



(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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Lilly Endowment awards clergy renewal grants to 22 Indiana congregations

Twenty-two congregations from 12 Indiana counties have received grants to enable their ministers to participate in the 2012 Clergy Renewal Program for Indiana Congregations, funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. The program – now in its 14th year – allows pastors to step back from their busy schedules 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 is 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 offer.

Getting away from their ordinary routines gives pastors a chance for private periods of reflection and reading. It also allows real family time together, far from the frequently unpredictable schedules at home. It is no surprise that many will head for points around the globe, from Hawaii to Ethiopia. Some will head to Europe for study and pilgrimages to Reformation sites in England, Scotland, France and Germany. Others will travel to places of Christianity’s first days in Rome, Greece, Turkey and the Holy Land.

After five weeks of intensive courses in Aramaic and Hebrew, one pastor will spend five weeks with his family in Scotland, exploring their Presbyterian and familial roots. One will take her teenage daughter to Hunan province in China where the girl was born and taken into an orphanage. They will stay a month in China, another month in Greece and the third in Ireland.

(more)

Indiana Clergy Renewal Recipients
Add 1

Several will spend some renewal time at St. Meinrad Archabbey for prayer, retreat and guided spiritual direction. They will hike in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, the Appalachians and the Cornish coast; take a photo safari to Africa; go on mission trips to Rwanda and Costa Rica, and explore the “thin places” of Celtic Christianity.

Clergy renewal grantees selected a variety of areas for self-improvement and how-to programs: working with a personal coach, woodworking, photography, fly-fishing, spiritual writing, master gardening, playing the hammered dulcimer and learning Spanish. Interspersed with all the activity is plenty of time alone to rest, study, meditate.

No matter where or how they spend this special time, they invariably return to their Indiana congregations feeling more rested, refreshed and enthusiastic for the years ahead. 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 ways to fulfill their dreams. Their time away frees them up to pursue personal interests and needs in ways that give them new energy for ministry – and while their pastors are away the congregations discover that they too experience refreshment and a newfound sense of their own strength.”

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 22 grants this year totaled nearly \$997,000. The average grant amount was slightly over \$45,300. Since the program began in 1999, 404 renewal grants have been awarded to Indiana congregations.

The renewal program will continue next year to benefit more Indiana congregations and their pastors. Interested persons should check Lilly Endowment’s website (www.lillyendowment.org) early this fall for information about how to apply.

(more)

Indiana Clergy Renewal Winners
Add 2

The congregations and pastors selected for the 2012 Indiana Clergy Renewal program are as follows:

Broadway United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, \$50,000
Rachel A. Metheny

Carmel United Methodist Church, \$48,216
Patricia Napier Payntor

Christ Church (Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America), Brownsburg, \$50,000
Michael L. LeFebvre

Crossroads Community Church (Presbyterian Church in America), Fishers, \$44,336
Scott A. Dean

Delphi United Methodist Church, \$49,971
Todd G. Ladd

First Baptist Church (American Baptist Churches, USA), Greenwood, \$50,000
Joyce A. Castleman

Franklin Community Church (nondenominational), \$49,625
Daniel R. Jepsen

Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America [ELCA]),
St. John, \$50,000
Mark Vance

Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), Harlan, \$29,427
Amy Beitelschees-Albers

Kern Road Mennonite Church (Mennonite Church USA), South Bend, \$49,995
David Sutter and Janice Sutter

John Knox Presbyterian Church (Presbyterian Church USA [PCUSA]), Indianapolis, \$50,000
Frank Mansell III

Logansport Church of the Brethren, \$49,789
Aaron V. Gross

New Hope Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), Fishers, \$49,973
Steven J. Ebling

Northminster Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), Indianapolis, \$48,585
Ruth C. Moore

Odon Church of the Nazarene (Church of the Nazarene International), \$39,747
Trevor L. Stanley

Indiana Clergy Renewal Winners
Add 3

Pleasant View Mennonite Church (Mennonite Church USA), Goshen, \$48,387
Tyler Hartford

Risen Lord Lutheran Church (ELCA), Bargersville, \$50,000
Richard M. Brown

St. Luke's United Methodist Church, Indianapolis, \$50,000
Marion J. Miller

St. Mark's United Church of Christ, New Albany, \$34,318
John E. Manzo

St. Vincent de Paul Parish (Catholic), Elkhart, \$29,205
Glenn J. Kehrman

Tabernacle Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), Indianapolis, \$47,348
L. John Gable

Trinity Episcopal Church (Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA),
Lawrenceburg, \$28,049
Mary J. Taflinger