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Being Prepared

The world we live in has many uncertainties.

We must prepare for whatever may occur. The most important preparation, of course, is our relationship with our Lord and Savior. We also need to prepare for our families and determine how we will distribute the resources God has provided us. An important part of that preparation is to have an up-to-date estate plan. This “Passport to Planning” booklet will help you with this preparation. If you have any questions after you have read this booklet, please feel free to contact:

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Creating Your Estate Plan

**God owns everything.
We are His money managers.**

*The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world,
and all who live in it. Psalm 24:1*

Christian stewardship is the efficient management of our time and talents. Each individual is accountable for the use of the resources available to him or her because all that we are and have is His.

As wise planning and hard work result in the accumulation of an estate, similarly, wise planning and dedication should also be applied to the disposition of that estate. Your estate, regardless of its size, is the

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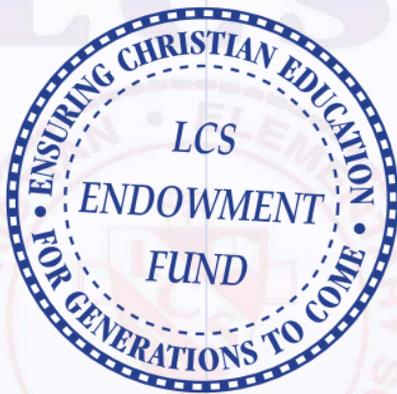
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material representation of your life and is, therefore, significant.

As Christians, our estate planning must establish the goals and objectives we wish to accomplish for ourselves, our dependents, and for our Lord. We must practice Christian stewardship in everything we do.



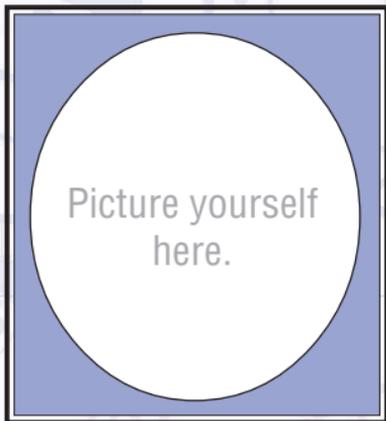
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Who Needs A Will?



Actually, you do...we all do. As we progress from young adulthood into marriage, parenthood, middle age, and, finally, retirement, each stage of life is accompanied by a changing set of “what ifs” and other circumstances that require documented

planning to carry out effective Christian stewardship. That planning is crucial during our lifetime and upon our death.

Estate planning designed for use during your lifetime generally addresses finances, asset management, and

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decision making (including medical decisions). Estate planning taking effect at death generally addresses children's needs, taxation accommodations, charitable bequests, estate management, and the distribution of your estate. Without a documented estate plan, you let state law and the courts make all decisions relating to the care of your minor children, as well as who manages and receives your estate.

Sorry, procrastination is not an option — when you REALLY know that you need estate planning documentation, it's too late to sign it!

As God's money managers, we owe Him nothing less than our best efforts to timely, thoroughly, loyally and conscientiously administer what has been temporarily entrusted to us.

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Single Individuals

Wise planning is necessary for singles, whether one's age is one score (20) or four (80). Spontaneity is a treasured hallmark of youth, but, no age group is immune from accident or calamity. A few moments taken to soberly plan for one's future will ensure that no unforeseen incident or other event will interrupt the orderly management of our affairs. Although we may start with few assets and a youthful feeling of invincibility, maturity carries with it greater understanding, an increasing accumulation of wealth and more exposure to life's perils of disability, disease, disaster and death. Who will see to our affairs if we cannot? To whom should those life

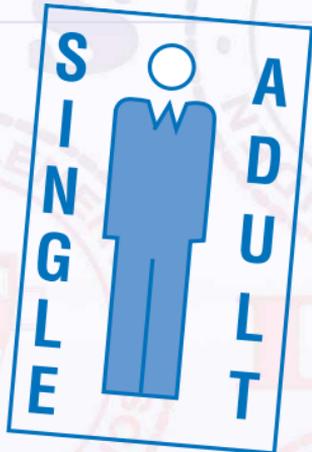
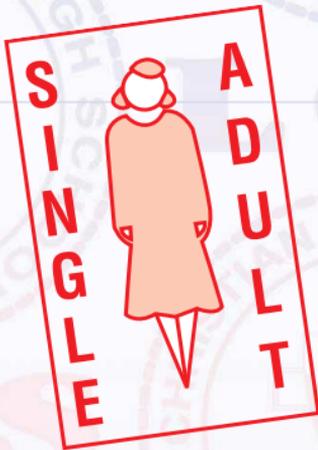
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insurance proceeds (or insurance recovery) go...and do they really need it? What portion will I dedicate back to Kingdom causes?



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Young Marrieds and Parents

The necessity of wise planning grows right along with our families. With marriage we become co-managers of the gifts God has placed in our hands. God bestows upon us the additional gift of a spouse and, perhaps, children along with added responsibilities. We and our beloved deserve each other's every effort to ensure that our affairs and attention to responsibilities are in order, whatever circumstance may grace or befall our family.

Young married couples and parents must evaluate the sufficiency of finances for the health, support and education of our spouse and children if we are disabled or die, while ensuring that an unwise distribution from our estate does not become a contributing factor to the distraction or harm of our children. Further, it is vitally important that we specify trustworthy persons to serve as

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guardians should our children become orphaned, and that they continue to raise our children in the fear of our Lord as the next generation of the faithful. And, as we do all this, young, impressionable minds are observing and absorbing our every example of management (or mismanagement) of the Kingdom gifts on loan to us from God.



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The Middle Ages

Empty-nesters and Grandparents

Maturing into middle age introduces each of us to new challenges. It is during these years that our cost of living decreases (the children are out of the house); our earning power is at its greatest; and our farms and businesses peak in value. We are faced with establishing a correct balance between our role as God's money managers, the inexorable lure of materialism, and our growing interest in laying up an adequate nest egg for retirement.

The possibility of an estate tax bite out of our estate lurks in the shadows and, even darker, a realization of our own mortality begins to loom as parents, relatives, and perhaps classmates pass on. While most of the same questions and concerns we asked and answered with

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planning at a younger age still linger, we must now revisit our prior planning to ensure that our changing situation is fully and rightly addressed, and that our management of God's assets continues to be a God-honoring model for our children (and grandchildren).



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Retired Saints

Retirement from the work force adds another Kingdom gift to those requiring our faithful management...one's time!

Our stabilized situation now affords us an opportunity to judge the adequacy of our retirement finances; perhaps some at one end of the economic scale must forthrightly concede that they could divest themselves of a portion of their holdings and still have more than sufficient resources for their projected retirement needs, while others must face the reality of having to resort to government assistance for their continued care.

The spiritual and financial position of our children is, by this time, likely evident and we can determine whether a sizeable inheritance would indeed be more harmful than

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helpful to their life's journey. Careful planning is again necessary in all these circumstances to responsibly administer our allotted share of Kingdom gifts.



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Overview

Estate planning needs to change as you progress through different stages of your life. Here are some examples that may apply to you:

Your first will and estate plan

Some concerns and goals:

1. Name a guardian for minor children and a trustee to manage assets for their care and education.
2. Assure sufficient financial security for your spouse and all dependent family members.
3. Consider gifts to Lynden Christian Endowment Fund and your other favorite Christian causes when the last parent dies and all children are adults.

Your second will and estate plan

Some concerns and goals:

1. Review whether named guardians are appropriate for teenage children.
2. Avoid estate and inheritance taxes as assets increase in value.
3. Attend to the manner in which your home and other assets are titled, including business, life insurance, and retirement funds.
4. Review plans for support of and fair distribution to family members who may have different levels of need, maturity, and responsibility.
5. Review provisions for Lynden Christian Endowment Fund and other Christian causes when the last parent dies and family responsibilities have been met.

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Your third will and estate plan

Some concerns and goals:

1. Plan for continuity of business and financial matters in case of disability and for the ultimate transfer to children or other family members.
2. Provide for transfer of assets at death with minimum probate intervention, delays, and administration.
3. Arrange for less active management of assets, yet assuring a regular life income plus sufficient funds in the event of emergencies or long-term health care needs.
4. Clearly express goals and intentions to family members in order to minimize potential disagreements among those interested in your estate.
5. Reduce or eliminate death and transfer taxes.

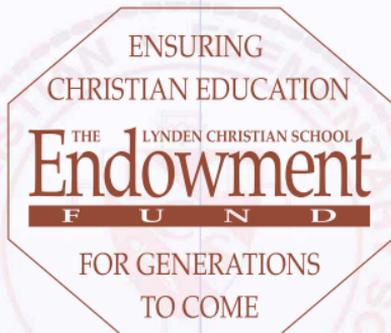
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6. Continue good Christian stewardship toward children, grandchildren, and other family members, as well as toward Lynden Christian Endowment Fund and other favorite Christian causes in planning the final distribution of your estate when both spouses are deceased and family needs have been met.
7. Provide financial protection for your children should your spouse later remarry.



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Other frequently listed concerns:

1. Avoiding the double tax on tax deferred retirement funds in the event of death before these funds are withdrawn.
2. Ensuring equal treatment of children where some, but not all, are involved in the family business.
3. Adjusting treatment of children where some show greater maturity than others.
4. Making provisions for family members with special needs due to handicap, disability, etc.
5. Providing care for aging parents without affecting their rights to governmental assistance programs.

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6. Developing criteria for identifying proper guardians, executors, trustees, or other estate representatives.
7. Minimizing probate delays and costs.



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Process Check List

1. Do you have a well thought-out will?
2. In this document have you worked through the four major areas which affect you and your long-range planning goals?
 - A) **People** - For whom do you wish to plan? Are there any special or unique family situations which should be considered?
 - B) **Property** - Is your estate likely to owe any estate or inheritance taxes? What assets are available to meet your family needs in case of death or long-term disability?
 - C) **Plan** - What specific goals do you have for your property after you are gone? How can a plan be prepared which meets both your family needs and your Christian stewardship desires?

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D) **Participants** - Which people should be involved to aid in accomplishing your goals? For example: executors and guardians.

3. Have you reviewed this will over the last five to ten years?
4. Do you have trusted professionals who helped you establish/review your estate plan?
5. Would you like free consultation with a representative from the Barnabas Foundation?
6. Have you ever considered the concept of “*A Child Named Charity*” (including charitable causes in your will as if one of your children)?

Help Before You Meet With Your Attorney

Estate Planning Services

As a member organization of the Barnabas Foundation, friends of Lynden Christian can avail themselves - at no cost - of the estate planning services offered by their staff. The goal of the Barnabas Foundation is to “assist Christian people in extending their lifelong pattern of good Christian stewardship into their wills and estate plans.”

A Barnabas representative will meet with individuals or couples, offering free and confidential guidance in meeting personal, family and stewardship goals. Barnabas representatives do not perform the necessary legal work to carry out these plans, but they follow up the

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conferences with a summary that can be brought to an attorney for translation into the appropriate legal documents.

Meeting with a Barnabas representative may be of special interest to you if your circumstances have changed in recent years due to the loss of a spouse, retirement, or your children have reached adulthood. You may also have concerns about what will happen to your family business or farm in case of your death.

To arrange a consultation with a Barnabas representative, please contact Mr. Don Van Maanen at (360) 318-9525 or donvm@lynchs.org.



Estate Planning and Review Update Seminar

Lynden Christian School has sponsored and expects to continue sponsoring an annual evening estate planning seminar featuring a number of Lynden attorneys whose practice includes estate planning. The seminar not only provides valuable free information, but also affords you the opportunity to meet the attorneys in person.

The notices that announce this seminar are accompanied by a coupon that may be presented to participating local attorneys for a valuable discount in the cost of your estate planning-this LCS coupon is honored whether or not you actually attend the seminar. In addition, those attending the seminar typically receive yet another coupon directly from the participating attorneys for even greater savings.