

Megachurch Pastor Raises Money for Ponzi Scheme Victims

Resurrection Life Church of Grandville, Michigan, has raised \$8,500 to help repay victims of convicted Ponzi schemer David McQueen.

McQueen, who is serving a 30-year prison sentence for his role in spearheading a \$46 million Ponzi scheme, donated \$300,000 to the church between 2005 and 2009. The church says that money was spent years ago on missions and outreach.

Thus far, only \$900,000 of the total sum McQueen and his accomplices swindled has been recovered—placed into a government holding account until his appeal is complete—and those who lost their life savings in the scheme are left holding the bag.

While many of the recipients of McQueen's donations have declined the government's requests to return it in order to help pay back the victims, Resurrection Life Church has taken a different tack.

The church's pastor, Rev. Duane Vander Klok says that using current church funds to repay the amount McQueen donated "would create an ethical and potential legal problem because, not only do we not have an equivalent sum available but, what we do have was donated recently and not for that purpose. Redirecting donated funds to a purpose other than what they were donated for is a very serious legal matter. We do not desire to be unethical, or commit a crime today, in reaction to the crime committed by someone else many years ago."

Despite these reservations, Klok and his congregation wanted to help the victims of McQueen's scheme, so Resurrection Life

Church set up a designated fund for that purpose.

“Our church community can donate to the account and all the monies received into that fund will be put towards the restoration of the investors’ loss,” said Klok when announcing the church’s move to help. “An independent attorney will oversee the escrow fund and will coordinate with the U.S. Attorney for eventual distribution of all funds received to the victims.”

At present, the fund has raised nearly \$9,000 and counting.