

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer  
Ramsey, New Jersey  
**Financial Gift Guidelines**

The congregation greatly appreciates all of the gifts it receives and the extraordinary generosity of members and friends. For the purpose of gathering financial resources effectively and using them to support mission and in the interests of fairness and clarity, the congregation accepts and receives gifts with the following provisions.

Regular Giving to Ministries of This Congregation, and other Expressions  
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and its Ministry Partners

The Congregation recognizes and acknowledges that first fruits and proportional giving is clearly set forth in the Scriptures (Malachi 3:8, 1Corinthians 16:2) and that members are encouraged to give, as God prospers them, to the work of this church and its mission enterprises.

- Weekly offering envelope giving (current operating costs and mission support)
- Weekly food donations for local feeding ministries
- Capital improvement campaigns for major repairs/renovations/additions to the church facility or property (as approved by council and/or congregation).
- Lutheran Disaster relief appeals (as they occur)
- Appeals from ELCA and New Jersey Synod and ELCA Ministry partners (LSM/NJ, LTSP, Seafarers, ELCA Camps, LWR, etc.)
- Special benevolence efforts as approved and scheduled by council.

Offering envelopes and electronic transfers are the primary methods for members to give donations to the church.

Giving to Support Activities Beyond the Regular Ministry of this Church

All special giving opportunities must gain final approval from the Congregation Council prior to being publicized or interpreted to the congregation or the community. The structure and guidelines for such special fundraising efforts must:

- Comply with the guiding principles of the church
- Be consistent with the concepts of Christian benevolence
- Compliment versus detract from established congregation stewardship efforts
- Build fellowship in the church and service to the community of faith
- Be for purposes outside of the general operating budget and programs
- Provide an avenue for people to use their abilities and to express willingness to serve others.

Efforts (on –site or off-site) involving alcohol, gambling, games of chance or other “get rich quick” schemes are expressly prohibited.

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*Approved January 2012 Annual Congregational Meeting*

It is generally assumed that members will be buffered from solicitation by non-church enterprises. Therefore, individual or team fundraising requests that seek sponsorships for a specific activity, local or national charities not affiliated with or connected to the ELCA, and business and commercial enterprises (including non-profits) are not permitted to be advertised or promoted through the church avenues (newsletter, bulletin, announcements or directory mass contact) except for special benevolence as approved and scheduled by the Church Council. Individuals are allowed to contact individuals they know personally outside the church programs.

Whenever possible, recipients of these benevolence fundraising efforts must go through an "ELCA umbrella" agency, unless:

- There is no ELCA agency capable or available
- The outside agency is far more efficient at delivering the service for a lower administrative cost ratio.

When a non ELCA agency is used, the agency must have at least 85% of their total funds raised to go the program/end recipient (not for administration and fundraising) with the percentage verifiable through credible publicly issued statements.

Products offered for sale are not encouraged and must be specifically approved by the Congregation Council; any product for sale must be done in a low key manner in a way that respects the sacredness of the worship space. Products offered for sale through the church are not to undermine local business.

All monies received from the fundraising efforts must be processed through the financial secretary of the church. All expenses and payments must be processed through the church treasurer; expenses are not to be taken out of the proceeds. Matching fund contributions/opportunities and unsolicited donations will be reviewed by the Congregation Council for approval before the donations can be accepted.

Requests for use of church facilities for any fundraising effort must be approved in advance through the church council and follow the established guidelines. Requests that involve banking, external church name usage (advertising, publicity, etc.), insurance or other financial matters must be reviewed by the Finance Committee Chair before presentation to council.

Local goodwill donations of \$250.00 or less can be designated for donation by pastor and council president without the Congregation Council's approval.

Final decision making authority for all fundraising requests rests with the Congregation Council.

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### Monthly Theme Giving Opportunities

In an effort to coordinate, focus and eliminate fundraising overload to the membership, the congregation has adopted a monthly theme focus for special benevolence efforts. In this monthly theme, every month will be dedicated to a special benevolence topic/program. This theme focus will allow a cooperative and coordinated effort by Stewardship, Social Ministry, Christian Education and any other committee or group for the benefit of the designated benevolence program. This focused effort for the month can include a newsletter article, bulletin articles, announcements, Temple Talk, adult form or Sunday school presentation/program.

Annually, at the September meeting, the Congregation Council will establish the special benevolence theme calendar for the upcoming calendar year. This will allow the committees the time to prepare for the January theme. The recommendations for the monthly focus theme calendar shall come from a joint recommendation of the Social Ministry and Stewardship committees. There is no specific guideline for setting the monthly theme – it can be very specific or general or broad.

All fundraising requests and efforts are approved as part of the annual theme calendar, and are limited to the month the effort is assigned. Mid-year requests can be considered by the council if they fit into a pre-approved monthly theme.

The sponsoring group(s) are expected to publish the results (financial and impact) of the efforts in the month following the monthly theme.

Prior program approval does not constitute an automatic renewal of the approval. The annual theme calendar is approved for the coming year.

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