



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

EMBARGOED UNTIL
MONDAY, MAY 19, 2003

39 Indiana congregations selected to participate in renewal program

For one pastor, it's nature and the notion of sanctuary. For another, it's visiting the ground where Jesus and Peter walked. For another, it's learning about the history of the church in Africa. For another, it's studying hymnody.

These are but a few of the "dreams deferred" that will become "dreams fulfilled" for 40 Indiana pastors. They and their congregations have been named recipients in the Lilly Endowment's 2003 Clergy Renewal Program for Indiana Congregations, a program which allows pastors to take an extended time away from the daily demands of clerical life. The program offers them and their families a time apart, an intentional time for both the pastors and parishioners to learn, grow and become renewed.

This is the fifth year for the program which has seen pastors in 119 other congregations in Indiana take advantage of the opportunity. The program now offers each congregation up to \$45,000 for the support of a renewal program for their pastor. Up to \$15,000 of the grant may be used to help the congregation fulfill pastoral duties during the pastor's absence and/or to support activities that enable the congregation as a whole to be renewed in its ministry.

"We are constantly gratified and pleased that so many congregations with good ministers apply for this program," said Craig Dykstra, Endowment vice president for religion. "From their applications, we can tell that pastors and parishioners have taken the

(more)

Indiana Clergy Renewal Program
Add 1

time to sit down together and think through how to make the very best use of this rare opportunity.

“The affection and admiration that these congregations have for their ministers are readily apparent.” he added. “They appreciate the sacrifices their ministers make, whether the congregation numbers in the thousands or in the double digits. These are lively groups who are looking for new ways to enhance their religious lives – and one way is to have a pastor who is refreshed and renewed after a ‘leave of absence.’”

This year’s “class” of ministers represents all parts of the state, from tiny Olean to the capital Indianapolis, from South Bend to New Albany, Fort Wayne to Evansville.

The Rev. Marcus Felde ministers to almost 200 people every Sunday from the pulpit of the St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church in Olean, a small town about 6 miles from Versailles. He holds two doctoral degrees – one in ministry and one in philosophy and both dissertations dealt with hymns. Felde, who has been at St. Paul’s since 1997, wants to join the Hymn Society of America to continue his scholarly pursuit of hymnody and attend the group’s national conferences. He and his wife also are planning a trip this summer to Australia to visit their eldest daughter and then take some time in Hawaii on their way back in October. His “replacement” minister is delighted to come from Australia; it will be his first visit to the States.

Timbuktu is a real place, and the Rev. Sylvester Hunter Sr. of Union Baptist Church in Fort Wayne is going there this winter. He is interested in church history, especially the history of the early African church. Before he gets to Timbuktu in Mali, Africa, he and his wife will do research at Oxford University in England and follow up next summer with research at Tuffs University in Dusseldorf. Then, in the spring of 2005 he and his wife will visit Jerusalem and the Holy Land.

(more)

Indiana Clergy Renewal Program
Add 2

The pastor from the predominantly African American church in urban Fort Wayne will study manuscripts at Timbuktu, which in the 15th and 16th centuries was an intellectual and spiritual capital and a center for expansion of Islam. He wants to study African religions informally and reflect on that continent's religious history and the contributions of people of color to the church.

The congregation of Unity Presbyterian Church in Terre Haute has bought 12.5 acres of land. What to do with that land – church building, gardens, jogging paths, playing fields – is the question that will occupy the thoughts of the Rev. Linda Jo Peters who will explore the notion of sanctuary. The process will include visiting botanical gardens in Chicago and St. Louis and spending time at Ghost Ranch in New Mexico, as well as visiting her sister in California and viewing the magnificent Sequoias there.

The “Footsteps of Paul” tour through Greece and Asia Minor is drawing several Hoosier pastors. Two Mennonite ministers will attend the Mennonite World Conference in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, and take advantage of the dazzling natural wonders of the continent. Others will pursue the Wesleyan sites in the United Kingdom, and one pastor has designed a C.S. Lewis tour in Ireland and England.

A couple of ministers will study violin or cello; at least one plans to write a book; another will set sail and tack to the winds. Many will be armed with digital cameras and laptop computers to keep in touch (but not too much) with those back home, and congregations will hear all about their pastor's trips via Power Point presentations when they get back.

“Their interests are as varied as their personalities,” Dykstra said, “but we believe they will share one commonality when they return to Indiana soil: They will be renewed, refreshed and eager to resume their work.”

(more)

Indiana Clergy Renewal Program
Add 3

The following ministers and congregations have received awards in the 2003 Clergy Renewal Program for Indiana Congregations:

American Martyrs Catholic Church, Scottsburg, \$14,824
The Rev. Thomas L. Schliessmann

Anderson (Ind.) First Friends Church, \$44,710
Angie Best-Ross, pastor

Carmel (Ind.) Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$42,322
The Rev. Steven B. Moore

Centennial Bible Church, Westfield (nondenominational), \$44,819
The Rev. Jeffrey Gaskill

Christ the King Episcopal Church, Huntington, \$45,000
The Rev. Margaret Griggs Harker

Crown Point (Ind.) First United Methodist Church, \$42,402
The Rev. Dennis A. Shock

Eagle Alliance Church, Whitestown (Christian and Ministry Alliance), \$45,000
The Rev. Kerry D. Bowman

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Bedford, \$45,000
The Rev. Robert L. Dailey

First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Bloomington, \$45,000
The Rev. Helen H. Enari

First Church of God, East Central Indiana (Church of God), Muncie, \$44,983
The Rev. Wayne Anderson

Fort Wayne Spring Street Wesleyan (Wesleyan), \$44,881
The Rev. Larry D. Maddox

Grace St. John's United Church of Christ, Fort Wayne, \$28,280
The Rev. Julia Goodall

(more)

Indiana Clergy Renewal Program
Add 4

Grace United Methodist Church, Franklin, \$39,750
The Rev. Michael R. Beck

Hazelwood Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Muncie, \$45,000
The Rev. David R. Cartwright

Holy Redeemer Catholic Church, Evansville, \$27,854
The Rev. Ronald S. Zgunda

Hudson Lake Mennonite Church, New Carlisle, \$41,923
The Rev. Esther A. Lanting

Indianapolis Monthly Meeting of Friends (First Friends), Indianapolis, \$44,035
Cathy L. Harris, pastor

Kern Road Chapel (Mennonite), South Bend, \$44,959
The Rev. Janice Y. Sutter and the Rev. David L. Sutter

New Haven (Ind.) United Methodist Church, \$38,148
The Rev. Stephen A. Beutler

North 27 Worship Center (Church of God, Mountain Assembly), Richmond,
\$42,860
The Rev. Robert E. Johnson

Ogilville (Ind.) Church of Christ (independent Christian), \$44,406
The Rev. Martin E. Wright

Our Lady of Perpetual Help (Catholic), New Albany, \$21,559
The Rev. Paul D. Etienne

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
[ELCA]), Indianapolis, \$45,000
The Rev. Lyle E. McKee

Poseyville (Ind.) Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$25,378
The Rev. Doris A.C. Beckerman

St. John's United Church of Christ, Michigan City, \$44,622
The Rev. William H. Fine

(more)

Indiana Clergy Renewal Program
Add 5

St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Monticello, \$45,000
The Rev. Susan J. Blubaugh

St. Matthew United Methodist Church, Frankfort, \$45,000
The Rev. John K. Wortinger

St. Monica Catholic Church, Indianapolis, \$34,517
The Rev. Paul D. Koetter

St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Versailles/Olean (ELCA), \$45,000
The Rev. Marcus P.B. Felde

St. Peter's United Church of Christ, Carmel, \$45,000
The Rev. Larry L. Kleiman

Shelbyville (Ind.) Community Church (nondenominational), \$41,014
The Rev. J. Brad Davis

Shore Mennonite Church, Shipshewana, \$44,958
The Rev. Brent A. Eash

Southport Baptist Church (American Baptist), Indianapolis, \$42,960
The Rev. Fredrick B. Oaks

Suburban Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church (Lutheran Church/Missouri Synod), Fort Wayne, \$39,377
The Rev. Richard K. Smith

Triumph Church (Calvary Apostolic Church), Greenwood (Global Network of Christian Ministries), \$45,000
The Rev. Stephen A. Schmidt

Union Baptist Church (National Baptist Convention), Fort Wayne, \$45,000
The Rev. Sylvester Hunter Sr.

Unity Presbyterian Church (Presbyterian Church USA), Terre Haute, \$45,000
The Rev. Linda Jo Peters

Walnut Creek United Methodist Church, Warsaw, \$43,120
The Rev. Frank J. Beard

(more)

Indiana Clergy Renewal Program
Add 6

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), Hartford City, \$34,545
The Rev. Mary Jo Lundquist

Endowment officials anticipate that the Indiana program will continue, and an announcement is expected soon.

Besides this program, the Endowment offers a National Clergy Renewal Program for ministers in the other 49 states. The deadline for those applications is July 18, and the recipients will be announced in November.