

CONGREGATIONAL GIFT POLICY
RESURRECTION LUTHERAN CHURCH
1270 N. BROADWAY
LEBANON, OHIO 45036
Adopted January 2021

PURPOSE

To give a written process to all constituents of our congregation that outlines what types of property are acceptable as gifts above and beyond pledges or plate offerings, and how decisions are made for its use.

This policy will answer 2 core questions:

1. How can I provide a gift to the congregation?
2. How will the congregation use my gift?

ELEMENTS OF A GIFT POLICY

- I. Gift Acceptance
 - A. Defines *who* will decide if the gift is *accepted*
 - B. Defines *what* gifts will be *considered*
- II. Gift Use
 - A. Define *who* will decide how gifts are used
 - B. Outlines process and guidelines to determine *how* gifts are used
- III. Memorial Gifts
- IV. Policy Distribution and Changes
- V. Ways to Make a Gift, Giving Vehicles, and methods

I. Gift Acceptance

- A. Members are encouraged to consider blessing the congregation with gifts free of designations.
- B. When an asset is ***offered*** to our congregation through an estate, from a living individual, family or other legal entity that is above and beyond a regular pledge/plate offering, the Congregational Council will determine if the gift will be **accepted**.
- C. All gifts will be considered on a case-by-case basis taking into considerations the type of asset, gift transfer costs, designations, potential liabilities, the congregation's mission, current congregational needs, and other factors.
- D. Gifts may be offered in a variety of ways. Our congregation is willing to **consider** the following types of assets:
 - a. Cash
 - b. Publically traded securities
 - i. Stocks
 - ii. Bonds
 - iii. Mutual funds

- iv. Options/warrants
- v. REITS (Real Estate Interest Trusts)
- vi. Other marketable securities
- c. Life insurance (assignment of ownership)- permanent type with cash value
- d. Real property
 - i. Residential
 - ii. Commercial
 - iii. Life estate
- e. Tangible personal property
 - i. Vehicles
 - ii. Jewelry
 - iii. Books
 - iv. Art
 - v. Collections
- f. Other property
 - i. Mineral rights/oil and gas interests
 - ii. Royalties
 - iii. Notes/Mortgages
 - iv. Copyrights/Patents/Trademarks
 - v. Bargain sales where congregation purchases an asset for less than fair market value

Members and donors should understand that in most cases the congregation will look to liquidate gifts and utilize the cash value of the gift.

- E. If a determination is made to decline a gift, the donor or representative of the donor's estate shall be contacted by verbal notice followed by written notice on official letterhead via US Mail. Contact will be made by the President of the Congregation Council or the Pastor, at the discretion of the Congregation Council.

II. Gift Use

- A. If our congregation accepts an unrestricted gift, *which is defined as an asset that a donor has given to our congregation without any limitation of it's use*, the Congregation Council shall determine how the gift shall be used following the guidelines provided in this section.
- B. For unrestricted gifts of \$1,000 or greater, as a model of good stewardship and gratefulness to God and God's blessings, Congregation Council shall at least tithe 10% from the initial gift before any other allocations are made. The contribution may be distributed to one or more of the following:
 - a. Southern Ohio Synod of the ELCA
 - b. ELCA Churchwide ministries and programs
 - c. ELCA related organizations
 - d. Any charitable organization

- C. If the gift is unrestricted, it is recommended that at least 50% of the gift (from the net proceeds after the tithe), be deposited into the church endowment fund, either the mission or building maintenance endowments, at the discretion of the Congregation Council.
- D. If the gift is unrestricted, the overall use (of the net proceeds after the tithe and endowment deposit), may be directed to:
 - a. Our Congregation
 - i. Youth programs
 - ii. Worship and music programs
 - iii. Christian education
 - iv. Community ministry
 - v. Buildings/maintenance/capital projects
 - vi. Office equipment/furniture/technology
 - vii. Council Discretionary Fund (*Church Council administered*)
 - viii. Operation budget (*only under extenuating circumstances*)
 - b. Outreach
 - i. ELCA Churchwide ministries i.e. Fund for Leaders, World Hunger
 - ii. ELCA related organizations i.e. Lutheran Campus Ministry, Living Waters Camping Ministry, Samaritas
 - iii. Other non-ELCA related charities
- E. Gifts with specific designations/restrictions are accepted with the understanding that the funds are to be used for the benefit of the congregation in support of its mission and current ministries. Donors should be aware that programs offered by the congregation may be discontinued, renamed, or incorporated into other programs. The congregation may accept a gift subject to the restrictions but reserves the right to use the gift in a manner consistent with the general intent of the restrictions. Donors may not restrict the manner in which a gift, bequest, or endowment fund is invested by the congregation.
- F. Restricted gifts added onto named funds will be reviewed periodically by the Pastor and Congregation Council. If restricted funds are unable to be used due to a lack of program or need, the Congregation Council may choose to initiate a good faith effort to contact the donor, estate, or family to discuss removing the designation or redirecting the gift to meet a current need or project within the congregation.
- G. After the good faith effort is completed or exhausted, every effort will be made to redirect the gift to a related fund or ministry. If that is not possible, the gift may become unrestricted. Gifts that become unrestricted will then begin the unrestricted gifts process, as outlined in this document, to determine the use.

III. Memorial Gifts Guidelines

- A. Memorial gifts include undesignated and designated gifts given to the congregation in memory or honor of loved ones, friends, or others.

- B. Receipt of all contributions and gifts dedicated to the memory of those who have died will be provided to the donor. Acknowledgment of the gift will be sent to the individual, family, or estate.
- C. Memorial and Honorarium gifts may be designated by the donor to an established, approved fund within the congregation. Specific designations are subject to the gift acceptance policies defined in this document.
- D. Memorial gifts without designation and gifts given specifically to the “Memorial Fund” will be directed into the congregation’s memorial fund.
- E. For accumulated undesignated memorial gifts given for an individual of more than a \$500 in total, an attempt will be made to contact the family to discuss potential uses for the funds, taking into consideration the memory of their loved one. If the family has no preference, the funds will be directed according to the unrestricted gifts use procedures within this gift policy.
- F. When a Memorial Fund has accumulated gifts of \$500 or greater, the funds may be directed according to the unrestricted gifts use procedure contained within this gift policy.

IV. Policy Distribution and Changes

- A. This Congregational Gift Policy shall be presented to the congregation at least every two years at the annual congregational meeting through the packet of reports.
- B. Congregation Council shall review this Congregational Gift Policy at least every two years for updates and revisions.

V. Ways to Make a Gift

- A. Cash, check, or money order
- B. Beneficiary designations- primary or secondary/contingent
 - a. Retirement accounts
 - i. IRA
 - ii. 402(k)
 - iii. 403(b)
 - iv. Annuity
 - b. Individual or joint bank/brokerage accounts
 - i. Transfer on death
 - ii. Payable on death
 - c. Life insurance
 - d. Living trust
 - e. Will
 - f. Real estate- transfer of deed on death
 - g. Distribution from donor advised fund or named endowment
- C. Asset transfer
 - a. Transfer securities from your brokerage account directly to our congregation’s brokerage account, or use the ELCA Foundation to facilitate the transfer.

- b. Transfer a title or deed to our congregation.
- c. Assign ownership of life insurance to our congregation, or ELCA Foundation, FBO (for benefit of) our congregation.
- D. Deferred Gifts
 - a. Charitable gift annuity
 - b. Charitable remainder trust
 - c. Donor advised fund
 - d. Named endowment
 - e. Life estate
- E. Bargain sale- sell an asset to our congregation below fair market value.

RESOURCE

ELCA Foundation: 800-638-3522 elca.org/foundation

We have resources available to our congregation through the services of the ELCA Foundation. These resources are available at no charge to you as a member of our congregation. The Charitable Gift Planner assists with establishing a comprehensive estate plan that provides for your family and the ministries you care about. In addition, the Gift Planner assists with current gifts to our congregation as described in this policy.

Please contact our pastor, a member of congregation council, or visit elca.org/foundation to connect with our Regional Gift Planner.