

CONGREGATIONAL GIFT ACCEPTANCE POLICY WORKSHEET
AS EDITED BY ELIZABETH POLANZKE, 8/10/2018
ORIGINAL PROVIDED BY THE ELCA FOUNDATION

Congregation information

Legal name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

EIN _____

Many people are under the impression an EIN is like a SSN and should not be shared. For not for profit organizations, this couldn't be less true. Whenever a giver wishes to include a charity in their gift plan, it is typical to need the EIN of the charity. Hiding this information or making it difficult for your givers to find, dissuades them from including your congregation in their gift plans. Make it available.

Purpose

To provide a comprehensive process by which the congregation outlines what types of property are acceptable as gifts and how decisions are made for their use.

Every congregation should have a Gift Policy, regardless of budget size, membership, or worship attendance. A clear thorough Gift Acceptance Policy provide standardized practices for decision-making and may defuse arguments, among other things. No one gives a special gift to their congregation hoping to tear the congregation apart. Gifts are given in love for the intention of building-up God's mission and related ministries.

An established and publicized policy fosters gifts, as it answers two 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

1. Gift Acceptance
 - a. Defines *who* will decide if gift is *accepted*
 - b. Defines *what* gifts will be *considered*
2. Gift Use
 - a. Defines *who* will decide how gifts are used
 - b. Outlines process and guidelines to determine *how* gifts are used
3. Ways to Make a Gift
 - a. Cash or check
 - b. Asset Transfer
 - c. Beneficiary Designation
 - d. Deferred Gifts

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Note: For clarification if necessary, this policy is to be applied solely to gifts above and beyond regular pledges or plate offerings. *All gifts, if accepted, will be liquidated. Exceptions to this rule may be made, on a case by case basis and within the parameters of this policy.*

Gift Policy

- 1. When your congregation receives an estate gift or outright gift, how will it be determined if the gift will be accepted?**
 - a. A committee (WHICH?) will be notified of gift and do research before taking to decision-making body...
 - b. An individual (WHO?) will be notified of gift and take it directly to decision-making body...
 - c. The Executive Committee will be notified and do research before taking to decision-making body...

- 2. Who will determine if the gift will be accepted?**
 - a. Pastor
 - b. Congregation Council
 - c. Finance Committee
 - d. Stewardship Committee
 - e. Endowment Committee
 - f. Gift Committee
 - i. If so, who would be on the committee?
 1. Pastor
 2. President of Council
 3. Finance Chair
 4. Stewardship Chair
 5. Endowment Chair
 6. Other _____
 7. Other _____
 8. Other _____
 - g. Other _____

- 3. What types of gifts are you willing to consider?**

COMMENTARY: When considering types of gifts, it is important for the drafters to remember that the type of gift one may personally find acceptable may not be the case for a congregation. The ELCA has social statements and a Christological confession that may influence the decision-making process.

For example, the ELCA's social statement on the "Care of Creation" may influence whether a congregation determines if oil, gas or coal mineral rights are an appropriate gift for the congregation to accept. While an individual may have no such conflict, a congregation might. We remember that Christians of good conscience may differ on

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these issues, but it does not prevent us from debating and considering these issues when making these decisions.

- a. Cash
- b. Securities
 - i. Publicly traded securities

NOTE: The ELCA Foundation has staff and aids donors and congregations in the donation and liquidation of publicly traded securities.

- 1. Stocks
- 2. Bonds
- 3. Mutual funds
- 4. Options/Warrants
- 5. Other marketable securities traded on public exchanges

- ii. Non-publicly traded securities
 - 1. REITs
 - 2. MLPs
 - 3. Closely held business interests
 - a. Partnerships
 - b. Limited Liability Corporations
 - c. S-Corp shares
 - d. C-Corp shares
 - e. Options/Warrants

- c. Life Insurance - Permanent Type with Cash Value

Specifically, this is referring to Universal or Whole Life policies.
- d. Real Property
 - i. Residential
 - ii. Commercial
 - iii. Life Estate
- e. Tangible Personal Property

In some cases, gift policies require the donor or estate provide a qualified or certified appraisal and a minimum value in order for a tangible asset to be considered.

 - i. Vehicles
 - ii. Jewelry
 - iii. Books
 - iv. Art
 - v. Collections
- f. Other Property
 - i. Mineral Rights
 - ii. Royalties
 - iii. Notes/Mortgages
 - iv. Copyrights
 - v. Patents

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- vi. Trademarks
- vii. Oil and Gas interests
- viii. Bargain Sales: Congregation purchases an asset for less than fair market value

4. If your congregation decided to decline the gift, how will you inform the donor?

- i. Written notice, via US Mail
- ii. Written notice, via email
- iii. Verbal notice

b. By whom:

- i. Congregation Council Chair
- ii. Finance Committee Chair
- iii. Stewardship Committee Chair
- iv. Endowment Committee Chair
- v. Gift Committee Chair
- vi. Pastor

5. If the gift is unrestricted, who do you want to determine how it's used?

- a. Pastor
- b. Congregation Council
- c. Finance Committee
- d. Stewardship Committee
- e. Endowment Committee
- f. Gift Committee
 - i. If so, who would be on the committee?
 - 1. Pastor
 - 2. President of Council
 - 3. Finance Chair
 - 4. Stewardship Chair
 - 5. Endowment Chair
 - 6. Other _____
 - 7. Other _____
 - 8. Other _____
- g. Other _____

6. If the gift is unrestricted, do you want to require an automatic 10% tithe distribution?

- a. No
- b. Yes
 - i. ELCA Synod
 - 1. Any amount of distribution
 - 2. Specific portion: _____ % of distribution
 - ii. ELCA Churchwide Organization
 - 1. Any amount of distribution

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2. Specific portion: _____ % of distribution
- iii. Any ELCA-related Organization
 1. Any amount of distribution
 2. Specific portion: _____ % of distribution
- iv. Any Charitable Organization
 1. Any amount of distribution
 2. Specific portion: _____ % of distribution

7. If the gift is unrestricted, do you want to require an automatic contribution to the congregation's endowment fund?

- a. No
- b. Yes: _____ %

8. If the gift is unrestricted, do you want to limit the overall use of the gift?

- a. No
- b. Yes
 - i. Up to _____ % can be used for our congregation
 - ii. Up to _____ % can be used for ELCA Churchwide ministries
 - iii. Up to _____ % can be used for other ELCA related charities
 - iv. Up to _____ % can be used for other non-ELCA related charities
 - v. Up to _____ % can be used for other _____
 - vi. Up to _____ % can be used for other _____

9. If the gift is unrestricted, do you want to limit the type of use within your congregation?

- a. No
- b. Yes
 - i. Up to _____ % can be used for operating budget
 - ii. Up to _____ % can be used for debt reduction
 - iii. Up to _____ % can be used for buildings/maintenance
 - iv. Up to _____ % can be used for office equipment/furniture
 - v. Up to _____ % can be used for cemetery maintenance
 - vi. Up to _____ % can be used for youth programs
 - vii. Up to _____ % can be used for music programs
 - viii. Up to _____ % can be used for Pastor's discretionary fund
 - ix. Up to _____ % can be used for other _____

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x. Up to _____% can be used for
other _____

10. If the gift is restricted, but the funds are unable to be used due to lack of program or need for which it was intended, do you want it to become unrestricted?

- a. No
- b. Yes - after _____ months

11. How often do you want your Congregation Council to review your Gift Policy?

- a. Every year
- b. Every 2 years
- c. Every ___ years