



**Congregational Gift Policy**  
**Peace Lutheran Church**  
**455 Clark State Rd. – Gahanna, OH 43230**

**Purpose of a Gift Policy:**

To give a written process to all constituents of our congregation that outlines what types of property are acceptable as gifts above and beyond pledges or plate offerings, and how decisions are made for its use.

This policy will answer 2 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:**

**I. Scope & Purpose**

**II. Gift Acceptance**

- a) Defines *who* will decide if gift is *accepted*.
- b) Defines *what* gifts will be *considered*.

**III. Gift Use**

- a) Defines *who* will decide how gifts are used.
- b) Outlines process and guidelines to determine *how* gifts are used.

**IV. Memorial & Endowment Fund Gifts**

**V. Policy Distribution and Changes**

**VI. Ways to Make a Gift**



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**Scope of Gifting:**

To help carry out God’s mission, members and friends of Peace Lutheran Church donate their time and resources to Peace. These gifts are the life blood of Peace, allowing it to serve the congregation, the community, and the larger world. This policy addresses how gifts of resources, be they money, securities, or other forms of property, made to Peace are to be handled. These gifts come with varying indications of their intended use.

**Purpose and Use of Gifts:**

The rich array of gifts that support the work of Peace can be categorized in multiple ways:

- **Purpose:** for specific or general ministries or purposes, special projects, the general operation of the church, or unspecified purposes.
- **Timing:** for current needs or reserved for longer-term anticipated or unforeseen needs.
- **Nature:** as general tithing, in response to specific campaigns or requests, as memorials to individuals, or as bequests from estates.
- **Form:** as cash, stock, bonds, or other financial instruments, physical assets (for example: land, artwork, musical instruments), goods (food, supplies, clothing, paint, plants), time, or services.
- **Commitments:** made available for immediate use or pledged to be given sometime in the future.



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**II. Gift Acceptance:**

1. The Congregation of Peace Lutheran Church, Gahanna, OH operates through its elected Vision Board and Officers charged with responsibilities through Peace’s Constitution and By-Laws and these responsibilities include the review and acceptance of gifts and budgeting of the church and its mission programs. The use of the phrase “**the congregation**” in the following policy means “the congregation, via the Vision Board or its designated agents”.
2. Members are encouraged to consider blessing the congregation with gifts free of designations or restrictions.
3. All gifts will be gratefully acknowledged in a timely manner by the congregation.
4. When an asset is offered to our congregation through an estate, from a living individual, family, or other legal entity that is above and beyond a regular pledge/plate offering, the congregation will consider the gift on a case-by-case basis. Consideration will be given to the type of asset, gift transfer costs, designations, potential liabilities, Peace’s mission, current congregational needs, and other factors as to whether the gift will be accepted.
5. Gifts, once given by the donor and accepted by the congregation, are solely the property of the congregation.
6. To make funds available for use, gifts of financial securities will be sold as soon as practicable after receipt and acceptance unless otherwise restricted by the donor.
7. Donors or the congregation may want to attach restrictions to specific gifts. The nature of these restrictions must be clearly understood by both the donor and the congregation before the gift is accepted. Common restrictions would relate to the purpose or use of the gift, timing of the use of the gift, whether the congregation would be required to commit additional resources to implement the desired effect or maintain it in the future, and contingency options if the gift could not be used for its primary purpose.
8. The congregation reserves the right not to accept the gift if the gift is of limited use, is not in keeping with the mission of the congregation, has maintenance or space requirements that the congregation cannot provide, or is otherwise constrained in a way that would make it difficult or impossible to meet the desires of the donor.



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### **III. Gift Use:**

#### **1. Unrestricted Gifts:**

Gifts of this type have no specific restrictions for their use or time limits in which they must be used. These are gifts given over and above or in addition to regular giving and donations given towards pledge gifts.

Gifts made to the congregation without an indication of the donor's desired purpose or other restrictions are particularly valuable because they can be applied to address unanticipated circumstances. Where not required in a current year for such circumstances, unspecified gifts should be reserved for such use in the future.

If the gift is unrestricted, the overall use [of the net proceeds after the tithe and endowment deposit] may be directed to Our congregation (e.g., Youth programs, Worship and music programs, Christian education, Community, Ministry, Buildings/maintenance/capital projects, Office equipment / furniture / technology).

#### **2. Restricted Gifts:**

Gifts with specific designations / restrictions are accepted with the understanding that the funds are to be used for the benefit of the congregation in support of its mission and current ministries. Donors should be aware that programs offered by the congregation may be discontinued, renamed, or incorporated into other programs. The congregation may accept a gift subject to the restrictions but reserves the right to use the gift in a manner consistent with the general intent of the restrictions. Donors may not restrict the manner in which a gift, bequest, or endowment fund is invested by the congregation.

Restricted gifts may involve allocation of other resources or adjusting priorities, they must be considered case-by-case and in consultation, if possible, with the donor.

Overall, it should be understood by donors that unless otherwise provided, restricted gifts should be re-directable to as similar an intent as possible by the congregation if the gift remains unused for a period of time set at the time of the donation.



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**3. Special Appeal Gifts:**

Occasionally, there will be a need for Special Appeal Gifts. Gifts of this type are designated for a specific cause (e.g. Peace for Justice, Hoops for Haiti, Souper Bowl).

**4. Congregational or Capital Campaign Gifts:**

Congregational or Capital campaign gifts are solicited and will be used only for the specified purpose, unless there is a maximum required and gifts exceed that amount.

If campaign gifts exceed the requirements for the stated campaign purposes (e.g. the building is built and more funds were raised than needed), the excess funds will revert to an **unrestricted gift** to the congregation after one year from the completion of the initially intended campaign use.

Gifts to congregational campaigns will retain no separable identity after they are in their respective fund.



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#### **IV. Memorial & Endowment Fund Gifts:**

##### **1. Memorial Gifts:**

Memorial gifts may be Unrestricted or Restricted. Unrestricted memorial gifts are those for which no specific use is stated. Such unrestricted memorial gifts will be understood to be gifts for the general operation and ministries of the congregation.

All restricted monetary memorial gifts are required to have one or more acceptable usages and a time interval in which they are to be used. Records will be kept of all active directed memorial gifts. The time interval begins upon the receipt of the first gift.

If for some reason the gift cannot be used for the specified purpose within the time interval, the unused portion of the gift will become an **unrestricted gift** and treated under policies for such gifts.

A pre-approved list of gift uses will be maintained by the congregation. Examples might be “general operations”, “general ministry”, “mission trips”, “Vacation Bible School”, “continuing staff education”, “music fund”, “endowment fund”. Gifts directed to one of the pre-approved uses will automatically be accepted if the time interval is acceptable.

If an alternate use for a restricted monetary gift presents itself, a new agreement between the congregation and the solicitor (solicited gifts) or the donor (unsolicited gifts) must be reached that is mutually agreeable. Either party may initiate such a renegotiation. If a new agreement cannot be reached, the original agreement remains in force.

Twenty-five percent of unrestricted memorial gifts will be directed to the *Peace Lutheran Endowment Fund* and Twenty Five percent of unrestricted memorial gifts will be directed to the *Peace Lutheran Building Fund*. The remainder of the gift will be applied to the most appropriate unfunded need of the congregation (including, possibly, additional allocations to the *Peace Lutheran Endowment Fund*), as deemed appropriate by the congregation.



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**2. Endowment Fund Gifts:**

The intent of Endowment Fund gifts is to provide an ongoing source of funds for use over time by having principal remain invested and have the earnings from those investments made available for current use. The purposes to which Endowment Fund gifts will be used will be established by the Endowment Committee, within guidelines established by the congregation. Endowment fund gifts are acknowledged at the time they are received. After the gift has been added to the Endowment Fund, it becomes part of the principle of the Endowment Fund and maintains no separable identity of its own.

**3. Building Fund Gifts:**

The intent of Building Fund gifts is to provide an ongoing source of funds for use over time to support building and property improvements equal to or greater than \$5,000 and not supported by the Annual Operational Budget.

**V. Policy Distribution and Changes**

1. This Congregational Gift Policy shall be made available via Peace’s Website and the congregation will be made aware of any changes to policy via Peace2U Newsletter or Sunday Bulletin.
2. The Vision Board shall review this Congregational Gift Policy at least every two years for updates and revisions.



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## **VI. Ways to Make a Gift**

### **1. Cash, check, or money order**

### **2. Beneficiary designations** – primary or secondary/contingent

Retirement accounts

i. IRA

ii. 401(k)

iii. 403(b)

iv. Annuity

Individual or joint bank/brokerage accounts

v. Transfer on death

vi. Payable on death

Life insurance

Distribution from donor advised fund or named endowment

Living trust

Will

Real estate - Transfer of deed on death

### **3. Asset transfer**

Transfer securities from your brokerage account directly to our congregation's brokerage account or use the ELCA Foundation to facilitate the transfer.

Transfer a title or deed to our congregation.

Assign ownership of life insurance to our congregation, or ELCA Foundation, FBO (for benefit of) our congregation.

### **4. Deferred gifts**

Charitable gift annuity

Charitable remainder trust

Donor advised fund

Named endowment

Life estate

### **5. Bargain sale** - Sell an asset to our congregation below fair market value.