Planned Giving Reprintables

*WELS Ministry of Christian Giving has edited and approved the following resources for your church to customize (when necessary) and use as needed. They are intended to encourage members about good stewardship practices and to inform them about ways to make planned gifts to benefit your church and other WELS ministry. Consider using them at your website, in bulletins or newsletters, etc. To use, modify as you’d like. Then highlight the text and copy and paste it (Ctrl-C, Ctrl-V) where you want it to go.*

*The first article is from Stewardship Advisors. To learn more, visit* [*www.stewardshipadvisors.org*](http://www.stewardshipadvisors.org) *or call Ron Chewning at 888-783-2790. WELS Ministry of Christian Giving obtained permission to share this.*

# Wash Me, O Lord God

During the season of Lent, as we visualize Christ praying in Gethsemane, being ridiculed and abused before Pilate, stumbling under the heavy weight of the cross on the road to Golgotha, and praying for his enemies as he hung from the cross, we are again reminded of our sins and our need for forgiveness.

Yet we hardly need that reminder, do we? You’ve heard about the saint of God who prayed, “Oh, Lord, I’m doing pretty well. So far today I haven’t spoken sharply to my wife, I haven’t said an ill word about anyone, and I haven’t cheated my boss out of a minute’s work. I’m doing ok. But, Lord, I’m about to get out of bed, and then I’m really going to need your help!”

The situation of the sinner is that he sins often and he sins much. The situation of the sinner is also that he is forgiven all his sins—his sins of what he says and does, of what he neglects to say and do, and of who he is. Like King David, he cries, “Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow”(Psalm 51:7). And by his blood, Jesus cleanses us, washes, and makes us righteous. How grateful we are for this gift, for there is no way we could make up for our sinfulness. There is nothing within us that we can offer to God to gain his approval. Our righteousness is God’s gift to us in Christ because of his compassionate and merciful nature.

Then God gives us his Spirit to continue his work of sanctification within us, to strengthen us to overcome temptation, and to equip us for service in his kingdom. A hurting world waits to hear the Good News. The lonely, the sick, those sunk in sin need to know that they have a Savior who loves them so much he gave his life for them. We, God’s stewards, are the vessels that God uses to spread that message. Let’s be about our Father’s work using all the gifts he has given us for his glory.

A New, Tax-wise Way to Support the Lord’s Work

As of 2016 anybody 70.5 years or older has a new option for making gifts to the Lord’s work at church, a local WELS-affiliated ministry, and/or a WELS area of ministry: their IRA!

A provision of the PATH Act allows IRA distributions to charity of up to $100,000 to be made tax-free (at the federal level and in most states). This may be an especially useful gifting tool for those who must take required minimum distributions each year.

WELS Foundation is prepared to assist God’s people with IRA distributions to the ministries of their choice. Talk to your financial planners and your WELS Christian giving counselor (800-827-5482) to learn more.