

GIFTS AND MEMORIALS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

For

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

I. Introduction

CHRIST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH has an understanding that all we have is a gift from God. The congregation gives thanks to God for the thoughtful and generous giving toward its ministry and life by both members and non-members. It is our responsibility, as disciples of Christ, to exercise good stewardship of these many and varied gifts.

As a result of this understanding, the congregation is committed to the utilization of these policies and procedures to ensure that good stewardship principles are applied to all gifts given to Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church.

II. Purpose

This policy and procedures document is intended to assist the Pastor, Congregation Council, the Treasurer, the Financial Secretary, the Bookkeeper, Counters and Committees in the acceptance, handling and use of all gifts and memorials.

The objectives of this policy are to ensure that gifts are given and received with a full understanding and disclosure of their intended purpose and use, that their form is acceptable, and that all handling of funds is transparent and properly reported.

III. Scope

This policy applies to the receipt and distribution of all charitable gifts. It also applies to the distribution of funds generated as earnings, i.e. interest, dividends and capital appreciation.

IV. Gift Acceptance

A. Undesignated Gifts of Cash

Offerings and gifts are normally received as cash or check either in the offering plate or by mail. If a gift is received in the mail, it will be held in the Finance Office for processing by the Counters, and treated as if it were received in the offering plate. Undesignated gifts of cash are considered those under \$250.

1. Counting

All gifts and memorials will be routed through the Counters, who are under the direction and oversight of the Financial Secretary.

All money received by the Counters in the offering plate will be counted and recorded on the "Contribution Sheet" (Attachment 1).

Gifts received in regular offering envelopes may be designated for the Unified Budget or the Property Fund. Without any designation, gifts will be credited to the General Fund. Gifts received that are designated for a specific fund will be credited to that fund, but not considered a memorial, unless noted.

Gifts received in the special Gifts and Memorials envelope, or some other envelope so noted, will be credited to the Gifts and Memorials Fund. These gifts will first be recorded on the “Contribution Sheet” (Attachment 1) under the “Other” column with the designation “GM”. Even if a memorial is designated for a specific fund, it will still be considered a memorial. The memorial offering envelope, accompanying letter and any special notation (other than on the cash or check itself) will be retained for one year in the Finance Office.

2. Recording

Proper recording of all gifts and memorials is the responsibility of the Financial Secretary.

Gifts will be recorded by envelope number, if one has been assigned, or by name.

Information regarding memorial gifts will be transferred to the “Gifts and Memorials” worksheet (Attachment 3). Information includes the amount, the name and address of the donor, the person memorialized or honored, and designation for the gifts use. Uses include Candlelight at Christ, Global Missions, Heifer Project, etc. There may also be no designation.

This information will be transferred to a “Gifts/Memorials” report (Attachment 4) and forwarded to the Gifts and Memorials Committee for acknowledgement purposes.

3. Acknowledgement

Acknowledgement of gifts and memorials is the joint responsibility of the Financial Secretary and the Gifts and Memorials Committee. Acknowledgement of memorial gifts over \$1,000 is the responsibility of the Congregation Council.

In the case of normal envelope offerings, the Financial Secretary will be responsible to provide a year-end Statement of Charitable Giving to all known donors, for tax purposes.

In the case of memorial gifts, The Gifts and Memorials Committee will be responsible for providing a thankful response to a donor using the following procedures.

The Gifts and Memorials committee will enter information in the “Notify” column (on Attachment 4), regarding the persons to be thanked and/or notified of the gift.

The list will then be forwarded to the designated “acknowledger/notifier” of gifts and memorials and one copy is retained as a permanent record. The notifier may be a different person for each different fund. In some cases, it is appropriate that the Pastor write an acknowledgement and thank you note.

The committee will also publish the information collected, in summary form, in the “Gifts and Memorials Book” which is put on display for the congregation to review.

4. Reporting

In addition to recording and acknowledging gifts and memorials, permanent records will be maintained and publicized.

The Financial Secretary will maintain all giving records and will provide that information to donors and appropriate groups. Confidentiality will be maintained.

The Treasurer will maintain all disbursement records and will provide that information to appropriate groups.

Memorial information will be published in the CRUX, the Gifts and Memorials Book, and summarized in the Gifts and Memorials Committee’s annual report.

B. Bequests, Distributions from Trusts and Other Special Gifts

Some gifts are received as bequests, distributions from trusts or as other generous gifts. The gifts may be received as cash or in non-cash forms such as stock. These gifts typically require special handling.

1. Pre-gift Discussion

If at all possible, a meeting prior to the actual giving and acceptance of a special gift should be held to develop a clear understanding of the wishes of the donor and the needs of the congregation.

The Pastor and one church officer, determined by qualification and availability, will meet with the donor or his representative.

Donors should be encouraged to give to current program(s) and/or existing funds and/or the Gifts List (see Sec. IV.C.2).

Other persons should be involved in discussions as their expertise requires.

Any issues regarding recognition of the donor or other parties named by the donor should be resolved.

The preliminary details, terms and conditions of gift will be recorded on the Gifts and Memorials information form.

In addition to form requirements, a brief description as to the function of the gift will be included with the documentation.

2. Approval

The Gifts and Memorials Committee will review the gift's terms, conditions and impact, and present them to the Congregation Council for approval and formal acceptance.

The Congregation Council must formally accept special gifts along with their terms and conditions, or refer them back to the contact team for further discussion with the donor.

Once the gift has been formally accepted, the persons making the personal contact (pre-gift discussion and negotiations) will follow-up with the donor, noting Council action.

3. Gift Transfer

If the gift is cash or check, a special deposit will be made.

If the gift is non-cash, the gift will be converted to cash as soon as possible.

In the case of cash gifts, the gift will be valued at face value. If the gift is non-cash, but easily traded on the open market (such as stock and bonds), the gift will be valued at the transfer price. If the gift's value cannot readily be determined, it will be recorded as a "gift-in-kind" and reported as such. The donor will be responsible for establishing its value.

If the gift is made as a transfer of stock, sale of these securities by the broker must be authorized by the Treasurer or authorized members of the Funds Management Committee.

All funds will be credited to the Gifts and Memorials Fund unless otherwise specified in the terms and conditions of the gift.

4. Recording

Recording policy and procedure for special gifts are described in Section IV.A.2.

5. Acknowledgement

Acknowledgement policy and procedure for special gifts are described in Section IV.A.3.

6. Reporting

Reporting policy and procedure for special gifts are described in Section IV.A.4.

7. Special Procedures for Undesignated Bequests

An undesignated bequest will be sent first to the Gifts and Memorial Committee to review and then to the Congregation Council for approval and formal acceptance.

Following Council action, the Council will send a letter to the trustee or executor and the trustee's or executor's attorney acknowledging the receipt of the undesignated bequest and conveying the Congregation's appreciation and thanks.

The undesignated bequest will be deposited separately for tracking purposes. It shall be deposited in a checking or investment account appropriate for its volume and intended use.

The value of the undesignated bequest will appear on the monthly treasurer's report in the Memorial Fund. The Gifts and Memorial Committee may recommend to Council to create a specific fund.

C. Use and Distribution

1. Use

Funds from the Gifts and Memorials Fund are generally used for new items or projects within the Church property.

2. Gifts_List

Consistent with its priorities, ministries, and strategic plans, the congregation has specific needs and would encourage potential donors to respond to these pre-defined needs in their giving.

The Gifts List will be maintained by Gifts and Memorials Committee. It should be concise, yet informative, in a format that facilitates ease of updating. It should include specific needs, long-term goals (with cost estimates) and existing donation options. The list should be reviewed **periodically** by Council as part of its regular meeting. This review would be conducted by the Council's Gifts and Memorials Committee liaison.

The Gifts List should be published quarterly in the Crux, if appropriate. It could also be the content of educational opportunities that should be made available to the congregation at large (workshops, printed matter, etc.).

3. Funding Request and Distribution Form

The Funding Request and Distribution Form shall be used for ALL requests or recommendations for the use of any unbudgeted projects or programs (see attached).

- a) All appropriate committees shall be CONSULTED.
- b) The Congregation Council or the authorized committee shall provide AUTHORIZATION.
- c) All "affected" committees shall be INFORMED of the action.

d) Copies of ALL completed Funding Request and Distribution Forms will be maintained by the financial Secretary.

4. Documentation

Documentation is critical for clarity and will prevent any possible mishandling of gifts and potential conflicts.

Initial documentation (Sec. IV.B.1-2) will be reviewed and formalized by the Gifts and Memorials Committee.

A master file will be maintained by the Gifts and Memorials Committee for follow-up by others.

Initial and any subsequent actions taken by Council or Executive Committee regarding handling of gifts/donations will be recorded in a master file and communicated to relevant committees for recording in their documents as well.

5. Special Procedures for Undesignated Bequests

In cases where the undesignated bequest exceeds 5% of anticipated receipts for the year, the Gifts and Memorials Committee shall have the responsibility to receive and consider suggestions from the Congregation as to the use or uses of the undesignated bequest. The Committee would then make a report to the Council concerning potential disposition of the undesignated bequest. The Council would review the report and, in its discretion, make the final decision concerning disposition including any recommendations to the Congregation.

Approved by the Congregation Council on 21 April 2015