



Speak to the person you want to select for executor or trustee to ensure they are willing and able to accept the responsibility.

### **Begin the Blessings Today**

Share your plan with your family after it is complete - not only what it is, but why. The Bible gives many examples of this from Moses and Joshua, to Jesus and Paul. Sharing with your family while you are living provides an opportunity for discussion and allows you to experience the blessing firsthand.

This might be the most important step you take to ensure that the transfer will be a blessing — to you, your family and to others, when you are home in heaven.

Learn more about how your estate may encourage the faith of your family and loved ones by contacting an LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor.

### **Get started Today**

At no cost to you, a Gift Planning Counselor will help you plan and direct your passion for giving to family and ministries of the church. Please call today and learn more about gift planning and what will work best for you.

# What Will You Leave Behind?

## Transferring Blessings with Your Estate



The  **LCMS FOUNDATION.**

*Linking Christians with Giving Opportunities*

1333 S. Kirkwood Rd.  
St. Louis, MO 63122-7295

**(800) 325-7912**

**Please visit us online at:  
[www.lcmsfoundation.org](http://www.lcmsfoundation.org)**

The  **LCMS FOUNDATION.**

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# How can your estate plan be a blessing to family and the ministries you care about?

## Uncover God's Plan

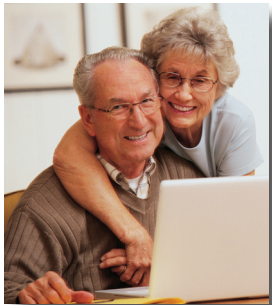
Prayerfully ask God's will for the transfer of your earthly blessings. Ask how He would have you transfer them so that they will bless the family He has given you and further God's work on earth.

## Share Your Faith

Most people prefer to keep their financial affairs private and think of estate planning as a financial matter. However, an estate plan can be an excellent opportunity to witness to your family and strengthen their faith.

A Christian preamble in your Will or Living Trust can be a source of comfort to a mourning family, a powerful message of love and encouragement, and a public record of Christian love.

Christian family blessings, sometimes called Ethical Wills, are an expansion of this idea and are growing in popularity. A Christian family blessing is not a legal document and does not replace a Last Will



*A Christian family blessing provides a great opportunity to share Christian witness, family values, love, gratitude, and meaningful personal or family stories.*

and Testament, Living Trust, or Health Care Directive. The blessings transferred in a Christian preamble or Christian family blessing can have much more important and lasting value than the material blessings transferred in the Last Will and Testament or Living Trust.

## Protect Your Family

Choosing a knowledgeable, experienced, and independent attorney can protect the ones you care about from the costly and emotionally draining process of estate litigation.

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*More people are living into their 80s and beyond increasing the chances that someone will raise issues about mental capacity and undue influence.*

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Attorneys who specialize in estate planning know the best way to craft your plan to ensure it mirrors your intent, minimizes tax liabilities, and protects it from challenges. No one wants to think problems may arise with their estate plan. However, trusts and estates are a fast growing areas of litigation.

## Plan Ahead

Maintain an organized list of assets and instructions on things to do after your death. Keep it in a safe place that will

be easy to locate, or advise the person responsible for handling your estate of the location. Consider giving them a copy of the legal documents in the event your originals cannot be located.

## Rest Assured

Who will have the responsibility of carrying out your wishes when you are gone? In the past it was common to name a trusted friend or family member. However, many people underestimate the amount of time and responsibility this appointment entails.

With the increasing complexity of the process and risk of litigation, it is becoming more common to select professional institutions. Even with a well-prepared estate plan it is likely that the person selected to manage your estate will be asked to exercise judgment and face difficult decisions. Carefully consider whether it is wise to give this responsibility to a family member and whether it has the potential to contribute to conflict within your family after you are gone.

*Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisors they succeed.  
-Proverbs 15:22*

