

C.A.R.S. Donation FAQs

Thank you for considering a donation to the C.A.R.S. Ministry. Your donation helps to provide reliable transportation to those in need who qualify. We accept running and non-running cars, trucks, SUV's, campers, trailers, just about anything.

How will C.A.R.S. maximize my donation?

The C.A.R.S. Ministry is a self-supporting ministry of Willow Creek Community Church—we do not use money from the church budget to operate. We rely solely on the generosity of donors for ministry operations. We work hard to maximize the value of each donated vehicle, enabling us to make more benevolent repairs and to give away more vehicles. We do this by utilizing optimal sales channels, such as public auto auctions, eBay online auctions, and dealer consignment. The C.A.R.S. Ministry develops good relationships with salvage yards to yield higher-than-average values for vehicles that cannot be repaired. In addition, because all repair labor is done by volunteers, the full proceeds from the sale of any vehicle go back into the ministry, helping those we serve.

Your donation is utilized in one of the following ways:

Giveaway

As much as we would like every car we take in to be given away, it's not possible. The ideal vehicles for giveaway are 4-door, 4-cylinder, inexpensive on gas, repairs, and insurance. We foresee these vehicles lasting the qualified recipient at least two years. If and when properly maintained, we've known them lasting much longer. The vehicles that are given away are inspected and repaired, then test driven before the new owner takes possession.

Sale

We have established relationships to help generate revenue for the ministry and thus recycle resources back to C.A.R.S. to help pay for the parts in other giveaway cars. We do this through a retail nationwide auction such as eBay motors: through a public auction in the Chicagoland area: through the consignment to local dealers who will sell vehicles on our behalf; and finally, if the vehicle is in a condition beyond repair we may need to sell it to a local salvage yard. Our relationship with local salvage yards enables us to yield higher-than-average values.

How much is my donated car worth?

Once C.A.R.S. receives your donation, within 5 days we will notify you the way in which we intend to use your donation. If we determine that your vehicle will be used to further the ministry purposes, thus by giving your vehicle to a qualified individual or by using ministry funds to repair your vehicle, you are then allowed to take the fair market value for your vehicle as described in many car value guides (i.e. Kelley Blue Book or NADA Guides). If we decide it's not financially feasible to repair your vehicle and we dispose of it in the condition it was donated, you would be allowed to claim the amount we receive for the car. Within 30 days of its sale, we will notify you of the amount we received for it and the way in which it was utilized.

Willow Creek Community Church is responsible for filing IRS form 1098-C on your behalf. We must have your social security number in order to file this form with the IRS.

To drop off your vehicle:

The C.A.R.S. garage is located at the South Barrington campus, we are the very northwest part of the building (near the G Dock). Donations are accepted:

Monday – Thursday, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Saturday, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

To have C.A.R.S. pick up your vehicle:

C.A.R.S. owns and operates our own tow truck. We can arrange to have your vehicle towed from its location. Our pick up schedule is generally Monday through Friday.

When donating your vehicle please provide the following:

- All keys, including truck, gas door, ignition
- Title
- Any accessories

Please remember to remove your I-PASS transponder, garage door opener, audio accessories/equipment, documents from the glove box, and licenses plates.

For more information, please email cars@willowcreek.org or call 847.765.7200