

Abolishing Medical Debt



The United Church of Christ has engaged in a partnership with RIP Medical Debt (<https://ripmedicaldebt.org/>) in an effort to abolish medical debt for people with low incomes. Maybe you've read the stories on www.ucc.org about how different UCC bodies partnered to eliminate \$5.3 million worth of medical debt for nearly 6,000 families in Chicago and \$12.9 million worth of medical debt for around 11,000 families in St. Louis. Here is the most recent story from northern California: https://www.ucc.org/news_additional_buy_racks_up_more_medical_debt_relief_in_california_10062020. By working with RIP, we are able to pay pennies on the dollar in order to help to relieve medical debt for people in our communities.

Here in the Penn West Conference, we have an amazing opportunity help families struggling with medical debt in an extraordinary way. Imagine feeling the stress and anxiety of wondering how you are going to pay your medical bills and one day receiving a card saying, "You may not know us and you may never have been to one of our churches, but we are the United Church of Christ in the Penn West Conference, and we are writing to tell you that your medical debt has been forgiven." Can you imagine what an extraordinary gift that would be? What a testimony that is to the call that we have from God to love our neighbors!



CURE MEDICAL DEBT

You Have the Power to Forgive Millions in
Medical Debt for Pennies on the Dollar

Our Conference is working with the Rev. Traci Blackmon of our United Church of Christ Justice & Local Church Ministries on this project. In order to begin to do this work with RIP, we need to raise a minimum of \$15,000.00 toward this effort. If each local church in the Conference contributed \$250.00, we would exceed that minimum. And

any money that is over the minimum will help to relieve more debt! We are hoping to begin this campaign on February 1, 2021, and our target ending date is April 30, 2021. Churches might consider this as a Lenten offering, with a kickoff on Ash Wednesday and a conclusion on Easter.

We hope that our churches will be generous with this effort and will promote this opportunity. Think of what a difference this kind of gift will make in people's lives and what a witness it will be to the Gospel message we proclaim.



Please make out your checks to the Penn West Conference and earmark them for "Abolishing Medical Debt." You may also donate online; again, please select the option for "Abolishing Medical Debt." If you have any questions, please contact me at david@pennwest.org. Thank you for helping to make an amazing difference in people's lives!