

DONATIONS, BEQUESTS AND GIFTS TO VALLEYVIEW MENNONITE CHURCH

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Valleyview Mennonite Church is a non-profit Charitable Corporation that is dependent on donations, tithes, gifts and bequests to maintain its programs. Anyone who wishes to support the goals and purpose of Valleyview may make financial contributions. There are four basic ways this can be done:

Ways to Gift

Regular Giving

Members and adherents are encouraged to give regularly throughout the year. Cash and cheque are accepted and an envelope system is available for confidentiality and tax receipts (See tax receipts below) . All money collected in a regular offering will be put towards the general budget unless the gift has been designated. (See designating Funds below)

Automatic Withdrawals

One option that works well for everyone is to set up an automatic withdrawal from your financial institution. Please speak to the Church Administrator, Church Treasurer or Board member to set up automatic withdrawals. This helps even out the church's income and simplifies regular giving for both the donor and the church.

Special and One Time Gifts

From time to time, Valleyview may promote some special projects or have a collection for a specific need. VMC will clearly state the project or need prior to accepting any offering. Without such a statement, all other offerings will be used for VMC's general budget.

For needs such as capital improvements or special projects such as support for a refugee family, Valleyview has / or will set up funds that donations can be designated to. Money that is designated to a fund in existence at the time of the donation will go directly to that fund. This will be in addition to any money going to the funds from the general budget. Please see Valleyview's "Designated Fund Policy" for further information and a listing of current funds.

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Donors who wish to designate a donation to a specific cause where a fund has not been set up should contact the Church Treasurer or Church Board (via the Church Administrator if required) to discuss the benefits and drawbacks to designated gifting as well as determining how to proceed.

For larger sums of money (greater than 10% of the operating budget), the donor or Church Board may choose to use MFC to set up an endowment or similar type fund.

Bequests

A bequest is a donation coming through someone's last will and testament. This is an effective method to support charities with a portion of moneys accumulated during a lifetime. We would encourage our members to ensure they have set up a will and to prayerfully consider including charities as part of their stewardship.

There is a variety of options available to set up a bequest. For gifts to a single charity such as Valleyview, this can be easily included in the will. For larger amounts or where there may be gifts to more than one charity, VMC would encourage the use of Mennonite Foundation Canada (MFC).

MFC can effectively disburse the funds to single or multiple charities. MFC can distribute the money over many years or set up an Endowment fund which could continue to support your chosen charities for many years in the future. In addition to gift distribution services, MFC also provides confidential, free will counselling services to members and adherents of VMC. You can find out more about MFC at www.mennofoundation.ca or by calling 1-888-212-7759

Anonymity

In general, gifts to VMC will be considered as anonymous. In the case of bequests and larger gifts, VMC would accept requests for donor recognition to including mentioning their gifts in the weekly bulletin and / or service and including the gift and donor in the annual report. Other forms of recognition, such as plaques are discouraged. If specific requests for donor recognition cannot be met by VMC, the gift will be refused.

Issuance of Receipts

At the calendar year end, a charitable receipt will be issued for all donations where the donor has made their identity known. The cumulative total will include all amounts going to the general budget and projects set up by Valleyview unless it has been determined that funds to a specific project cannot be receipted. This determination would be made at the time the fund was established and be communicated at that time.

In the case of money's given through Mennonite Foundation of Canada (MFC) and designated to Valleyview, MFC will issue the charitable receipt.

In general, we want to encourage our members to support each other and from time to time, this may include financial support for a member going through a rough time for a short period. However, in general, our charitable status would not allow these moneys to be receipted. Please check with the treasurer or board if in doubt about the eligibility for receipts.

Discussion of Designated Funds

VMC would encourage anyone thinking of designating a bequest to discuss the issues with an MFC consultant. The trust laws of Canada require the church to use a designated gift or bequest as specified by the donor.

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Consequently, the church would need to refuse a gift if it cannot meet the donor's wishes. For example, gifts designated to a fund that has been closed or not established, by law, would have to be refused.

The gift could still be accepted if the donor allowed the church to use discretion if their primary intent for the gift could not be followed. This would need to be clearly stated (in the will for a bequest). An MFC stewardship consultant has the knowledge and experience to discuss the suitability and implications of a designation.

If the designated fund is not one currently set up by Valleyview, the donor should discuss with church board to determine if a fund could be set up and if it would fit with the Valleyview policies and mandates.

It is very important that all designated funds include specific instructions on what to do with the funds, should the designation cease to exist. Best practise would be for the donor of every designated gift (should be done at the time the gift is made or in the will for bequests) to sign and date a declaration giving alternatives or discretion to the church or one or more family members.

For example, if a bequest is given to renovate part of the building but the renovation turns out not to be feasible or has been completed prior to the enactment of the bequest, the gift may legally need to be refused unless there is alternate instructions.

In all cases, VMC has the final decision as to the acceptance of a gift. It will not be accepted if it:

- Commits the church to ongoing and/or unpredictable future expenses;
- Violates the faith principles, Anabaptist beliefs and stewardship values of members;
- Violates the laws of Canada or in any way threaten VMC's charitable status or its relationship with the Canada Revenue Agency.

A donor can check with the VMC's administrator or treasurer as to what funds currently exist. When requested, VMC's board can prepare for the potential donor, a list of suggested uses for a gift.

Logistics of Undesignated Bequests and Large Gifts (Greater than 10% of the Church Budget)

The VMC board which includes the treasurer will meet to identify the best short-term investments into which any bequest or large gift will be deposited until it can be used. Whenever possible, the church will include the donor (or donor's family in the case of a bequest) in determining the timing and usage of the moneys – both short and long term. In the case of undesignated gifts, the church board will have the final say in how and when the moneys will be used.

Possible uses and methods may include:

- Forwarding portions of the gifts to charities like MCC & MCEC in keeping with VMC's vision and mission
- Using portions of the gifts for general budget or ongoing VMC programs in need of funds
- The establishment of an endowment fund to create ongoing funding for church programs
- Church Board (and Council) may discuss their recommendations on usage with the congregation during the annual or special meeting