

Westminster Policy On Gifts and Fundraising Activities

I. Special Offerings. Special offerings are church-wide solicitations, usually for a benevolence supported by Westminster or the PCUSA, which includes facilitation of giving at our normal offering time during worship service. These must always be first reviewed by the A&F Committee and approved by the Session. During the January Session meeting each year, the A&F Committee should include in the Consent Docket those special offerings such as One Great Hour of Sharing, Christmas Joy Gift/Gift of Hope Offering, Presbyterian Women Least Coin Offering, and the Per Capita solicitation for the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly. Proposals for other special offerings must be recommended by a Session committee and approved by the Session after favorable review in advance by the A&F Committee. Notice of emergency disaster relief through the PCUSA does not require approval of either the A&F Committee or Session.

II. Restricted Gifts. Restricted gifts to Westminster are donations of money or property that are given by a member, group of members, or someone outside the church who conditions the contribution for a specific use. If the restricted gift is a monetary gift to an existing restricted fund in the operating budget or to an existing endowed fund in the Westminster Foundation, then approval is not necessary. However, upon receipt of any such gift of \$1,000 or more, the Pastor should be notified so that he/she can make appropriate acknowledgement to the donor.

Restricted gifts of property or money given to the church with donor restrictions must be approved if there is no current operating or foundation fund set up to receive such a gift. When the value of the gift is under \$5,000, the approval may be done by the Gifts and Bequests Committee, which is made up of the Pastor, the Westminster Foundation Chair, the A&F Chair, and the Westminster Business Administrator. Such gifts valued at \$5,000 or more must be approved by the Session acting upon the recommendation of the Gifts and Bequests Committee. Where appropriate, the Gifts and Bequests Committee shall seek input from other church committees and organizations in the program areas relating to the donor's designation/restriction.

When restricted gifts of property come in the form of stocks or other publicly-traded securities, the Westminster policy is to sell the securities upon receipt. When the property is intended to be kept by Westminster and put into use or on display, the Gifts and Bequests Committee and the Session must include in their deliberations whether accepting the gift of property is consistent with the church mission and purpose. A full description of the process for accepting restricted gifts is set out in Section Seven of the Westminster Foundation Board Charter.

III. Challenge Gifts. Challenge gifts are those made to Westminster in support of a church project with the express stipulation that the donor will match all contributions for the same cause up to a specified amount. Challenge gifts can be done if first requested by a Session committee, are favorably reviewed in advance by the A&F Committee, and are approved by the Westminster Session.

IV. Fundraising by Church-Sponsored Groups. Any fundraising activity done by a group affiliated with Westminster must be approved by the A&F Committee. Those activities that are currently common practice such as Youth Plant Sale, Youth Dessert Auction, Youth Poinsettia Sale, Boy Scout Troop 129 Wreath Sale, and Alternative Christmas Bazaar should be approved annually through the Consent Docket at the January Session meeting upon the motion of the A&F Committee.

Approved fundraising activities allow the church group to include promotion in the Chronicle, the church bulletin, the Chronicle Update, and the church website. Groups can also set up tables and displays at

coffee hours following Sunday services. These activities cannot, however, use a special offering as a means of solicitation.

V. Fees Charged by Church-Sponsored Groups. Church-sponsored groups at Westminster can charge fees to defray nominal costs of church-sponsored activities upon the approval of the Session committee, sub-committee, board, or steering committee of jurisdiction, in consultation with the Business Administrator. Funding plans for major activities or projects such as retreats, major trips or mission trips which involve fees and other church funds must be approved in advance by the Business Administrator, who shall have discretion to bring such matters before the A&F Committee.

VI. Use of Church Facilities by Unaffiliated Groups. Westminster facilities can be used by some outside groups if first approved by the Business Administrator and the Buildings and Grounds Committee, and if the activity involves a non-profit group in the Alexandria community involved in work not inconsistent with the Westminster Mission Statement. In no case can church facilities be used for private events, political activities, or for-profit organizations. This, however, does not preclude use of the church facilities for a reception following a worship service event, such as a wedding held in the sanctuary or chapel or similar usage following a funeral or memorial service. Where a request for the church facility is for a single usage, the Business Administrator can approve such request if it is otherwise consistent with church policy.

Organizations using Westminster facilities, including the sanctuary, should pay a service fee set by the Buildings and Grounds Committee and approved by the Westminster Business Administrator. The amount of the service fees should be sufficient to defray operating costs such as utilities, maintenance, insurance, room setup, and personnel costs associated with building administration. Under certain circumstances, there may be compelling reasons to waive the service fee for an organization, but this must be approved in advance by the A&F Committee.

Meeting promotion and marketing is the sole responsibility of the participating organization and the church facility and publications are not to be used by these groups for that purpose, unless to do so advances the work of Westminster. This does not preclude nominal usage such as signs and directions for participants at the time of their meetings.

The Worship and Music Committee may approve use of the sanctuary by unaffiliated groups. Unaffiliated groups can collect a free will offering as part of using the sanctuary, if first approved by the Worship and Music Committee. A free will offering is a voluntary donation (not an admission fee) made for a designated purpose (e.g., funding of the unaffiliated group). A free will offering may be collected at the beginning or end of the service or performance by placing baskets or offering plates outside the sanctuary exits. Free will offerings do not include an offering taken up during the service or performance by passing offering plates. Offerings taken up during a service or performance by passing plates within the Sanctuary or Chapel require Session approval and are not appropriate except in unusual circumstances.

VII. Memorials and Bequests. Memorials are gifts given to the church to memorialize and celebrate the life of a loved one who has died. Bequests are gifts to the church paid out of the estate of someone who has died. The bequest can be a specific amount and for a specific purpose as set out in a will. The bequest can also be made from the estate by the heirs even if the will is silent, as long as it is not inconsistent with the express wishes of the decedent.

Monetary gifts, whether memorials or bequests, can be accepted without Session approval if there is a fund in the operating accounts or the Westminster Foundation consistent with the donor intent. When donor intent is not clear, the Gifts and Bequests Committee may accept gifts consistent with the established guidelines set out in the Westminster Foundation Board Charter.

VIII. Donor Recognition. At various times in the history of Westminster Church, special donor gifts have been acknowledged in a variety of ways. Placing plaques on the building and its furnishings is a practice the church is trying to discourage, especially with the completion of the recent capital construction project. Where plaques have been used in the past, a special display case will be used as an appropriate archival of past acknowledged gifts.

Memorial Books and special publications will be used where appropriate to acknowledge donations, special gifts and bequests for capital campaigns. Rooms in the church facility can be named for individuals who have given much of themselves to the work of Westminster, including very generous financial commitments.

IX. Sales of Merchandise at Church Sponsored Events. Study guides or books required for a class or items which are compatible with the church's ministry and provide additional resource material for a topic or curriculum being discussed may be sold on church premises or at church sponsored events. Committees or clergy sponsoring an event at which materials are being sold shall be responsible for ensuring that these guidelines are followed. The seller of materials shall be responsible for collecting and paying appropriate sales taxes.