



Contact: Gretchen Wolfram
317/916-7304
317/255-2640 (home)
wolframg@lei.org

**Embargoed for release until
Tuesday, Sept. 20, 2005**

Lilly Endowment announces 2005 recipients in its National Clergy Renewal Program

They have rarely been to church – in the pews. They have been front and center – in the pulpits – leading and serving grateful congregations who want to keep them around. That is why their congregations want their pastors healthy, energized, enthusiastic, refreshed, engaged. One way to do that is to enable them to “go away” for a while.

Lilly Endowment Inc. announces that 124 congregations in the country – from 37 states and the District of Columbia representing 16 denominations – have been selected to receive grants in the 2005 National Clergy Renewal Program. Each congregation is awarded up to \$45,000 to send its pastor on a sabbatical, which they and the pastor have designed together. If the program works as it most often does, both the pastor and the congregation come away with renewed appreciation and concern for each other.

In preparing their proposals – the Endowment received nearly 500 in this round – pastors answer the question: “What will make your heart sing?” The answers range from spending time in personal retreat to reconnecting with old friends and family, from

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learning a new skill to picking up one dropped years ago for “lack of time.” This year’s recipients will travel the world to six continents, often to places “out of their comfort zones.” Many will journey to the Middle East to walk “in the footsteps of Paul,” two will head to Ukraine, another will take a family trip to visit relatives in the South Pacific. They are an adventurous group.

“Lack of time” is a common theme. Many ministers have devoted much of their lives to their congregations, often leaving their spouses and “PKs” (preachers’ kids) to deal with the daily goings-on of school and family life. Thus both the ministers and their families truly relish the “gift of time” that the renewal opportunity offers them.

“Many people are unaware of the terrific demands upon ministers these days,” said Craig Dykstra, senior vice president for religion at the Endowment. “They are expected be excellent administrators, fine speakers, articulate representatives in the community and enthusiastic fund-raisers. They are called upon day in and day out to give individual attention to many individuals and to deal with a steady stream of crises. This is ‘normal.’

“This hectic pace is difficult to halt, unless they have the freedom, permission and willingness to simply get away. From time to time, they need a more extended ‘sabbath’ that provides the time and space in which to rest, to rekindle their fire for ministry and rediscover what led them into this vocation in the first place,” he said. “That’s what this program is all about.”

The Rev. Martha E. McMane leads a 900-member congregation at the First Congregational Church in Boulder, Colo., the oldest surviving Congregationalist church in the state. She is its first female minister, and her congregation admits they do not understand how she manages to handle all the administrative and ministerial functions with “such wisdom and grace.”

McMane is known for her interests in the arts: She has overseen the construction of a new building with an architecturally innovative chapel and is now poised to embark

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on the renovation of their historic sanctuary and antiquated fellowship space. The congregation agrees that now is a perfect time for a renewal experience.

Working with a theme called “With New Eyes: The Intersection of Spirituality and Creativity in the Visual Arts,” she will head for Europe next spring. She and her husband, Alan Johnson (a United Church of Christ chaplain in an oncology unit at Children’s Hospital in Denver), will stop first in Florence. She will enter into a solo retreat at the East West Monastery in Assisi. They will rent a farmhouse in Tuscany for three weeks while she takes art classes in Florence. That will be followed by a tour of the “Footsteps of Paul” in Greece and Turkey where they will visit the early Christian sites that dot the area.

Other highlights include taking a 10-day creativity workshop in Crete where she will work with pastels, renting a cabin in Little River, Calif., taking tutorials with artists and enjoying a two-day retreat at San Damiano Monastery in Berkeley.

She says her congregation has a “long history of critical thinking and theological inquiry. We feel that we have begun to awaken to how the creative arts can also activate and deepen one’s faith.”

Others heading for Europe include the Rev. Kyle C. Childress of Austin Heights Baptist Church in Nacogdoches, billed as “the oldest town in Texas.” Childress has a 12-week plan to “just stop.”

“Central to my ministry is finding the Word in the words and translating that to the congregation,” he wrote. He finds inspiration in the words of the classics, especially from long-ago writers who penned words that still “speak” to him and his 270-member congregation. Last year he preached a Lenten series based on Dante’s *Divine Comedy*. He wanted his congregation to see this poem as a source of spiritual formation and renewal. Attendance rose.

The main body of his retreat will be a trip to England and Wales with his wife and two daughters. Based at Oxford, he will re-read John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, read *Canterbury Tales* and go to Canterbury Cathedral, and research John Milton. The

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minister also has included time for vacationing in Galveston, visiting friends at Duke University Divinity School, gardening, and thinking ahead about sermons around his renewal theme of “Living with the Word: Reading, Writing and Preaching in the Small Church.”

At least two ministers will use their time to renew their ties to their homelands. The Rev. Delphain Demosthenes of the French Speaking Baptist Church will return to Haiti with Rev. Rigaud M. Pierre, pastor emeritus of FSBC. His 160-member congregation, composed mainly of immigrants in inner-city New Rochelle, N.Y., credits him with giving them the impetus to move beyond the walls of the church to engage in humanitarian projects, especially in impoverished populations.

The church established a secondary school in one of the poorest sections of Haiti, and this monthlong visit will be his first time back since he left in 1987. “In my culture it is critical for one to connect with elderly relatives,” he wrote, “because they represent the ‘cradle of wisdom.’” He is eager for his British-born wife to see his homeland. His renewal plan also includes vacation time in Europe to meet his wife’s family in Spain and tour France.

The Rev. Stephen Oo of the Columbus (Ohio) Chinese Christian Church (CCCC) has three congregations: Mandarin, Cantonese and English. With more than 300 members, CCCC is the largest Chinese church in the city.

During his renewal, Oo wants to immerse himself in the cultures of Singapore, Malaysia (his home), China and Macao and Taiwan, the main areas from which most ethnic Chinese in central Ohio come. He wants to interview local church leaders to learn how they deal with cultural changes.

He grew up in Malaysia; his wife grew up in Korea; they met in Bible college in Singapore. They came to Columbus after graduation from a California seminary. Like his counterpart in New Rochelle, Oo looks forward to seeing family members in Malaysia.

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“In the past 20 years, I’ve spent barely more than a week at a time with my aging parents. I miss them a lot,” he says.

The Rev. Kathryn L. Davelaar from Hope Church in Holland, Mich., is a master knitter who found that using wool or cotton for her work was surprisingly more satisfying than using synthetic yarns. She will use her renewal time to explore the basic threads of her craft. She will learn to tat, watch sheep being sheared, observe the carding and spinning of wool, talk to fiber artists in Vermont, visit the Fiber Arts Eweporium Shop/Studio in Whitingham and the Green Mountain Spinnery in Putney.

Not stopping there, she will head overseas to the renowned Iona Community in Scotland for a month to rest, pray and reflect in the rhythms of communal life. She also will visit with European fiber artists in Scotland and Belgium. Members of her congregation share her passion for knitting but, more widely, describe themselves as a community that celebrates art as a form of worship and spiritual expression.

“The variety of interests and passions of these ministers and their congregations amazes us every year,” said Dykstra. “It is always thrilling for us to see the vitality and variety of these congregations who value the inspiration and hard work of their ministers. Seeing their leaders leave for three or four months may be unsettling initially, but part of the strength of this program is that congregations and ministers work together on the renewal plan. Many congregations are eager to step up and fill in some of the duties that they realize the minister has done for years – duties that they can do themselves. They begin to see the program as an empowering agent for both themselves and their ministers – and that is just what we intend.” (Up to \$15,000 of the grant funds may be used for congregational renewal.)

These 124 congregations join 631 previous recipients in the national program and bring the six-year total funding to more than \$23 million. The Endowment expects the program to continue, and a formal announcement is expected soon. (A separate program for Indiana congregations also is sponsored by the Endowment.)

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A complete list of the 2005 clergy renewal recipients follows.

National Clergy Renewal Program/2005

124 Grants

Alabama

Auburn – First Presbyterian Church of Auburn (Presbyterian Church USA [PCUSA]), \$31,400
W. Franklin Covington

Arizona

Sun City West – Lord of Life Lutheran Church (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America [ELCA]), \$44,877
John D. Kautz

Arkansas

Little Rock – Henderson United Methodist Church, \$32,804
Kevin L. Lyon

California

Altadena – St. Mark's Episcopal Church, \$31,600
Elizabeth E. Hooper

Los Angeles – Angeles Mesa Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$45,000
Timm (cq) Cyrus

Redwood City – St. Matthias Church (Catholic), \$41,316
John Glogowski

Salinas – Sacred Heart Catholic Church, \$41,642
Michael J. Miller

San Francisco – St. Mark's Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$32,665
Elizabeth Ekdale

Seaside – Lighthouse Southern Baptist Church (Southern Baptist Convention [SBC]), \$45,000
James L. Wilson

Tustin – Tustin Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$45,000
Rebecca B. Prichard

Colorado

Boulder – First Congregational Church (United Church of Christ[UCC]), \$44,136
Martha E. McMane

Evergreen – Church of the Transfiguration (Episcopal), \$30,998
Catherine C. Tran

Glenwood Springs – Mountain View Church of Glenwood (Baptist General Conference), \$34,351
David W. Pearson

Steamboat Springs – St. Paul's Episcopal Church, \$44,890
David W. Henderson

Connecticut

New Haven – Trinity Evangelical Lutheran (ELCA), \$24,305
M. Henry Pawluk

Old Saybrook – St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$40,613
Leslie R. Swenson

District of Columbia

Washington – St. Margaret's Parish (Episcopal), \$44,970
Susan H. Neff Blue

Washington – St. Mark's Episcopal Church, \$36,075
Paul R. Abernathy

Florida

Dunedin – Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, \$43,406
Thomas Madden

Jacksonville – Riverside Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$44,846
Michelle R. Thomas-Bush

Longwood – Wekiva Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$45,000
John Allen Dalles

Tampa – Peninsular Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$38,585
Kent D. Riner

Georgia

Augusta – Williams Memorial Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, \$45,000
Paul W. Gardner Sr.

Decatur – Clairmont Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$44,550
Thomas M. Pipkin

Woodstock – Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$40,815
Kari L. Parsons

Hawaii

Kihei – Kihei Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$39,500
David J. Krueger

Illinois

Bensenville – Peace Church (UCC), \$12,781
Geraldine K. Gregersen

Elmwood Park – St. Celestine Roman Catholic Church, \$44,875
Lawrence J. Sullivan

River Forest – Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$44,684
Bruce K. Modahl

Springfield – Korean United Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$44,054
John Jung-II Park

Iowa

Ames – Collegiate United Methodist Church and Wesley Foundation,
\$39,600
W. Scott Grotewold

Kansas

Cheney – St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran (Lutheran Church/Missouri Synod
[LC/MS]), \$34,397
Kenneth Kaufmann

Kansas City – Grandview Park Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$38,750
Rick D. Behrens

Kentucky

Harrods Creek – St. Francis-in-the-Fields (Episcopal), \$45,000
Robert T. Jennings

Louisville – Crescent Hill Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$34,120
Jane Larsen-Wigger

Louisville – Douglass Boulevard Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$37,783
Dean W. Bucalos

Shepherdsville – Divine Savior Lutheran Church (LC/MS), \$45,000
John C. Lehenbauer

Louisiana

Shreveport – Grace Community United Methodist Church, \$45,000
Robert A. Weber

Maine

Waterville – St. Mark's Episcopal Church, \$33,713
Susan J. Latimer

Maryland

Baltimore – Shrine of the Sacred Heart (Catholic), \$40,928
Richard E. Cramblitt

Bethesda – St. Dunstan's Parish (Episcopal), \$44,759
Jeffrey B. MacKnight

Lexington Park – Good Samaritan Lutheran Church (ELCA),
\$37,010
Meredith Wilkins-Arnold

Odenton – Epiphany Church, St. Peter's Parish (Episcopal), \$41,080
Phebe L. McPherson

Phoenix – St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$35,700
David R. Asplin

St. Marys (cq) City – Trinity Episcopal Church, \$44,918
John A. Ball

(Maryland, cont.)

Silver Spring – Mount Jezreel Baptist Church (unaligned), \$45,000
Eldridge Spearman

Massachusetts

Brookline – United Parish in Brookline (American Baptist Churches [ABC],
United Methodist Church, UCC), \$44,955
Patricia C. Coughlin

Framingham – Plymouth Church (UCC), \$44,993
Peter M. Cook

Lynn – St. Stephen's Memorial Episcopal, \$45,000
Jane S. Gould

Marshfield Hills – North Community Church (UCC), \$29,210
Virginia R. Brasher-Cunningham

Woburn – St. John's Baptist Church (unaligned), \$44,732
Larry Edmunds

Michigan

Big Rapids – Immanuel Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$19,879
Robert F. Garrels

Holland – Central Wesleyan Church (Wesleyan Church Corp.), \$43,880
Paul S. Hontz

Holland – Hope Church (Reformed Church in America [RCA]), \$41,725
Kathryn L. Davelaar

Holland – Third Reformed Church (RCA), \$44,920
Kama Jongerius Zuidema

Spring Lake – Lakeshore Lutheran Fellowship Church (LC/MS), \$45,000
Glenn M. Shelton

Minnesota

Duluth – Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd (ELCA), \$37,375
Timothy P. Berdahl

(Minnesota, cont.)

Edina – Edina Morningside Community Church (UCC),
\$32,918
Rosemary A. Rocha

Minneapolis – First Congregational Church of Minnesota (UCC), \$40,440
Eric M. Nelson

Minneapolis – Westminster Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$45,000
Timothy D. Hart-Andersen

Plymouth – St. Philip the Deacon Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$45,000
Valerie L. Strand Patterson

St. Paul – St. Mary's Episcopal Church, \$36,140
Lee Ann Watkins

Savage – Bridgewood Church (Christian Reformed Church in North America),
\$45,000
Mark K. Brouwer

Woodbury – Resurrection Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$44,977
Theodore D. Vanderpan

Missouri

Cape Girardeau – La Croix United Methodist Church, \$45,000
Ronald L. Watts

Joplin – South Joplin Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$37,390
Jill C. Michel

Manchester – Manchester United Methodist Church, \$45,000
Carl L. Schenck

St. Louis – Compton Heights Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$28,280
Jacquelyn L. Foster

New Hampshire

Meriden – Meriden Congregational Church (UCC), \$45,000
John Davis and Susan Gregory-Davis

Nashua – Christ the King Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$37,293
Timothy J. Keyl

New Jersey

Colts Neck – Colts Neck Reformed Church (RCA), \$43,828
Scott D. Brown

East Orange – Calvary Baptist Church (ABC), \$43,650
Joseph Oniyama

New Mexico

Farmington – St. John's Protestant Episcopal, \$32,475
Carl F. Brenner

New York

Brooklyn – St. Thomas Episcopal Church, \$45,000
Rene R. John

Brooklyn – Salam Arabic Lutheran (ELCA), \$44,860
Khader N. El-Yateem

Buffalo – St. Joseph University Church (Catholic), \$45,000
Jacob C. Ledwon

Colonie – Community Reformed Church (RCA), \$45,000
Bruce K. Cornwell

Mohegan Lake – St. Mary's Episcopal, \$33,854
Claire Woodley-Aitchison

New Rochelle – French Speaking Baptist Church (Metropolitan New York Baptist Association), \$45,000
Delphain Demosthenes

Syracuse – Reformed Church of Syracuse (RCA), \$29,921
Lucille Perkins

North Carolina

Belmont – First United Methodist Church, \$43,001
W. Mark Andrews

Chapel Hill – Church of Reconciliation (PCUSA), \$41,856
J. Mark Davidson

(North Carolina, cont.)

Chapel Hill – University Baptist Church (North Carolina Baptist Street Convention), \$44,925
H. Mitchell Simpson

Charlotte – Mount Carmel Baptist Church (ABC), \$44,850
Casey Reginald Kimbrough Sr.

Raleigh – St. Mark's Episcopal Church, \$42,068
Margaret Ljunggren and James S. Melnyk

Winston-Salem – Ardmore Baptist Church (SBC/Cooperative Baptist Fellowship), \$39,629
William J. Ireland Jr.

North Dakota

Fargo – St. Mark's Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$42,490
Mark A. Strobel

Ohio

Akron – Wedgewood United Methodist Church, \$29,040
Karen C. Hartley

Columbus – Columbus Chinese Christian Church (nondenominational), \$45,000
Stephen Chin-Guan Oo

Grove City – St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$31,408
Donald R. Allman

Stow – First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$32,307
Mark C. Richardson

Oregon

Beaverton – Murray Hills Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$21,541
Stacy Kay Shelton

Beaverton – Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$39,759
Kurt L. Rizer

Eugene – First United Methodist Church, \$18,000
Deborah G. Pitney

(Oregon, cont.)

Portland – First Covenant Church (Evangelical Covenant), \$45,000
John S. Wenrich

Portland – Portland Mennonite Church, \$41,270
Rodney A. Stafford

Portland – St. Luke Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$41,656
David A. Knapp

Salem – Trinity United Methodist Church, \$44,785
Janet G. Burkhart

Springfield – First Baptist Church of Springfield (ABC), \$40,040
Jeffery L. Savage

Pennsylvania

Bushkill – Reformed Church of Bushkill (RCA), \$44,687
Steven J. Sayer

Harleysville – BranchCreek (cq) Community Church (nondenominational),
\$45,000
S. Craig Bishop

Mohnton – Reading Evangelical Free Church, \$45,000
R. Dean Linsky

Newville – Centerville Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$32,278
Jean N. Kuebler

Pittsburgh – Community of Reconciliation (PCUSA, UCC, ABC, United
Methodist Church, Disciples of Christ, ecumenical), \$44,475
Denise R. Mason

Pittsburgh – North Hills Community Baptist Church (ABC),
\$41,906
Timothy E. Spring

Wexford – Trinity Evangelical Lutheran (ELCA), \$44,300
Frederick P. Schenker

South Carolina

Rock Hill – Oakland Avenue Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$45,000
William C. Pender

South Dakota

Presho – Lyman County Parish (ELCA), \$42,693
Lori L. Hope

Rapid City – First Congregational Church (UCC), \$44,987
Ted E. Huffman and Susan R. Huffman

Sioux Falls – Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$41,090
Jeffrey A. Eisele

Tennessee

Knoxville – Westminster Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$33,500
Christina M.B. Carrasco

Texas

Abilene – First Baptist Church (Cooperative Baptist Fellowship), \$35,795
Philip L. Christopher

Burleson – Cross Timber Baptist Church (SBC), \$38,950
P. Scott Whitson

Dallas – Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, \$38,597
Jay A. Hobbs

Nacogdoches – Austin Heights Baptist Church (Baptist General Convention of Texas), \$41,920
Kyle C. Childress

Tyler – First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$45,000
Jeffrey D. Wilson

Vermont

Greensboro – Greensboro United Church of Christ, \$30,155
Anthony E. Acheson

Virginia

Blacksburg – Northside Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$33,016
Linda J. Dickerson

Fredericksburg – Mount Hope Baptist Church (ABC), \$42,342
Raymond A. Bell Jr.

Washington

Colbert – Colbert Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$44,878
Eric E. Peterson

Edmonds – Faith Community Church (RCA), \$44,635
Philip Assink

Freeland – St. Augustine's-in-the-Woods (Episcopal), \$45,000
Nigel J. Taber-Hamilton

Seattle – Evangelical Chinese Church (nondenominational), \$44,810
Samuel Ka-Chieng Law

Wisconsin

Shawano – First Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$45,000
Susan L. Phillips