

The Southern Ohio Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (“Synod”), is a not for profit corporation organized under the laws of the state of Ohio. The Synod encourages the solicitation and acceptance of gifts to the Synod for purposes that will help the Synod to further and fulfill its mission to benefit the community in the Synod's mission territory. The following policies and guidelines govern acceptance of gifts made to the Synod.

The mission of the Synod is as follows:

The Southern Ohio Synod consists of congregations, individuals, clusters, conferences, organizations and synod staff members who 'walk together in the way' of Jesus Christ to work toward God's purpose of restoring the world. We believe that together as a synod, we are able to accomplish things that we cannot do on our own. Indeed, the English word, 'synod,' is derived from two Greek words that denote the power of working together for a common purpose (*syn* - 'together' + *hodos* - 'way' = *synodos*).

I. Purpose of Policies and Guidelines

The Synod solicits current and deferred gifts from member congregations, individuals, corporations and foundations to secure the growth and mission of the Synod. These policies and guidelines govern the acceptance of gifts, over and above ongoing Mission and Ministry support, by the Synod and provide guidance to prospective donors and their advisors when considering making gifts to the Synod. The provisions of these policies shall apply to all gifts received by the Synod for any of its programs and services.

II. Decisions on Acceptance of Gifts

The Synod Finance Committee will make final decisions on whether a gift is accepted. All gifts are subject to Finance Committee review. Under certain circumstances, the Synod Finance Committee will engage legal counsel and advisor assistance in making a decision. Decisions and the rationale for those decisions will be shared with the Synod Council as appropriate. In general, the Synod Finance Committee will make acceptance decisions based on the following criteria:

- a) Does the gift help to fulfill the mission of the Synod?
- b) Can the Synod readily utilize the gift, or easily convert the gift to cash?
- c) Are there any liabilities associated with the gift?
- d) Are there any undue restrictions on the use of the gift?
- e) Are there any carrying costs to accept and retain the gift?
- f) Will there be any undesirable tax consequences in accepting or in disposal of the gift?

III. Restrictions on Gifts

The Synod encourages donation of unrestricted gifts, and gifts directed to specific programs and purposes that are in alignment with the Synod's mission. The Synod will not accept gifts that are too restrictive in purpose, including gifts that violate the tenants of the Synod's corporate charter, gifts that are too difficult to administer, or gifts that are for purposes outside the mission of the Synod.

After five years, any unused part of a restricted gift will become unrestricted. This is in recognition that circumstances change, allowing programs and services to come to a logical end where and when appropriate. Acceptance of a restricted gift is contingent on the donor's (or donor's delegate's) written agreement to allow the gift to become unrestricted after five years.

IV. Acceptable Types of Gifts

The Synod will consider Acceptance of the following Types of Gifts:

- Cash or Cash Equivalents
- Bequests
- Life Insurance
- Securities – Publicly Traded and Closely Held
- Real Estate
- Oil, Gas and Mineral Interests
- Tangible Personal Property
- Remainder Interests in Property
- Bargain Sales
- Charitable Gift Annuities
- Charitable Remainder Trusts
- Charitable Lead Trusts
- Retirement Plan Beneficiary Designations
- Life Insurance Beneficiary Designations

The above list is not exhaustive, and other types of gifts will be considered. All gifts are subject to review by the Synod Finance Committee.

V. Other considerations

The Synod Finance Committee may require inspections, audits, appraisals and consultation with legal counsel as part of Acceptance. In most cases, the Synod will look to the donor to cover the expenses associated with those activities.

The Synod Finance Committee will comply with IRS guidelines and policies, filing appropriate forms around the receipt of gifts. The Synod Finance Committee will not provide legal or tax counsel to prospective donors.

VI. Gift Policy Updates

The Synod Finance Committee will evaluate updates to the Gift Policy every five years, or as circumstances require, whichever comes first. The next formal review period will be January of 2025.