

United In Christ Lutheran Church

Gift Acceptance Policy



Employer Identification Number: 233079221

General Statement

As elected leaders within the faith community of United In Christ Lutheran Church, the Congregational Council is entrusted with the responsibility of being diligent stewards of God's care and gifts in this community. With the utmost care and reverence for such responsibility, the Congregational Council has adopted the following policy regarding the acceptance of gifts made to the congregation. A strong planned gifts program is not only an important element in fulfilling long-term goals of the congregation, but approved policies also contribute to forming the best possible relationships with those who give. This statement provides guidelines for general policies and specific practices by which the Congregational Council operates. The degree of detail specified helps assure efficient and responsible functioning and quality control.

The Congregational Council will oversee the gift acceptance process for the congregation of United In Christ Lutheran Church (UIC) and will review proposed gifts. The Congregational Council will periodically review and update these policies and procedures, keeping the congregation apprised of its activities.

General Gift Acceptance Guidelines

All gift and bequest arrangements including cash or publicly traded securities must be reviewed for acceptance by the Congregational Council.

All non-cash gifts shall be liquidated as soon as possible after receipt.

When a restricted gift/endowment is established, the Congregational Council must determine that a proposed restriction does not violate any policy of the UIC Constitution or requires a program or service which UIC cannot provide. Further, the Congregational Council must communicate clearly and receive a written acknowledgement from the donor that should the time come when UIC can no longer provide the specific service for which the endowment was established, and after an accrued term of twelve months, the restricted gift/endowment will be used at the discretion of the Congregation Council, following the established guidelines for receipt of unrestricted gifts.

Substantiation of Gifts

The Congregational Council shall see that donors are informed and have appropriate information and receipts/acknowledgements for the substantiation of the value of their gift.

The Congregational Council will not establish the value of a gift. It is understood that acceptance does not represent concurrence in the value placed on the contributed property by the donor. Acceptance simply represents acknowledgement that the property described has been received on a specific date. The donor or donor's appraiser, and not the Congregational Council, is responsible for establishing the value of the property gifts.

The donor will be referred to IRS Publication 561 as well as IRS. Where the donor is required to file any tax forms, the Congregational Council shall see that the donor receives the required signature.

Policies and Procedures for Specific forms of Gifts

Cash:

Gifts in the form of cash or checks will be accepted, regardless of amount. All checks must be made payable to "United In Christ Lutheran Church."

Publicly Traded Securities:

Securities (stocks, bonds, mutual funds), which are traded on public exchanges will be reviewed for acceptance by the Congregational Council.

Real Property:

The Congregational Council will consider gifts of real property with due diligence and the following required phases of research:

1. Complete a Real Estate Environmental Questionnaire and Disclosure Statement with the donor's signature on the questionnaire. Inform the donor that if there are any environmental concerns, he/she may be responsible for an EPA Phase 1 audit.
2. Examine the property title for clear ownership and acceptability of liens and encumbrances.
3. Inform the donor that they are responsible for a Qualified Appraisal.
4. For commercial property, require owners of commercial property to provide an EPA Phase 1 audit. The Congregational Council may require from the donor an Agreement to Indemnify stating that the donor will indemnify United In Christ Lutheran Church if the property must be cleaned up after UIC takes ownership.

Tangible Personal Property:

Tangible Personal Property (vehicles, jewelry, art, collections, etc), will be received after satisfactory review by the Congregational Council, including a Qualified Appraisal (at donor's expense) yielding a minimum value of \$5000 worth of property.

Life Insurance:

Life Insurance of Permanent Type with Cash value will be accepted only after due diligence and research by the Congregational Council, including a specific consultation with an ELCA Foundation representative.

Unrestricted Gift Guidelines

Upon receiving an Unrestricted Gift, the Congregational Council will take the following steps with the funds received:

1. Ten percent (10%) of the gift's cash value will be given as a tithe to the Upper Susquehanna Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
2. Fifty percent (50%) of the gift's cash value will be placed in contribution to United In Christ Lutheran Church's Endowment Fund for the sake of ongoing and future ministry in through congregation.
3. The remaining forty percent (40%) will be made immediately available for use at the discretion of the Congregational Council.

Declining a Gift

In the event that the Congregational Council declines a gift based on any of the above criteria, the donor will be officially notified by the Council and Pastor via certified mail.

Policy Review

The United In Christ Lutheran Church Gift Acceptance Policy will be reviewed by the Congregational Council at a minimum of every five years with any changes or modifications being clearly communicated to the congregation at large.

This policy was adopted by the Congregational Council on September 12th, 2018.