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. The second resource is a letter template that churches can use to acknowledge qualified charitable distributions that they have received from members’ IRAs in support of the church’s ministry.*

God Calls Us to Be His Workers

In spite of our foolish and sinful ways, God calls us to be his workers. Scripture tells us that Jesus did not pick people from society’s elite when he chose his workers. Jesus’ disciples were peasants, fishermen, and even a tax collector. Paul wrote, “Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things . . .” (1 Corinthians 1:26-28). The majority of God’s work was done and continues to be done by lowly and oppressed people.

Certainly, God can use celebrities and very successful people in his work. However, we need to remember that, even though we may not have accomplished anything of worldly significance, broken any records, or won any awards, God transforms us into effective workers in his kingdom. “I can do everything through him who gives me strength” (Philippians 4:13). Society gives many accolades to those who succeed, but there is no greater honor or privilege than to be chosen as God’s vehicle to spread the gospel. As John states in his gospel, it is Jesus who does the choosing. “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit” (John 15:16).

So why does God elevate the foolish and the lowly to be his workers? A reason may be found in 1 Corinthians 1:29: “so that no one may boast before him.” It is only by God’s grace that we are saved, called, and equipped to be in his service. If we come into God’s work with impressive credentials, we risk taking the glory and credit for ourselves. God desires the weak and the lowly. As Paul said, “Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong” (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things, “for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose” (Philippians 2:13). And with God leading us, we know that our labor for him will not be in vain (1 Corinthians 15:58).

[Date]

[Donor Name]

[Donor Address]

Dear [Donor Name],

Thank you for your 2016 IRA rollover gift in the amount of [$x.xx] received at our office on [date]. As you requested the gift will be used for [gift designation].

We are writing to acknowledge that we received check [#] directly from [company], your plan trustee/administrators, and that it is your intention for all of your gift to qualify as a qualified charitable distribution from your IRA, as provided under Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015 (H.R. 2029) and Section 408(d)(8) of the Internal Revenue Code.

In that connection, we warrant to you that our organization is qualified under section 170(b)(1)(A) of the Internal Revenue Code. Your gift was not transferred to a donor advised fund or a supporting organization or any other funds for which donors or their designees have further advisory rights.

We further warrant that no goods or services or benefit of any value were or will be transferred to you in connection with this gift.

Please retain this letter with your tax documents and provide a copy to your tax preparer. While you have undoubtedly used much personal and professional information to make this gift, it is important for us to remind you this gift does not qualify for a charitable deduction.

If you have any questions, please contact me as needed.

Together in Christ,
[Signature]
[Name]
[Title]