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Lilly Endowment announces 132 recipients in National Clergy Renewal Program

American congregations – 132 of them from Hawaii to New Hampshire representing 23 denominations – have been chosen as recipients of grants totaling \$5 million in the Lilly Endowment 2004 National Clergy Renewal Program. They have worked with their pastors on intentional sabbatical programs that will provide the ministers and their families with time to pursue significant interests, reconnect with families, travel in all parts of the world, learn new modes of creative expression and engage in studies that will enhance their ministries. Through all this, they will renew the passions that led them into ministry in the first place.

The congregations represent 37 states and the District of Columbia. Some have 50 or fewer members; others have more than 4,000. But they are unanimous in expressing their love and concern for the well-being of their pastors and an enduring appreciation of the ministers' faithfulness, service and nonstop hard work. These ministers, who love the ministry but are constantly faced with the relentless demands of the profession, will take much-deserved renewal leaves with their congregations' encouragement and support.

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“These relationships are clearly valued on both sides of the pulpit,” said Craig Dykstra, Endowment vice president for religion. “The congregations are grateful for their pastors and aren’t shy about saying so in their proposals. They also recognize that to ‘keep the fires burning’ the pastors need to take a break, get away, find some breathing space, reflect, pray and renew their spirits.

“At the same time,” he noted, “the parishioners realize with sometimes sudden clarity what the pastor’s time away (usually three to four months) will mean for them. Aside from some initial misgivings – who will marry us? who will do the hospital visits? who will perform the funerals? – they quickly determine that the capacity to handle the various pastoral duties is available among themselves or in other clergy close at hand.

“Most congregations embrace the challenge of seeing what they can accomplish ‘on their own’ and soon discover that they can move into positions of more responsibility than they had imagined,” Dykstra continued. “They have gone through a careful process of planning this sabbatical with the minister; the plan has been tweaked and tuned to give the most benefit to the pastor and the congregation so that both parties know what to expect. The possibility of unwelcome surprises is kept at a minimum.”

Each congregation is eligible to receive up to \$45,000, and up to \$15,000 of that may be used for providing substitute pastoral leadership and for renewal activities for the congregation. With these grants, the Endowment has approved 631 grants totaling \$18.9 million in its national program. (The Endowment administers a separate program for Indiana congregations.)

Some churches in this 2004 cohort were established shortly after the first settlers arrived on these shores. Eight others were “in business” before George Washington became president in 1789. All Saints’ Episcopal Church in Avenue, Md., for example, was founded in 1642. Seven have been established in just the last 16 years. They are a mix of inner-city, suburban and rural churches that represent the spectrum of American Christianity.

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“An amazing storyteller” is one way his congregation describes the Rev. Rex K. Loy of First Christian Church in Portland, Ore. If that is the case, he should return full of stories from a next-summer sabbatical that will involve trains, a plane, a bus, his feet and a motorcycle to take him all over the West and back to Portland.

Loy is the pastor of a 500-member church with responsibilities for the faith of his congregation, plus administration of four buildings that encompass an entire city block – a church, an office building, an apartment building and a learning center. But he finds constant renewal for his ministry by regularly following in the footsteps of his grandfather, who said “the streets could provide clarity of thought” and meaningful encounters with neighbors, friends and strangers. Noting that the “Christian faith is the product of stories collected while on the road as nomadic, traveling people,” Loy’s busy schedule leaves little time to do what he loves: collecting stories and learning lessons from individuals in the streets and on the highways.

Loy will hop on his Harley and head out on the Oregon Trail; travel the Road to Nowhere; work on Habitat for Humanity houses in Boise, Idaho; Casper, Wyo.; Spokane, Wash., and Seattle. He will travel on the Great Northern Railway and “bus it” to Berkeley and San Diego in California, get on Route 66 and head to Santa Fe, then take Amtrak to Memphis for chats with the musicians on Beale Street and to New Orleans to gather stories from street performers and musicians.

His wife, Twila, will join him there while he begins a week of study at the Loyola School of Religion. After flying home to Portland he will transform his road stories into sermons and spend time with his family. He says it will be an opportunity for him “to study the human condition” while he is away and the “license to address the human condition upon my return.”

By contrast, the Rev. David H. Garcia of the San Fernando Cathedral in San Antonio, plans to stay relatively “put” during his August to December sabbatical. “Relatively put” once he gets to Europe, that is. During the fall, he will study in England

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at Heythrop College, a Jesuit theological school that is part of the University of London. Then he will tour the great cathedrals of Europe which have always fascinated him.

As pastor of the oldest cathedral in the United States, he will try to learn more about what role a great central church can have in the modern cities of America. San Fernando has just completed a six-year project to raise \$20 million. Sitting in the historical center of San Antonio, the church has been completely restored and its facilities have expanded.

More than 4,000 people worship at the cathedral each Sunday, and a mariachi-style Mass on Saturday evenings draws big crowds. The cathedral values its tradition of being a place of worship, and also a place for the arts, music, social services, health care, educational services, ecumenical and interfaith gatherings and civic events. As leader of such a multipurpose organization, Garcia hopes to better understand how the cathedral parish can better develop its role as the downtown central church of the city.

Meanwhile, up in Detroit, the Rev. Lottie Jones Hood also looks to the past for guidance to imagine the future. She is the minister at the First Congregational Church of Detroit. The church started in 1844 with 13 members and moved to its current location in the Woodward Avenue area in 1891 when it was a quiet residential neighborhood. Today the church of 125 members stands in the heart of midtown Detroit's University/Cultural District.

The church has a history as an Underground Railroad (UGRR) station and opened a UGRR Living Museum in 2001 as an interactive experience which simulates a 1,000-mile escape route that slaves used to flee the South. On her sabbatical, she will look for ways to expand this ministry to "heal the heart of diversity."

Known as "Rev. Lottie," she has earned enough academic degrees to cover a wall. She also has earned a certificate in floral design.

Rev. Lottie will begin her springtime retreat with a week at the Manresa Jesuit Retreat House in Bloomfield Hills, Mich. Then she and her husband, Harold, will embark

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on a tour that will travel the old slave trade route from Europe to West Africa and to the New World. She will visit Ghana, South America, the Caribbean and New Orleans. From there she will simulate the 1,000-mile escape route that her Living Museum describes, starting at Oak Alley Plantation in Vacharie, La., and ending in Dresden, Canada, where descendants of many of those slaves now live.

Along the way she and Harold will be able to visit family in Mississippi whom she has seen only once in 35 years. She will conclude her sabbatical as it began, with a weeklong directed retreat back at Manresa.

“Simplicity of heart and mind” is what the Rev. Jeffrey G. Edwards will be seeking on his springtime sabbatical. As the pastor of Parsippany (N.J.) United Methodist church, Edwards leads a nearly 240-member congregation that has built a new sanctuary, which they started amidst the national grief of 9/11. An enthusiastic writer of plays (he launched a theater ministry at the church), Edwards would like to write a play about Francis of Assisi as a paradigm of simple living.

The day after Christmas he, his wife, Sarah, and their three children will head for a campground cottage on St. John’s Island. In early February, he will spend time at Pendle Hill, the Quaker Center for Study and Contemplation outside Philadelphia. In a “simple living workshop” there, he will explore some of the difficult practical issues involved in living a simpler life: finances, the environment, work and community.

Later in February, the family will travel to San Francisco. Edwards, with the help of a spiritual director and certified guide in wilderness rites of passage, will prepare for a “sacred quest” to be taken in the wilderness of northern California, a four-day solitary retreat and fast among dense redwoods.

Each pastor’s plan for renewal is as unique to each person and his or her congregation. Some will head for the Iona Community in Scotland to study Celtic spirituality, others will take “Journeys of Paul” tours in Greece and Turkey or

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Reformation tours in Germany and Switzerland. Some will study in Jerusalem while others spend time in Africa.

They will climb mountains, hike national park trails, canoe the Boundary Waters, study art and architecture, keep journals and write books, dust off their musical instruments and learn to play again, go whitewater rafting, immerse themselves in diverse cultures, visit other churches and ministers.

This is the fifth year for the National Clergy Renewal Program. Over the years, nearly 500 other ministers and congregations have been selected to participate. Their reactions have been uniformly positive. One typically reported: “While I returned rested and refreshed, I also returned highly charged and somehow more resolved. It has been an amazing and life-changing journey.”

Another wrote: “It was a great disconnect from my normal life. I walked. I visited ruins. I visited huge old churches. I ran out of cash. I met interesting people. I felt alone. I spent a lot of time with God. I kept a journal. I read. I attended one of the most moving church services I’ve ever experienced – all in Spanish. God is good.”

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The following is a list of recipients in the 2004 National Clergy Renewal Program:

National Clergy Renewal Program/2004

132 Grants

Alabama

Birmingham – Vestavia Hills Baptist Church (Southern Baptist Convention [SBC]), \$35,911
Gary Allison Furr

Arizona

Sun City – American Lutheran Church (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America [ELCA]), \$40,705
Mark G. Huggenvik

Arizona, cont.

Tucson – Lord of Grace Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$33,820
Dale L. Moe

California

Chico – Bidwell Memorial Presbyterian Church (Presbyterian Church USA [PCUSA]), \$37,369
Steven D. Schibsted

Fallbrook – St. Peter's Catholic Community, \$41,345
Edward L. Kaicher

Irvine – Filipino American Church (Baptist General Conference), \$43,030
Vicente A. Arnaldo

Pacifica – St. Andrew Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$35,600
Penny L. Newall

Redlands – First Baptist Church (American Baptist Convention), \$33,333
William H. Maury-Holmes

San Clemente – San Clemente Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$42,950
Tod E. Bolsinger

San Francisco – Golden Gate Community Church (Apostolic Christian Church [Nazarene]), \$41,386
Barry L. Brown

Colorado

Boulder – Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$27,425
Ronald W. Roschke

Greenwood Village – St. Peter Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$45,000
David J. Risendal

Lakewood – Lakewood United Church of Christ, \$43,662
Robert S. Hundley

Connecticut

North Haven – St. John's Episcopal Church, \$34,471
Matthew R. Lincoln

District of Columbia

Washington – St. Patrick’s Episcopal Church, \$29,600
Elizabeth S. McWhorter

Florida

Fort Myers – St. Hilary’s Episcopal Church, \$38,070
Robert S. Hennagin

Micco – Concordia Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$44,870
Grant A. Kilps

Georgia

Atlanta – All Saints’ Episcopal Church, \$32,600
Geoffrey Michael St. John Hoare

Atlanta – North Avenue Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$45,000
D. Scott Weimer

Brunswick – First Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$44,765
Greg A. Garis

Carrollton – St. Andrew United Methodist Church, \$40,525
Karen Miyoshi Kagiya

Marietta – St. Catherine’s Episcopal Church, \$44,785
James T. Nixon

Smyrna – Cumberland Community Church (nondenominational), \$45,000
Peter J. Grant

Hawaii

Kihei – Keolahou Congregational Hawaiian Church (United Church of Christ),
\$36,500
Rennie Y. Mau

Idaho

Pocatello – Central Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$41,602
Roger J. Bray

Soda Springs – Presbyterian Church of Soda Springs (PCUSA), \$38,240
Helen S. Young

Illinois

Bloomington – First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$37,497
Cynthia Dobson McBride

Carlock – East White Oak Bible Church (independent), \$21,097
Jeffrey J. VanGoethem

Peoria – First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$39,496
Karen R. Merrick

Schaumburg – St. Marcelline Catholic Church, \$45,000
Denis (cq) Condon

Iowa

Waukee – Waukee Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$18,815
Larry D. Squier

Kansas

Halstead – First Mennonite Church, \$45,000
Cleo Koop

Kentucky

Louisville – Second Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$45,000
Stephens (cq) G. Lytch

Maryland

Avenue – All Saints' Church, Oakley Parish (Episcopal), \$43,075
Kathleen V. Price

Crofton – Community United Methodist Church, \$44,865
Christopher T. Holmes

Maryland, cont.

Ellicott City – Bethany United Methodist Church, \$38,135
Roderick J. Miller

Reisterstown – Reisterstown United Methodist Church, \$33,687
W. Richard Harden

Massachusetts

Arlington – St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$41,350
Susan C. Henry

Brockton – Mount Moriah Baptist Church (American Baptist Convention),
\$42,664
Eugene L. Neville

Great Barrington – Unitarian Universalist Meeting of South Berkshire, \$13,150
Kathrene M. Duhon

Greenfield – St. James Episcopal Church, \$27,441
Frank H. Moss III

South Dartmouth – Congregational Church of South Dartmouth (United Church
of Christ), \$40,500
Jeffrey W. Larsen

Sudbury – St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church, \$41,035
Barbara S. Williamson

Michigan

Bridgman – Woodland Shores Baptist Church (North American Baptist
Conference), \$44,984
Randy Keith Mitrovich

Detroit – First Congregational Church (Association of Congregational
Christian Churches), \$44,800
Lottie Jones Hood

Kalamazoo – Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$44,632
Kenneth L. Johnson

Plymouth – Trinity Presbyterian Church (Evangelical Presbyterian), \$45,000
William C. Moore

Minnesota

Austin – Our Savior’s Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$43,203
Glenn L. Monson

Lino Lakes – Living Waters Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$40,773
Timothy G. Nelson

Minneapolis – Bethlehem Evangelical Covenant Church, \$38,650
Philip Noel Stenberg

Minneapolis – Church of All Nations (PCUSA), \$45,000
Jim S. Kim

Minneapolis – University Lutheran Church of Hope (ELCA), \$24,502
Kwanza Yu

Roseville – Calvary Church (Baptist General Conference), \$38,022
Vonn K. Dornbush

St. Paul – Pilgrim Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$44,951
Carol J. Tomer

Missouri

Jefferson City – Community Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$11,103
David L. Avery

Nevada – First Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$43,200
Gregory S. Ferree

St. Louis – Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church (Lutheran Church/Missouri
Synod), \$45,000
John S. Brunette

Montana

Helena – Our Redeemer’s Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$37,818
Loren J. Gustafson

Helena – St. Paul’s United Methodist Church, \$45,000
Marianne Niesen

Nebraska

Lincoln – Sheridan Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$45,000
Larry D. Arganbright

New Hampshire

Hopkinton – First Congregational Church (United Church of Christ), \$22,410
Gordon L. Crouch

New Jersey

Nutley – Grace Episcopal Church, \$45,000
Pamela Brownlow Bakal

Parsippany – Parsippany United Methodist Church, \$30,420
Jeffrey G. Edwards

New Mexico

Albuquerque – Los Altos Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$44,500
Christopher W. Wilson

Dulce – Jicarilla Apache Reformed Church (Reformed Church in America [RCA]), \$19,108
William J. De Boer

New York

Bemus Point – United Methodist Church, \$25,550
Daniel G. McBride

Hopewell Junction – First Reformed Protestant Dutch Church (RCA),
\$28,706
Taylor W. Holbrook

New York – New Song Community Church (Presbyterian Church in America),
\$44,880
Jeffrey O. White

New York, cont.

New York – Park Avenue United Methodist Church, \$45,000
William S. Shillady

Plattsburgh – St. Peter’s Roman Catholic Church, \$18,150
John R. Yonkovig

White Plains – Church of St. Joseph of Arimathea (Episcopal), \$20,620
Adelaide S. Clark

North Carolina

Chapel Hill – Church of the Holy Family (Episcopal), \$45,000
Timothy Edward Kimbrough

Chapel Hill – Holy Trinity Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$41,210
Mark Alan Coulter

Charlotte – Providence United Methodist Church, \$26,000
William T. Jeffries

Greensboro – Westminster Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$44,481
Robert W. Henderson

Raleigh – Poplar Springs United Church of Christ, \$45,000
Charles W. Brooks

Wilmington – St. Andrews-Covenant Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$42,650
Steven E. Hein

North Dakota

Fargo – Gethsemane Episcopal Cathedral, \$44,972
Pamela K. Easterday and Stephen W. Easterday

Ohio

Canal Winchester – David’s United Church of Christ, \$44,855
Elizabeth Ann Long-Higgins and David Michael Long-Higgins

Cincinnati – St. Mark Christian Fellowship (Church of God in Christ), \$45,000
Gerald J. Bates

Cleveland – Trinity Cathedral (Episcopal), \$45,000
Tracey Lind

Ohio, cont.

Granville – First Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$33,254
Karen J. Chakoian

Maumee – St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$44,200
Roger K. Miller

Mentor – Mentor Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$44,499
Ralph S. Wearstler

Oxford – Oxford Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$45,000
Barbara Barnes and J. Mark Barnes

Wapakoneta – First English Lutheran Church (ELCA),
\$45,000
Steven L. Nelson

Oklahoma

Ada – St. Luke's Episcopal Church, \$14,685
John D. Norvell

Tulsa – Community Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$28,123
Gerald W. Kinder

Tulsa – Red Fork Church of God (Anderson, Ind.) \$41,317
Brent N. Hinkle

Oregon

Bend – New Hope Evangelical Church of North America, \$30,897
A. Randall Myers

Hillsboro – First Congregational United Church of Christ, \$26,831
Diane B. Dulin

Lincoln City – Chapel-by-the-Sea Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$45,000
Richard C. Neese

Portland – First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), \$45,000
Rex K. Loy

Portland – St. Thomas More Parish (Catholic), \$20,853
Michael P. Johnston

Pennsylvania

Carlisle – Second Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$44,178
James A. Gilchrist

Hummelstown – Bridge Brethren in Christ Church , \$43,993
John G. Reitz

Huntingdon – St. John’s Episcopal Church, \$45,000
William T. Warne III

Kittanning – St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, \$30,300
David D. Wilson

Lancaster – Highland Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$45,000
Lawrence R. Chottiner

Philadelphia – Church of St. Luke and the Epiphany (Episcopal), \$41,575
Rodger C. Bradley

Sewickley – St. Stephen’s Episcopal Church, \$29,310
Geoffrey W. Chapman

Wexford – Mount Pleasant United Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$43,115
Daniel M. Corll

Wilkinsburg – Christian Church of Wilkinsburg (Disciples of Christ) \$45,000
Janet Hellner-Burris

Rhode Island

Warwick – Pilgrim Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$39,638
Dennis P. Kohl

Woonsocket – Smithfield Monthly Meeting of Friends, \$22,610
Marnie Miller-Gutsell

South Carolina

Anderson – Boulevard Baptist Church (Cooperative Baptist Fellowship), \$41,900
Johnny F. McKinney

Chapin – Chapin Baptist Church (SBC), \$44,350
Kenneth W. Kelly

South Carolina, cont.

North Charleston – Living Waters Assembly of God, \$44,399
Roland E. Bean

Tennessee

Nashville – Second Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$30,570
Stacy K. Rector

Texas

Bellaire – Faith Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$32,916
Herbert E. Palmer

Dallas – Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$33,228
Blair R. Monie

Houston – Christ the King Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$42,977
Robert G. Moore

Katy – Grace Fellowship United Methodist Church, \$40,740
James E. Leggett

Lewisville – First Baptist Church (SBC), \$36,115
Stephen G. Hatfield

Marble Falls – Trinity Episcopal Church, \$28,100
Ann D. Normand

San Antonio – San Fernando Cathedral (Catholic), \$44,436
David H. Garcia

Virginia

Alexandria – Christ Protestant Episcopal Church, \$20,595
Beverly K. Weatherly

Alexandria – Emmanuel Episcopal Church, \$38,431
Daniel W. Eckman Jr.

Arlington – Arlington Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$34,496
Sharon K. Core

Virginia, cont.

Fairfax – Fairfax Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$44,998
Carrie Elizabeth Yearick

Leesburg – St. James Episcopal Church, \$45,000
John R. Ohmer

Winchester – First Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$23,500
Richard W. Reifsnyder

Washington

Seattle – Epiphany Parish (Episcopal), \$44,898
Daniel G. Conklin

Seattle – Mount Baker Park Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$37,700
Leland L. Seese Jr.

Wisconsin

Appleton – Memorial Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$38,850
Charles D. Valenti-Hein

Beloit – First Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$37,971
Thomas R. Wanner

Chilton – Ebenezer United Church of Christ, \$26,555
Kathleen K. Kahl

Darlington – First Baptist Church (Baptist General Conference),
\$40,490
Stewart W. Dix

Madison – St. Andrew's Church (Episcopal), \$45,000
Patrick Raymond

Milwaukee – West Granville Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), \$28,765
Dee M. Anderson

Pewaukee – New Vision Brethren in Christ Church, \$44,400
Matthew A. Lewis

Waukesha – Christ the Servant Lutheran Church (ELCA), \$40,743
Richard T. Engen