

SMPC ADOPTION FUND - Frequently Asked Questions

Purpose

The purpose of the SMPC Adoption Fund is to help families who are members of Signal Mountain Presbyterian Church (SMPC) or are community members directly connected to SMPC overcome financial barriers to adoption.

ABBA Fund

To administer the adoption assistance fund, SMPC has partnered with ABBA Fund, a Christian 501(c)3 non-profit ministry that helps churches across the country establish and administer adoption assistance funds. Through partnership with ABBA Fund, the SMPC is able to help families who are adopting with grants and interest-free loans.

How It Works

Qualified applicants should complete the attached application, including reference letters. The application should be mailed directly to ABBA Fund. ABBA Fund evaluates the application and makes a recommendation regarding the type of funding (grant or interest free loan) and the amount of funding each family should be offered based upon the available funds and the amount of assistance needed by the family. The ABBA Fund will contact the applying family with the final decision.

ABBA Fund handles all aspects of the application review process, including evaluation and verification of all financial and other information. No one from SMPC reviews the applicant's information.

Eligibility Status

The SMPC Adoption Fund will serve only those families who are members of Church or are community members directly connected to the Church. Families are expected to be living in the community must be a Christian, called by God to enlarge their family through adoption, committed to train and educate their children in accordance with Biblical principles, and who need financial assistance in order to complete the adoption; therefore, each applicant will be expected to provide a recommendation from a missional community leader as well as a ministry leader.

Marital Status

Both married couples (defined as between one man and one woman) and singles, living in a Christian lifestyle, are eligible to receive support through the Fund. Additionally, both families with children and families who are childless are eligible.

Income Level

Families of all income levels are welcome to apply for funding; however, if a need to prioritize families arises, priority will typically be given to the family with the greater financial need.

Multiple Adoptions

Families may apply multiple times. However, it is the preference that any interest free loans be repaid to the Fund before further funding is granted.

Types of Adoptions

While the SMPC Adoption Fund will generally be used to assist families with international or domestic adoptions facilitated by a non-profit agency, it may be possible to assist families who are adopting by way of a private adoption attorney through an interest free loan. Because adoption through the state foster care system is typically under \$2,000, these adoptions may not be given priority for funding; however, may be considered if the family pursuing adoption incurs large expenses in finalizing a state adoption.

Types of Agencies

The SMPC Adoption Fund will be able to administer interest free loans to families using an approved agency or adoption attorney. Matching grants and grants may be restricted to those families pursuing adoption through an agency with 501(c)3 status.

Homestudy

Families wishing to apply for funding through the Fund must have either completed their homestudy or provide comparable information for “pre-approval” pending sufficient funding, homestudy completion, review and approval, and confirmation of no changes at the time of homestudy completion. While the ABBA Fund and SMPC recognize that there are initial costs for applying with an agency and paying for the homestudy to be completed, these expenses tend to be a smaller percentage of the total cost of the adoption process. It is our hope that families would be able to find ways to cover these smaller expenses (either from savings, help from community groups, fundraising, etc.) so that the SMPC Adoption Fund can serve as a “source of last money” to help families overcome the final financial barriers to adoption. The homestudy is a helpful tool in a evaluating a family’s application.

Review of Applications

Applications are typically reviewed by a committee at the ABBA Fund within 4-6 weeks of the time the ABBA Fund receives the completed application. If there is a more immediate need, please contact the Church or the ABBA Fund directly because the ABBA Fund may be able to review an application in an expedited fashion.

Availability of Applications:

Applications will be available to applicants in hardcopy or over email and can be requested by contacting the church office at 423.886.2190. In the future, the application may be available for download from the church website.

Additional Questions:

If you have any additional questions or comments, please contact Chris Robinson at the church office at 423.886.2190 or Ben and Jessica Fischer at 423.886.9941.