**TIP OF THE MONTH – April 2017**

**Quarterly Reports**

The first quarter of the calendar year is over and in many congregations the Financial Secretary sends out a “quarterly report.” As you think about your congregation’s practices in this area of stewardship, consider some of the following:

* If you don’t send quarterly reports to your members, reconsider it.
	+ It is NOT a bill
	+ It helps members see how they are doing in their self-set goal for their financial offerings for the mission and ministry of their congregation.
	+ Members are conscientious and when they have made an Estimate of Giving, they want to meet their goal.
	+ It allows members to check that any special offerings they have given are properly credited. And, any mistakes can quickly be corrected by contacting the Financial Secretary.
	+ Quarterly reports help increase offerings.
* When you send your quarterly report, include a thank you letter
	+ Give the prepared letter to the Financial Secretary to include with the member’s statement – this preserves confidentiality.
	+ Keep the letter positive and share a story or example or two of how member offerings have benefitted the mission and ministry of the congregation.
	+ People are more generous and more cheerful when they see how their generous gifts have made a difference.
	+ Be sure to say thank you.
* DO NOT send negative messages about deficits or guilt producing language.
	+ Most congregations are behind budget most of the year.
	+ Guilt is not conducive to giving and can frustrate those who are most conscientious (they are doing all they can and you are saying it still is not enough).
* Quarterly reports give a consistent message about best practices.
	+ We encourage intentional and prayerful, thoughtful giving
	+ We encourage regular giving
	+ We give thanks for the gifts that are given in response to God’s grace.