

# IDEAS FOR MAKING SPECIAL GIFTS TO THE CHURCH

Economists tell us that \$41 trillion will be passing from one generation to another over the next quarter-century. This is over 10 times our current national debt. Some of us will be leaving assets behind; others of us will be receiving them. As Christians, we should recall that we are merely stewards of that which has been entrusted to our care. Our Lord calls upon us to share with others. How can we do this? There are several common means by which we can make special once-in-a-lifetime gifts to our congregations and the wider church.

**Bequests:** This is probably the most commonly used means of making a special gift to the church. Have you remembered the church in your will? Chances are that your family is provided for in this document, but what about your church family?

**Insurance:** Taking out a life insurance policy on yourself is one way in which a person can make a rather sizable gift to the church with a very modest expenditure. This especially works well if you are younger. For instance if a couple are both 30 and purchase a second-to-die policy (a payout will not occur until after the second person is deceased), they can give a gift of \$680,000 to the church. The cost? Believe it or not only, \$103 a month or about \$3 a day. You can easily arrange to have the congregation own the policy. If this is the case, your payments are tax-deductible, since they are a gift to the church. This is a powerful but under used financial planning tool.

**Charitable Remainder Trusts:** This is not for everyone, but works well with older people who have highly-appreciated assets (i.e. stocks they have held a long time or a piece of property that has gone up in value) that are not paying much interest. By using these assets to fund a trust, you will be getting an income stream of somewhere between 5 & 8% a year, an immediate tax deduction (that can be spread over a number of years) and, eventually, after your death, the church or institution receives the underlying value. Tax savings can often be used to fund an insurance policy so that your heirs will only be able to receive significant funds at the time of your death. For some this is truly a "have your cake and eat it too" situation.

If you are moved by the power of the Holy Spirit to make a significant gift to your congregation and/or the wider church and are interested in any of these strategies, please contact your investment professional or the New Jersey Synod Office (609-586-6800).