

NOT TO PLAN IS TO PLAN



Maybe you've heard this old adage before, but it's ever so true when it comes to estate planning. (And no, you don't have to be rich to have an estate.) Your estate plan should be as individual as you are. It covers the process of accumulating, managing, and distributing the property God has entrusted you with. There are four big challenges in creating an effective plan:

Dying too soon. If you have people depending on you, you may worry about providing for them when you're no longer around. Savings plans, retirement accounts and life insurance are some common ways to assure adequate support is available.

Living too long. What if you outlive your resources? The wise "guys" will reduce what they spend today to ensure they have adequate funds later. Now *this* is what I call a challenge!

Emergencies. Estate planning may provide security in case of serious illness, accidents and other unforeseen economic hardships. Savings and insurance policies of all kinds can help alleviate concerns that an emergency will "wipe you out."

Disability. It's also very important to plan for adequate income and management of assets in the event that a mental or physical disability impairs your ability to manage what God has given. Various financial arrangements, including trusts, have been created to help deal with the need for assistance should disability strike.

What happens if you decide not to make an estate plan? Your state government will take over and here's what may happen:

- ***A total stranger will settle your affairs.***
- ***Your property may be distributed according to the law. That's the law that assumes you want to treat all recipients equally, regardless of need.***
- ***No matter how you've lived your life, if you die without an estate plan, NOTHING goes to ANY charity.***

We think it's best to exercise your rights and make your own estate plans. The United Methodist Stewardship Foundation of Central Pennsylvania can help you with this seemingly daunting task. We will help you complete an outline of your wishes and then you may take the outline to your attorney who will prepare the proper legal documents. All of our consultations are strictly private, confidential, and free. We do, however, encourage you to consider the Church in your estate plan.