

Note to media: Please check the list of recipients in the body of this release to see if a congregation(s) in your community is among award recipients. This release and a full list of recipients is available at [www.cpx.cts.edu/renewal](http://www.cpx.cts.edu/renewal) and www.lillyendowment.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 11, 2017

Contact: Robert Saler

317-931-2348 / [rsaler@cts.edu](mailto:susan@ewingmiller.com)

**Christian Theological Seminary Announces 146 Congregations Awarded**

**Lilly Endowment 2017 National Clergy Renewal Program Grants**

Christian Theological Seminary, in its role of administering the Lilly Endowment National Clergy Renewal Program, has awarded grants to 146 congregations located in 37 states and the District of Columbia. The 2017 program allows congregations to support their pastors with the gift of extended time away from ministerial duties and responsibilities for reflection and renewal. Pastors use the respite from congregational leadership to engage in renewal experiences that often include travel, scholarly research and immersive experiences with different cultures and traditions.

Congregations awarded the National Clergy Renewal Program grants applied to the program to honor their pastors. Congregations in the 2017 program represent a diverse group that includes Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, and nondenominational traditions. The congregations and pastors worked together to determine how they will use the grants to replenish, restore and renew their pastors’ ministries. Travel to domestic and international destinations and journeys into nature are popular activities for grant recipients. One pastor will travel to Africa to experience the vitality of missions work and spiritual life in that context, while another pastor will visit key sites from her childhood in order to weave together the narrative of her own formation in the faith.

In addition to travel as a form of renewal, some pastors will use their time away from congregational leadership to engage in new spiritual disciplines, focus on time with loved ones and study topics that renew their excitement for preaching and congregational leadership. Study topics include congregations engaging vital outreach ministries in settings with changing neighborhood demographics and historical figures of Anglican history.

Since Lilly Endowment introduced the National Clergy Renewal Program grants in 2000, more than 2,450 congregations across the nation have participated in the program. Congregations in the 2017 program received grants totaling more than $6.5 million. The grants recognize the tremendous amount of energy, time and leadership that pastors invest in their congregations.

“Lilly Endowment recognizes the important role that pastors play in shaping and guiding the work of Christian churches,” said Dr. Christopher L. Coble, the Endowment’s vice president for religion.  “We can think of no better way to honor these hardworking, faithful men and women than to help them step away from the demands of leadership for a brief period of rest and spiritual renewal.  We regularly hear that these renewal experiences are transformative for pastors, their families and their congregations.”

Christian congregations were invited to apply for grants of up to $50,000. The application process was participatory in nature, involving congregations and their pastors in the design and development of the renewal experience. Up to $15,000 of the grant could be allocated to fund interim pastoral leadership, as well as renewal activities within the congregation. Pastors were encouraged to include their families in the renewal activities.

The Rev. Dr. Robert Saler, director of the Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Programs at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, noted that the National Clergy Renewal Program leverages the reciprocal dynamics of support, trust and encouragement reflective of healthy congregations. “The program is designed to respect the innate human need for times of service and replenishment. It provides a means for congregations to express appreciation for their leaders’ service and respect for his or her health and energy for continued ministry,” Saler said.

Christian Theological Seminary’s Center for Pastoral Excellence has administered the Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Programs since 2012. “At a time when society is experiencing unprecedented levels of change at ever increasing speeds, it is rewarding to offer programs that recognize the value of retreat and renewal,” Saler said.

**Award Recipients:**

**Arkansas**

Little Rock, AR – Second Baptist Church, the Rev. Preston Clegg

**Arizona**

Phoenix, AZ – Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Rev. Lara E. Forbes

Tucson, AZ – Grace Community Covenant Church, the Rev. David Stanton Hillis

**California**

Albany, CA – Solano Community Church, the Rev. Andrew Hoffman

Auburn, CA – The First Congregational Church of Auburn, United Church of Christ, the Rev. Daniel Spacek

Davis, CA – Christ Church of Davis, the Rev. Eric Dirksen

Grover Beach, CA – First Presbyterian Church of Arroyo Grande , the Rev. Andy Rock

Long Beach, CA – Fountain of Life Covenant Church, the Rev. John Edwin Teter

Los Angeles, CA – St. Camillus Center for Spiritual Care, the Rev. Christopher Ponnet

Mountain View, CA – Chinese Church in Christ Mountain View, the Rev. Beland Huang

San Diego, CA – Pacific Beach Christian Church, the Rev. Brian Daly

San Diego, CA – Penasquitos Lutheran Church, the Rev. Sean Kelly

San Diego, CA – Pioneer Ocean View United Church of Christ, the Rev. Mary Sue Brookshire

San Francisco, CA – Golden Gate Christian Reformed Church, the Rev. Jack Lum

**Colorado**

Denver, CO – Washington Park United Church of Christ, the Rev. Todd Smiedendorf

Fort Collins, CO – Heart of the Rockies Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Rev. Melissa St. Clair

Greeley, CO – First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, the Rev. Ben Konecny

Longmont, CO – The Journey of Longmont, the Rev. Richard Ebbers

Monument, CO – Tri-Lakes United Methodist Church, the Rev. Robert Kaylor

**Connecticut**

Bridgeport, CT – Mount Aery Baptist Church, the Rev. Anthony L Bennett

**District of Columbia**

Washington, DC – The District Church, the Rev. Aaron Graham

**Florida**

Cape Coral, FL – Grace United Methodist Church of Cape Coral Inc., the Rev. Wesley Olds

Indialantic, FL – Eastminster Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Timothy Rogers-Martin

Mt. Dora, FL – St. Philip Lutheran Church, the Rev. Johan Arndt Anders Bergh

Oviedo, FL – Covenant Presbyterian Church of Oviedo, Inc., the Rev. Randall Ray Greenwald

Tallahassee, FL – St. John's Episcopal Church, the Rev. Abigail White Moon

**Georgia**

Atlanta, GA – Edgewood Church, Inc., the Revs. James Nathan & Carrie Lynn Dean

Atlanta, GA – Village Church of East Atlanta, Inc., the Rev. Matthew Armstrong

**Iowa**

Sioux Center, IA – Bethel Christian Reformed Church, the Rev. John Lee

Steamboat Rock, IA – Steamboat Rock Baptist Church, the Rev. Harrison Lippert

**Illinois**

Chicago, IL – Epiphany United Church of Christ of Chicago, the Rev. Kevin James McLemore

Chicago, IL – Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Beth Lynn Brown

Chicago, IL – St. Bartholomew Church in Archdiocese of Chicago, the Rev. Ricardo Castillo-Castillo

Edwardsville, IL – First Christian Church of Edwardsville, the Rev. James Brooks

Hebron, IL – St. Johns Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hebron, the Rev. Sarah Wilson

**Kentucky**

Lawrenceburg, KY – First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Rev. Micki McHugh

Lexington, KY – The Episcopal Church of St. Michael the Archangel, the Rev. Laurie Brock

Lexington, KY – Twin Pines Christian Church, the Rev. Bennie Braddick

Louisville, KY – Saint Stephen Lutheran Church , the Rev. Kerri McFarland

Wilmore, KY – Wilmore Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Beth Garrod-Logsdon

**Massachusetts**

Arlington, MA – Free Christian Church of Andover, the Rev. Jonathan Paul

Arlington, MA – The Church of Our Saviour, the Rev. Malia Crawford

Dedham, MA – Fellowship Bible Church of Dedham, Inc., the Rev. Stephen Andrew Johnson

Hamilton, MA – First Congregational Church of Hamilton, the Rev. Kevin Baird

Hingham, MA – Episcopal Parish of St. John the Evangelist, the Rev. Tim Schenck

Norwood, MA – Grace Episcopal Church, the Rev. Robert John Brockman

Rockport, MA – The First Congregational Church of Rockport, UCC, the Rev. Derek Peter van Gulden

Westford, MA – St. Mark's Episcopal Church, the Rev. Suzanne Wade

**Maryland**

Fallston, MD – Fallston Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Kimberly Secrist Ashby

Townson, MD – The Church of the Good Shepherd, the Rev. Arianne Rice

**Maine**

Portland, ME – Christ Church of Portland, the Rev. Mark Pearson

Waterville, ME – Pleasant St. United Methodist Church, the Rev. Thomas Blackstone

**Michigan**

Ann Arbor, MI – Church of the Good Shepherd, United Church of Christ, the Rev. Deborah Dean-Ware

Ann Arbor, MI – First Baptist Church of Ann Arbor, the Revs. Paul & Stacey Simpson Duke

Farmington Hills, MI – Grace Chapel, EPC, the Rev. Douglas Walker

Kalamazoo, MI – Haven Reformed Church, the Rev. Shawn Robert Johnson

Kalamazoo, MI – Westwood Church of God – Kalamazoo, the Rev. William Ferguson

Petosky, MI – Cross of Christ Lutheran Church, ELCA, the Rev. Sherry Elizabeth McGuffin

Rockford, MI – Blythefield Christian Reformed Church, the Rev. Darrin Jay Brink Compagner

Rockford, MI – First Congregational Church of Rockford, Michigan (United Church of Christ), the Rev. Laurel Jean TenHave-Chapman

Saint Joseph, MI – Christian Reformed Church of Saint Joseph, the Rev. John DeVries

Sturgis, MI – First Presbyterian Church of Sturgis, Michigan, the Rev. Michael Wicks

Zeeland, MI – Second Reformed Church , the Rev. Karsten Voskuil

**Minneapolis**

Hopkins, MN – Church of the Cross, the Rev. Christian Ruch

Minneapolis, MN – Community Covenant Church, the Rev. Luke Swanson

Minneapolis, MN – Judson Memorial Baptist Church of Minneapolis, Minn, the Rev. Glen Travis Norvell

Minneapolis, MN – Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Kara Kristen Root

Minneapolis, MN – St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Revs. Luisa & Patrick Cabello Hansel

Saint Paul, MN – Saint John the Evangelist Episcopal Church, the Rev. Jered Weber-Johnson

**Missouri**

Bridgeton, MO – Arlington United Methodist, the Rev. Barbara Phifer

Dardenne Prairie, MO – Morning Star Church, the Rev. Charles Schreiner

Independence, MO – First Presbyterian Church of Independence, MO, the Rev. David Clark Carlson

Uniontown, MO – Grace Lutheran Church, the Rev. Paul Richard Winningham

**North Carolina**

Charlotte, NC – Light of Christ United Methodist Church, the Rev. Marianne McMasters Romanat

Charlotte, NC – Myers Park Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Julie Coffman Hester

Davidson, NC – Church of the Good Shepherd, the Rev. Kyle Alexander Wallace

Elizabeth City, NC – Cann Memorial Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Elizabeth Mickey Cluff

**Nebraska**

Seward, NE – St. John Lutheran Church, the Rev. Scott D. Bruick

**New Hampshire**

Rindge, NH – First Congregational Church and Society of Rindge, the Rev. David Jadlocki

**New Jersey**

Milford, NJ – Alexandria First Presbyterian Church of Mount Pleasant, the Rev. Nicholas Hatch

Nutley, NJ – Vincent United Methodist Church, the Rev. David LeDuc

**New Mexico**

Albuquerque, NM – Covenant Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Seth Niles Finch

**New York**

Brooklyn, NY – St. Ann and the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, the Rev. John Edward Denaro

Cambria Heights, NY – St. David's Episcopal Church, the Rev. Joshua Mastine Nisbett

Coopertown, NY – First Presbyeterian Church of Cooperstown, NY, the Rev. Elsie Armstrong Rhodes

Farmington, NY – Farmington United Methodist Church, the Rev. Jeff Long

New York, NY – Uptown Community Church, the Rev. Reyn Cabinte

Rochester, NY – First Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Melissa Lynn DeRosia

Rye, NY – Presbyterian Church in the Town of Rye, the Rev. Daniel Love

Suffern, NY – All Souls Community Church Inc., the Rev. William Reinmuth

Vestal, NY – Grace Point Church, the Rev. Kyle Dean Kaurin

Warsaw, NY – United Church of Warsaw, the Rev. Barbara Therese

**Ohio**

Columbus, OH – Columbus Mennonite Fellowship, the Rev. Joel Miller

Macedonia, OH – Good Shepherd Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Rev. Melanie Delaney

Maumee, OH – First Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Clinton Wiley Tolbert

Napoleon, OH – St. Augustine Catholic Church, the Rev. J. Douglas Garand

North Olmsted, OH – John Knox Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Susanne Meabon Bendoraitis

Sidney, OH – Green View United Church of Christ, the Rev. Larry A. Grunden, Sr.

Toledo, OH – Monroe Street United Methodist Church, the Rev. Larry Clark

Warren, OH – St. Paul Lutheran Church, the Rev. Ann Marie Winters

**Oklahoma**

Yukon, OK – Resurrection Lutheran Church, the Rev. Mark Borseth

**Oregon**

Baker City, OR – First Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Kathryn Nicole

La Grande, OR – First Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Laura Hudson

Lake Oswego, OR – Mountain Park Church, the Rev. Gregg Borror

Redmond, OR – Zion Lutheran Church, the Rev. Eric Burtness

Salem, OR – Bridge Covenant Church, the Revs. Carmen & Scott Bensink Lewis

Salem, OR – St. Timothy's Episcopal Church, the Rev. Brandon Lee Filbert

**Pennsylvania**

Ambler, PA – First Presbyterian Church of Ambler, the Rev. Ryan Balsan

Beaver, PA – Park Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Mark Boyd

Bristol, PA – Redemption Church of Bristol, Inc., the Rev. Gary Alloway

Erie, PA – First Alliance Church, the Rev. Robert Harris

Hatboro, PA – Hatboro Baptist Church, the Rev. Douglas Stratton

Philadelphia, PA – George W South Memorial Church of the Advocate, the Rev. Renee McKenzie-Hayward

Pittsburgh, PA – Berkeley Hills Lutheran Church, the Rev. Scott Alan Bryte

Pittsburgh, PA – Christ Community Church of the South Hills, the Rev. Terry Timm

Yardley, PA – Yardley United Methodist Church, the Rev. Cynthia Elizabeth Skripak

**Rhode Island**

West Warwick, RI – Emanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Rev. Todd Stange

**South Carolina**

Clemson, SC – Fort Hill Presbyterian Church (USA), the Rev. Laura Conrad

Ninety Six, SC – St. Paul United Methodist Church, the Rev. Valerie Mireb

**Tennessee**

Memphis, TN – Downtown Church Presbyterian, the Rev. Richard Rieves

Murfreesboro, TN – First Presbyterian Church, Murfreesboro, the Rev. John Austin Hinkle, Jr.

**Texas**

Flower Mound, TX – First Korean Baptist Church of Lewisville, the Rev. Kyung D. Kim

Galveston, TX – Trinity Episcopal Church, the Rev. Susan Kennard

Houston, TX – Christ Episcopal Church, the Rev. Arthur Callaham

Marble Falls, TX – St. Peter's Lutheran Church, the Rev. Harold Wayne Vanicek, Jr.

Rockwall, TX – First Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Cheryl A. Taylor

Rockwall, TX – Transformation Anglican Church, the Rev. Donald Rogers McLane

San Antonio, TX – Crossroads Baptist Church of San Antonio, Texas – the Rev. Douglas Alan Diehl

**Virginia**

Portsmouth, VA – Great Awakening, the Rev. Nanette Hilliard

Powhatan, VA – St. Luke's Episcopal Church, the Rev. Sandra B. Kerner

Springfield, VA – St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, the Rev. Peter Ackerman

Virginia Beach, VA – Coastal Community Church, the Rev. William (Hank) Brooks

Williamsburg, VA – First Baptist Church, the Rev. Reginald Davis

**Vermont**

Brattleboro, VT – St. Michael's Episcopal Church, the Rev. Mary Lindquist

**Washington**

Ferndale, WA – Christ Lutheran Church, the Rev. Jana Schofield

Lacey, WA – St. Mark Lutheran Church, the Revs. Beth Ann & Eric Louis Utto-Galarneau

Medina, WA – St. Thomas Episcopal Church, the Rev. Alexander Breckinridge

Olympia, WA – First Christian Church, the Rev. Amy LaCroix

Vancouver, WA – Columbia Presbyterian Church, the Rev. Matthew John Peyton Overton

**Wisconsin**

La Crosse, WI – First Presbyterian Church of La Crosse, the Rev. Johnathan Taylor Haley

Madison, WI – St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church, the Rev. Miranda Hassett

Onalaska, WI – First Lutheran Church, the Rev. Karyn Bodenschatz

Pewaukee, WI – Queen of Apostles Congregation, the Rev. Charles T. Hanel

Sheboygan, WI – St. Peter Claver, the Rev. Paul Fliss

Washburn, WI – Messiah Lutheran Church, the Rev. Nancy J. Hanson

**Wyoming**

Dubois, WY – Saint Thomas' Episcopal Church, the Rev. Melinda Denise Bobo

**About Lilly Endowment Inc.**Lilly Endowment Inc. is an Indianapolis-based private philanthropic foundation created in 1937 by J.K. Lilly and his two sons, Eli and J.K. Jr., with gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical company.  The Endowment exists to support the causes of religion, education and community development.  Lilly Endowment’s religion grantmaking is designed to deepen and enrich the religious lives of American Christians.  It does this largely through initiatives to enhance and sustain the quality of ministry in American congregations and parishes.  More information can be found at [www.lillyendowment.org](http://www.lillyendowment.org/).

**About Christian Theological Seminary**  
Located in Indianapolis, IN, Christian Theological Seminary (CTS) is a fully accredited ecumenical seminary, open to all, affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). It offers nine graduate-level degree programs, each rooted in a rich history of biblical scholarship, theological openness, and spiritual discernment. More than 30 denominations are represented among CTS faculty and students. Additional information about CTS is available at [www.cts.edu](http://www.cts.edu).

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE FOR RECIPIENTS OF GRANTS IN THE

2017 NATIONAL CLERGY RENEWAL PROGRAM

Contact: (Name) For Immediate Release

(Telephone number (Date)

and/or email address and/or fax numbers)

(Name of church) has received a grant of (amount of the award) to enable its minister, (name), to participate in the 2017 National Clergy Renewal Program. (Name of Church) is one of 146 congregations across the United States selected to participate in this competitive grant program, which is funded by Lilly Endowment Inc. and administered by Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. Established by the Endowment in 2000, the program’s grants allow Christian congregations to support their pastors with the gift of extended time away from their ministerial duties and responsibilities.

Ministers whose congregations are awarded the grants use their time away from the demands of daily ministry to engage in reflection and renewal. The approach respects the “Sabbath time” concept, offering ministers a carefully considered respite that may include travel, study, rest, immersive arts and cultural experiences, and prayer.

Through the National Clergy Renewal Program, congregations apply for grants of up to $50,000 to support renewal programs for their pastors. Collaborative in nature and implementation, the program allows congregations to partner with their ministers in developing experiences that addresses their unique renewal needs and aspirations. Recognizing that ministers’ families are subject to the stress and demands placed on pastoral leaders, the program encourages pastors to involve their families in renewal activities. Congregational needs during the minister’s renewal experience also are considered. Up to $15,000 of the grant may be used to support interim pastoral leadership during the pastor’s retreat, as well as renewal activities within the congregation. Since the National Clergy Renewal Program’s inception, more than 2,450 congregations have participated in the program, including the 146 congregations receiving grants in 2017.

(Describe your congregation’s and minister’s plans and activities for the renewal period.)

“Lilly Endowment recognizes the important role that pastors play in shaping and guiding the work of Christian churches,” said Dr. Christopher L. Coble, the Endowment’s vice president for religion.  “We can think of no better way to honor these hardworking, faithful men and women than to help them step away from the demands of leadership for a brief period of rest and spiritual renewal.  We regularly hear that these renewal experiences are transformative for pastors, their families and their congregations.”

The Rev. Rev. Robert Saler, research fellow and director of the Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Programs, noted that the National Clergy Renewal Program integrates key attributes of healthy congregations, including a mutual respect for the renewal needs of both ministers and the congregations they serve.

“The program provides an opportunity for congregations to express appreciation for their ministers’ service and leadership,” Saler said. “At a time when leaders are often praised for their pace of innovation and productivity, the National Clergy Renewal Program pays homage to the timeless wisdom embedded in the practice of reflection and renewal.”

Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis directs the Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Program for Indiana Congregations and a second program for congregations across the United States through its Center for Pastoral Excellence.

**Note to congregations:** Please remember, when you talk or write about this program, that the correct name for the funding organization is Lilly Endowment Inc. or, on second reference, the Endowment.