

As Christians,  
we want to be  
responsible and  
faithful with the  
gifts God has  
given us.

And that  
includes being  
a faithful steward  
of our estate!

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*This information is provided as a service. It is not intended to be legal advice on a specific issue. Always consult your own attorney when considering these and other matters.*

No Will?  
No  
Way!

WILLS



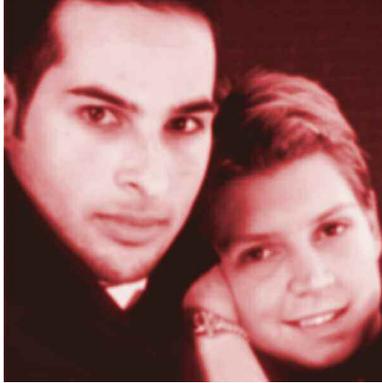
## Everyone Has A Will!

You have a will whether you know it or not! Some folks discuss their plans with their spouse, children and other loved-ones. Some have an attorney draw their will. Others put it off saying, "I'll get around to it someday." But each of us does have a "will" whether we have a written legal document or not!

If you neglect writing a will, the state distributes your property at your death by a "will" that it has created for you.

It is not called a will, but it functions the same way. Without a will, your possessions, homes, bank accounts, automobiles, personal belongings, and most other remaining items you own are distributed by a set of laws and regulations, usually referred to as the "laws of descent and distribution."

Unfortunately, as well intended as the state may be in creating these laws, the state seldom does what you would do if you had created a valid will for yourself. And, it is very likely that your loved ones may not receive what you would have intended for them. The only way to be certain your wishes are carried out is through a valid will.



## Where there's No Will — There's No Way!

For instance, with **no will**, there is **no way** to decide who will be the guardian of your children.

With **no will**, there is **no way** to divide your assets as you might choose and distribute them between your spouse and children.

With **no will**, there is **no way** to protect your children's interests in their share of your estate if your spouse remarries.

With **no will**, there is **no way** to distribute your wealth to your children and spouse in the way you believe is in their best interest.

With **no will**, there is **no way** to lower unnecessary taxation of your estate.

With **no will**, there is **no way** to leave anything to help support a college, a charity, a local United Methodist church, or other ministries you would like to support through your estate.

With **no will**, there is **no way** to be certain that your wishes will be carried out as you intended!

With **no will**, there is **no way** to guarantee that the assets you have accumulated throughout your life will be distributed faithfully.

## Preparing A Will Means Good Stewardship

As in the parable of the talents (*Matthew 25:14-30*), we strive to serve God with all God has entrusted to us. We do not "bury our talents," but "trade" them and make more. Good stewardship pleases our Lord.

You work diligently. You try to be a faithful steward by protecting what God has given you and by allowing what you possess to multiply. You have learned the Christian's responsibility of faithful stewardship. Doesn't that responsibility include being a faithful steward of your estate?

If you believe you know better than the state how your plans should be carried out and what God wants you to do, then you must have a valid will. It's your responsibility.

## The United Methodist Church Cares

Your church can help. Through area and conference United Methodist Foundations, planned giving departments, and other United Methodist institutions and agencies, qualified people can help you get a proper will drafted. Let us help you grow as a faithful steward.

To learn more about this important subject ask your pastor for information, or write your Annual Conference United Methodist Foundation, or Office of Development.