Indiana Clergy Peer Group Study Program

Christian Theological Seminary

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Indiana Clergy Peer Group Study Program (PGSP) is to continue to provide continuing education opportunities to clergy through the formation of peer groups. The PGSP group will involve eight persons meeting over three years developing a continuing education plan that will focus on improving congregational leadership.

The range of topics selected for study, reflection and action may include areas such as faith and giving, congregational renewal, African-American and Hispanic relations, interfaith issues and relations, the public roles of congregations, and other such issues that reach into addressing perplexing problems and needs in Indiana congregations and communities.

The kinds of activities that the peer groups may engage in are workshops, reading and discussion sessions, preaching clinics, study/travel seminars, designing and carrying out projects with congregations, videotaping and critiquing preaching and teaching skills.

FUNDING FOR PEER GROUPS

Proposals could receive a maximum grant of $5,500 per person or $44,000 per group, which includes the financial obligation of the individual pastors and congregations ($400 per minister per year & $400 per congregation per year each for three years).

Here is the way it works: Peer group members will prepare a proposal for a three-year process of learning with the peer group and experimentation in their congregations. When the proposal is accepted:

- The PGSP will provide $3100
- Each congregation will be asked to contribute $400 per year 1200
- Each pastor will be asked to contribute $400 per year 1200
- Total amount of funding for an individual for three years $5500

If a lesser amount is requested, then PGSP will contribute 56 percent per participant, congregations will contribute 22 percent, and pastors will contribute 22 percent of the amount requested. All funds are to be used only for actual costs of travel, lodging, study materials, and leadership. Funds will be available after approval of the three-year plan and dispersed as needed with appropriate documentation.

To apply for a grant, any proposed peer group will:

- form a group of eight and contact the Project Manager of PGSP;
- be assigned a Coach by the Project Manager;
- participate in a 2-3 day planning and orientation event;
- submit carefully developed three-year plans of study;
- set goals, learning objectives, timelines, how leadership and resources will be delivered to congregations, and evaluation plans;
- create a detailed annual budget for three years.

All of the plans, topics and activities must relate to the overall goal of the Indiana Clergy Peer Group Study Program: to focus primarily on leadership and resources for congregational life.

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Generally speaking, members of a peer group will:

- be serving a congregation full time;
- be in good standing with a denomination (if applicable);
- have passed the third anniversary of seminary graduation and be at least five years from retirement;
- make a serious time commitment for three years of uninterrupted participation in a peer group (a minimum of ten days a year);
- agree to comply with all established policies and guidelines of the Indiana Clergy Peer Group Study Program;
- have support of local church and governing body.

While a seminary degree is preferred, exceptions will be made for churches and judicatories that do not require it.

FORMATION OF PEER GROUPS
The program holds the principle of self-selection in the formation of peer groups. Pastors/ministers need to take the initiative to seek out colleagues with whom they can study and interact on a fairly intensive basis over three years. At the same time it is important to hold up the expectation that peer groups are inclusive and diverse in terms of men and women of different ages, ethnic/racial backgrounds, denominational affiliations, and different geographical and congregational settings.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
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