

**Oregon Synod, ELCA
Gift Acceptance Policy
Adopted by Synod Council May 16, 2013**

1. General Statement

The Oregon Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America welcomes and encourages donations, bequests, and charitable gifts. The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent process for managing the acceptance of such gifts.

2. Administration

The Synod Council will oversee the gift acceptance process for the Oregon Synod. At times, a team consisting of the bishop, a Synod Council officer or her/his designee, and a member of the Oregon Synod Endowment Board will administer the gift acceptance process in behalf of the Synod Council.

3. General Gift Acceptance Guidelines

- 3.1 All gift or bequest arrangements other than cash shall be reviewed for acceptance by the Synod Council.
- 3.2 All designated gifts shall be reviewed for acceptance by the Synod Council. Gifts designated for a campaign or project already approved by Synod Council do not require additional review.
- 3.3 The Synod Council reserves the right to decline to accept any gift, if in the judgment of the Synod Council, acceptance of such gift would be detrimental to the mission of the synod or the proper administration of the synod's resources.
- 3.4 The Synod Council retains discretionary authority to designate a portion of any bequest to the Oregon Synod Endowment Fund. This should always be done in consultation with the donor or the donor's surviving family.

4. Non-Monetary Gifts

- 4.1 The general policy will be to always sell or otherwise convert quickly to cash any non-monetary gift, including any publicly traded securities (e.g., stocks, bonds, mutual funds).
- 4.2 The Synod Council may rely upon the advice of professional advisors in determining the manner, timing and procedures to be followed in disposing of any non-monetary gifts. If an appraisal of real or other property is required, the

donor will be responsible for the expense. (See Appendix A for a detailed checklist of how real estate gifts will be handled).

- 4.3 The Synod Council may choose to retain a non-monetary gift without conversion to cash if such a gift directly supports the mission of the Oregon Synod.
- 4.4 The Synod Council will notify any donor of a non-monetary gift regarding the Synod Council's intended action with respect to that gift (i.e., rejection, retention, sale, or other disposition).

5. Donor Designated Gifts

- 5.1 Undesignated gifts provide the Oregon Synod with the greatest flexibility in meeting the needs of the synod and its ministries. Where possible and appropriate, donors should be encouraged to make undesignated gifts.
- 5.2 The Oregon Synod may solicit gifts in connection with particular projects or ministries. Such gifts are designated and set aside to be used for the named project or ministry.
- 5.3 At times, donors may wish to designate the purposes for which a gift may be used. Although the Oregon Synod would like to accept all gifts as offered, it is not always practical or desirable for the synod to accommodate donor gift designations. (For example, a gift that requires the synod to allocate additional resources to complete the project may not be appropriate.) A synodical representative working with the potential donor should be prepared to provide a list of current needs for the synod and its ministries.
- 5.4 The Synod Council has a duty to periodically review all outstanding designated funds for current appropriateness and to make a judgment as to whether it would be beneficial to the Oregon Synod to make the funds undesignated or differently designated. In such cases, where the Synod Council deems it appropriate, the Synod Council shall appoint a representative to request such a change by the donor or donor's surviving family.

6. Administration

- 6.1 It is the responsibility of the Synod Council to ensure that all gifts are properly recorded and that such records are kept current and accessible to facilitate periodic review of funds, assist in communication with donors or donor's surviving family, and serve as a historical record of ministry within the Oregon Synod.

- 6.2 Every donor of every gift shall be thanked. (See Appendix B that describes the process for thanking donors).

APPENDIX A.
Criteria for Accepting Outright Gifts of Real Estate

A gift of real estate will be accepted if the gift meets these criteria:

1. The donor obtains, at the donor's expense, a qualified appraisal as required by law.
2. Mortgaged property had the mortgage placed at least five years prior to the gift. Generally, the amount of mortgage balance should not exceed 50% of the agreed-upon property valuation.
3. The property is free of liens (other than a possible first mortgage), judgments, suits, or other financial and legal claims.
4. An examination of title, paid for by the synod, verifies that the donor(s) is (are) the current owner(s) of the property. Or, preferably, a title insurance binder is obtained, showing the donor(s) as owner(s) of the property and has (have) clear title. Payment for the title insurance may be negotiated with the donor(s).
5. Taxes and assessments on the property are current and fully paid.
6. A qualified, professional on-site check of the property determines the property to be salable for the price of the property appraisal. Payment for the inspection may be negotiated with the donor(s).
7. An environmental assessment will be performed to determine the presence, nature, and extent of any toxic wastes or other environmental hazards. This item shall not be satisfied until the Synod Council accepts or approves this item in writing. Payment for the assessment is the responsibility of the donor(s).
8. An examination of the property determines that it meets "code" in such areas as wiring, plumbing, heating, etc. to ensure the salability of the property.
9. Bargain sale rules as required by law apply if the synod either purchases the property for an amount less than its appraised fair market value or accepts responsibility for an unpaid mortgage which the donor(s) passes (pass) on as part of the property transfer.
10. The donor(s) will be encouraged to consult with their tax and financial advisors to see how tax laws apply to them. Neither legal nor financial advice can or will be given by the Synod Council.
11. Property gifts at variance with these policies will be considered on a case-by-case basis in consultation with advisors the Synod Council deems necessary to adequately evaluate the scope of the gift and its implications for the ministry of the Oregon Synod.

APPENDIX B.
Oregon Synod Process for Thanking Donors

Corner Stone Giver \$15,000 & up

Form letter indicating tax-deductible donation and signed by bishop
Hand written Thank You note card on bishop's cards
Follow up phone call from bishop (thanks & face-to-face meeting?)

Stake Holder Giver \$5,000-\$15,000

Form letter indicating tax deductible donation and signed by bishop
Thank You note card on bishop's cards
Follow up phone call

Supporters \$1,000-\$5,000

Form letter indicating tax-deductible donation and signed by bishop
Bishop writes a short note on the bottom of the letter

Pledged

Form letter indicating tax-deductible donation and signed by bishop
Bishop writes a note on the bottom of the letter

Congregation Gift

Thank you letter for congregation to the church council signed by bishop
Phone call to pastor from bishop
Congregational acknowledgement at Sunday worship

One Time Gift

Form letter indicating a tax-deductible donation & signed by bishop