



# CHRISTIAN GIFT PLANNING

*"A man's heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps."*

Proverbs 16:9

Two years ago the Lord was at work directing my steps away from the career that I had enjoyed for decades to the blessed, rewarding work as the Ohio District Gift Planning Counselor for the LCMS Foundation. Many thanks to my predecessor, Pat Bilow, for introducing me to this position and Godspeed as she continues as a Gift Planning Counselor for LWML. While there was much training to be absorbed in those early months, God led me to meet with nearly 100 wonderful Christian people/families, consult with 60 pastors, and was invited to present the message of gift planning services to 47 different groups of our LCMS faithful. It has been a true joy to interact with so many brothers and sisters in Christ.



The goal of our Gift Planning Services office is to Link Christians to Giving Opportunities by helping them record the gift that God planted in their hearts at their baptism. Some gifts are for Today, some Tomorrow, and some will last Forever. The model of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as a servant and “washing feet” is at the heart of the gift planning ministry. I am here to serve every congregation and every person in the Ohio District as they plan to accomplish their Stewardship goals. Many beautiful gifts to ministry have been uncovered, several are in the process of documentation, and I pray that God will lead us to countless others that are yet to be developed.

There are five principles that guide the Gift Planning Services ministry of the LCMS Foundation. They are:

***High Activity:*** Meet with as many pastors and fellow Lutherans as possible to assist them in developing and accomplishing their stewardship goals.

***Gift Completion Goals:*** Strive for excellence in knowledge and training in order to facilitate the discipline needed to complete the documentation necessary to assure gifts will be realized.

***Honesty and Integrity:*** Observe the Golden Rule in all that a gift planning counselor does in their work.

***Cooperation and Teamwork:*** Work in harmony with other LCMS Foundation employees and their partner ministries.

***Passion for Ministry Shared with Positive Attitude:*** A positive attitude infects pastors and laymen. We are ambassadors of this special stewardship focus and our positive attitude can be caught by others to grow this ministry.

Abiding by these principles helps me focus on the work the Lord has sent me out to do.



*Christian stewardship is the free and joyous activity of the child of God and God's family, the church, in managing all of life and life's resources for God's purposes.* - LCMS definition of stewardship

In our conversations we spend a lot of time exploring what that definition means in our lives and how we live them. The concept that everything we have is a gift from God and the fact that we are just managers, not owners, of all His blessings dominates many discussions. *The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it. Psalm 24:1.* As faithful stewards we need to transfer God's blessings to us the best way possible in order to care for our families and our Lord's Kingdom work.

Over the next five years there will be a great transfer of wealth (several Trillion dollars!), as the Lord calls the members of the great Builder Generation to their eternal home. Has your congregation done enough to provide its people with the information and tools to effectively transfer their blessings on? Do we ask them if they have considered leaving a gift to the Lord's ministries? Do we offer to guide them through the documentation needed to record their wishes? Have you recorded the gift God planted in your heart? As leaders of our congregations, we need to be proactive in making everyone aware of the options and assistance available, because that is what will provide financial support for our Lord's work for decades and generations to come. Jesus's hand will guide us to God's purposes if we ask Him.



Extraordinary things can happen through the gift planning process. I would welcome an opportunity to develop your Lifetime Plan for Giving through a gift planning presentation or a personal consultation. My services come to all of you free of charge because of the partnership between the LCMS Foundation which pays my salary and the Ohio District which pays my travel expenses. Both organizations understand the benefits to you, your family, and God's ministries of preparing for your financial future with a Christian perspective. *"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future"* Jeremiah 29:11 I encourage you to take advantage of the service by calling me at 888-482-8425. I am here to serve.

Joy in Christ's service,

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