



Contact: Gretchen Wolfram
317/916-7304
317/255-2640 (home)

For Immediate Release
July 16, 2001

Lilly Endowment to continue Indiana Clergy Renewal Program

Lilly Endowment's Clergy Renewal Program for Indiana Congregations has been renewed for a fourth season, thus allowing up to 30 congregations from large cities, small towns and rural villages in Indiana to plan a "time out" for their pastor. The sabbatical is intended to strengthen a congregation by allowing its pastor to step away for a period of renewal and rejuvenation.

"We place incredible demands on pastors," said Craig Dykstra, Endowment vice president for religion. "From time to time, they need some time to restore their energies and refresh their minds and spirits in order to continue to be strong pastors, good spiritual advisers and effective leaders of our congregations. This program makes that possible. It also enables the congregations to show their sincere appreciation for all their ministers' hard work and dedication.

"We have found that this program has had an incalculable effect on Indiana ministers," he said. "The congregations have been eager to step in and 'make up the difference' when their pastor is away, and the ministers have returned to their congregations with new vigor and enthusiasm. This win-win situation is exactly what we hoped for when we designed the program."

During the past three years, Indiana pastors have taken time away – usually two to three months – to pursue hobbies, travel the world, visit far-off missions in Latin America and Africa, tread the earth of early Christianity in the Middle East, explore the beginnings

(more)

Indiana Clergy Renewal Program
Add 1

of their denominations, enhance their pastoral skills, spend time with family and long-unseen relatives and, through it all, get in touch with the deep impulses that led them into the ministry in the first place.

Any Indiana congregation served by an ordained minister is eligible to apply for the program. A congregation may apply for up to \$30,000; up to \$10,000 of that amount can be used for congregational expenses incurred because of the absence of the pastor. Applications must be postmarked by Feb. 12, 2002.

An informational meeting for ministers and congregational representatives is scheduled for Oct. 4 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at North United Methodist Church, 3808 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis.

For information about this meeting and for applications for the program, please call the Endowment at 317/924-5471.

The Endowment also offers a separate National Clergy Renewal Program for non-Indiana congregations. Information about that program will be announced by the end of the year.