



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

First Congregational United Church of Christ, Washington, DC
GUIDE TO GIVING

"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." - Matthew 6:21

Where does my gift go?

With the exception of special collections (e.g., for "Second Sunday" offerings) and gifts or bequests for the Church's endowment, all financial offerings to First Congregational UCC (or First Church) are applied to the operating budget to support the Church's ministry, mission, and programs. The operating budget is a detailed accounting of income and expenses approved by plenary vote at congregational meetings. All members have an equal voice in determining the operating budget and expending the resources of the Church.

How can I give?

There are several ways to give to First Church:

1. **Online:** You may [give online](#) via credit card or a bank (debit) transfer through Venmo or PayPal. When prompted, please consider selecting the option to pay the electronic processing fee to enable the Church to receive the full donation. The processing fees for bank (debit) transfers are lower than the fees for credit card transactions. Please also consider automatic giving along with a pledge designating your planned offering for the year.
2. **In-Person:** When you worship in person, you can leave cash or a check in the offering plate (generally located at the back of the sanctuary). There is also a QR code next to the offering plate and on the back of the Worship Folder that will take you to the online giving page on the church's website.
3. **Via Mail:** You may mail checks to the Church, directly or through your bank's bill-pay function, to 945 G Street NW, Washington DC 20001.

4. **Gifts of Stock:** See below for further instructions on donating appreciated stock.

Should I pledge?

Each year, we ask members of the church and invite friends of the church to submit a commitment form designating your annual offering of time, talent, and treasure. The Church's operating budget is built in substantial part on such pledges. Without pledges, we can not reliably project annual revenue necessary for sustaining Church operations. The Church's operating budget is determined by calendar year. We collect new and renewed commitments in the fall before the beginning of each new year. But you may submit a commitment for the calendar year at any time. If you wish or need to change your commitment during the year, please notify us of the change, which you may do through a revised commitment form. To submit a pledge, please use the online pledge form available [here](#).

What is planned giving?

Planned giving means a charitable donation other than a simple monetary gift (via cash, check, credit card, or bank transfer). Examples include bequests, gifts of stock, or gifts from special investment vehicles. Such gifts require advanced planning and may require the help of a lawyer or accountant. Depending on your circumstances (income, assets, and tax liability), you may be able to increase your giving at no additional cost to you by giving a gift of appreciated stock, giving directly from an individual retirement account, or giving through a donor-advised fund. You may also make an enduring gift to the Church through a bequest in your will or gift of life insurance.

A. Donating Appreciated Stock

Providing a gift of appreciated stock or exchange-traded funds (ETF) to the Church—in lieu of selling the stock or ETF and donating the money proceeds—may provide tax benefits to you through the avoidance of capital gains taxes that increase the value of your donation to the Church. To determine tax consequences, we encourage you to speak to a financial or legal advisor. If you choose to give gifts of stock or ETF, please, give your broker the following instructions:

Brokerage firm: Cambridge Investment Research
Brokerage DTC#: 0443 Pershing LLC
Charity name: First Congregational United Church of Christ
Charity account #: TH8912430

Contact Steve Howard or Troy Ochoa – 877-683-7147
troy@seeleyhoward.com steve@seeleyhoward.com

Please make sure your broker identifies you as the donor. Our broker will review the high and low values on the date the stocks are received and use the mean value as the value of the gift for your tax purposes. The shares will be sold (usually the next day) and the proceeds sent to the church.

B. Donating From Your Individual Retirement Account (IRA)

If you are age 70½ or older, you may make gifts to charities—qualified charitable distributions (QCDs)—directly from an IRA without paying federal income and social security tax that otherwise would be owed on the same funds if withdrawn from the IRA for personal use. IRA owners 73 years or older must take an annual required minimum distribution (RMD). A QCD to the Church would count toward your required distribution. QCD gifts can be especially advantageous for persons who do not expect to itemize their deductions or who have limited deductions. You may make QCD gifts in any amount up to \$105,000 per person (although this maximum may be reduced for persons who add to an IRA after age 70½). A QCD is only possible with an IRA. But you may be able to roll funds from other retirement plans into an IRA to take advantage of a QCD. Check with your investment or tax advisor.

C. Contributing from a Donor-Advised Fund (DAF)

A donor-advised fund (DAF) is a personal investment account dedicated to charitable giving. You may contribute to the fund as frequently as you like and receive immediate tax benefits for those investments (as itemized deductions). You may designate distribution to the Church or other charities in the future after your fund has grown.

D. Leaving a Bequest in Your Will

You can leave an enduring legacy to the Church through a gift (bequest) in your will. Bequests may be designated for the Church's endowment or may be unrestricted, leaving the Church the option of how to program the funds. If you wish to place further conditions on a bequest (e.g., to provide a gift for a particular ministry or purpose), please contact the Church first so we can work with you to ensure your wishes are achieved.

Charitable bequests may take the following forms:

A general bequest would provide a designated sum from your estate's general assets. For example, you might make a general bequest of \$10,000. This

type of bequest is easily arranged and is considered a "primary charge against your estate," which means it will almost certainly be fulfilled. For example, your will might provide: "I give, devise and bequeath [dollar amount] of my estate to the First Congregational United Church of Christ, Washington DC, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization [tax ID #53-0206286] currently at 945 G Street NW, Washington DC 20001."

A *percentage bequest* would provide a predetermined percentage of your estate, e.g., 10% or 25%. For example, your will might provide: "I give, devise and bequeath [specific percentage] of my estate to the First Congregational United Church of Christ, Washington DC, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization [tax ID #53-0206286] currently at 945 G Street NW, Washington DC 20001."

A *specific bequest* would direct that specific property, such as a certain piece of real estate, stock or some other designated property be transferred to the church. For example, your will might provide: "I give, devise and bequeath [specific asset] of my estate to the First Congregational United Church of Christ, Washington DC, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization [tax ID #53-0206286] currently at 945 G Street NW, Washington DC 20001."

A *contingent bequest*, as the name implies, is "contingent" on some event. Usually, you might make a primary bequest for a loved one with the contingency that if that loved one is not living after your lifetime, the bequest will pass to the church.

A *residuary bequest* would provide some or all of the funds remaining in your estate after all necessary costs, general bequests, and specific bequests are satisfied. For example, your will might provide: "After fulfilling all other specific provisions, I give, devise and bequeath [a specified] % of the remainder [or specified dollar amount] of my estate to First Congregational United Church of Christ, Washington DC, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization [tax ID #53-0206286] currently at 945 G Street NW, Washington DC 20001."

E. Designate the Church a Beneficiary of a Life Insurance Policy

You may also leave a legacy to the Church by naming the Church as a designated beneficiary of a life insurance policy. This option may be appealing, for example, if you have reached a stage in your life where an original beneficiary (e.g., spouse or minor child) is no longer in need of the full support for which the policy was acquired.

How can we help?

If you have any questions about giving, please contact the Senior Minister, the Moderator, Assistant Moderator, or Treasurer, and we will endeavor to answer or to direct you to persons or resources that can answer your question.

The United Church of Christ has partnered with [freewill.com](https://www.freewill.com/), an online resource that enables individuals to prepare wills and other vehicles for charitable giving free of charge. For more information, go to: <https://www.freewill.com/> We also encourage you to raise questions about taxes and estate planning with a professional legal or financial advisor.

If you have already included the Church in your will or a life insurance policy and are comfortable sharing any of the terms with us, we would like to know to express our gratitude and to encourage others to do the same. You are (of course) free not to share and we will respect your wishes about keeping the terms of any gift confidential.

Thank you for all your gifts to the programs and ministries of the Church, whether they are gifts of financial resources, volunteer efforts, or simply gifts of your presence. We are grateful to share life's journey with you and to work together to build a just and loving community within the Church, our neighborhood, and the wider world.