



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

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Lilly Endowment announces 7th year of Indiana clergy renewal program

Up to 40 Indiana congregations and their pastors will be selected next spring to receive grants in Lilly Endowment's 2005 Clergy Renewal Program for Indiana Congregations. This is the seventh year for the popular program in which nearly 200 congregations have received grants to allow their pastor time away for reflection and renewal.

"Few people probably realize what an around-the-clock job ministers have," said Craig Dykstra, Endowment vice president for religion. "They are called upon to fill many roles: preacher, counselor, community leader, fund-raiser and on and on. They are with their parishioners at the most important moments of their lives: marriages, baptisms, illnesses, funerals – times of great joy and deep sorrow.

"All this takes a lot of energy – physical, emotional and spiritual. The resources upon which pastors draw must be replenished periodically. They need renewing experiences, as well as time to reflect on what led them into the ministry in the first place so they can return to their congregations with new vigor," he said.

Any congregation in Indiana with an ordained pastor is eligible to apply. "The application cannot be put together quickly," Dykstra said. "It requires a deliberate process

Clergy Renewal for Indiana Congregations
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of thinking and planning that involves collaboration between the congregation and the pastor. These renewal programs work best when everyone involved has a shared vision for what will be truly renewing for the pastor, his or her family and the congregation.

“Many pastors and congregations tell us that the process of putting together their proposal was itself a renewing experience. In many cases, they learn how much the congregations treasure their pastors and want them to continue their ministry in their church, and that comes through in their proposals,” he said.

Each congregation is eligible for a grant of up to \$45,000. Up to \$15,000 of the grant may be used to help the congregation fulfill pastoral duties during the pastor’s absence or to support activities that enable the congregation to be renewed in its ministry. The deadline for applications is Feb. 17, 2005, and recipients will be announced by June.

Interested persons may gain access to the brochure/application by going to lillyendowment.org and clicking on Religion.

An information meeting about the program for interested persons will be held Oct. 28 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at North United Methodist Church, 3808 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Those who would like attend may return the invitation card that accompanies the application, print the invitation card off the Endowment’s Web site, e-mail indianaclergyrenewal@yahoo.com, or call 317/916-7350.

(The Endowment also supports the National Clergy Renewal Program which includes congregations and pastors in the other 49 states. An announcement about that program will come later this fall.)