

## **MINNEDOSA UNITED CHURCH LEGACY GIFTS PLAN OF OPERATION**

The Minnedosa United Church Legacy Gifts Fund (referred to in this document as the “Fund”) was introduced to the congregation at its annual congregational meeting on February 21, 2010, approved at the Church Council meeting on March 17, 2010 and revised at the February 24, 2013 congregational meeting.

These guidelines are intended to provide some direction to those that have specific responsibilities for the Fund’s operation. They are intended to facilitate its operation by clarifying and expanding on the enabling resolution established in March 2010.

### What is Legacy Giving?

A legacy gift (also known as a planned gift) is a gift made from an estate or accumulated financial assets rather than regular income. In the United Church more than 90 percent of legacy gifts are gifts made through bequests in wills. Regular giving generally comes out of a person’s regular income while a bequest comes out of assets left at death, when current giving ceases. Therefore when someone includes a gift to the church in their will, their current giving is generally not affected.

Legacy gifts do not eliminate the need for fundraising or stewardship campaigns, but handled responsibly and prudently, can enhance other financial programs of the congregation.

More information on these various types of gifts can be obtained from the legacy giving section of The United Church of Canada’s website:

[www.united-church.ca/getinvolved/donate/howto/planned](http://www.united-church.ca/getinvolved/donate/howto/planned)

### Purpose of the Legacy Gifts Fund

Legacy giving is another way for members and adherents to support the ministry of the church. Many dedicated members and adherents have a strong commitment to their faith and to the ministry of Minnedosa United Church. The opportunity to reflect that commitment through a legacy gift can be a significant proclamation of faith for the individual, and an important and lasting gift to the congregation and the church as a whole.

The Fund will be separate and distinct from all other church funds, and is intended to be used to expand the ministry and mission outreach of Minnedosa United Church.

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### Receipts

It is the hope that those who desire to contribute a legacy gift will offer it as an undesignated gift. Undesignated gifts are those with “no conditions” attached. A gift given without conditions enables the church to use the monies, or a portion thereof, in ways that offer the greatest benefit to the ministry and mission of the church.

Any gift that is given with specific instructions as to how it is to be used, will be known as a designated gift. Designated gifts will not form part of the Fund. Designated gifts, if accepted, will be used in the intended manner as stated by the donor.

It is expected that most donations to the Fund will be bequests through wills, United Church gift annuities and gifts of insurance.

### Disbursements

Disbursements will be determined by the Finance and Stewardship Committee in consultation with the Church Council, and must be in accordance with the guidelines described within this plan.

Fifty percent (50%) of the funds from all undesignated legacy gifts will be endowed. (“Endowed” is defined as: to provide with a permanent fund or source of income. Therefore, endowed funds would never become available for disbursement.)

The remaining fifty percent (50%) of the funds plus the interest earned from the endowed portion will be available for disbursement each year. Eligible monies not disbursed will be carried over and available for disbursement in subsequent years.

Money available for disbursement from the Fund will be used to support and enhance the ministry of Minnedosa United Church in the following areas:

- a. outreach activities
- b. youth ministry and programs
- c. lay education
- d. music and worship enhancements
- e. capital improvements
- f. up to 25% of the amount available for disbursement could be put towards operating expenses, if required. It is the expectation that legacy funds will not normally be available for operating expenses, but in the event of unexpected or emergent issues related to operating expenses, the Church Council may consider the use of such monies without need of a congregational meeting.

### Investment

The Trustees are the custodians of the endowed portion of the Fund and are responsible for investing the endowed funds. As well, they will transfer the income earned from the endowed portion of the Fund to the Stewardship and Finance Committee for disbursement annually.

There will be an annual review of the Fund by an independent auditor or review team appointed by the Church Council. At each annual meeting of the congregation, the Trustees will provide a financial statement for the previous year along with a report of the audit or review.

### Responsibilities of the Finance & Stewardship Committee

The Committee shall:

- (i) develop and promote a legacy giving plan for the congregation;
- (ii) provide information to interested members and adherents about the legacy giving plan;
- (iii) arrange a legacy giving information session for the congregation every three to five years; and be a resource to members and adherents who wish to make a legacy gift;
- (iv) work with the Regional United Church Financial Development Officer and keep them informed of:
  - any finalized legacy gifts (those who have completed a will that states their intentions)
  - donors who wish to meet with them to discuss or arrange a legacy gift
- (v) review restrictions on any proposed legacy gift in accordance with the Gift Acceptance Policy described within this plan.
- (vi) in consultation with the Church Council, manage the disbursements of the Fund (in accordance with these operating guidelines and in accordance with policies and procedures established by the congregation)
- (vii) write “thank you” letters to those who make a legacy gift;
- (viii) write acknowledgement letters to executors, lawyers, etc. where appropriate;
- (ix) spearhead a faithful way to celebrate all legacy gifts and their donors, while ensuring respect for individual wishes;
- (x) keep a permanent record of donations to the Fund;
- (xi) keep a permanent record of all disbursements from the fund;
- (xii) report legacy gifts to the Fund and disbursements from the Fund to the Church Council as activity occurs, and report annually to the congregation;
- (xiii) periodically review these guidelines so that recommended changes may be presented to the Church Council for consideration and then to the congregation for approval.

All communication regarding legacy giving between individuals and members of the committee will be held in the strictest confidence. Members of the committee must be careful to avoid all conflicts of interest. The interests of the individual member or adherent, who is the potential donor, must be the guiding concern.

### Enquiries

Members and adherents interested in learning more about legacy giving should contact a member of the Finance & Stewardship Committee.

Members and adherents may also wish to contact a Financial Development Officer from the United Church. The name of the United Church’s Financial Development Officer for our area can be obtained by contacting the church office or by contacting the national office of The United Church of Canada.

Anyone wishing to make a legacy gift to the church is encouraged to seek professional advice (Lawyer, Chartered Accountant, etc.) and is encouraged to discuss their gifting intentions with their family. The church would also appreciate being informed of any intended legacy gift.

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Gift Acceptance Policy

The Finance & Stewardship Committee will carefully consider the nature, extent and impact of restrictions attached to gifts. The restrictions may be due to:

- the type of gift (life insurance policy, real estate, etc.)
- the use that the donor has specified for the gift.

With respect to the first type of restriction, the Finance & Stewardship Committee will seek professional help, if necessary, in determining whether to accept the gift.

With respect to the second type of restriction, the Finance & Stewardship Committee might recommend against accepting a gift if, for example, it is specified for a cause or organization that the church does not support, or if the terms and conditions around the gift impose unreasonable demands.

If the Finance & Stewardship Committee decides that a gift should not be accepted to the Legacy Gifts Fund, such recommendation must be made within 60 days (July and August excepted) to the Council which must decide within 60 days (July and August excepted) whether to accept the gift. Given the 60-day requirement for accepting gifts, the Council may decide to authorize the Chair of the Council, in consultation with the Trustees to make decisions on whether to accept gifts with restrictions attached.

Amendments

Amendments to this Plan of Operation or the enabling resolution require a two thirds majority vote of members and adherents present and voting at an annual meeting of the congregation for which notice of intent to amend the Plan of Operation or resolution has been given, or at a special meeting called for the purpose of amending the Plan of Operation or enabling resolution.

Termination

In the event that Minnedosa United Church ceases to exist, disposition or transfer of the Fund shall be in accordance with The Manual of The United Church of Canada.

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Amendments to the Minnedosa United Church Legacy Gifts Plan of Operation adopted this  
\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2013

Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_