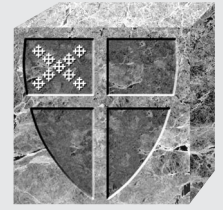


VESTRY PAPERS

To Encourage and Guide Those Called by God to Lead Episcopal Congregations



CORNERSTONE

IS A MINISTRY OF

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

FOUNDATION

Ready to Receive

by Charles Gearing

When John and Sarah Coleman wrote their will, they wanted to leave a substantial amount — around \$1 million — to their much beloved parish. But then came a key question from their attorney: “Do you feel comfortable with the way the church might handle a gift of that magnitude?”

After thinking about it, they were not confident that church leaders would manage such a gift in a careful, prudent way. They worried that the funds might be dissipated quickly, not leaving any significant footprints in the parish history. Unfortunately, the Colemans made other arrangements.

This is not a far-fetched scenario, and it could apply to many, if not most, parishes at some time in their lifespan. How might you make preparations so that a prospective donor will feel confident about your parish’s

ability to exercise good stewardship of a major gift? Put in place a well-woven basket of structure, awareness and response.

Structure

A sound structure — permanent, competent, reliable, accountable, and responsive to donors — assures benefactors that gifts will be managed well and that the church will be faithful to any restrictions or limitations the donor stipulates, in perpetuity. To set it up, you will need a formation resolution by your vestry that creates an endowment fund and provides for its management, usually in the form of a separate board, with by-laws. With a clear vision, the resolution should define how the endowment will support the parish’s ministries and mission.

continued on page 6

Only if We Ask...

by Fred Osborn

Wilma, eighty years old, wasn’t feeling very well when she got dressed one chilly Sunday morning and went to church.

Even so, she was thrilled to hear the rector report that Gladys, a good friend of hers, who’d died just a few months earlier, had left a bequest to the parish.

Wilma said to herself, “I’m going to do the same thing! I love this church, and I want it to thrive so my friends and neighbors — and their children — can enjoy it. After all, I’m not taking my money with me!” On her way out, she spoke to the rector quickly at the back of the church, telling him she was anxious to do something for the church “like Gladys did.”

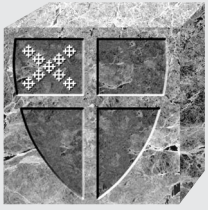
Wilma promised herself that she’d call her lawyer the next morning and arrange something. But on Monday morning, Wilma felt worse. That afternoon she went into the hospital.

Her rector came to see her on Tuesday and she told him that the doctor reported rapidly spreading cancer — but that she’d lived a long life and was ready to die when the Lord was ready to take her. She and the rector prayed together. The rector said nothing about Wilma’s words that Sunday — he felt it was a bad time to sound like he was asking for money.

continued on page 2

Requests for planned gifts abound from museums, schools, charitable organizations and other worthy groups — but churches are often loathe to raise the issue. As a result, parishioners may not think to include their church in their will, or even to write one. This issue considers how best to encourage Episcopalians to think through end-of-life affairs, both spiritual and financial.

This Issue:
Legacies of the Faithful



Only If We Ask...

continued from page 1

Wilma died that Friday; her will was read a week later. With no heirs, her estate, to the community's surprise, exceeded \$500,000. Her will left the bulk of that money to her college, from which she'd graduated some sixty years earlier, and to which she'd not been back since. There was no provision for her beloved church.

Wilma is not alone. With some \$50 trillion changing hands as Wilma's generation passes on, there are many instances in which well-meaning, generous people make bequests. They will leave assets to their beloved churches — but usually, only if churches ask.

Important learnings

The church in this story, St. Matthew's, learned two things. The vestry learned the importance of a legacy society (*See page 3*), and all members of the vestry now belong.

Develop a mindset within your parish where it is acceptable to talk about death, dying and planned giving, and offer opportunities for such reflection routinely.

Wilma's rector realized he has a pastoral duty to help people who are facing the end, on their "death bed," as it were, to reflect on

Christian teachings about death. He was right that such a time is not a good time to ask for money; but it is a good time to help people insure that their estate plans reflect their values.

Money left wisely...or not

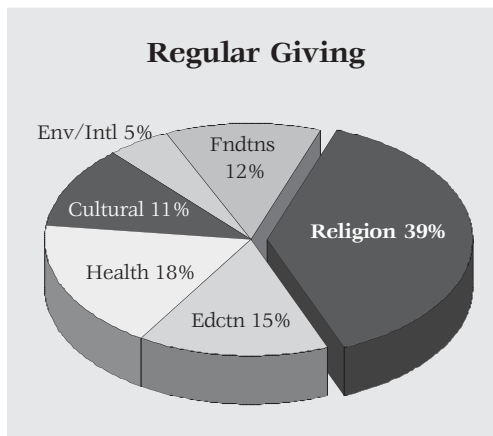
The Episcopal Church Foundation hears stories like Wilma's frequently, about money that is left wisely and money that is not, wills made or not made at all, or wills left in some form that was good twenty years ago, but irrelevant to the situation when the person dies. It is heartbreaking when good intentions are not put into action because the instructions were never given.

How can you help parishioners to reflect their values in their estate plans? Develop a mindset within your parish where it is acceptable to talk about death, dying and planned giving, and offer opportunities for such reflection routinely. Point out what others have done. Most of all, take immediate action to be sure that your estate plans express your values. We don't know when we'll go, but we do know we're not taking it with us.

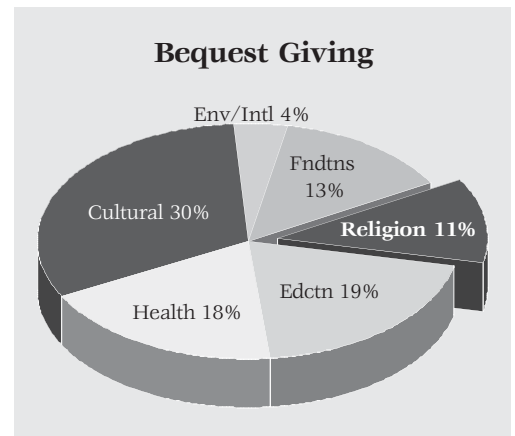
Fred Osborn is the director of philanthropic services at the Episcopal Church Foundation.

Design your funeral service before making out your will. The funeral can then be a reflection of your life, a message to loved ones about what was important to you. Then write or amend your will so that it reflects those values.

Religion is by far the favored charity...



People want to support churches and do so throughout their lifetimes



... but why not through bequests?

Source: AAFRC Trust for Philanthropy/Giving USA 2002

Field research by the Episcopal Church Foundation shows that if a parish provides consistent Christian teaching about planned gifts, members are more likely to include their church in their wills.

Four Legacies of the Faithful

by Randal Gardner

How best to motivate people to think about their final plans with Christian teachings in mind? What follows are excerpts from a sermon on planned giving preached at Emmanuel Episcopal Church on Mercer Island, Washington.

What is the greatest legacy a wealthy Christian has to give? A hint: It's exactly the same for rich and poor alike, *for being a witness to Jesus Christ is the first and greatest legacy of all.*

No generation of faithful people has ever come into being on its own. Faith is passed on from one generation to the next. The legacy of the apostles is scripture, and the legacy of our generation will be the stories and faithful explanations we pass on to our children and grandchildren. Telling others, especially the young, about your faith and your convictions is the most important legacy you have to give.

Creating sacred spaces

The second legacy of the faithful is the creation of sacred spaces. This is a complex legacy, because we do not worship buildings. In fact, we are called as God's people to travel light and not to become over-burdened

with material things. But in every generation of the church, creating a place in which to gather and honoring that space as a holy place has been essential. I am not aware of any body of the church that has ever lasted for very long without having created a place to worship and to gather.

This legacy is, in fact, one of the legacies of the rich. Buildings speak about what we value, and buildings have always been expensive. The average person makes vital and essential contributions to any church building, and their financial gifts are like the mortar that binds the stone together. Those who have chosen to give their greater wealth for the glory of God are the ones who have done what was needed to give us the great cathedrals. They have been and must continue to be the ones who give us this space where we gather and worship.

continued on page 5

SECURING THE FUTURE

The Promise of Legacy Societies

by Lindsay Hardin Freeman

At many parishes, Memorial Day weekend is a time of empty pews and thoughts of summer. But at Emmanuel Episcopal Church on Mercer Island, just east of Seattle, the Sunday service begins in the church's memorial garden, with prayers for those buried there. Then, following a bagpiper inside, parishioners hear a sermon that encourages them to remember God's work and sacred places in their wills. (*See story above.*)

According to Glenn Ledbetter, a local realtor and chair of Emmanuel's endowment board, the goal is to raise the current endowment from \$250,000 to \$2 million. As an incentive, those who sign up this spring will be known as founding members, and will have their names on a first plaque in the narthex.

For Ledbetter, it's all about the future. "The whole message is about what one generation is going to give to the next generation," he

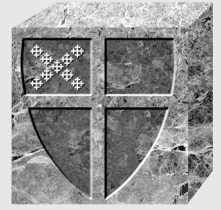
says. "If you don't have something that's worthy of the marketplace, you deserve to go out of business. But if you believe in your church having something to offer future generations, then you need to help that happen."

Not one negative voice

Some parishes, like Emmanuel, use legacy societies to increase the endowment; others, like St. Paul's by the Sea in Jacksonville, Florida, are creating an endowment through bequests.

"Our parish has never had an endowment," says Tony Gabrielle, a retired executive and chair of the endowment board at St. Paul's. "We haven't been in a position to feed new ministries that come up periodically — so we are changing that."

continued on page 4



The Top Ten Myths about Gift Planning

- ✦ *Gift planning is only for the rich.*
- ✦ *Gift planning lowers annual stewardship.*
- ✦ *Gift planning is too complicated.*
- ✦ *I don't have enough assets to make a will.*
- ✦ *If this is so important, why is it so boring?*
- ✦ *The church doesn't know what to do with my money.*
- ✦ *Younger people don't need wills.*
- ✦ *No one wants to talk about death.*
- ✦ *Clergy can't talk about money.*
- ✦ *Church people don't need to be thanked.*

The Promise of Legacy Societies

continued from page 3

St. Paul's goal is to enroll half of its ninety-six families in its new "Tree of Life" legacy society for an initial endowment of \$250,000. Some fifty families have been contacted to date: the response has been overwhelmingly positive.

"Out of all that, not one negative voice," says Gabrielle. "As this thing gathers publicity and momentum, I really think it will work."

Sustaining the momentum

Such momentum is key when setting up a legacy society, says Charles Gearing, a national expert in the process and director of diocesan programs at the Episcopal Church Foundation. The problem comes, he says, if that momentum is not sustained from year to year.

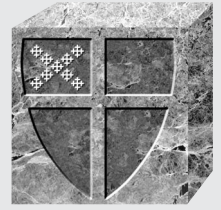
"Planned giving is unique in that there is a substantial time lag between when a person makes a decision to give a gift and when that gift is received," he says. "The challenge is to keep people feeling good about their commitment within that time frame."

Consistent communication, including regular events and periodic mailings, Gearing says, help keep that energy going.

Such events might include an annual dinner with an outside speaker focusing on issues of life and death, legacy and remembrance, generosity and abundance. Names of legacy society members are often posted on a plaque or engraved on a sculpture, and members should receive one or two special communications a year, updating them on ministries made possible because of bequests.

Does the work pay off? Gearing says yes, unequivocally. "The more we live with this task of planned giving in the church, the more important it becomes. It's just confirmed over and over again. It's indispensable."

A parish priest at St. Martin's-by-the-Lake in Minnetonka Beach, Minnesota, the Rev. Lindsay Hardin Freeman is the editor of Vestry Papers.



"For it is in giving that we receive and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life."

— St Francis of Assisi

Resources

Dynamic. Faithful. Discriminating. Such are the resources provided by the Episcopal Church Foundation for helping vestries begin and sustain planned giving programs. Available are:

- ✚ A staff of eleven planned giving field representatives to help design customized parish planned giving programs.
- ✚ Planned giving vehicles that will pay the donor and beneficiaries a lifelong income. Among the options are charitable gift annuities, the pooled income fund, and charitable remainder trusts.
- ✚ *Funding Future Ministry* — a comprehensive textbook covering the "nuts and bolts" of planned giving. Also available on CD through Episcopal Parish Services, (800) 903-5544.
- ✚ Coming soon:
 - Brochures for planned giving programs, trusts, charitable gift annuities and the pooled income fund.
 - An online subscription service of bulletin inserts, advertisements, newsletter articles and other materials.
 - Legacy society brochures.
 - Kits for writing wills, including medical directives and funeral instructions.



*Next Issue:
Christian Formation
for Families*

For more information, contact Patti Savoulidis, marketing and operations manager or Natalie Guthrie, development associate at (800) 697-2858 or visit our website www.EpiscopalFoundation.org

Four Legacies of the Faithful

continued from page 3

The legacy of the not-so-rich

The third legacy of the faithful is the community that is created during their years. Oddly enough, this is often the legacy of the not-so-rich. One of the facts of life is that wealth is distracting. It is hard to belong to a community when there is great wealth to manage. It is certainly possible to be rich and live a communal life, but often it is the more humble who are the ones who create the familiarity and caring by which a truly lovely Christian community can be formed.

Centuries after Nicholas Ferrar died, the small community he created in the 16th century in Little Gidding, England, remains a holy place and focus for pilgrimage. T.S. Elliot and Evelyn Underhill found its simple church and small village inspiring and uplifting, in part because the story and the spirit of the place remind them of what a Christian community can be. Jesus said to his disciples, "If you love each other, the world will know that I have come to you from God." A legacy of a loving and caring community enriches the world for decades and even centuries after the members of that community have died.

The material realm

The fourth legacy is support in the material realm. Most generations have the chance to accumulate wealth and property, and wise stewardship of that gift is part of what we learn as Christians. It does not take great wealth to leave a legacy, but it requires a thoughtful plan to make the legacy of money or property into another form of witness.

Leaving a gift to the church seldom deprives the following generation, and it reminds that generation of your enduring faith and beliefs.

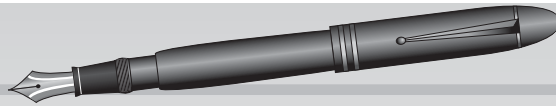
Legacy gifts promote something that is important to us — the ministry of the church in general, or one of its special ministries like music or preaching or social service. At this time, when trillions of dollars of wealth are passing from one generation to another in our country, it would be a shame to neglect those charities and churches that have done so much to shape our society, promote its well being, and love its people.

What is important to you? Do you show that your relationship with God is important by telling about Jesus in word and deed? Do you make space for what is important to you? A home for family and friends is likely. But what about a holy place that connects your spirit to what is sacred? Does your love for what is important shape the way you act, so that you work to make a community that is influenced by the goodness of what you value?

What Jesus said, and what I leave you with today, is the challenge: "Do not store up for yourselves treasure on earth, for it will eventually come to nothing. But store up treasure in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy. Where you place your treasure, is where your heart will be."

The Rev. Randal Gardner has been part of Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Mercer Island, Washington, since 1962. Having grown up in the parish, he returned to be rector in 1996.

EDITOR'S NOTE



Dealing with end-of-life issues is tough stuff. No one likes to ask for money, for it's almost always uncomfortable. And urging others to plan their funerals and leave the church in their wills can be awkward.

But we've learned a few things about planned giving in writing this issue — first, it's more fun doing it together. There are churches out there having a good time doing this — and getting much accomplished. When the whole congregation is introduced to the idea of planned giving and a legacy society is formed, it makes a difference.

Secondly, we already have a whole theological framework in which to think about death and dying — namely the resurrection. Christ has already accomplished the most important teaching. Giving people an opportunity to leave money to their church is not the end-point, but rather an option, and one which we think they'd like to have.

Finally, most churches wouldn't be here if it weren't for those who built them and left money for their upkeep. Let's do the same.

—Lindsay Hardin Freeman

The
ACADEMY for
EPISCOPAL
Philanthropy

Learn about planned giving and capital campaigns for congregations, dioceses, agencies and schools at the Academy for Episcopal Philanthropy.

April 14 – 17, 2004
St. Mark's Episcopal Church, San Antonio, Texas

October 20 – 23, 2004
Trinity Cathedral, Cleveland, Ohio

(800) 697-2858

www.EpiscopalFoundation.org

Ready to Receive

continued from page 1

Addressing these questions is also helpful:

- ✦ By what means do funds get into the endowment (e.g., are all monies the parish receives by bequest directed automatically to the fund?)
- ✦ Are designated or restricted funds welcome? Is there a minimum amount that is required to maintain a separate, designated fund?
- ✦ How will the investment function be managed?
- ✦ How do funds get out of the endowment fund — i.e., what are the spending rules to determine how much is available for expenditure each year?

Awareness

After the structure is in place, consider how you might motivate parishioners to make provision for the church in their estate plans. You need to be intentional, creative, steady — and patient. It has been said that “Procrastination is the most formidable enemy of planned giving.” I can assure you that your experiences will tend to confirm this. You just have to stay at it.

You may want to create a legacy society, which can aid in the education/awareness program. Preparing a descriptive leaflet and conducting an information program is inherently more interesting to parishioners under the aegis of a legacy society than simply talking about “planned giving.”

The rubric on page 445 of *The Book of Common Prayer* is especially helpful:

The minister of the congregation is directed to instruct the people, from time to time, about the duty of Christian parents to make prudent provision for the well being of their families, and of all persons to make wills, while they are in health, arranging for the disposal of their temporal goods, not neglecting, if they are able, to leave bequests for religious and charitable uses.

Given its priority of putting families first, this rubric helps establish the “tone” of the planned giving effort, for making arrangements for the disposition of one’s worldly goods is inherently a *pastoral* issue, not a church fund-raising event. Begin the program with a letter to the congregation from the chief pastor, the rector.

Once this has taken place, there is no end to the possibilities for continuing to make your parishioners aware of opportunities to com-

plete arrangements for their final affairs and provide for the church in their estate plans. Most parishes use the parish newsletter and service bulletins with articles, inserts, notices, and regular “one-liners” (e.g., “The spirit is willing, but where’s the will?”)

Periodic mailings can be directed to a specific demographic group, such as those fifty-five and over, and special events, such as a “wills clinic” or a “final affairs fair” can be held. All of these provide time and motivation to discuss the role of Christian charitable giving in estate planning.

Approaching the awareness task as part of the overall stewardship education program is key, for the stewardship of accumulated assets is the logical next step.

Many of us strive to tithe during our lifetime but are unable to reach that goal. I have known a number of Episcopalians who found comfort in allocating 10% of their estate to their church, thus completing a personal goal in death, if not in life.

Response

“If a parishioner shows interest in making a planned gift, how do we best respond?” Before anyone asks for help, it is essential to work out the answer to that question.

First, identify the key contact person, so that when a question is raised, every parish leader is prepared to make an unequivocal reference. Your contact person is the one who knows enough to be comfortable in a first conversation with the prospective donor and can easily access additional resources.

The Episcopal Church Foundation, with the responsibility for the planned giving ministry in the Episcopal Church, is the principal resource for assistance and support of parishes in their planned giving programs. Parish representatives should feel free to call the Foundation office for assistance or information, (800) 697-2858, at any time.

The director of diocesan programs for gift planning services at the Episcopal Church Foundation, the Rev. Charles Gearing is also a deacon at St. Bartholomew’s in Atlanta, Georgia. He takes particular delight in working with parishes and seeing their planned giving programs succeed.



Director, Cornerstone

The Rev. L. Ann Hallisey
AHallisey@EpiscopalFoundation.org

2401 Le Conte Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94709

Editor

The Rev. Lindsay Hardin Freeman
VestryPapers@aol.com

Editorial Assistant

Karen Greenfeld

Design/Production

Monarch Communications

Mission

To inform, inspire and affirm
Episcopal vestries in their work.

Subscriptions

\$35 annually. Mailed in
packages of 15 copies per issue.
\$25 annually for electronic version.
Published in January, March, June,
September and November.

Call Cornerstone at (510) 644-9941
or subscribe online at
www.EpiscopalFoundation.org