

A Will to Give

A newsletter for those who want to leave a legacy.



Vol. 2 Issue 1 Spring/Summer 2024



"One of the things I learned is to treat faith as a verb and not a noun, so you have to act on your faith just like Jesus did. I think giving is an act of faith."

—Michael

Michael and Agnes Voligny

Faith is a Verb

What brings two people together for the rest of their lives could be a certain chemistry, a love of the same kinds of things, a feeling of completion, or a host of other experiences. In Michael and Agnes Voligny's case, it is a common purpose: the great commission (Matthew 28:18-20). Throughout their lives, individually and together, they strive to live out their faith. Agnes served as a missionary in our sister church in Manila, Philippines. "As a missionary in my birth country, I formed deep friendships with many disciples as we lived out our faith together. What a blessing that those relationships endure to this day!" Early in their marriage, they moved to Philadelphia, where

Michael worked for HOPE worldwide to build a hospital in Cambodia, support an AIDS clinic in South Africa, and house a leper colony in India. Those spiritual experiences left an indelible love in both Michael and Agnes, and as they had children and continue to have exciting careers in the academic world, they have given generously to the church.

Recently, Michael and Agnes talked about their faith and their philanthropy. Michael had been reading the book *Jesus is the Question* by Martin B. Copenhaver. "One of the things I learned is to treat faith as a verb and not a noun, so you have to act on your faith just like Jesus did. I think giving



Boston Church of Christ
214 Concord Street • Framingham, MA 01702
plannedgiving.bostonchurch.org

is an act of faith,” says Michael.

Now they have decided to leave a lasting imprint long after they are gone. “We are who we are because of our faith, because of the people who support us in our faith. So it was never a question to us of whether we would leave part of our assets to the church. What’s changed over the years is how much more we want to give,” Agnes says.

They have created a Donor Advised Fund (DAF) with Fidelity Charitable Foundation. “A DAF is surprisingly easy to create,” Michael explains. “You can start with a small deposit with a custodian like Fidelity and get a tax deduction for the gift. You then choose the non-profit organization to give to from your fund and direct the custodian to distribute funds when you want. Recipients can include the church, academic institutions, social services, etc. The church’s website has a DAF widget that makes this very easy to do. Just click on the widget, type the name of your custodian and you will be taken directly to your DAF site. Also, you can add to your fund at any time and get additional tax deductions from that gift. All the while, the fund will be gaining interest as it is invested.”

“We are excited to involve our kids in decisions with the DAF to foster a culture of philanthropy in our family,” notes Michael. Agnes is enthusiastic, too. “The DAF makes it easy to give. You don’t have to call a lawyer to make changes to your plans. You can do them yourself.”

Agnes and Michael put their estate in order a few years ago, enabling heirs to avoid probate when they pass away. “Our estate planning lawyer, David Adams, has been so helpful,” Michael says. “He created a life trust for us. I have a very large notebook with all the estate documents. We know exactly what we are leaving behind and where it will go.” It was an intentional exercise to discuss and think about assets and end-of-life issues. “Anything you plan for will take effort. We’ve had two iterations of our will with David’s guidance, and the process is worth it. I feel very secure about what we are leaving our kids, the church, and other organizations we care about.”

“We have tithed and given to special missions for over thirty years. We gave to the Capital Campaign for the Arlington building. And now, having put a plan together is helping us realize the mission for our philanthropy. It was the next step in our giving back to God,” Michael says.

As Michael and Agnes look back on the many ways they enacted the great commission over the years – as family group leaders, as shepherds, as mentors – they continue to be grateful for the opportunity to be part of God’s mission. “I think giving financially is an act of love,” says Michael. “I think the church represents a very big part of our hearts and our gift is an act of love to God that will benefit others. The church has an inspiring plan and we want to support it. Our generation must set the example of giving for the next one.”

How to Leave a Gift in Your Will

When creating a gift in your will that lives on for generations to come, here is a simple bequest you might consider and the specific language to use in your will.*

“I/we irrevocably give, devise, and bequeath to the Boston Church of Christ, Tax ID #04-2494881, 214 Concord Street, Framingham, MA 01702, the sum of \$ _____ (or a description of a specific asset), to be used for the following purpose: (e.g., unrestricted current use).

If at any time in the judgment of the trustees of Boston Church of Christ it is impossible or impracticable to carry out exactly the designated purpose, they shall determine an alternative purpose closest to the designated purpose.”

*This information is not intended as legal advice. For legal advice, please consult an estate attorney.

Be sure to include our tax ID number and address in any gift in your will:

**Boston Church of Christ
Tax ID #04-2494881
214 Concord Street
Framingham, MA 01702**

Evangelist's Corner

When you think of the meaning of the word *legacy*, you think about something left behind, you think about the lasting effect of events, institutions, or the impact that someone had on your life. Of course, as disciples of Jesus, we are living out the legacy of his life and the inspiring impact of his death and resurrection 2000 years ago.

Every generation of his church has been given the choice about whether they will do the same. Will we take the convictions that have been passed down to us and carry them forward with our own energies, gifts, and convictions? This is the question of legacy.

There is great evidence that well over 40 years after its birth, the Boston Church is successfully living out the legacy of the heroes that have come before. The chemistry, convictions, and culture that the Boston Church is experiencing here in 2024 is incredibly inspiring. The diverse staff, generationally and racially, is united in their effort to save as many souls as possible. The unity between the evangelists, elders, teachers, and deacons, and the existence of leadership teams charting the path forward in every region is a legacy of unity. The thriving campus ministries show the engagement of the youth and that the gospel is as attractive as ever to the younger generation. The incredible ownership of the members of the church is shown as they lead small groups throughout the church, create incredible programs like People of All Nations (PAN), and through sacrificial benevolence work. Lastly, the women of the church are as energized as ever as 1,100 came together on a Sunday in April to worship God and to talk about spiritual friendships.

There is a story that inspired me recently. Sam Findley is 65 years old and has been a disciple in the Boston Church for many years after finding Jesus as a Harvard student nearly 40 years ago. His older brother Joe had been disinterested in Sam's faith all their lives, but because of Sam's steadfast faith, he finally was able to pass it along. After inviting him to visit our church for more than 30 years, Joe came to a Sunday worship for the first time in late 2023.



Kevin Miller and Melissa Miller

On March 31, 2024, he was baptized into Christ. It is never too late to accept Christ into your life.

There is obviously a revival taking place among the youth of our church, too. Many young college students are becoming Christians. This, in and of itself, is one of the great legacies of the Boston Church – holding the gospel out successfully to the students of the Boston area has been taking place in a powerful way for the last four decades. But as the story above illustrates, it's not just college students. Young families, single professionals, and teens are responding to Jesus' call for their lives.

The Boston Church is an older church with over four decades' worth of life. But rather than ebbing away, its vitality is growing as it lives out the inheritance of convictions it has received from so many disciples over the years.

I hope you can be as inspired as I am by what God is doing in our day and that you can continue to leave a legacy here and now so that others who come after us can continue to be blessed by Christ's love.

To learn more about legacy giving to the church, please contact:



Mr. Gary Slebodnick
Director of Administration
Boston Church of Christ
214 Concord Street
Framingham, MA 01702
gslebodnick@icoc.org
(508) 848-2419



Boston
CHURCH OF CHRIST

214 Concord Street
Framingham, MA 01702

A Will to Give

A newsletter for those who
want to leave a legacy.

FROM THE ELDERS

Let's Do What We Can

Mark 14 includes the story of “the sinful woman” anointing Jesus. In verse 3, it says, “While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head.”

When some of the other dinner guests berated her, Jesus put a stop to that by saying, “She did what she could.”

In verse 9, he went on to say, “Wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.” As it turns out, the anointing of Jesus is one of the few stories that appears in all four gospels (Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 7, and John 12).

Perhaps there are two ways that we are like the woman in the story.

The first is that we may just be learning of an unexpected way to honor God. I get the impression from the story that the woman did not know Jesus would be in Bethany that night, but once she saw the opportunity to honor Jesus, that is exactly what she did. Giving weekly contributions may be very straightforward, but legacy



The Van Aukens (l to r): Sarah, Ryan, Scarlette, Emma, Mike, and Daniel

giving opens up the possibility of also using stocks, bonds, real estate, and other instruments to honor God.

The second is that, like the woman, if we simply do what we can, our impact can far outlive us. One of the great things about legacy giving is that we have time as our ally. Even if what we set aside now seems small, by doing what we can and letting time bring our gift to maturity, the result can be far greater than we currently imagine.

Let's explore some ways to do what we can – confident that the gospel will be preached and God will be honored as a result.