



Endowment Funds

An endowment fund is a permanent, self-sustaining source of funding. Endowment assets are invested. Each year, a portion of the value of the fund is paid out to support the fund's purpose, and any earnings in excess of this distribution are used to build the fund's market value. In this way, an endowment fund can grow and provide support for its designated purpose in perpetuity. When you establish an endowment fund, you create a permanent legacy of support for your church and other charities that you wish to support.

Webster defines Endowment as “the act or process of furnishing with an income.” If the church is to remain on the frontier, it must plan for future as well as present mission and ministry; but unless these plans include ways of funding this mission and ministry, they may be only empty dreams. The concept of endowment funding says to the church and to the community that the church is here to stay...that it is both planning and funding for the future.

One thoughtful church member reasoned, “Those persons who preceded me in this church left a rich heritage. What will I leave as a heritage for future generations?” What can I do to reflect my sense of gratitude for what the church has done for me over the years?

Endowment funds are a good way for you to say:

- We believe in the future of this church.
- We want to be guided in our stewardship by the belief that all we have is a trust from God.
- We want to build a sense of permanence in what we do.
- We want to be good stewards as a “church family” even as we expect each member to be a good steward.
- We want to “go the extra mile” in providing services and programs that formerly (due to budget constraints) were only dreams.
- We want to create a heritage that future generations can celebrate as joyfully as we celebrate our rich heritage today.

An elderly member was discussing her “stewardship philosophy” with a planned giving counselor. “My church has always been an important part of my life, and I want to always be a part of my church.” One of the ways she accomplished this during her lifetime was through her generous and faithful contributions from her current income, but she gave her stewardship conviction permanence as she **established an endowment with the remainder of a life income gift**. “Now,” she said with a great deal of satisfaction, “I will be a part of this church every year even after I am no longer here to make my contributions.”