



at a glance **GIVING THROUGH YOUR ESTATE** **WITH DONOR-DIRECTED DISTRIBUTION AGREEMENTS**



WHAT IS AN ESTATE GIFT?

As Christians we are called to bear witness to our faith, in life and through our final moments. We do not consider death to be our final defeat – instead, our final victory is in Christ. Making end-of-life gifts, or estate gifts, in support of the ministries that matter the most is an important way we can leave a legacy of generosity as a witness to others.

Every individual has an “estate” comprising all the assets (money and property) they own at death. An estate gift is a broad category of end-of-life gifts, made to charities from one or more of these sources. Working with a regional gift planner from the ELCA Foundation can help you structure your estate plan in a way that maximizes gifts to family and ministries and minimizes the risk of a lengthy legal process. An estate gift can be the largest gift you’ll ever give, and it’s important to ensure that the gift is well-planned and -documented.

A regional gift planner can help you establish a donor-directed distribution agreement, a tool that enables flexibility and accountability in your estate-giving plans to ensure that your gift is properly funded, distributed and utilized.

WHAT IS A DONOR-DIRECTED DISTRIBUTION AGREEMENT?

A distribution agreement allows the ELCA Foundation to be your partner in distributing your end-of-life gifts and ensuring that these gifts are as you intended. The agreement contains a list of up to 10 beneficiaries, with specific percentage allocations and descriptions of the uses intended for these gifts. You can change a distribution agreement at any time without amending your estate plan or will.

Here’s how it works:

A distribution agreement is established through the ELCA Foundation with the help of a regional gift planner. This process documents charitable gifts from your estate and helps guide your decisions on funding sources for each. The process is completed by listing the ELCA Foundation as the charitable recipient on any beneficiary designations, bequests and/or transfer-on-death deeds. That way, you can make any future changes to your charitable estate plans directly with the ELCA Foundation without needing to amend your will or estate plans.

A DISTRIBUTION AGREEMENT IS RIGHT FOR YOU IF:

- You want the flexibility to modify your charitable beneficiaries at any time.
- You want to keep control of your assets during your lifetime and make charitable gifts through your estate.
- You want to combine multiple assets to fund your charitable-giving plans.

WHY SHOULD I USE A DISTRIBUTION AGREEMENT?

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- You can add or change charitable recipients of your estate at any time without updating beneficiary designations or amending your will or trust.
- A distribution agreement allows the ELCA Foundation to be your partner in ensuring that your estate gifts are distributed in a timely fashion to the charities of your choice and used for your intended purposes.
- Distribution agreements allow for more beneficiaries and more specific designation details than are typically allowed in beneficiary forms.

RULES TO KEEP IN MIND:

- A portion of your total charitable gift will support the work of the ELCA Foundation through a 5% distribution. This gift will be used to support the ministry of the ELCA Foundation in developing charitable gift plans, working with congregations and processing gifts.
- There is no minimum gift amount for a distribution agreement.
- An estate gift is a revocable gift and can be changed at any time.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Find your regional gift planner at [ELCA.org/foundation](https://www.elca.org/foundation) or call 800-638-3522.

The examples and information provided are for illustrative and educational purposes only and should not be considered tax or legal advice. Please consult with your tax or legal advisor about proceeding with your gift plan.