

## Planting Seeds that Grow Bequests: Five Steps Churches Can Take

- 1. Develop a Gift Acceptance Policy.** The Foundation can help your Board of Trustees or Endowment Committee craft the Church’s policy regarding how gifts will be administered. Will a portion of bequests to the Church be added to the Endowment as a perpetual resource? Having a Gift Acceptance Policy in place reassures donors that Church will properly administer their bequests.
- 2. Invite bequests.** Make planned giving, such as bequests, part of the ongoing conversation around stewardship all year long. Church members are more likely to consider leaving the church a gift from their estate if they are reminded of the possibility. Include the phrase, “Have you considered a bequest to the church?” on your giving records and newsletters.
- 3. Provide estate planning resources.** Contact the Foundation to help with this. Invite us to do an Estate Planning seminar for your congregation or a group of members (such as United Methodist Women or Men or the Senior group). We can provide free brochures to give away and articles about estate planning for your newsletter. Remember to participate in United Methodist Foundation Sunday. The celebration in 2014 is April 6.
- 4. Consecrate bequests and other gifts.** Any gift to the Church is an act of faith and stewardship on the part of the donor. Honor the donor’s faithfulness and memory by consecrating the gift as a part of worship. Consecration demonstrates and increases the Church’s understanding of the sacredness of generosity.
- 5. Publish stories in the Church newsletter that celebrate the impact of giving.** Have bequests made a difference in the ministry of your Church? Tell people these stories. Share who the person was who made the donation and the transformational difference the bequest has made in the life of the Church. End the story with a suggestion for the reader: “Have you considered a bequest to the Church?”



Contact the Foundation for help as you work to create an environment that nurtures planned giving.