

# 14 WAYS TO GIVE GENEROUSLY TO YOUR CHURCH



**D**o you feel led to cultivate a spirit of generosity in 2019? Do you want to give more so your church can do more to transform lives? While cash is the most common method of giving, a number of other options exist for members and friends who resolve to give generously in the New Year. Below are some examples of how you can support the church through your giving.

**1. GIVE CASH.** The most common form of a cash gift is writing a check. You may also make a gift by using your credit card on the church's website.

**2. GIVE APPRECIATED STOCKS.** Gifts of appreciated stocks can be one of the most advantageous ways of giving. If your gift of stock is one you have owned for more than one year, you may be able to deduct the full market value of the stock as a gift, while bypassing capital gains taxes.\*

**3. GIVE YOUR REQUIRED MINIMUM DISTRIBUTIONS THROUGH YOUR RETIREMENT DIRECTLY TO THE CHURCH AND SAVE TAXES.** This is a tax benefit for persons 70 ½ or older. You may transfer your required minimum distribution directly to the church and not pay income taxes on the gift.

**4. GIVE APPRECIATED REAL ESTATE.** Gifts of appreciated real estate are like gifts of appreciated stock. Assuming you have owned the property for more than one year, you may deduct the fair market value of real estate as a charitable contribution while avoiding capital gains taxes.\*

**5. GIVE APPRECIATED PROPERTY.** Gifts of tangible appreciated personal property (e.g., art) related to the church's exempt purposes are fully tax deductible at fair market value.

**6. GIVE GIFTS IN KIND.** Gifts of property such as autos, equipment, etc. (even though not appreciated property) may be tax deductible at fair market value.

**7. GIVE THROUGH YOUR WILL.** A properly drawn will is an excellent way to remember the church and make a significant contribution. Gifts may be a designated amount, part of an estate, or the residue of a will given at the time of the donor's death.

**8. GIVE THROUGH BENEFICIARY DESIGNATIONS.** One of the easiest ways to leave a gift to the church is through a beneficiary designation of assets such as retirement accounts, savings and investment accounts, or life insurance policies.

**9. GIVE THROUGH DONOR-ADVISED FUNDS.** Donor-advised funds may allow you to donate now, take an immediate tax deduction and distribute the gifts at a later time. The funds are invested for tax-free growth. By front-loading several years of donations into a single tax year, you may realize the tax benefits from itemized deductions while maintaining the freedom to make charitable gifts over time.

*\*The tax deductibility of gifts depends on whether the donor can itemize on their tax return. Check with your professional advisor.*

**10. GIVE THROUGH A LIFE ESTATE AGREEMENT.** Donors may contribute a personal home, a farm, or other assets to the church and retain the right to live in the home or farm and use the property to produce income. At the donor's death, the property would go directly to the church without going through probate or taxation.

**11. GIVE THROUGH RETIREMENT ASSETS.** A gift of your retirement assets (IRA, 401(k), 403(b), pension or other tax-deferred plans) is an excellent way to give to your favorite charity.

**12. GIVE THROUGH LIFE INSURANCE.** Life insurance is a unique way to give to the church. To qualify, the church needs to become the owner and beneficiary. If the policy is paid up, your charitable contribution is generally the replacement value or cost basis of the policy, whichever is less. Premiums paid on a gift life insurance policy also qualify for a charitable deduction.

**13. GIVE THROUGH CHARITABLE TRUSTS.** Charitable trusts can offer you substantial tax savings while providing income to you and your family resulting in a substantial gift to the church. Examples of each trust with illustrations are available at [www.gumf.org](http://www.gumf.org) > [planned giving > gift options](#).

**14. GIVE THROUGH GIFT ANNUITIES.** The Georgia United Methodist Foundation offers gift annuities which are a contract between you and GUMF. You receive a fixed quarterly payment for life in exchange for transferred assets. Your United Methodist church or organization receives a portion of the initial gift at the end of life.

*All information presented is for general purposes only and should not be acted upon without qualified professional assistance. Your attorney, accountant, or other professional advisor can help you explore the ways of giving that have been shared here.*