

CHRIST  CHURCH
at Grove Farm
ENDOWMENT
FUND

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why was the Endowment Fund created?

For a couple of reasons. First, by December 2010, our church had conducted four capital campaigns to pay for the investments we made in our property and our facilities. After fifteen years of *Its Time To Build*, *Lighting The Way*, *Building A Legacy...one brick, one person at a time* and *Sharing Our Legacy...one person, one family at a time*, we had no plans for another capital campaign.

Secondly, we were focused on *Helping Ensure Our Legacy...be a blessing*. That is the theme and purpose and mission of the Endowment Fund – to create a perpetually managed fund to help ensure that our legacy is passed on to future generations and to give donors the opportunity to make a gift and be a blessing to future generations.

When did the church first consider an Endowment Fund?

The church has been considering an Endowment Fund for more than a decade. We got serious about it several years ago.

The first official record of interest in an Endowment Fund was from a Long Range Planning Steering Committee chaired by Dick Kennedy. Their report dated November 25, 2000, Recommendation XII, was to establish an Endowment Fund. Interestingly, it also recommended a 5-year capital campaign to build a new sanctuary. (We actually conducted two three-year campaigns instead, and we continue to receive payments from those pledges).

How did we get from the 2000 Long Range Planning Report to the announcement?

We got serious about *Helping Ensure Our Legacy* during follow up meetings for the *Sharing Our Legacy* Campaign, from 2007 through July 2010. We had built and shared our Legacy, now we focused on ensuring our Legacy for future generations. A small group was formed to look into the establishment of an Endowment Fund. The group met for several years to develop materials and policy for an Endowment Fund. They met with John Guest in mid 2009 to brief him and he agreed with their recommendations.

The question of approving a church Endowment Fund was on the Parish Council agenda for their September 21, 2009 meeting. They were given three basic documents to review for the meeting. Jim Hamilton, now chairman of the Endowment Fund Board, briefed Parish Council and answered all questions to their satisfaction. Parish Council unanimously approved the creation of the Endowment Fund to be announced at an appropriate time in the near future.

We were in no rush to announce the Endowment Fund in 2010. We were monitoring proposed changes in Federal income and inheritance taxes to assess the impact on estate planning. But as John Guest's retirement approached, we were ready and John made the announcement – his last letter to members dated December 28, 2010 announced the creation of the Endowment Fund and the Endowment Board membership.

Are those basic documents available on the Christ Church at Grove Farm web site?

Yes, they are dated September 21, 2009. They are great reference documents for members to use when discussing estate planning with their tax and financial advisors. The team that prepared those documents did an outstanding job of drafting so that everyone, especially donors, understands how the Endowment Fund is administered, its purpose and the relationship between Parish Council and the Endowment Fund Board.

How would you describe the relationship between Parish Council and the Board?

The Endowment Board manages, protects and promotes the Endowment Fund in perpetuity and can make available to Parish Council an annual gift of up to 5% of the fund's value each year, depending on earnings. Parish Council decides how the gift is used to support our ministries. So, for example, if we had a \$1 million endowment fund, up to 5%, or \$50,000 could be given to Parish Council to support our ministries each year – outside of annual funding budgeted for our ministries. As Senior Warden Bob Wagner noted, Parish Council would love to have that flexibility - in perpetuity.

What is the standard of giving to the Endowment Fund?

The same as it has been for our capital campaigns. *Not equal gifts, but equal sacrifice.* Give as you can, not as others do. The joy in giving is in your sacrifice for the Lord's work here on Grove Farm and beyond.

Is it Christian to incorporate tax considerations into our giving?

Yes, Christians should be aware of tax consequences concerning their giving – to comply with and take advantage of tax laws. They should take care before making investment or contribution decisions and consult with their tax and investment advisors.

Can our members get advice from the church?

Yes, we encourage that. If members have questions about the Endowment Fund they can call the church and a pastor or an Endowment Board member will be happy to discuss

their questions or gift plans. Once they make a gift decision, it is best to give us a heads up to be sure the Endowment Fund has no problems with the gift.

Is a gift to the Endowment Fund the most important gift we can make?

Yes, it can be. The gift is managed in perpetuity and keeps on giving well after our death. John Guest stated that beautifully and powerfully in the close to his December 28th letter:

“Such a gift will help ensure the legacy we have created on Grove Farm, in perpetuity, and will support the Lord’s work at Christ Church, even after your death. Think about that! We can *be a blessing* to future generations long after we have gone to be with the Lord.”

Don’t you love that paragraph – it was beautifully written by John and says it all.

After four capital campaigns haven’t we given enough?

Yes and No.

Our members are faithful in giving to our and annual operating budgets every year.

Yes, enough - take a break, we have supported four capital campaigns in 15 years.

We also have made great investments in our land and facilities. We have been fiscally responsible. We should feel good about that. We now have fantastic facilities to grow into and to accommodate those with whom the Lord has and will bless us.

No, not enough - if we enjoy a windfall during our lives or plan our estate, we should consider a gift to our church.

For example:

- Specify memorial contributions to the Endowment Fund after the death of a loved one. Why not our church as opposed to another charity?
- Add the Endowment Fund as a beneficiary to an insurance policy – consider a tithe so that 10% goes to the Endowment Fund and 90% to the other beneficiaries. For example, if you tithe a \$10,000 policy, that is a gift of \$1,000 to be managed in perpetuity.
- If you receive an inheritance or an unexpected windfall during your life, consider a gift to the Endowment Fund.
- Consider the Endowment Fund when you plan your estate.
- Follow tax developments to take advantage of charitable gifts. You may be surprised by the recommendations of your tax and financial advisors.

Why haven't members given to the church from their estates?

This is a great mystery. How can our members be so supportive of the church during their lives and not consider the church through their estates after our death? The simple truth is our church receives very little from our member's estates.

Why is that? Because we have not asked or made it easy to give. Schools we graduate from and charities are good at soliciting gifts from wills or estates. We all get letters and brochures to give to endowments, many through pledges but also through our estates.

But we don't even ask for a gift. The church is not even considered. That's our fault. This is the irony of our fundraising for the church – and our own stewardship. We hope to correct this so members are encouraged to consider a gift to the Endowment Fund.

Is the mission of the Endowment Board to correct this irony?

Yes – to make our members aware of the opportunity to give a gift to the Endowment Fund during their life and from their estate – to be managed in perpetuity. It's so easy to do after you decide to make a gift. And you'll feel good with your decision. You'll feel blessed. You will help ensure our legacy and be a blessing to future generations.

Is there a promotional brochure for the Endowment Fund?

Yes. It was enclosed in John Guest's December 28, 2010 letter to members and is in each pew in the sanctuary and chapel. The brochure is also available on the church web site www.ccgf.org. You can go to our church web site, click on Endowment Fund and there you will see John's letter, the brochure, this document and the three documents approved by Parish Council. There is a lot of information there that answers most questions. Members can refer their tax and investment advisors to the site for information about the Endowment Fund.

PLEASE THINK ABOUT A GIFT TO OUR ENDOWMENT FUND:

YOU CAN BE A BLESSING TO FUTURE GENERATIONS!

YOU CAN HELP ENSURE OUR LEGACY!

Christ Church at Grove Farm
Endowment Fund Board
James L. Hamilton, III
Chairman

May 11, 2010