

Living on



"We pray that nothing good in this man/woman's life will be lost, but will be of benefit to the world; that all that was important to him/her will be respected by those who follow; We ask that he/she may go on living ... in the hearts and minds and in the courage and consciences (of those who knew and loved him/her)."

Farewell by a Relative (adapted)
SEC Funeral Rites 1987

Research shows good statistical evidence that those who have wills live longer than those who do not (*Radcliffe 2001*). There is also evidence that those who include a charitable bequest in their will outlive both those without a will and those with a will that does not include such a bequest or gift.

Obviously the fact of having a will or leaving a bequest to a charitable organisation, in this case the church, does not in itself guarantee that you will live longer. It maybe, however, that in facing up to your own mortality, taking control of your life and your finances and being generous with what you have does in some positive way affect your general well-being, happiness and ultimately length of life.

ASSET RICH BUT CASH POOR

The majority of us do not have a large disposable monthly income but many of us often have considerable wealth tied up in our assets: for example in our property. These assets, however, can not easily be drawn upon during our lifetimes.

Leaving a legacy from your estate can be an effective way of being generous with your wealth after your death in ways that are not possible before hand. A legacy can enable you to give later that which you would like to give today.

A legacy to your church can be an important means by which your church's mission and ministry can be sustained and developed.

Legacies can be left to further the work of your individual congregation or the Scottish Episcopal Church itself. Legacies can also be left in a variety of ways:

- As a fixed amount of money (*a pecuniary legacy*)
- As a specific item bequest (*for example a house, a piece of land, an item of jewellery*)
- As a percentage of your estate
- As a percentage of the remaining value of your estate after all other gifts and bequests have been made (*a residuary bequest*)

Your solicitor will be able to advise you as to the best way to leave a legacy to your church or other charitable organisation.

LEAVE A LEGACY AND SAVE MONEY!

Any bequest, be it a legacy or gift to a charity (The General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church and your congregation are both registered charities) is exempt from inheritance tax and therefore can significantly reduce the amount of such tax that may have to be paid on your estate. A bequest enables more of your assets to be used as you would wish them to be used.

WHY LEAVE A LEGACY?

A legacy enables your hopes and dreams to continue to live after your death by supporting those charitable organisations to which you were committed during your life.

St. Paul urged the Early Christians in Corinth to regularly set aside an amount of money in proportion to what they had:

"On the first day of every week, each of you is to put aside and save whatever extra you earn, so that collections need not be taken. "

1Cor 16:2

and to be always ready to respond to the needs of others:

"Now it is not necessary for me to write you about the ministry to the saints, for I know your eagerness... (to give) this bountiful gift that you have promised... (as) a voluntary gift and not as extortion. "

2Cor 9:1-5

The Church continues to urge its members to plan their giving. Leaving a gift in your will to your Christian community and other organisations that are important to you is a way of planning your giving after your death. A legacy also enables you to give of the 'whole of your treasure' and not just from your disposable income.

USE A LEGACY TO GIVE THANKS TO GOD

Giving a legacy to your church is an expression of your gratitude and thanksgiving towards God for all that you have been given and enjoyed during your life. It is also a means of ensuring that your past can become part of the future of your church's life, through its mission and ministry to all God's people.

Leaving a legacy may help you not only to live longer it may also enable you to live for ever.