

BLC “GIFTING” POLICY

Merciful Father,

We offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us--our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Offerings. Bethlehem Lutheran Church encourages tithing and asks its members and friends to provide regular “thank offerings” --a portion of their income--to help sustain and increase the ministry of the congregation and of the larger Church.

Planned and Deferred Gifts. We also encourage Planned and Deferred Gifts, opportunities for BLC friends to use a portion of their accumulated assets to further the God’s work now and in the future. Deferred Gifts may be in the form of wills, insurance, or other financial instruments. Planned Gifts may include gifts of monies, stock, or other property.

Fund Drives. Besides regular offering support and occasional planned or deferred gifts, BLC friends also are invited from time to time to support “fund drives” --for instance, to support a national or local social ministry, to meet “special” BLC needs, or for some other purpose sanctioned by the BLC Council.

Memorials, Celebrations, and Other Special Gifts. Some persons choose to gift BLC and its ministries as a memorial (e.g. death of a loved one) or in celebration of some special event (e.g. 50th wedding anniversary). Others offer monetary or other gifts as a special gift to BLC, to promote some aspect of the BLC ministry or to take care of some specific facility need.

These gifts may be unrestricted or restricted. In either case, a representative of the BLC Council may consult with the key family members about their preferences regarding how the gift is to be used to further the ministry of BLC. Gifts restricted by the gifter and accepted by BLC will be used within the bounds of the restrictions, unless some other possibility is agreed upon by the gifter.

Those interested in making a restricted gift are invited to consult with the BLC Council about possibilities. In rare instances, it is possible that a restricted gift offered cannot or will not be accepted by BLC, most likely because the gift is considered by the Council to be inconsistent with the congregation’s values or priorities. Unrestricted gifts are more readily useable to support the priorities of the congregation.

Gift Committee. The Council may establish a Gift Committee to advise the Council on matters related to gifts and how they are encouraged and handled. The Committee also may devise and periodically revise lists of desired “special” gifts that are consistent with BLC purposes and priorities. The lists will be available to potential gifters, but the lists are **not** to be considered comprehensive or limiting.