



*“Learning and Living as  
God’s Baptized Children”*

# St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church and School (LCMS)

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The Gifting & School Endowment Fund Advisory Committee  
of St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church and School

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Dear members of St. John’s,

In order to bring as much clarity as possible, this letter will review how stewardship and financial funds have worked historically at St. John’s and changes made in recent years. We want everyone to understand the different funds available, what those funds are used for now, and how we hope St. John’s can increase and use those funds into the future.

As you read and consider this letter, please keep in mind the following:

1. Our operating budget is now more than \$2 million per year
2. We have a large facility whose newest sections are already over 20 years old, and thus requires constant upkeep, repairs, refurbishments, and replacements.
3. Providing both the staffing and the facilities to operate a Christian day school, while very costly, is a vital means of carrying out the church’s mission & purpose, as stated in our Church Constitution, Article I.

## **History of Funding at St. John’s**

In the past we operated a general fund with an approved budget and an endowment fund. Practically speaking the latter was an “endowment fund” in name only. In reality it was a “catch all” account that housed many disparate accounts (i.e. altar guild, youth group, scholarships, improvements, etc.). When the general fund fell short of the approved budget, or when the approved budget was a *deficit* budget, we would borrow from the endowment fund.

Three years ago we began the process of restructuring our funds. That led us to the three funds we use today: the General Fund, the Gifting & Improvement Fund, and the School Endowment Fund. The goal of the Advisory Committee and Council of Deacons is to be more active and involved in raising funds and clearly communicating the needs those funds are supporting.

## **Our Goals for St. John’s**

Our long-term intent is to foster a generosity at St. John’s that fulfills St. Paul’s encouragement to excel at the grace of giving (2 Cor. 8). That will allow us to accomplish three goals: (1) to maintain a balanced budget as we operate day-to-day with the General Fund; (2) to pay for the capital improvement needs of an aging but beautiful facility from the Gifting & Improvement Fund; and (3) to give towards the present and future cost of education through the School Endowment Fund.



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## Summary of Current Giving Model

### 1. General Fund

- a. **Purpose:** to fund the salaries, benefits, and utilities of the church & school
- b. **Funding source:** primarily offerings to the church and tuition & fees at the school
- c. **Principle:** This is our first priority, to fulfill our duty to provide a living for the God-given workers of the congregation (1 Cor. 9:14; Gal. 6:6-7; and 1 Tim. 5:17-18)

### 2. Gifting & Improvement Fund

- a. **Purpose:** to fund capital improvement projects (such as parking lots, roofs, HVAC, etc.)
- b. **Funding source:** gifts and bequests
- c. **Principles:**
  - i. Pay for current needs and prepare for unexpected projects
  - ii. Maintain a minimum balance of \$100,000 to ensure readiness for emergencies
  - iii. Funds will be held in a liquid money market account

### 3. School Endowment Fund

- a. **Purpose:** To provide tuition assistance to those in need today, while simultaneously building the fund for the future, with a lofty goal of being a tuition-free school
- b. **Funding source:** gifts and bequests
- c. **Principles:**
  - i. Invested with goal of long term growth with current income.
  - ii. 4% of portfolio is distributed each year to help reduce cost of education and to provide tuition assistance

## Final Encouragement

St. John's has been richly blessed for nearly 160 years! We all desire to continue steadfast in the mission Christ has given us for generations to come. Please prayerfully consider what you have read here today and how your household can support the various funds and needs of our church & school. The needs are great and can seem overwhelming, but God's grace is greater still. He has provided for St. John's at every turn and will continue to do so. Supporting our church & School through these funds is an important way we can express our gratitude to God while also showing the wider world around us just what our God can do with a few faithful people who have been redeemed by the blood of Jesus!

We consider ourselves blessed to serve Christ and you, His Church, on this committee,

The Gifting and School Endowment Fund Advisory Committee

Chris Kruse (Chairman)

Steve Kruse (Congregation President)

Tom Brady (Treasurer)

Ross Meyer (Deacon Chairman)

Andrew Heinen (BOA Deacon)

Leif Briel (BOE Deacon)

Mike Gaffer (Past Treasurer)

