



## Zion Lutheran has \$1.7 million in future gifts in the pipeline, and so can your church!

by John Hawkins, Director of Planned Giving



*Hawkins*

In May 2003, the voters of Zion Lutheran Church in Dallas voted to establish the Zion Endowment Fund (ZEF). By the grace of God, they now have more than \$1.7 million in future estate and planned gifts designated for their endowment.

How did they do it? In January 2006, Zion Lutheran Church launched a program called "Building the Zion Legacy," through which their members were asked to designate a future gift to the ZEF through their will or estate plan.

The ZEF will support three areas of non-budgeted ministry at Zion: Christian Ministries (including special outreach projects), Christian Education, and Music Ministries. As is typical with endowments, the principal remains intact, and only future income or growth is intended to be used for these areas of ministry.

By the time the program concluded on March 31 of this year, 32 congregation members had made a commitment of a future estate gift to the ZEF. Of these, 17 indicated a dollar value of their future gift totaling \$1.7 million. On April 22, a Dedication Sunday was held at Zion celebrating the completion of the program.

"The drive for charter membership in the ZEF was conducted with a positive stewardship spirit and has had a significant impact for the future of this parish," says The Rev. Dr. Robert C. Preece, senior pastor at Zion. "The mission and ministry will remain the same then as now. His precious Gospel is to be proclaimed and the Holy Sacraments celebrated, in all places and in all times," he added.

To help the program succeed, staffing was provided by the Lutheran Foundation of Texas (LFOT). The Foundation helped prepare Legacy program materials, made presentations to individuals and groups at the congregation, and outlined specific ways that could be used by church members to leave an estate gift to the ZEF. (Details of individual estate commitments are also being held in confidence by LFOT.)

**Is what Zion accomplished with the help of our loving Lord something only they could do, or can your church do it too?** The answer is that all churches in the Texas District can encourage their members to remember them in their estate plan. LFOT also is willing and able to help your congregation gather commitments future estate gifts to the Glory of God and His Kingdom.

For more information on how to conduct a Legacy program, or establish an endowment at your church or school, contact us at 800-880-3733, ext 230, or via [johnh@lfot.org](mailto:johnh@lfot.org). We stand ready to serve you.



**The ZEF Charter Membership Plaque was dedicated at Zion Lutheran on Sunday, April 22. Pictured are (L to R), John Hawkins, LFOT; Marvin Stelzer, Honorary Co-Chair; John Stelzer, ZEF Committee Member; the Rev. Dr. Norbert Mueller, Honorary Co-Chair, Gloria Young, Barbara Bradfield, Katherine Bolland, Committee Members; Richard Tesauo, ZEF Committee Chair, Linda and the Rev. Dr. Robert Preece, Ex-Officio Committee Members; Daniel Kruger and Jerry Knippa, Committee Members.**