



Estate Planning *for the* Christian Steward

*An Instrument for Planning
Provided by the Estate Planning Office of the
Evangelical Lutheran Synod*



This Planner is the property of:

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Attention:

This booklet is for private use only. It is meant to be used by myself, my family members chosen to represent me, or by my legal and financial advisers. It may also be used by my giving counselor(s).

Should you come into possession of this booklet, please return promptly to myself, my representative, or my legal counsel.

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This book has been prepared to give accurate and authoritative information of a general character only. Neither the editor, nor the publisher, nor this organization is engaged in rendering legal or tax advisory services. For advice and assistance in specific cases, the services of an attorney should be obtained. Watch for tax revisions. State laws govern wills, trusts, and charitable gifts made in a contractual agreement. Advice from legal counsel should be sought when considering these types of contracts.

***Guide me oh thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land.
I am weak, but Thou art mighty;
Hold me with Thy pow'rful hand.
Bread of heaven, feed me till I want no more.***

TLH 54:1

***Your words are a lamp for my feet
and a light for my path
Psalm 119:105 EHV***



Introduction

We want to thank our brethren from the WELS office of the Ministry for Christian Giving for helping to create this planning guide especially for you, the Christian steward.

Much of your life's energies have been spent in Christian service to your family, your church. Your congregation and synod. These are a part of all you hold dear in life.

In light of all we learn from God's Word, we know our estates are a sacred trust. In faith we confess that God is the owner of all we have and all we are. It is he who has blessed us through our labors and faithful stewardship. We are responsible for managing what God has entrusted to us in life as well as in death, and he has given us the privilege, opportunity, and the joy of expressing our love for him and those we love through our estate plans.

We pray that, with God's blessing, this booklet will give you a practical, understandable, and workable process that results in a plan with which you are comfortable. An estate plan which;

- Expresses God's plan of stewardship for your estate
- Transfers your estate to your loved ones and charitable beneficiaries in ways that gives glory to God and helps them be good stewards of God's gifts
- Completes the process in the least amount of time and with the least amount of expense.

Using This Booklet

This booklet will take you through the steps of **preparing an estate plan**, including filling out **detailed forms** at the end that will be **useful to your planners and family**. It is recommended that you work through this booklet with the assistance of your ELS Christian Giving Counselor. There is no cost or obligation for working with your giving counselor. He will not pressure you. *His goal is to help you carry out your stewardship objectives more efficiently.*

Please start this booklet by completing the “What Is Your Present Situation?” section on page 15. Leave plenty of time (Make an appointment with your spouse) and stay with it. When completed and you would like a second opinion, share with your giving counselor.

Every good act of giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the lights, who does not change or shift like a shadow. James 1:17 EHV

The Christian Preamble

Refer to Part IV, page 20, Additional Information for My Professional Counselors

The death of a loved one is a time of emotional stress. It is a time when your family and friends need comfort, strength, and guidance. You can speak to your family in your will by using a Christian preamble. You can influence others for Christ and share with them the promise of eternal life—the Christian faith by which you lived and died. You can express your prayers for their lives and your desire to share heaven with them.

A Christian preamble is precious. It will be remembered! Following are five examples of Christian preambles. You may use them as printed, or as idea starters for writing your own. When finished, indicate your selection under #1 on page 20.

Example 1

I, _____, do hereby testify that I am a Christian. I have placed all my hope of life hereafter in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. His death and resurrection have given my life meaning and make my death a peaceful passage to eternal life in heaven. I want my family and friends to know that for me to live was Christ, and to die is gain.

Example 2

My dear loved ones, I lived in grace and I died in grace. There is no more beautiful sound than the word "GRACE." It comes from God and perfectly characterizes the work of his Son, Jesus Christ. He gave his life so that I could be saved by grace. I count my family as gifts of God's grace and I loved them dearly. All my blessings in life were further evidence of God's grace. You may accomplish great things in life, but don't ever trust in them. Grace alone saves. Please learn all you can about it. In your life let it be obvious that you are God's child and saved by grace alone. May the purpose of your life be to share the message of God's grace in Christ Jesus in every way that you can.

Example 3

Thankful for Jesus' gift of eternal life in heaven as stated in Hebrews 4:9 EHV, "***So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God.***" and for the many blessings bestowed on me during my lifetime, I, _____, ask my children to rejoice with me. May God motivate you to share his Word at home and abroad. May the words of 2 Timothy 3:15, "***From infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus,***" bring back memories of the many Bible stories read to you as children and the privilege of your Christian education. Mindful of Luke 1:50, "***His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation,***" may God grant you and yours peace, love, and strength to continue in the faith until our blessed reunion in heaven.

Example 4

I, _____, commit myself to God's care, secure in his love for me and trusting in the salvation purchased for me through Christ's suffering and death. I leave those who survive me the comfort of knowing that I have died in this faith and have now joined my Lord in eternal glory.

I commend my loved ones to the protecting arms of God, knowing that he will continue to provide for them despite my absence, and I encourage them to place their faith and trust in him alone.

Through Jesus, therefore, let us constantly offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. And do not forget to do good and share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased. Hebrews 13:15-16 EHV

The People in Your Life

Refer to Part I on page 16

This section records information on the people in your life—family members and other individuals who are important to you. As you fill out the form, make sure to give complete information for all individuals, children from a former marriage, deceased children, adopted children, foster children, and any other relationships that apply to your situation, including the extent of dependency.

This section also lets you record the charitable organizations that are important to you—your congregation, synod, and other ELS ministries, for example. These organizations affect many people by bringing to them God's saving gospel. There are three reasons why Christians often give to people. Two of them are scriptural. The third is tradition and needs to be carefully evaluated.

Reason 1—Love

The first reason to give is love. There are those for whom you may wish to make provisions, because of your love for them. This is scriptural. *For God so loved ... that he gave ...* John 3:16

Love is also a reason to list charitable organizations. You love supporting God's work here on earth. As Jesus loved when he looked over Jerusalem and wept, you also love a lost, hurting, and dying world. You love those people who minister in your name and on your behalf.

Reason 2—Dependency

The second reason to give is dependency. Who is dependent upon you for financial support—your spouse, minor children, aged parents, individuals with special needs? Those who would suffer financial loss at your death take a high priority, according to Scripture as well as state law.

But if anyone does not provide for his own family, and especially for his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. 1 Timothy 5:8 EHV

Your church, synod, and other ELS ministries depend on you to carry out their mission. They should also be considered.

Reason 3—Tradition

The third reason why people give is tradition. Is this a valid reason? Neither the Scriptures nor the laws of the state say you must divide your property among family members. If you are not giving to them out of love, or if they do not qualify as dependents, you may want to reconsider your plans for your estate.

How do you give property to people in such a way that it will help them?

Should we not look at what we give in light of what is best for those we love? Experience reveals few people who are truly satisfied and at peace from wealth which they have not earned.

Paul writes, “You will be made rich in every way so that you may be generous^[4] in every way, which produces thanksgiving to God through us.” (2 Cor. 9:11 EHV). This gives us insight into God’s blessings and what he would have us do with what he gives us.

Through proper planning, you can give to your family:

1. A strong Christian heritage, based on Scripture and confirmed by a Christian lifestyle
2. An honorable and just name
3. A good education
4. An appreciation for the value of work

You must decide whether you should give more than this, or if anything additional will only carry with it burdens and responsibilities which can stifle initiative.

The greatest inheritance that you can leave to your children, grandchildren, and to a hurting and dying world is:

1. A strong church and synod with opportunities to worship, serve, and proclaim God’s plan of salvation at home and throughout the world
2. A Christian system of education that teaches not only how to earn a living but also how to live a life for Christ.

Peter writes about our receiving “...an inheritance that is undying, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you. Through faith you are being protected by God’s power for the salvation that is ready to be revealed at the end of time.” 1 Peter 1:4,5 EHV

Giving to the Lord through Your Estate Plan

Your Christian giving counselor can discuss with you the different instruments available for giving through your estate plan (or just in general) to best benefit you, your family, and the ministries you’d like to support. These options include:

Current Gifts:

- Cash
- Appreciated assets
- Donor advised fund
- Other options like life estates; stock options; or gifting grain, livestock, other appreciated property, etc.

Deferred Gifts:

- Government savings bonds
- IRA/401K/Keough plans
- Payable on Death accounts
- Life insurance

Lifetime Income Gifts:

- Charitable gift annuity
- Charitable remainder trust

If you would like to give to a variety of ELS ministries you can do so via the ELS Foundation. The ELS Foundation, Inc. has as its purpose to provide, direct, channel and manage funds for religious, charitable and educational purposes on behalf of donors who want to benefit some portion of synod work. The foundation provides these services to ELS members, participating ELS agencies and to ELS congregations.

The Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation, through your Christian giving counselor, can provide you with a “Letter of Instruction” (at the end of this booklet) to allocate a portion of a gift to each of several recipient organizations or areas of ministry. This can include congregations, missions both foreign and home, Christian schools at all levels, organizations supported in conjunction with the synod. If at some point in the future you wish to change your letter of instruction, you can do so at no cost through your giving counselor.

“Therefore go and gather disciples from all nations...” Matthew 28:19

Since your gift for the Lord’s work is routed through the ELS Foundation, your attorney does not have to change your estate plan. If you are interested in learning about the different synodical ministries available for gifts, talk to your Christian giving counselor or see the Estate Planning Booklet. If you do decide to make a gift to any charitable beneficiary, it is important to identify the charitable beneficiary by their legal name, address, and tax identification number.

Below is the information for the ELS and Synod Foundation. Note that in order for your intentions to be accurately carried out, all gifts to the ELS Foundation should be directed to the ELS area of ministry or endowment of your choice via a Letter of Instruction (p.33-copiable).

Evangelical Lutheran Synod (Tax ID #23-7181739) - *Unrestricted gifts to ELS & its ministries*
Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation (Tax ID #81-4376991) - **Restricted or endowed gifts*
6 Browns Ct
Mankato, MN 56001
507-344-7311 or 507-469-9656
E-mail: elsynod@blc.edu

www.els.org

***Consider an Endowment Fund**

Some Christians are concerned that making a large planned gift to their church might disrupt regular offerings. Experience has proven that this need not be so.

Your gift can serve as an example to others. By setting up gifts to an endowment/trust fund so that the interest rather than the principal is available for use, your influence for specific ministries can continue into the future while not affecting regular giving. Thus your gift can stand as a testament to your witness and serve as a beacon for others to follow.

If your congregation does not now have an endowment/trust fund, your ELS Christian giving counselor is available to help your church leaders establish one. Guidance information is available upon request. Your counselor can also better inform you about the synod's endowment funds for missions and Christian education.

The earth is the Lord's and everything that fills it, the world and all who live in it. Psalm 24:1 EHV

Listing the Property God Has Entrusted to You

Refer to Part II, pages 17-18

You should take a complete inventory of the property in your estate. Doing so will give you a true picture of all the blessings the Lord has given you to manage here on earth. It could make you aware of certain tax consequences. It will also help you as you begin the process of deciding how much you want to give, to whom, and in what manner. If you decide on a percentage gift for the Lord's work it will give you an idea of the approximate value of that gift.

When you are listing your property it is important that you clearly convey to your planners how your property is held. The four most common types of property ownership are:

1. individual ownership
2. joint tenancy with right of survivorship
3. tenancy in common
4. community property

It is not practical or necessary to have professional appraisals on your property at this time. However, it is important that you furnish your professional counsel with reasonable values on your property. Be realistic. Do not over-value or be too conservative. Use fair market values. For example, what have similar homes in your neighborhood recently sold for? A figure of \$1,000 per room can be a guideline for calculating the value of furniture and appliances. Collections, hobbies, jewelry, and antiques can be more difficult to value. Describe them with as much detail as possible for your professional advisor.

It is likewise important that you list your liabilities, items such as outstanding mortgages, bills, etc. Subtracting liabilities from assets will give you a reasonable estimate of your net worth.

Likely you also have personal items which do not have great financial value but their family value is great. Some state laws permit the use of a separate list or "personal property memorandum" to dispose of tangible personal property. Please consult with your Christian giving counselor if your state of residence permits such a document. This is NOT a part of your legal will; you can change it at any time. However, it is important that your personal representative has a current copy or knows where a current copy is stored so that he can fulfill your desires. If you have one, you may attach it at the "Additional Information for My Counselor" section on page 20.

Personal Nominees

Refer to Part III, page 19

Personal Representative (Executor/Executrix)

The personal representative will be responsible for carrying out the terms of your will at the time of death. The personal representative may be your spouse, or if there is no surviving spouse, an adult child, a corporate trustee, or even a trusted friend. Here are important points to keep in mind as you select your personal representative:

Availability

Be sure to consider a personal representative who will be readily available when needed. It is best if he or she lives near you.

Qualifications

Is the person qualified through experience, business management, etc.? Above all, is the person trustworthy? If he or she is, then you can waive a bond for the personal representative and save your estate substantial dollars.

Degree of Involvement

The distribution of household goods and personal effects, the sale of the family home, and/or the continuation of the family business or farm may place your personal representative in potential conflict with family members.

Don't overlook the possibility of a bank serving as personal representative. Banks don't move away or die. If personal involvement in decisions is desired, a family member can be appointed to serve with the bank, with powers limited to certain management decisions. Be sure to name an alternate personal representative if you choose not to use a bank or trust company.

A Guardian for Minor Children – *Special Note For Younger Families...*

One of the most important reasons for a young family to have an estate plan is to name a guardian for minor children. It is impossible to replace parents, but if death occurs someone must fill that critical role. *When making that selection, important considerations to keep in mind are:*

- *A Christian Faith:* If you are not there to nurture the faith of your children, then select people that you are confident will bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord as you would have done.
- *Willingness to Take On Responsibility:* Speak with the potential guardian(s) to be certain they are willing to serve in this way.
- *Experience as Parents:* We learn to be parents by being parents, one child and one day at a time. Look for people who are learning what it means to be good parents.

- *The nomination of an alternate guardian* is also important should the individual or family you have chosen be unable or unwilling to serve when called upon.

The Trustee

The trustee is an individual or an entity that holds title to property for the benefit of another person or persons. A trustee should have the skill of money management and investment. The trustee and the guardian may be the same person, but occasionally they are not. A trustee may be a corporate entity, such as a trust company. You may also choose co-trustees. For example, you may choose a family member and a corporate trustee to act together to carry out your instructions.

Durable Power of Attorney

All of us face the risk that due to injury, illness, or age we become incapable of making business and other legal decisions for our lives. It is important that we legally appoint someone to serve in our behalf in such an event. All of us need a Durable Power of Attorney. Your spouse can serve in this role but you also need a successor such as one of your children or someone else, possibly the person appointed as your personal representative. The attorney who drafts your will is also qualified to draft your Durable Power of Attorney. Your Christian giving counselor can discuss this with you and provide a list of area professionals.

So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who belong to the household of faith. Galatians 6:10 EHV

Power of Attorney for Health Care

You have the right to make decisions about your health care.

- No health care can be given to you over your objection, and necessary health care cannot be stopped or withheld if you object.
- Yet you may not always be able to speak for yourself.

Christian Life Resources (www.christianliferesources.com) and National Right to Life (www.nrlc.org) have developed documents which meet the laws of each of the states and which provides helpful information about what God says to us regarding the sanctity of life and health care provisions. They are materials that are “state specific.”

A *Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care—Christian Version*, or a *Will to Live Durable Power of Attorney* are legal documents in which you outline your directives for health care and appoint a health care agent(s). You can obtain this document online at (www.ChristianLifeResources.com) or (www.nrlc.org/medethics/willtolive/states/) or through your Christian giving counselor.

An attorney who works in estate planning can also provide you with your state’s specific health care directive. Be aware that some secular documents do not always reflect your Christian values. Many people have statements that they may all too late discover are not in accord with their Christian faith and values.

Your Planners

Refer to Part IV, page 20

Estate planning is not a “do-it-yourself” project. Competent counsel, with expertise in estate planning, tax laws, and tax planning is extremely important. If you do not have an attorney who works in the field of estate planning and if you desire assistance in securing such an attorney, the ELS Christian giving counselor can be of help.

Your ELS Giving Counselor along with other Christian planners often work with qualified attorneys and will be pleased to give you references. Your ELS Christian Giving Counselor is also a valuable member of your team. He can give you information of a general nature regarding estate planning and how various instruments function. He is especially knowledgeable in the area of charitable estate planning and is able to advise regarding how gifts can be beneficially given to congregations, the synod, and other agencies in our fellowship.

The wisdom of the prudent is to give thought to their ways. Proverbs 14:8 NIV 84

Property Distribution

There are various legal instruments to help you distribute your property quickly and efficiently in accordance with your goals. A brief acquaintance with them is helpful before you speak with your ELS Christian giving counselor and legal advisors so that you will be prepared to select those which best serve your needs.

For example, suppose you have decided that 10 percent of your estate is to go to a certain individual or charity. You include that in your will, but not in your beneficiary designations for life insurance, etc. What you intend will never happen. Your 10 percent will be limited to that part of your estate controlled by your will, which may be a very small percent of your total estate.

There may be a tax issue which may make this important also. Suppose you want to make a gift to a qualified charity. To accomplish your desire in a tax efficient manner it may be best to specify that your gift for charity be given from your retirement account rather than from other assets in your estate. The reason is that when heirs receive an inheritance from a retirement account, the inheritance is subject to federal and state income tax. Your attorney will explain these issues to you when you plan these things

Your estate could be set up to be a Tax Time Bomb or it could be a gifting opportunity!

For example: If you inherit a \$100,000, on taxable accounts there is a mandatory 20% tax withholding (-\$20,000). You then receive \$80,000 of your inheritance. But then if your heir is in the 28% tax bracket, he is taxed at 28%, so an additional \$8,000 goes for tax. But after Federal tax your state may have taxes which may add as much as 10% (e.g. If 6.5% another \$5,200 is given to the state. Bottom line inheritance: \$66,800. If it comes from a “tax-deferred annuity, the penalty is even greater! **It pays to plan!**

There are various ways you can transfer property:

By Title

For example, if a house is titled “joint tenancy with right of survivorship” and one of the owners dies, ownership of the house is transferred to the surviving owner(s) named in the title without probate.

Beneficiary Designation

Life insurance contracts and most pension plans provide the opportunity to name the person(s) who is to receive those assets upon your death. Again, they are transferred directly without probate.

Payable on Death (POD) Accounts

Passbook savings, bank notes, and Church Extension Fund notes, for example, can belong immediately upon death to designated people and charities by filling out a simple form available from the issuing institution—again, without probate.

Will

After your death this legal document specifies who will receive the assets that remain in your estate and that have not in some other legal manner already been designated to pass to selected heirs.

Trusts

Property which you have placed under the administration of a trustee or trustees will pass directly to others according to the provisions of the trust. This may occur during your lifetime and/or after your death.

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that although he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that through his poverty you might become rich. 2 Corinthians 8:9 EHV

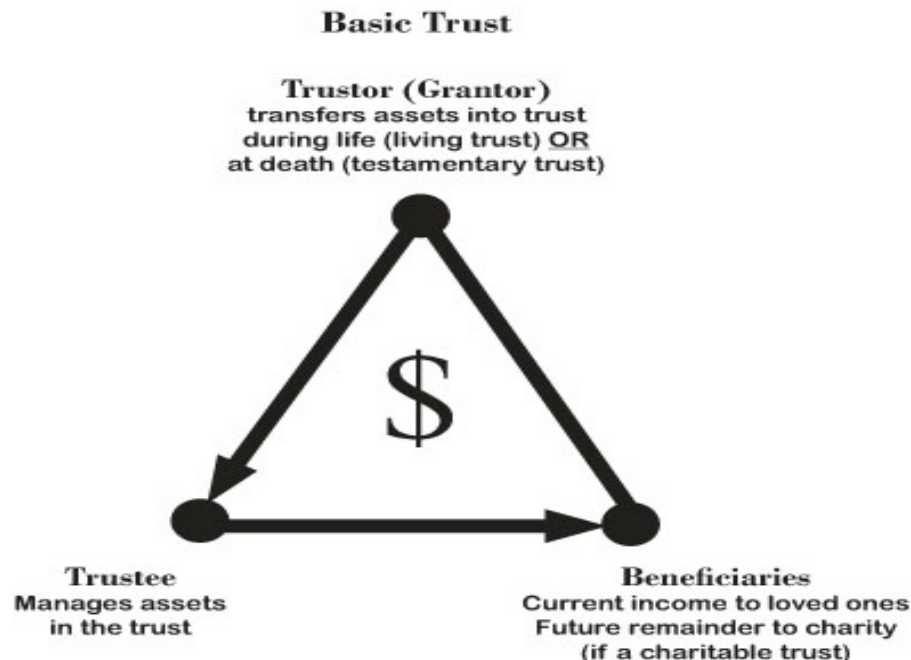
Characteristics of Living Trusts

1. In most states a living trust requires the retitling and monitoring of assets in the trust. In community property states, this may not be necessary.
2. Assets held in a living trust avoid probate and pass directly to designated beneficiaries.
3. Privacy is often retained by the living trust grantors.
4. Assets in a living trust are under the control of the trustee. You can serve as trustee and provide for successor trustees so long as you are living and mentally competent.
5. Assets in a living trust require management by a trustee. This may incur costs and/or fees.
6. A living trust can control assets in more than one state.
7. A living trust is accompanied by a pour-over will appointing guardians for minors, special needs, and **the trust can then be used to make current and deferred charitable gifts.**
8. In many states a living trust is difficult to contest.

Ways to Distribute Your Estate in Your Estate Plan

How you distribute your estate is another matter of importance. There are various ways in which you can make distributions to loved ones:

- **Specific Bequest:** Such a bequest designates a specific amount, specific property, or a percentage of the assets that the will controls. Several such designations can be made effective after death.
- **Residual Bequest:** After provisions have been made for loved ones, a charity can receive all or a fractional portion of the estate's residue.
- **Contingent Bequest:** The charity receives all or a designated portion of the assets controlled by the will in the event of the death of another beneficiary.
- **Trust Remainder Bequest (also referred to as a Testamentary Trust):** A trust can be created by a will which provides income to a loved one for a specified period of time. Charity receives the remaining trust principal after the lifetime of the trust has expired. Can also designate IRA/401(k) or 403(b) to such a trust.



Summary

A good estate plan can carry you and your heirs safely over many dangerous and potentially costly pitfalls. The foundation of a good estate plan is your will, carefully constructed by you and your attorney, in partnership with your professional counselors.

As we honor our Lord and Savior for our salvation we also remember that God has given us everything, especially his Son Jesus. We respond to his undeserved love with thankful gifts to our family, friends, church, and various charities.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endures forever. Psalm 107:1 EHV

Information for Your Planners

The remaining pages of this book are for important information that will be useful to your planners (pp. 15-20) and family (pp. 21-29). After you complete this “Information for Your Planners” section, tear or cut out the forms and make copies for your planners and family.

What Is Your Present Situation?

Do you have a will?	You:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Your spouse:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Have trusts been created?	<input type="checkbox"/> Testamentary	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	<input type="checkbox"/> Living	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Have gifts been made?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are pre-nuptial agreements in effect?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you have minor children?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there children from a previous marriage?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you have children who qualify to receive government support because of special conditions?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you own property in more than one state?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you have a detailed list of your property?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are community property agreements in effect?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you have nursing home insurance?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are you in need of an attorney who is qualified in estate planning?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you have a durable power of attorney?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you have a power of attorney for health care?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you expect any inheritance in the near future?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are you now or might you be subject to estate tax?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you want to make a gift for the Lord’s work but you also need income from the assets you wish to give?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Doing the Will of God from Your Heart (Ephesians 6:6)

Part I: The People in Your Life

Date: _____

Full name: _____ Birthdate: _____ Social Sec. #: _____

Address/city/state/zip: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____ Best time to call: _____

E-mail: _____ Congregation & City: _____

Employer: _____ Occupation: _____

Adjusted gross income: _____

Marital status: _____ Married _____ Single _____ Widowed _____ Divorced, separated

Spouse (if married)

Full name: _____ Birthdate: _____ Social Sec. #: _____

E-mail: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Employer: _____ Occupation: _____

Adjusted gross income: _____

Loved ones to remember

Full Name/Relation	Date of Birth	Age	Notes/Provisions
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Do any of your children have permanent disabilities? If so, please explain:

I/we want to continue Christ's mission through: (fill in blanks for those which apply)

Name	City, State	Notes/Provisions:
Congregation:	_____	_____
Synod:	_____	_____
ELS Agency:	_____	_____
Other:	_____	_____

Part II: Listing the Property God Has Entrusted to You

	Yourself	Spouse	Joint or Community
Current Assets			
Real Estate			
Home	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Other Real Estate	_____	_____	_____
Cash and Securities			
Cash	_____	_____	_____
Checking accounts	_____	_____	_____
Savings accounts	_____	_____	_____
Certificates of Deposit	_____	_____	_____
Treasury bills	_____	_____	_____
Stocks	_____	_____	_____
Bonds	_____	_____	_____
Mutual funds	_____	_____	_____
Credit union shares	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____
Personal Property			
Car 1	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
Car 2	_____	_____	_____
Car 3	_____	_____	_____
Rec./hobby equipment	_____	_____	_____
Household furnishings	_____	_____	_____
Jewelry	_____	_____	_____

Collectibles			
Antiques			
Other			
Other Assets			
Personal life insurance (death benefits)	\$	\$	\$
Trusts			
Annuities			
Employer life insurance			
Profit sharing			
Pension(s)			
IRA			
Roth IRA			
TSA/403B			
401K			
SEP			
Keogh			
Ownership interest in business			
Potential inheritance or loan repayment			
Total Assets	\$	\$	\$
	Yourself	Spouse	Joint or Community
Current Liabilities			
Mortgage debts	\$	\$	\$
Installment debts			
Loans (personal/college)			
Insurance loans			
Current bills outstanding			
Taxes due			
Miscellaneous			
Total Liabilities	\$	\$	\$
	Yourself	Spouse	Joint or Community
Net Worth			
Total assets	\$	\$	\$
Minus total liabilities			
Net Assets	\$	\$	\$

Part III: Personal Nominees (to serve with or without bond)

A. Personal representative (Executor)

1st choice: _____

City/State: _____ Phone: _____

Alternate: _____

City/State: _____ Phone: _____

B. Guardian

1st choice: _____

City/State: _____ Phone: _____

Alternate: _____

City/State: _____ Phone: _____

C. Trustee (for revocable living trust or minor's trust)

1st choice: _____

City/State: _____ Phone: _____

Alternate: _____

City/State: _____ Phone: _____

D. Trustee (for irrevocable living trust or minor's trust)

1st choice: _____

City/State: _____ Phone: _____

Alternate: _____

City/State: _____ Phone: _____

E. Durable power of attorney

1st choice: _____

City/State: _____ Phone: _____

Alternate: _____

City/State: _____ Phone: _____

Part IV: Your Planners

Tax Advisor: _____ Phone: _____

Attorney: _____ Phone: _____

Financial Planner: _____ Phone: _____

Bank Trust Officer: _____ Phone: _____

Christian Giving Counselor: _____ Phone: _____

Insurance Agent: _____ Phone: _____

Additional Information for My Professional Counselors

-
1. Christian preamble (pages 4-5): Use example # _____. If you have written your own preamble, please attach it here.
 2. Personal Property Memorandum: If you have one, please attach it here.
 3. Minor's trust – ages of distribution? _____
 4. I wish to set up my distributions by establishing a "Letter of Instruction" with the ELS Foundation. Please send me the forms that help me do this! _____

Be sure to call, write, or text your giving counselor for a form or further details.

Office: 507-344-7311. Email: synod

Further Notes:

Information for Your Family

Name: _____ Date: _____

After you are taken home to heaven, the last thing you want to do to your family members is make an already trying time more difficult. This section includes important information to help your family manage your affairs after you are gone. After completing this section, tear it out and, along with a copy of the "Information for Your Planners" section, provide to a family member or keep in a safe location.

Funeral Arrangements

Funeral Director Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address/city/state/zip: _____

_____ Funeral expenses were pre-paid. Contract information: _____

Special Burial Instructions

1. Cemetery: _____
Address/city/state/zip: _____

Lot number: _____ Location: _____ Deed is located: _____

2. Disposition (check only those which apply)

_____ Memorial service without casket

_____ Closed casket service

_____ Open casket service

_____ Cremation of remains. Disposition of ashes to be in the following manner: _____

_____ Portions of my body are authorized to be used for medicinal purposes. Specific organs and instructions are as follows: _____

_____ If necessary, or desirable, I authorize a postmortem autopsy.

_____ Additional instructions: _____

Funeral Services

1. To be held at: (check one or both) _____ Funeral home _____ Church

2. Church: _____ Community: _____

3. Music: _____ Soloist _____ Congregational _____ Chorus
Hymn selections: _____

4. Scripture passages: _____

5. Pall bearers: _____

6. Memorials to be designated to the following groups, agencies, organizations, and/or charities: _____

Obituary Information

Date of birth: _____ Place: _____

Date of baptism: _____ Church: _____

Date of Confirmation: _____ Church: _____

Marriage Information

Date: _____ To whom: _____ Place: _____

Education: _____

Places and types of employment: _____

Member of the following clubs, organizations, or branch of military service (indicate any areas of special service or honor received): _____

Offices held: _____

Church offices held: _____

Survivors: (include names and addresses)

Spouse: _____

Children: _____

Number of grandchildren: _____ Great-grandchildren: _____

Parents: _____

Brothers and sisters: _____

Other relatives and friends of special mention: _____

Preceded in death by (parents, spouse, children, brothers, and sisters): _____

Please call the following individuals and inform them of my death. (Name and Phone number)

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 8. _____ |

Important Documents

Last Will and Testament

1. Location of my Last Will and Testament: _____
2. Date signed: _____

Trust Information

1. Types of trusts: (Check those that apply and list trustee.)
 - _____ A. Testamentary _____
 - _____ B. Charitable Annuity _____
 - _____ C. Unitrust _____
 - _____ D. Pour-over Unitrust _____
 - _____ E. Lead Trust _____
 - _____ F. Funeral _____
 - _____ G. Other, including Pooled Income Fund _____
2. For details, including assets, beneficiaries, and terms of disposition, see trust agreements located: _____

Annuity Information

1. List annuities, giving face amount, income, company/charity, address, representative and phone:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
 - d. _____
 - e. _____
 - f. _____
2. Annuity documents are located: _____

Stocks, Bonds, and Investment Funds

3. List of holdings. (Give number of shares, type—corporate, government, municipal, utility, etc., and name. You can also attach a copy of your broker statement that covers this...)
 - a. _____
Date purchased: _____ Cost basis: _____
 - b. _____
Date purchased: _____ Cost basis: _____
 - c. _____
Date purchased: _____ Cost basis: _____
 - d. _____
Date purchased: _____ Cost basis: _____
 - e. _____
Date purchased: _____ Cost basis: _____
 - f. _____
Date purchased: _____ Cost basis: _____
 - g. _____
Date purchased: _____ Cost basis: _____
4. My broker is: _____
Address: _____ Phone: _____

_____ Additional list attached

Banking Information

Banks, Savings & Loan, Credit Unions:

1. Name: _____ Address: _____
Representative: _____ Phone: _____
_____ Savings—Account number(s): _____
_____ Checking—Account number(s): _____
_____ Loan—Loan number: _____ Amount: \$ _____

2. Name: _____ Address: _____
 Representative: _____ Phone: _____
 _____ Savings—Account number(s): _____
 _____ Checking—Account number(s): _____
 _____ Loan—Loan number: _____ Amount: \$ _____
3. Name: _____ Address: _____
 Representative: _____ Phone: _____
 _____ Savings—Account number(s): _____
 _____ Checking—Account number(s): _____
 _____ Loan—Loan number: _____ Amount: \$ _____
4. Name: _____ Address: _____
 Representative: _____ Phone: _____
 _____ Savings—Account number(s): _____
 _____ Checking—Account number(s): _____
 _____ Loan—Loan number: _____ Amount: \$ _____
5. Other: _____

Safe deposit box:

Location: _____ Key number: _____

Bank statements, cancelled checks, and documents for tax purposes:

Location: _____

Personal safe combination:

_____ Located in safe deposit box

_____ Also known by: _____

Insurances

I. Life Insurances

1. Company: _____ Representative: _____
 Address: _____ Phone: _____
 Policy number: _____ Face amount: _____
 _____ Loan? — Amount: _____
2. Company: _____ Representative: _____
 Address: _____ Phone: _____
 Policy number: _____ Face amount: _____
 _____ Loan? — Amount: _____
3. Company: _____ Representative: _____
 Address: _____ Phone: _____
 Policy number: _____ Face amount: _____
 _____ Loan? — Amount: _____

4. Company: _____ Representative: _____
 Address: _____ Phone: _____
 Policy number: _____ Face amount: _____
 _____ Loan? — Amount: _____
5. Company: _____ Representative: _____
 Address: _____ Phone: _____
 Policy number: _____ Face amount: _____
 _____ Loan? — Amount: _____

Policies are located: _____

II. Other Insurances

1. Automobile Insurance Company: _____
 Agent: _____ Phone: _____
 Policy number: _____ Policy location: _____
2. Medical Insurance Company: _____
 Agent: _____ Phone: _____
 Policy number: _____ Policy location: _____
3. Homeowner's Insurance Company: _____
 Agent: _____ Phone: _____
 Policy number: _____ Policy location: _____
4. Business Insurance Company: _____
 Agent: _____ Phone: _____
 Policy number: _____ Policy location: _____
5. Special Liability Company: _____
 Agent: _____ Phone: _____
 Policy number: _____ Policy location: _____

III. Special Insurances

1. Clubs, Organizations (i.e. AAA, American Express, Diners, Mobil, Shell, etc.)
- a. Policy: _____ Location: _____ Amount: _____
 - b. Policy: _____ Location: _____ Amount: _____
 - c. Policy: _____ Location: _____ Amount: _____
2. Employer Insurances (Health, Life, Accident, etc.)
- a. Policy: _____ Location: _____ Amount: _____
 - b. Policy: _____ Location: _____ Amount: _____
 - c. Policy: _____ Location: _____ Amount: _____
3. Other
- a. Policy: _____ Location: _____ Amount: _____
 - b. Policy: _____ Location: _____ Amount: _____
 - c. Policy: _____ Location: _____ Amount: _____

Home Information

My/our home is registered under the following name(s): _____

The deed can be found: _____

Purchase price: _____ Date: _____

Estimated value now: _____ Mortgage amount: _____

Other Documents

1. Credit Cards

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| a. Company: _____ | Card number: _____ |
| b. Company: _____ | Card number: _____ |
| c. Company: _____ | Card number: _____ |
| d. Company: _____ | Card number: _____ |
| e. Company: _____ | Card number: _____ |
| f. Company: _____ | Card number: _____ |
| g. Company: _____ | Card number: _____ |

If cards are lost (missing after an accident, etc.), notify companies immediately.

2. General

- a. Birth certificate is located: _____
- b. Title insurance(s) is located: _____
- c. Automobile/truck titles and registrations are located: _____
- d. Income tax records are located: _____
- e. Naturalization and/or citizenship papers are located: _____
- f. Copyrights/patents are located: _____
- g. Special keys and their locations:
 - 1. _____ 4. _____
 - 2. _____ 5. _____
 - 3. _____ 6. _____
- h. User names and passwords for computer programs and online accounts:
 - 1. _____ 4. _____
 - 2. _____ 5. _____
 - 3. _____ 6. _____

My SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER is: _____

My MEDICARE/MEDICAID NUMBER is: _____

My VETERANS BENEFITS NUMBER is: _____

III. Pension and Retirement Benefits: Pension and retirement benefits will be forthcoming from the following sources and in the following amounts.

1. Pensions

- a. Company: _____ Amount: _____
b. Company: _____ Amount: _____
c. Company: _____ Amount: _____
d. Company: _____ Amount: _____

2. Keogh or IRAs

- a. Savings Institution: _____ Amount: _____
b. Savings Institution: _____ Amount: _____
c. Savings Institution: _____ Amount: _____

Also consult the insurance information on pages 25-27.

3. Business Interests (Partnerships, corporations, proprietorships, etc.)

- a. Percentage of Ownership: _____ Description of Business or Asset: _____
b. Percentage of Ownership: _____ Description of Business or Asset: _____
c. Percentage of Ownership: _____ Description of Business or Asset: _____

4. Real Estate in Addition to My/Our Home

Nature of Ownership	Date Purchased	Cost	Mortgage	Approx. Current (Title) Value
1. _____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
2. _____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
3. _____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
4. _____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
5. _____	_____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____

Additional information on these properties can be found: _____

For assistance with any of this contact: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Debts Description

Long term obligations, other than mortgages and business partnerships listed earlier, include: (Type of debt, location of documents, terms, description, and balance)

- | | | |
|----|-------|----------|
| 1. | _____ | \$ _____ |
| 2. | _____ | \$ _____ |
| 3. | _____ | \$ _____ |
| 4. | _____ | \$ _____ |
| 5. | _____ | \$ _____ |
| 6. | _____ | \$ _____ |

Covered by insurance? ____ Yes ____ No

Additional information and instructions: _____

Debts Owed to Us

(Owed by, terms, location of supporting documents, and amount)

- | | | |
|----|-------|----------|
| 1. | _____ | \$ _____ |
| 2. | _____ | \$ _____ |

Further Notes:

Glossary of Terms

administrator: A person appointed by the court to settle an estate.

appointment, power of: The right of a person to designate, by will or otherwise, who is to receive certain assets in the estate when a person dies.

asset: Any possession with a market value.

attestation and witness clause: The last clause in a will, in which testator and witnesses sign.

beneficiary: One who benefits from a will or trust.

bequest: The gift of property by will.

bond: A guarantee made binding by a money forfeit.

by-pass trust: An arrangement to pass property to heirs to maximize the marital deduction allowed by federal law.

charitable remainder trust: A trust that gives the remainder of an estate to a charity after all provisions for paying an income have been carried out.

codicil: A separate document making changes in the will.

commencement clause: The introductory statement in a will.

common disaster clause: A phrase setting forth the distribution of an estate in the event all heirs are killed in a common accident.

community property: In the states of AZ, CA, ID, LA, NV, NM, TX, WA and to a certain extent WI, property that is acquired by husband and wife during their marriage.

conservator: The court appointed guardian and steward of a person's property or of a person.

decedent: A deceased person.

descent and distribution: The state law that governs how property passes when no will is left.

devise: Gift of real estate through a will.

donor: Giver of a gift or power of appointment.

durable power of attorney: A legal instrument authorizing another person to act on your behalf.

estate: All of the assets (property, cash, stocks, etc.) a person accumulates during his/her lifetime.

estate taxes: Taxes levied on the estate of a person at the time of his/her death.

executor (personal representative): A man named by a testator to settle an estate.

executrix (personal representative): A woman named by a testator to settle an estate.

fiduciary: A person or organization appointed to carry out the wishes of the testator.

gift annuity: A gift agreement which provides the donor guaranteed, stipulated lifetime annual payments.

guardian: A person named in a will to care for minor children.

heir: One who receives property or would be considered entitled to receive property from a deceased person.

holographic: Literally, “one’s own writing,” refers to a will made out entirely in the handwriting of the testator. Not legal in all states.

intestate: Literally, “without a will.” A person who leaves no will dies intestate.

irrevocable: Not possible to take back or retrieve.

joint tenancy: When two or more people own the same property at the same time, with the understanding that at the death of any one, the survivor will own the whole.

letters testamentary: Written authority given by the court to an executor to settle an estate.

living will: A legal instrument authorizing another person to make medical decisions for you.

marital deduction: The amount of assets that an individual can transfer tax-free to a surviving spouse, per federal statute. Since 1982, the marital deduction is an unlimited amount.

personal memorandum: A list for the disposition of tangible personal property.

personal representative (executor/executrix): A person named by a testator or courts to settle an estate.

probate: Proving the validity of a will and executing its terms under court direction.

remainder interest: The amount that is left after other provisions of the estate are distributed.

residue: The remainder of an estate after payment of debts and bequests.

revocable: May be retrieved, taken back, or changed.

revocation clause: The clause in a will that revokes all previous wills.

tenancy in common: When two or more people own the same property at the same time, not necessarily equally, with no right of survivorship, so that the deceased co-tenant’s share passes through the estate.

testamentary: Related to the disposition of property at death.

testator: A man who makes out a will.

testatrix: A woman who makes out a will.

trust: A right of property, real or personal, held by one party for the benefit of another.

trustee: A person appointed or required by law to manage a trust.

trustor (grantor): One who transfers assets into a trust at death (testamentary trust) or during life (living trust).

trust income: The income a beneficiary receives from a trust.

will: A legal document through which an individual directs the disposition of his or her possessions after his or her death. A will does not go into effect until death and may be changed or revoked at any time during life.

Consider a Gift for One of These Ministries

(Gifts to other ministries possible... Please call).

1. **Your Church and its Preaching and Teaching ministries** – We need every congregation to be a mission congregation. Remember your church. Remember your school and its education and outreach ministries.
2. **Home Mission Work – Critical to sustaining our ELS presence in the USA**
It is the goal of the ELS home missions program to open new missions, join the seminary in supporting the Vicar-in-Mission training program helping our future pastors to be mission minded, and support cross-cultural opportunities through our existing churches. The fields in the USA are ripe for the harvest. You can help with a gift to Home Missions even perpetuating your gifts through the CEF (*see below*).
3. **Foreign Mission Work – Including Thoughts of Faith**
The Lord's directive to go into all the world has prompted our synod to send and support missionaries to Peru, Chile, Korea, India, Ukraine, Latvia and in the Czech Republic and beyond. Help us start, sustain, and administer our world missions.
4. **Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary**
The purpose of our seminary is to find zealous, Christian men and to train them for the public ministry for our churches and missions. Scholarships are needed as well as general support.
5. **Bethany Lutheran College**
BLC is the largest, single ministry of the ELS. Bethany enables the youth of our synod and others from around the world to prepare for many earthly careers in a Christian environment. With a growing list of majors they could use our support.
6. **The Evangelical Lutheran Synod or The Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation**
Founded in 1918, the **ELS** consist of some 134 congregations in 19 states. Within American Lutheranism, the ELS is a firm voice contending for the inerrancy of Scripture. **The ELS Foundation** exists to serve the members of the ELS and to receive, administer, and manage gifts and investments for all its missions and ministries, including your own ELS church.
7. **Church Extension Fund**
CEF is a restricted fund used as a revolving loan, at reasonable rates, to purchase land and to build churches or schools. Your gift to CEF will never stop working for the Lord.
8. **Lutheran Schools of the ELS**
Encouraging Christ-centered, Gospel-predominated schools focused on excellence in education. With outreach as a focus, our Christian schools are a great way to help our churches grow spiritually as well as help them reach lost souls with the Gospel.



Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation

6 Browns Court
Mankato, MN 56001

LETTER OF INSTRUCTION

Donor Name(s)

City, State, Zip Code

Address

Description of Gift and/or sources of gifts

This Letter of Instruction is to provide you with notification that we respectfully request that all assets from our above-mentioned gift to the Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation be distributed in the following manner:

_____ % to _____

_____ % to _____

_____ % to _____

_____ % to _____

_____ % to _____

_____ % to _____

With this Letter of Instruction, we reserve the right to change this distribution request, if we provide another Letter of Instruction to the Estate Planning Office at a later date. Should any of the listed ministries, no longer be in existence or no longer be in Christian fellowship with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod at the distribution of these gifts, we request that the respective portion of the distribution be used in a manner deemed appropriate by the Board of Trustees or other appropriate governing body of the ELS Foundation, Inc.

Signed this _____ day of _____, Month _____ Year

Signature (Donor)

Signature (Donor)

The Evangelical Lutheran Synod hereby gratefully acknowledges receipt of this Letter of Instruction.

Signed this _____ day of _____, Month _____ Year

Signature (ELS Administrator or BOT Representative)

Signature (ELS Giving Counselor) Phone: 507.344.7311



*Evangelical Lutheran Synod Foundation is a 501(c)(3) corporation -
Federal Tax ID: 81-4376991 - Governed by the Board of Trustees of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.*

Estate Planning Checklist

Check each item when completed

- ☐ Legal name, permanent address, date of birth
- ☐ If divorced or separated, provide details
- ☐ Pre or post marital agreements
- ☐ Current wills and codicils
- ☐ Living trust agreements (revocable or irrevocable)
- ☐ Names and addresses of children and other heirs
- ☐ Names and addresses of persons to be your personal representative, guardian or trustee
- ☐ Life insurance policies
- ☐ Information on pensions, profit sharing and deferred compensation plans
- ☐ Business agreements related to corporations, partnerships and sole proprietorship interests.
- ☐ Listing of all real estate, including type of ownership, present fair market value, and mortgages
- ☐ Listing of personal property, including ownership, location, and value
- ☐ Outline of objectives and disposition of your estate
- ☐ Legal names and addresses of charitable organizations you wish to benefit
- ☐ Power of Attorney for Health Care
- ☐ Durable Power of Attorney
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Other: _____



The Purpose of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod

The synod exists to carry out the command of Jesus Christ
to preach the Gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15;
Matthew 28:19-20),
to contend for the faith (Jude 3), and
to promote the development of Christian Life within its
membership (Galatians 5:22-25).



Contact Information

*Giving Counselor
Estate Planning Office
6 Browns Ct.
Mankato, MN 56001
Office and FAX: 507.344. 7311
Email: danbasel@blc.edu | www.els.org*

(Pic: Synod Offices & Seminary)