Clergy Tax Issues

IRS Publication 517 is a very useful reference tool in navigating the maze of IRS regulations that pertain to members of the clergy and religious workers. In this publication you will find step by step instructions on all things pertaining to pastoral tax returns, including:

- Personal income tax
- Social Security taxes
- Self-employment taxes and exemptions
- Exemption from FICA taxes
- Retirement savings arrangements
- Earned income credit and
- W-2 information

What is great about this publication is that it includes a comprehensive example of a sample pastor's return with all the forms filled in. Click on the link below to print a copy of this useful IRS publication.

For more information, go to www.irs.gov and search under clergy tax or similar topics.

Additional resources:

- IRS Publication 517 *Social Security and Other Information for Members of the Clergy & Religious Workers*
- IRS Publication 1828 *Tax Guide for Churches and Religious Organizations*
- In 2009 the IRS released a *Ministers Audit Techniques Guide*. This resource provides insights into how the IRS examiners will review tax returns for clergy if they are audited.

Clergy Tax resources from Portico Benefit Services

Another aid is the ***2014 Tax Return Preparation Guide for 2013 Returns for Clergy***. This is an 83-page document, but is easy to read and understand. It also includes completed examples of the required tax forms and explains in detail how the specific tax rules are applied to clergy. What is unique about this guide is that it goes into detail on each step of each form so it can be used as a reference guide if you need more detail regarding a specific issue or situation. This guide, available from Portico Benefit Services, can be obtained using the following instructions:

Log in to your retirement account at the Portico Benefit Services website;

1. Click on ***Retirement Center*** dark grey menu across the top of the page;
2. Click on ***Tax Planning Resources*** under Tools and Information; and
3. Click on ***Tools*** all the way on the right, and then select the ***Tax Return Preparation Guide***.