

# **SAMPLE DONOR RELATIONS AND GIFT ACKNOWLEDGMENT POLICY**

## **Donor Recognition**

The CHURCH (through its designated board/committee) shall acknowledge all gifts in an appropriate and timely manner.

It is the goal of the CHURCH to celebrate the gift, the giver and the ministry being supported through personal expressions of thanks and public recognition. Where appropriate, the CHURCH shall maintain records and publications that provide ongoing memorial recognition. By such actions the CHURCH intends to enhance the satisfaction of the giver, encourage others to give and lift up the ministries of the CHURCH to greater public awareness.

Donor requests for anonymity shall be respected and strictly observed. All donors shall receive necessary gift receipts for tax reporting purposes.

## **Giving Statements**

Whether monthly, quarterly, or annually the CHURCH shall generate giving statements for all identifiable donors. These statements shall clearly account for all gifts. Remember: 1) gifts of cash reflect date received and amount; 2) non-cash gifts (e.g., stocks, property) should reflect date received and a description of the property – not the value.

The statement should also clearly note whether a gift is tax-deductible or not. Most gifts to the CHURCH are given in support of the general charitable purposes of the CHURCH and are, therefore, tax-deductible.

Non-tax-deductible gifts may include:

- A 'Qualified Charitable Distribution' (QCD) from an IRA account. This gift should be acknowledged and may be counted toward a pledged amount, but it is NOT tax-deductible.
- A gift to the church for the benefit of a specific person. This is a nice thing to do, but it is NOT tax-deductible. Churches may want to create benevolence funds, scholarship funds, and procedures that facilitate tax-deductible giving for broader categories of people.

## **Personal notes**

Major gifts (in excess of \$\_\_\_\_\_ in value) shall receive a personal thank-you note signed by either the Pastor or the Board chair within one week of receipt of the gift.

Additional activities for affirming relationships, building friendships, and sharing joy in community may include:

- Birthday notes / gifts
- Pastor thank-you calls
- Social events
- Articles/videos about members – past/present

### **Timely written receipts**

Every donor should receive a timely, written receipt for every gift. At a minimum, this should occur annually as soon after the close of the calendar year as possible so that folks have this documentation for tax preparation purposes.

Formal receipts shall affirm that “in return for this gift, you received no tangible goods or services.”

Note: The Missouri UM Foundation processes gifts of stock benefiting any UM church or organization in Missouri. This free service includes a timely gift receipt to the donor and a full accounting along with the proceeds check to the church/organization.

### **Memorials**

Consider creative and meaningful ways to provide memorial recognition for families and friends. Ideas include: create a Heritage Society that maintains a book of legacy gifts; create memorial articles for publications/websites/archives; annual All Saints’ Day activities...

### **Education**

Host workshops and webinars about ways to give, estate planning, and related topics. Supply printed and online information to the congregation. Your Missouri UM Foundation is an excellent source of program resources.