

Gifts Policy & Guidelines for the Gifts Committee

Unless noted otherwise herein,

- a) "Church" shall mean Beargrass Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Corporation;
- b) "Executive Board" shall mean the governing body of the Church. The Executive Board has the ultimate responsibility of overseeing and implementing policies related to gifts made to the Church;
- c) "Board of Trustees" shall mean the Board of Trustees of Beargrass Christian Perpetual Endowment Fund, Inc. ("Endowment Fund"), which has the ultimate responsibility of overseeing and implementing gifts made directly to endowment.
- d) "Non-ordinary" shall mean not a part of the regular offering, or gifts toward the general / non-designated expenses of the Church's general operating, capital, or named mission / endowment funds.

Purpose of Gifts Committee and Authority Granted by Executive Board:

The primary purpose of the Gifts Committee is to assist the Executive Board in faithfully and properly managing, and stewarding, the non-ordinary assets and resources donated to further the Church's mission and vision. Such donations to the Church or Endowment Fund may include testamentary gifts; money designated for certain special projects or intentions; gifts of real or virtual property; financial instruments; and/or other material goods donated to the Church with or without special designations or instructions. The Gifts Committee may often be called upon to make recommendations about the direction of unrestricted gifts.

The goal of the Gifts Committee is to facilitate and honor the donor's intent, while keeping in mind the vision, mission, ethics and normal operating values that govern all of the Church's decision-making practices. A gift that honors the intention of the giver, while also facilitating necessary mission and ministry for the Church, is the ideal toward which both donor and Gifts Committee shall strive. This may include suggesting alternatives to either the form, nature, or instrument of the gift or the required designation.

Membership: The Gifts Committee consists of the Endowment Fund Chair, the Executive Board Chair, the Mission Board Chair, the Treasurer, and the Senior Minister or another designee of the ministerial staff (ex officio). Other members may be appointed by these members as needed. The Gifts Committee may consult with other ministry leaders as needed.

Meetings: The Gifts Committee shall meet within a reasonable time upon being notified of a gift being made available, and may meet as otherwise needed.

Should a member of the Church object to a decision of the Gifts Committee, the specific issue in question may be presented to the Executive Board for review and vote. The Executive Board's decision shall be the final and binding word on the matter brought for appeal. If the decision is made to reverse a decision of the Gifts Committee relative to a gift designated for retirement, the question may be revisited annually for review and vote to sustain or ultimately override the objection.

The Church has been fortunate in the past to receive gifts that have been procured in whole or in part through the time and talent of the ministerial staff. In the event of such minister-procured gifts, a focus should be on the area of the Church's greatest need at that time.

1. Unrestricted Gifts

These outright gifts are received with no donor requirements on how they may be used. Except as outlined below, the Gifts Committee will recommend how unrestricted gifts should be distributed.

- (a) Unrestricted gifts received in any form other than cash will be converted to cash at its fair market value as soon as reasonable and prudent practice shall allow. New gifts will be invested in a money market account until the Gifts Committee or Endowment Fund takes further action regarding proceeds. The Church or Endowment Fund shall sell all gifts received in the form of stocks, bonds, or other fiduciary instruments. The donor (or estate) shall be receipted the full value of the stock or fiduciary instrument on the date the Church takes possession of said instrument, with the Church or Endowment Fund (not the donor) paying all commissions and required fees.
- (b) In the case of real estate or other items of real property (as circumstances dictate), acceptance of the gift shall be provisional pending the appropriate valuations (appraisals), inspections for deficiencies, and review of attached contracts which would be binding on the Church, or other instruments of ownership are adequately reviewed and the acceptance of said property is deemed to be of prudent risk or acceptable condition.

(c) Memorial Gifts

If the unrestricted gift is a memorial gift, within sixty (60) days of a person's death, the Church office shall send a thank you note to everyone who made a memorial donation. The office will further send a list of the donors (without amounts) to the designated family member.

(i) Memorial Gifts less than or equal to \$2,000.

If the total amount of the memorial gift is less than \$2,000, the monies shall be distributed to the general operating budget of the Church.

(ii) Memorial Gifts greater than \$2,000.

Otherwise, the Gifts Committee shall recommend how the memorial gift should be distributed, keeping in mind the present and greatest needs of the Church.

(d) Bequests

If the unrestricted gift is a bequest (meaning from a donor's estate), the Gifts Committee shall allocate the proceeds as follows to honor the donor's legacy and acknowledging a gift coming from the accumulation of the donor's life work:

i) 10% to Mission / Outreach (to be allocated by the corresponding Ministry Team);

If the Church, as determined by the Treasurer, does not have sixty (60) days of operating cash on hand (in addition to sufficient cash to cover reserves), then the Gifts Committee shall have the discretion to recommend how the remaining 90% of the gift will be distributed, keeping in mind the area(s) of greatest need for the Church at that time. Otherwise, if there is sufficient cash on hand, then the remaining amount of the gift shall be distributed as follows:

ii) 35% to the Endowment Fund

iii) 10% to the Annual Operating Budget (to be allocated following recommendation of the Finance Committee);

iv) 10% to the Church's Debt – If there is no debt, this share will be allocated to the Building / Capital Improvement Fund;

v) 35% to the Building / Capital Improvement Fund – Once the Building / Capital Improvement Fund reaches 1.5 X the annual operating budget, this share of the bequest should go to the Endowment Fund.

2. Restricted Gifts

These gifts include a donor specifying the purpose for which a gift should be used or that the gift should be held to generate income.

- (a) The Church or Endowment Fund is legally bound to use or to hold restricted gifts that it stewards, as well as all restricted gifts it accepts in the future, following the donor's instructions. Donor-restricted gifts will be held and accounted for separately from unrestricted funds.
- (b) **Budgeted Programs or Facilities.** The Church may accept a gift that is restricted as to its use if the Church's approved budget for the year in which the gift is to be accepted includes proposed funding for the specific program, purpose or facility for which the restricted gift is made.
- (c) **Other Restrictions.** The Church may accept a gift that is restricted as to its use if the Church's budget for the year in which the gift is accepted does not include funding for the restricted use of the gift, with the approval of the Gifts Committee.
- (d) **Variance Authority.** When working with donors (or their legally designated agents) to establish a restricted/designated fund(s), the Church shall seek to incorporate language in that documentation that allows the Church to broaden and revise the future use of the gift when necessary, so that its use remains in alignment with the Church's ongoing mission and practice. The Church shall intend to honor the legacy of the donor and to keep future use of the fund as close to the spirit of the donor's original (or perceived) intention as possible.

3. Refusing Gifts

On some rare occasions, the Church or Endowment Fund may want to refuse a gift, including but not limited to the following reasons:

- a) Funds or assets from sources that are inconsistent with the Church's moral and/or ethical values, or which a person of reasonable prudence may be expected to reject or willfully forfeit shall be refused.
- b) Bitcoins or other "crypto currencies" may likewise be scrutinized and, if accepted, shall be sold just as with stocks and bonds, as discussed in 1(a) above.

These guidelines were last revised in [June 2025].

- c) Items in which the cost to receive the gift is greater than the actual value of the asset (or that asset's ultimate perceived value to the Church) shall be refused.
- d) Gifts upon which the restrictions or designations are inconsistent with the current goals, mission, or values of the Church; or those which the Executive Board deems unacceptable.

When a gift is refused, the Gifts Committee should do all that it reasonably can to seek to honor the donor's intention of generosity and shall therefore seek acceptable alternatives (for both the donor and the Church), providing such alternatives are available. Christian decorum, politeness, and gratitude should be the operative attitude in time of such negotiations and should prevail even if a satisfactory solution which makes receiving the gift possible cannot be found.

4. Retiring Gifts

- a) The Church shall make as conditional to the receiving of any tangible gift (i.e., furniture, artwork, musical instrument, etc.) the understanding that:
 - i) all such assets have beneficial life spans;
 - ii) it shall be solely in the Church's purview to determine when a gift has become no longer usable due to the cost of repair, obsolescence, the normal "wear and tear" of time or use, or the ability of the item to either function in the capacity for which it was given or the continued need for item in the current context of the Church's life.
- b) The Church shall have the right to dispose of said item as it sees fit, including, but not limited to:
 - i) the sale or gifting of said item
 - ii) returning the item to the donor or donor's family

When appropriate, the Church shall publicly (or privately) in the context of worship or other proper setting, celebrate and acknowledge the gift, its service to the Church, and the generosity of its benefactor.

This also applies in those instances when a named room, wing or fund is no longer appropriate or relevant for the Church.