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135 congregations receive Lilly Endowment grants in National Clergy Renewal Program

Several of the 135 churches are older than the country; some have been born in the last decade.

They stand in the inner cities of America, the small towns, the suburbs.

Some congregations number in the double digits; some have more than a 1,000 members.

Some of their ministers have been in their pulpits for five or six years, while others have seen many years of sustained service.

What they all share – congregations and ministers alike – is the opportunity to participate in the 2002 National Clergy Renewal Program funded by Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment Inc.

The ministers will doff their robes and travel to spiritual centers like Iona, Scotland, and Taize, France. They will tour Europe and ponder the art and architecture and “hometowns” of their denominations’ founders; they will search out and renew ancestral family ties in Europe and Africa. They will travel across America to visit other

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congregations facing similar situations as theirs – developing new patterns of worship and ministry, facing increasingly diverse memberships, grappling with social issues such as providing for the needs of the homeless.

They will find new ways to foster their own spiritual growth and to instill a clear sense of purpose and mission in their congregations. They will brush up on their reading, write poetry, go fly fishing, hike, bike, renew college and seminary friendships, and spend good time with their families.

Most will be away from their pulpits for about three months, and their congregations have made plans to “take up the slack.” For them, the program involves accepting some new responsibilities and learning more about their own capabilities. It also provides opportunities for congregational renewal.

The Rev. Jane P. Harmes leads the 145-member congregation of Las Placitas Presbyterian Church in Placitas, N. Mex., (population: 350) at the foot of the Sandia Mountains. The congregation’s faith experience is shaped by the desert-mountain landscape, its Spanish heritage, and Native American influences, and Harmes would like to explore how the landscape, geography and environment affect the faith and theology of congregations.

Mixed among visits with friends, reading, and meditation, she plans trips in the spring of 2004 for spiritual reflection at Ghost Ranch and Christ of the Desert Monastery in New Mexico, a visit to the Presbyterian Border Ministry in Mexico, and spending time at the Taos Pueblo and Chaco Canyon in northern New Mexico. Then she will head for Northern Ireland to places where Catholics and Protestants work and live together and to Shannon, Ireland, home of her ancestors. In Scotland, she will take time for meditation on the barren island of Iona, home of an international center of Celtic spirituality.

The Rev. Michael L. Henning of All Saints Catholic Church in St. Peters, Mo., who has been ordained for 28 years and been at All Saints since 1991, has never taken an

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extended sabbatical, but next summer he will begin a five-month study of the connections between art and faith. He anticipates pilgrimages to the great European cathedrals, interviews with artists and taking classes in art and art appreciation to learn more about how religious art and architecture have been used through church history to communicate and celebrate beliefs.

Inner-city Baltimore has been the heart of the Cathedral of the Incarnation and the home of the Rev. Van Howard Gardner since 1987. He has no intention of letting up, but he would like some time away to step back and learn more about creating communities of reconciliation in an urban context. Incarnation began a Children's Peace Center three years ago, and he would like to learn new ways to develop and expand the program to help young people deal with conflict resolution. Thus, Gardner will spend six weeks studying the issue at the General Theological Seminary in New York City and then head cross country to Los Angeles for further work at the Institute for Urban Research and Development.

After that, he and his wife, Kathleen, will spend a month engaged in worship and spiritual reflection at Taize, France. His final month of renewal will take place back at home, where he will write about his experiences and what they may mean for his 500-member congregation.

In the 10 years that the Rev. Carlton P. Harris has headed Bethel Church of Cleveland Heights, Ohio, the congregation has grown from 70 to more than 500 members – and he has taken no more than three consecutive weeks off. This Baptist congregation is diverse in ethnicity, marital status, education and geography, and Harris wants to learn much more about how to lead a cross-cultural church.

His renewal program agenda includes interviews with a variety of other pastors serving similar congregations, a personal retreat at Osprey Point Leadership Center in Maryland and a trip with his wife, Carol, and his three children to Scotland, England and

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Germany. Attendance at a leadership summit at Willow Creek Community Church near Chicago and a visit to the Center for Church-based Training in Dallas will also be on his agenda.

The 135 programs are as diverse as the congregations themselves.

The National Clergy Renewal Program, now in its third year, awards congregations grants of up to \$30,000 each to plan a well-thought-out, intentional program of renewal for their pastor and themselves. Collectively, the grants for this year's program total \$3.5 million. The congregations may use up to \$10,000 of that amount to pay for pastoral services in their pastor's absence and for expenses related to a congregation's own renewal. In the program's initial year, 118 grants were awarded. Last year, the program's second, 129 grants were awarded.

This year's congregations represent 35 states (the Endowment runs a separate program for Indiana congregations). They represent 15 major Christian denominations and other church traditions. Of the pastors, 24 are women, and three are clergy couples.

"Obviously, we are very pleased with the success of this program," said Craig Dykstra, Endowment vice president for religion. "What strikes one in these proposals is the genuine affection these congregations have for their pastors, the pastors' honest appraisals of their successes and failures and, most important, their deep desire to deepen their own spirituality while searching for insight into how to lead their congregations into the future.

"We have heard wonderful stories from the pastors who already have experienced these sabbaticals," Dykstra noted. "Their time away freed them up to pursue personal interests and needs in ways that have given them new energy for ministry – and the congregations discovered that they didn't fall apart without their minister around. Indeed, they too experienced refreshment and a new-found sense of their own strengths."

The Endowment's larger goal is to bolster the good work that America's pastors and congregations are accomplishing day in and day out, to reinforce and build upon the

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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.

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Addendum: Complete list of recipients in the 2002 National Clergy Renewal Program.

National Clergy Renewal Program/2002

135 grants

Alabama

Falkville – Fairview Church of God, \$23,560
Milan Brown Dekich

Tuscaloosa – Korean Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa (Presbyterian Church USA [PCUSA]), \$30,000
In Sung Hoang

Arizona

Peoria – Celebration Lutheran Church (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America [ELCA]), \$27,472
Paul H. Nelson

Sahuarita – Good Shepherd United Church of Christ, \$26,587
Randal John Mayer

Tucson – Immanuel Presbyterian Church of Tucson (PCUSA), \$30,000
Valerie Hicks Moore

Arkansas

Little Rock – Pulaski Heights Baptist Church (Southern Baptist Convention), \$28,204
Randy Lee Hyde

California

Benicia – Heritage Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$30,000
Beverly C. White

Concord – Concord First Church of the Nazarene, \$29,536
John Ervin Moore

Fairfax – Fairfax Community Church (United Church of Christ), \$26,126
Sara Louise Vurek

California (cont.)

Fallbrook – Fallbrook United Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$29,174
Kirk Bottomly

Garden Grove – Hoi Thanh Chua Cuu The (Episcopal Church of the Redeemer)
\$24,170
Hong Xuan Nguyen

Los Angeles – St. Mark United Methodist Church, \$29,800
L.L.C. Hammond

Los Angeles – Vineyard Christian Fellowship-Westside, \$14,785
Bradley George Bailey

San Francisco – Presbyterian Church in Chinatown (PCUSA), \$30,000
Calvin Chinn

San Francisco – Seventh Avenue Presbyterian Church of San Francisco, \$19,410
Jeffrey Steven Gaines

Saratoga – Prince of Peace Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$16,218
James Carl Friedrich

Valley Springs – Good Samaritan Community Covenant Church (Evangelical
Covenant Church), \$23,591
Jeffery A. Mitchell

Colorado

Aurora – All Saints Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$20,372
John S. Petty

Fort Collins – Christ United Methodist Church, \$27,277
Edgar Clarkson Bigler III

Littleton – Hosanna Lutheran Church (Lutheran Church/Missouri Synod),
\$24,238
Gregory Glenn Peters

Longmont – Faith Community Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$29,785
Daniel Paul Hansen

Colorado (cont.)

Palmer Lake – Mountain Community Mennonite Church, \$30,000
Donald D. Rheinheimer

Connecticut

Woodstock – First Congregational Church (United Church of Christ), \$29,900
James Shepherd Harrison

District of Columbia

Washington – Church of the Epiphany (Episcopal), \$19,900
Randolph Cassells Charles

Florida

Fort Myers - Lamb of God Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$25,827
Walter B. Fohs

Jacksonville – Ortega United Methodist Church, \$30,000
Barbara Williams Riddle

Palm Bay – Peace Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$29,899
Daniel G. Gilbert

Georgia

Fayetteville – Church of the Nativity (Episcopal), \$30,000
Robert Andrew Hudak

Illinois

Chicago – Grace Episcopal Church of Chicago, \$25,974
Edward Wells Curtis

DeKalb – St. Mary Catholic Church, DeKalb, \$29,995
Karl Peter Ganss

Franklin Park – Resurrection Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$30,000
Paul Carl Stolz

Illinois (cont.)

Jacksonville – Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$29,300
Samuel John Roth

Lombard – York Center Church of the Brethren, \$16,532
Christy Jo Waltersdorff

Naperville – Wheatland Salem United Methodist Church, \$27,966
Scott Nelson Field

Western Springs – St. John of the Cross Parish (Catholic), \$29,784
Richard P. Hynes

Iowa

Cedar Rapids – Cedar Rapids Christian Center (Foursquare Gospel Church), \$29,980
Barry Michael Foster

Cedar Rapids – Lovely Lane United Methodist Church, \$29,168
Brian Kent Milford

Cedar Rapids – Peace Christian Reformed Church, \$21,492
Douglas M. MacLeod

Des Moines – Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$25,573
David Lynn Cline

Kansas

Lawrence – Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$24,538
Jeffrey Merrell Lilley

Pittsburg – First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$29,524
Ruth Ann Moran and Geoffrey H. Moran

Louisiana

Baton Rouge – Trinity Lutheran Church (Lutheran Church/Missouri Synod)
\$29,455
Scott Alan Schmieding

Maryland

Baltimore – Cathedral Church of the Incarnation (Episcopal), \$28,877
Van Howard Gardner

Bethesda – Vestry of Redeemer Parish (Episcopal), \$30,000
Susan Cecelia Thon Burns

Hagerstown – First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$29,253
Fred Myers Harris

Silver Spring – Christ Congregational Church (United Church of Christ), \$30,000
James A. Todhunter

Silver Spring – Church of the Ascension (Episcopal), \$26,000
Mary Catherine Miller Sulerud

Silver Spring – Transfiguration Church (Episcopal), \$29,756
Richard George Paul Kukowski

Massachusetts

Arlington – St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$28,685
Ross S. Goodman

Brewster – Brewster Baptist Church (American Baptist Church), \$25,353
Douglas Victor Scalise

Cambridge – Cambridge Community Fellowship Church, \$30,000
Soong-Chan Rah

Cambridge – First Parish (Unitarian Universalist), \$18,250
Marjorie Agate

East Bridgewater – Union Congregational Church (United Church of Christ),
\$23,057
Marcia M. Cham

Northampton – College Church (independent), \$29,200
David Paul McDowell

Quincy – United First Parish Church in Quincy (Unitarian Universalist), \$26,820
Sheldon Wells Bennett

Massachusetts (cont.)

Westwood – St. John's Episcopal Church, \$25,850
Stephen Vaughn Smith

Michigan

Detroit – Cathedral Church of St. Paul (Episcopal), \$28,414
Stephen H. Bancroft

Iron Mountain – Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, \$27,630
Charles Edmund Piper

Jackson – Westminster United Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$16,315
Karen (Margaret) Jones Kelley

Livonia – Mount Hope Congregational Church (National Association of
Congregational Christian Churches), \$29,966
Steven Bruce Schafer

Williamston – St. Katherine's Episcopal Church, \$15,438
Jannel T. Glennie

Minnesota

Blackduck – Zion Lutheran Church of Blackduck (ELCA), \$29,902
Dean George Oelfke

Bovey – Bethel-Trinity Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$14,512
Judith Claire Anderson-Bauer

Mankato – St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, \$30,000
Richard M. Colletti

Minneapolis – Plymouth Congregational Church (United Church of Christ),
\$29,630
James Curtis Gertmenian

Mountain Iron – Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$22,333
Kristin Mary Foster

Nevis – Bethany Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$23,974
Daniel Andrew Babine

Minnesota (cont.)

Red Lake Falls – St. Joseph Church (Catholic), \$22,156
Timothy F. Bushy

St. Paul – Olivet Congregational Church of Merriam Park (United Church of Christ), \$27,312
John Marcus Cox

Missouri

Eureka – Eureka United Methodist Church, \$29,817
Jeffrey A. Long

St. Louis – Grace and Peace Fellowship (Presbyterian Church in America), \$16,177
Kurt Herman Lutjens

St. Peters – All Saints Catholic Church, \$29,305
Michael L. Henning

Nebraska

Henderson – Bethesda Mennonite Church, \$30,000
Weldon Roy Martens

Lincoln – Our Saviour's Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$15,400
Lowell Ralph Hennigs

Lincoln – Vine Congregational Church (United Church of Christ), \$25,373
Ross Norman Tyler

New Jersey

East Orange – Christ Episcopal Church, \$27,500
William Anthony Guthrie

Liberty Corner – Presbyterian Church of Liberty Corner (PCUSA), \$25,850
Stephen David McConnell

New Mexico

Placitas – Las Placitas Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$20,850
Jane Parmalee Harmes

Santa Fe – United Church of Santa Fe (United Church of Christ), \$27,110
Talitha J. Arnold

New York

Alexandria Bay – Reformed Church of the Thousand Isles, \$28,935
Jeffrey A. Neevel

Brooklyn – Most Holy Trinity Roman Catholic Church, \$24,685
Russell S. Governale

Ithaca – First Ithaca Chinese Christian Church (Evangelical Free Churches of America), \$25,000
Tony Hsin-Tao Hsu

Penfield – St. Joseph's Church (Catholic), \$28,760
Kevin P. Murphy

North Carolina

Arden – Lutheran Church of the Nativity (ELCA), \$29,971
Mark Elmer Fitzsimmons

Cary – Covenant Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$28,842
Joanne Linda VerBurg

Charlotte – Bread of Life Christian Ministry (PCUSA), \$25,321
James Henry Logan Jr.

Greensboro – Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, \$30,000
Virginia Norton Herring

Huntersville – Hopewell Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$28,453
Jeffrey Lynn Lowrance

Raleigh – St. Philip Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$30,000
David J. Amidon and Diane R. Amidon

North Carolina (cont.)

Wilson – First Baptist Church (Cooperative Baptist Fellowship), \$25,013
Douglas Ervin Murray

North Dakota

Fargo – Olivet Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$29,962
Jeffrey L. Sandgren

Ohio

Barberton – Summit Mennonite Church, \$28,540
Jayne Marie Byler

Chauncey – Chauncey Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$29,906
Stephen Scott Bentley

Cleveland Heights – Bethel Church of Cleveland Heights (Baptist General Conference), \$29,775
Carlton P. Harris

Lancaster – Grace United Church of Christ, \$27,337
Robert Charles Tussing

Orrville – Christ Church (United Church of Christ), \$29,921
Randall L. Gehres

Rocky River – Rocky River United Methodist Church, \$29,832
David F. Martin

Sandusky – First Congregational Church (United Church of Christ), \$27,608
Lenore Kure

Oklahoma

Ardmore – First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$24,945
Douglas Ray Miller

Oregon

Albany – First United Methodist Church, \$14,380
Donna Marie Lowman Pritchard

Aloha – Reedville Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$22,110
Jeffrey Scott Sievert

Corvallis – First United Methodist Church, \$24,630
Herbert Magee Scott

McMinnville – McMinnville Covenant Church (Evangelical Covenant Church),
\$30,000
Mark Edward Larson

Pennsylvania

Quarryville – Mechanic Grove Church of the Brethren, \$5,433
Geraldine Mae Godfrey

Sumneytown – Friedens United Church of Christ, \$29,247
Deborah Rahn Clemens

West Chester – Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$16,350
Stephen Elliott Godsall-Myers

Wyomissing – First Church of the Brethren of Reading, \$24,772
Timothy D. Speicher

Rhode Island

Charlestown – St. Andrew Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$30,000
James E. Hazelwood

South Carolina

Fort Mill – Grace Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$18,142
Arthur Smith Gatewood

Spartanburg – Mount Moriah Baptist Church (National Baptist Convention),
\$18,473
Benjamin Douglas Snoddy

South Carolina (cont.)

West Columbia – Providence Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$22,127
Michael Terence Bragan

Tennessee

Greeneville – Greeneville Cumberland Presbyterian Church (Cumberland Presbyterian), \$28,550
James Wesley Lively

Knoxville – St. James Episcopal Church, \$23,531
Joseph Howard Ballard Jr.

Mount Juliet – Celebration Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$30,000
Douglas A. Hill

Nashville – Woodmont Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$29,069
Douglas N. Lofton

Texas

Austin – Trinity United Methodist Church, \$28,279
Sidney G. Hall III

Georgetown – First United Methodist Church, \$30,000
Timothy Keith Bruster

Spring – Resurrection Lutheran Church (Lutheran Church/Missouri Synod), \$28,900
Stephen Sohns

Wichita Falls – Park Place Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$29,000
Alice Louise Hupp

Vermont

Burlington – Christ Church, Presbyterian (PCUSA), \$21,967
Michael Brown and Rebecca Strader

Virginia

Alexandria – Christ Protestant Episcopal Church, \$20,764
Pierce Wittfield Klemmt

Lexington – Lexington Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$29,945
William Murdoch Klein

Lynchburg – Rivermont Avenue Baptist Church (autonomous), \$30,000
James E. Baucom Jr.

Richmond – St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, \$29,052
David Hickman May

Richmond – St. Mark's Episcopal Church, \$22,193
Sandra Maria Levy

Washington

Marysville – Mountain View Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$30,000
John Metz Mason

Seattle – First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$23,000
Peter W. E. Drury

Seattle – Phinney Ridge Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$14,450
Paul E. Hoffman

Sequim – Presbyterian Church of Sequim (PCUSA), \$28,828
Scott Emil Koenigsaecker

Vancouver – Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$30,000
Richard E. Jaech

West Virginia

Charleston – Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$28,993
Reinold Schlak Jr.

Morgantown – Morgantown Church of the Brethren, \$28,313
Cameron Blake Kaufman-Frey

Wisconsin

Eagle River – Prince of Peace Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$27,560
Margaret Stokes Johnson

Madison – Dale Heights Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$30,000
Daniel Scott Yeazel

Stevens Point – St. Paul's United Methodist Church, \$30,000
Graham Neville West

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