

**POWER OF THE PLEDGE:
*FOR THE SAKE OF THE CHURCH***

There is a difference between a direct (cash) gift in response to a one-time request (mail solicitation or personal ask) and a pledge to give a specific amount over a period of time. A direct gift is a one-time decision (a door closer); a pledge is a commitment to support a personal decision to be involved over a longer period of time.

Perhaps it may not seem like an important issue to discuss or think about whether a gift is a one-time decision or a pledge to give a specific gift over a period of time. After all, a gift is a gift!

But there is a subtle difference. A pledge of a specified amount over a period of time requires a personal selection of a charitable entity and a commitment to follow-up with regular gifts until the pledge is fulfilled. A pledge is like a vow---whatever is promised requires personal attention. In many cases it is a matter of stewardship, budgeting from available funds intended for charitable causes.

How does a pledge commitment work out over time? The steps are simple:

- Select a charitable entity to support over a period of time.
- Make a personal commitment to send a gift at regular intervals and share that decision with the entity of choice.
- Establish a payment schedule or ask the charitable entity to send specific reminders.
- Make scheduled payments until the pledge is completed.
- Renew the pledge for another specified period of time, especially after discovering the joy of giving.

What is important about a pledge over a period of time? It revolves around commitment. A commitment is the dedication of one's heart and mind, the true indicators of a person's character. It exemplifies what St. Paul talks about in Corinthians "giving with joy."

The Concordia University System colleges/universities are worthy charitable entities for a pledged gift. They are about the educational mission/ministry of the LCMS, preparing leaders to serve in our churches and society. Contact a Development Officer at one of the Concordias and set up a schedule for a pledged gift (names and telephone numbers are listed in this Chronicle) or call 1-800-248-1930 x 1252 for assistance.