ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Frequently Asked Questions on Planned Giving

1. What is planned giving?

Planned giving is a way to make a charitable gift to the church as part of your overall financial and estate planning. These gifts are often arranged during your lifetime but fulfilled in the future—most commonly through a will, trust, retirement account, or insurance policy.

2. Why is planned giving important to the church?

Planned gifts help ensure the long-term strength and mission of the church. They provide enduring support for worship, outreach, ministries, and future generations—allowing the church's light to continue shining for years to come.

3. Who can participate in planned giving?

Anyone can participate. Planned giving is not about wealth—it's about intention. Whether your gift is large or modest, it reflects your values and your commitment to the church's future.

4. What are the most common ways to give?

Some of the most popular planned giving options include:

- Bequests in a will or trust
- Naming the church as a beneficiary of a retirement account (IRA, 401(k))
- Life insurance beneficiary designations
- Charitable remainder trusts or gift annuities
- Gifts of stock or appreciated assets

5. Can I still take care of my family first?

Absolutely. Planned giving allows you to provide for your loved ones first while also leaving a meaningful legacy to the church. Many options are designed specifically to balance both priorities.

6. Do I need a large estate to make a planned gift?

Not at all. Planned gifts of any size are meaningful. Even a small percentage of an estate can make a lasting impact on the church's mission.

7. How do I include the church in my will?

You can include the church by adding a simple clause (called a bequest) to your will or trust. Your attorney can help you with the wording, or the church can provide suggested language.

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8. Are there tax benefits to planned giving?
In many cases, yes. Planned gifts may reduce estate taxes, provide income tax benefits, or offer other financial advantages. You should consult with a financial advisor or estate planning professional for guidance.

9. Can I remain anonymous?
Yes. You may choose to keep your gift completely private, or you may allow the church to recognize your commitment as an encouragement to others.

10. What is a legacy society?
Many churches offer a "Legacy Society" to honor those who have included the church in their estate plans. It's a way to recognize your commitment and celebrate the shared vision for the future. St. Mark's in Glen Ellyn's legacy society is called: From Generation to Generation – St. Mark's Planned Giving Program.

11. Can I change my plans later?
Yes. Most planned giving arrangements are flexible and can be updated if your circumstances or intentions change.

12. How will my gift be used?
Your gift can be designated for a specific purpose (such as outreach, facilities, or missions) or given as unrestricted support to be used where it is most needed. Church leadership will steward your gift with care and prayerful consideration.

13. How do I get started?
Start with a conversation. Speak with your church leadership or a planned giving representative, and consult your attorney or financial advisor to explore options that align with your goals.

14. What kind of legacy does planned giving create?
Planned giving creates a legacy of faith, generosity, and hope. It ensures that the ministries you cherish today will continue to bless lives for generations to come.

15. Who do I contact for more information about "From Generation to Generation – St. Mark's Planned Giving Program"?
Contact Chip Bennett at (630) 649-0010 or Rev. George Smith at the church office at (630) 858-1020.