

September 10, 2021

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Bethlehem has kicked off a great start in celebrating our 100th anniversary! Over the next year there will be many opportunities for us all to share in the rich history of our church and meet (or meet again) many of the important people who have been part of the journey.

But what about the next 100 years? What will Bethlehem's legacy be? To begin to answer those questions, an Investment in **Ministries Fund (IMF)** team has been formed and working the process of establishing an endowment fund.

Why establish an endowment fund?

Endowments breathe life into a congregation. They make new ministries possible, spark creative outreach projects, and create a legacy of giving for our church. From the donor's perspective, a well-ordered endowment provides a trustworthy means of making a gift.

Our goal of forming an Investment in Ministries Fund is not to reduce the need for annual stewardship, but rather to increase our ability to support worthwhile ministries. With a larger **IMF** providing additional investment income, we will be able to address new mission opportunities, or expand existing ones. Who knows what exciting ministries await -- next year, 10 years from now, or 100 years from now? The **IMF** provides the means to be innovative and responsive to the needs of the time.

Please look over the enclosed Frequently Asked Questions (see back of letter). The **IMF** team is planning an informational meeting in the coming weeks. Meeting time and place will be announced in the STAR. In the meantime, if you have questions, please contact anyone on the **IMF** team.

Blessings to all,

BLC Investment in Ministries Fund team

Paulette Costanza
Julie Owen

Mark Gaul
John Panko

Roger Kolker
Neil Vokes

Attachment: FAQ



Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Investment in Ministries Fund (IMF)
Frequently Asked Questions

- 1) **What is the purpose of the IMF?** The Investment in Ministries Fund offers a way to support missions and ministries beyond the resources contained in our annual spending plan that reach out to our local community and our global neighbors to plant the seeds of faith for generations to come. The purpose of the IMF is to secure gifts to expand support of ministries primarily outside the walls of BLC. In addition to financial support, engaging members of BLC in active support of ministry is one of the two priorities set forth by Church Council for the coming year and beyond. [Again, this fund will not replace funding for Missions and Social Concerns in the spending plan but rather augment it.]
- 2) **Why is the IMF being established now?** The fund is being created at this time in celebration of BLC's 100th anniversary and to create the opportunity for further ministry for the next 100 years. We will ask members of the congregation to consider making a special gift to the IMF sometime during this year of celebration in addition to their regular contributions.
- 3) **Who will administer the fund?** The Missions and Social Concerns Committee along with Church Council will determine which ministries are supported and how. The IMF Committee will manage gifts and interactions with the ELCA concerning the financial aspects of the endowment.
- 4) **How will the IMF work?** The IMF will be an endowed fund, where gifts to the fund will be invested and the earnings from the fund will be used to support various ministries. Gifts will be invested with the ELCA along with endowed funds of other ELCA congregations. In effect, the IMF will exist in perpetuity. The IMF Committee is working closely with an advisor from the ELCA in establishing this fund.
- 5) **What is the financial goal?** The IMF Committee has an initial goal of \$100,000, which when realized, will yield \$4,000 - \$5,000 **each year**. Over time, the fund will grow through additional outright gifts, growth in the fund value, and we hope thoughtful estate gifts from members of BLC. With growth, the funds available each year to support ministry will also grow.
- 6) **What are the next steps?** Church Council approved the Resolution to establish the Investment in Ministries Fund at their meeting on August 19. The Congregation will be asked to approve this same Resolution at the Annual Meeting on October 31.
- 7) **How can I learn more about the IMF?** Each week an article will appear in the STAR with additional information about the IMF. And a page for the IMF will soon be created on the BLC web site. Also, several virtual Q&A sessions will be held in late September through mid-October. Finally, you may contact any member of the IMF Committee – Paulette Costanza, Mark Gaul, Roger Kolker, John Panko, Julie Owen, and Neil Vokes.