



(Note to media: Naturally, the Endowment would appreciate your notice of this program in your publication/broadcast. Beyond that, of course, if you know of any pastors and/or congregation members who may be interested in the renewal program, please feel free to share this information with them.)

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For immediate release
July 20, 2010

Lilly Endowment awards 27 clergy renewal grants to Indiana congregations

Twenty-seven Indiana congregations have received grants to enable their ministers to participate in the 2010 Clergy Renewal Program for Indiana Congregations, funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. The program – now in its 12th year – allows pastors to step back from their busy lives and renew their spirits for challenges ahead.

The Endowment invites congregations and ministers to consider and plan a period of “intentional reflection and renewal.” It provides a time for ministers to take a break from their daily obligations and gain the fresh perspective and renewed energy that a carefully considered “sabbath time” of travel, study, rest and prayer can provide.

A time away from their busy lives gives pastors a chance for private times of reflection and reading. It also allows real family time together, far from the hectic lives at home. Not surprising, many take the opportunity to travel. Seven pastors will enjoy Italy, and five plan pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Others will visit family, missionaries and mission programs in the Czech Republic, Ukraine, Georgia, Great Britain, Korea, Kenya, Ghana, South Africa and Ethiopia.

Many see the time as a golden opportunity to get fit – and stay that way. They’re headed for fitness programs and hours of horseback riding, camping and serious hiking. One pastor and his wife, former Marines, will run in several 5K and 10K races before they run the Maui Marathon. Another pastor will fly to Los Angeles and bike back to Boston.

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Clergy Renewal for Indiana Congregations
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Pastors and their families also find enjoying or practicing the arts a profoundly renewing experience. This year they will hone their crafts in various workshops and learn the fine arts of making mosaics, sketching landscapes or improving their musicianship. Others enjoy theater and will see plays in New York, Chicago and Europe. And many will be awed by collections in world-famous museums around the world. When they return to Indiana, they invariably feel refreshed. Previous grantees describe their renewal experience as “profound” and “transforming.”

“We ask these congregations and ministers to consider the question, ‘What will make your heart sing?’, as they devise their plans,” said Craig Dykstra, senior vice president for religion at the Endowment. “They never fail to come up with wonderful and imaginative yet doable ways to fulfill their dreams. Their time away has freed them up to pursue personal interests and needs in ways that have given them new energy for ministry – and the congregations have discovered that they too experience a refreshment of their own and a newfound sense of their own strengths.”

The Endowment’s larger goal is to bolster the good work that America’s pastors and congregations accomplish day in and day out, to reinforce and build upon the important work being done on both sides of the pulpit. “In our religion grantmaking, we hope to strengthen the efforts of today’s excellent pastors, because it is no secret that pastors who have reconnected themselves to the passions that led them to the ministry in the first place are more likely to lead healthy and vibrant congregations,” Dykstra said.

Indiana congregations were invited to apply for a grant of up to \$50,000. Up to \$15,000 of that amount could be used to fulfill pastoral duties during the minister’s absence and for expenses related to the congregation’s own renewal. The 27 grants this year totaled \$1.25 million.

These Indiana congregations represent 20 cities and towns and 18 counties. Eighteen have fewer than 400 persons at worship (the smallest is 50), six have between 400 and 800, while three have regular worship attendance of more than 1,000 (the largest is 2,500). The oldest and the newest are in Indianapolis: Roberts Park United Methodist Church (1821) and Trinity Church (2003).

Since the program began in 1999, 363 renewal grants have been awarded to Indiana congregations. The renewal program will continue next year to benefit even more Indiana congregations and their pastors. Application information for the 2011 program will be available at indianaclergyrenewal.org by the middle of August.

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Clergy Renewal for Indiana Congregations
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The congregations and pastors selected for the 2010 Indiana Clergy Renewal program are as follows:

American Reformed Church (Reformed Church in America), DeMotte, \$49,546
Daniel R. Jelsma

Avoca Baptist Church (American Baptist Churches), \$50,000
Kyle D. Witmer

Castleton United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, \$50,000
C. Mac Hamon

Central Presbyterian Church (Presbyterian Church USA [PCUSA]), Lafayette, \$36,621
Jeff K. Cover

Church at the Crossing (Church of God), Indianapolis, \$49,796
Steven L. Rennick

Concordia Lutheran Church (Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod), Greenwood, \$31,100
John A. Flamme

Crossroads Community Church (Christian Reformed Church in North America [CRC]),
Schererville, \$44,627
Kris J. Vos

Eden Church (Conservative Congregational Christian Conference), Muncie, \$40,180
James E. Behrendt

Family Bible Church (Evangelical Free Church of America), Portage, \$46,053
Curtis A. Yingst

First Christian Reformed Church (CRC), Crown Point, \$49,343
Joel J. Sheeres

Grace Episcopal Church, Muncie, \$45,838
Thomas W. Blake

Irvington Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), Indianapolis, \$48,799
Galen L. Schwarz

Mount Gilead Church (Independent Christian), Mooresville, \$48,525
Jeff Faull

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Clergy Renewal for Indiana Congregations
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New Beginnings Christian Fellowship (North American Baptist Conference), Kokomo,
\$50,000
Jeffry R. Russell

Oak Grove Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Monticello, \$49,602
Ashli Cartwright-Peak

Ogilville Church of Christ (Independent Christian), Columbus, \$48,550
Martin E. Wright

Old North United Methodist Church, Evansville, \$49,974
Michael P. Monahan

Parkview Church of the Nazarene, Nashville, \$46,118
Davis S. Hayes

Roberts Park United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, \$50,000
Howard E. Boles

St. John's United Church (United Church of Christ/PCUSA), Chesterton, \$45,101
Catherine Lindberg

St. Mary Catholic Church, Crown Point, \$45,952
Patrick Kalich

St. Peter's United Church of Christ, Carmel, \$49,921
Lori E. Bievenour

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Terre Haute, \$50,000
Joseph H. Chillington

Shalom Mennonite Church, Indianapolis, \$38,191
Dagne Assefa

Southern Heights Baptist Church (Fundamental Baptist Fellowship Association),
Fort Wayne, \$48,676
Otha L. Aden

Trinity Church (nondenominational), Indianapolis, \$42,911
J. Todd Fisher

Wabash Friends Church, \$50,000
David W. Phillips