed in detail. A separate check request must be submitted for each recipient.
2. Provide full address information for recipients if the check is to be mailed unless the address is clearly marked on the invoice. Do not assume the office has this information.
3. Complete the description of the expenditure so that it will be clear to anyone reviewing the check request why the funds are being expended
4. Place an "x" or a dollar amount in the appropriate budget line item to charge for this expense. If a budget line item name does not show on the list, please add it on the "Other" line.
5. Two signatures MUST be on each check request. Each approver should apply the current date when their approval signature is given and should ensure the next person to approve the check request is aware that prompt attention is needed. (NOTE: Approver and requester cannot be the same)
6. Requesting party signs
  - Board chair, council liaison, program director, or other responsible party MUST approve. Once again, the requester and approver cannot be the same. Someone associated with the group must approve.
  - Check requests for Pastor must be approved by Council President, Vice President, or Treasurer.
  - At no time should a requester or approver be the same person who writes or signs the check.
  - Any check requests \$5000 or greater also require the approval of a member of the Executive Board and the check must be signed by the Council President or by the Vice-President in the absence of the President.
7. Attach receipts or invoices to the check request form. Receipts should show the itemized charges for which reimbursement is requested and must be appropriately marked (example: If a receipt or bill has many charges on it but only a small segment is what the check request is for, that portion of the receipt or bill must be what is attached and appropriately marked).
8. Make copies of the check request for the board chair or organization.
9. Submit the check request form to the Church Administrator by Wednesday noon for payment that week. NOTE: Do not submit any forms that do not have 2 approval signatures. Church Administrator should not be an approver. Requests that lack 2 signatures will be returned unprocessed to the requester.

**EXCEPTION TO THIS PROCESS FOR PURCHASE OF COMMUNION WINE (approved by Finance Board 10/2/2012):** This exception is required for the purchase of wine for communion when orders are Cash on Delivery only and the time between order placing and delivery does not allow for strict adherence to the process above..

1. Orders for wine are placed as necessary (2-3 times a year).
2. The office is notified that the wine order is coming and the dollar amount.

3. A check is written to give to the delivery person which will usually be the day after the order is placed for the wine.
4. Church Treasurer will sign the check if time permits. If not, the Pastor will sign the check or the Council President or Vice President if available.
5. Check should be signed by the Church Administrator only if no one else is available. She will make a copy of it and place it in the check signature folder for Thursday. The person signing checks will initial and date the check and give it back to the Church Administrator for record-keeping with the invoice or delivery receipt.
6. The person ordering the wine will create a check request when the order is placed and begin the process of obtaining signatures.
7. Once all signatures are affixed to the check request, it is given to the Church Administrator to be attached to the paperwork from the supplier as well as the copy of the check if signed by her.

**NOTE: Any requests for exceptions to these guidelines must be submitted to the Church Treasurer for review by the Finance Board and/or Council if necessary.**

- Initial procedure reviewed and approved by Finance Board 09/20/2012.
- Procedure updated 07/24/2013 to reflect new fiscal year and minor corrections.
- Procedure updated 8/22/2013 to reflect changes recommended by Finance.
- Procedure affirmed 8/25/2013 by Council.
- Procedure updated 6/19/2014 to remove reference to specific year so it can be used from year to year without updating unless there are relevant procedure changes. Approved by Finance 6/25/14. Approved by Council 6/29/14.
- Procedure updated 7/31/2017 to remove references to Property Check Requests
- Procedure updated 8/6/2018 only in first paragraph to clarify who has to follow procedure and to include ongoing exceptions to check request requirements.
- Procedure updated 2/11/2019 only in first paragraph to add 2 exceptions to check request requirements: monthly eSpace debits for maintenance program, monthly Planning Center debits for worship space.
- Procedure updated 6/09/2020 to remove Planning Center and add YouTube premiere monthly payments, Zoom monthly payments, Praesidium charges for background checks, and BREEZE monthly payments for database software. (Planning Center has been discontinued since last update of this procedure.) Also added paragraph about emergency measures for processing of check requests and payments during Covid-19 Shelter in Place. **Approved by Finance by email vote June 15, 2020; approved by council on June 28, 2020.**