

My life in
MINISTRY
has been a **MOST**
fortunate **JOURNEY**

Founding Pastor
Creekwood Christian
Flower Mound, TX
1992-2001



Texas Christian
University / BA in
Religion, 1975

Ordained at
University Christian
Fort Worth, TX
1978

Vanderbilt Divinity
School / M.Div., 1978



First Christian
Sioux City, IA
1979-1985



First Christian
South Bend, IN
1986-1992



Indiana
Disciples
Regional
Minister
2001-2023





Growing up in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), I was affirmed by Sunday school teachers, youth group sponsors, and camp counselors, and invited to consider ministry as my life's vocation. I am grateful I received the nudge from so many to pursue that path. My educational opportunity at Texas Christian University and later at Vanderbilt Divinity School expanded my consciousness of the world even as I enlarged my circle of friends.

With scholarship support from my college and seminary, the generosity of my family, and income from the churches I served, I did not accumulate educational debt as I launched my career. That is not the situation for many who are beginning ministry today. From the work we have done with ministers in the FLOURISH! Program we know that beginning ministers often carry with them \$60,000 or \$80,000 or \$100,000 in educational debt. Servicing that debt becomes a big challenge with the modest income they likely receive as a new pastor.

Fortunately, the generosity of the Lilly Endowment and the gifts of so many faithful members of our church have given us a way to assist our pastoral leadership. We have made grants to help them reduce their debt. We have introduced them to financial advisors to help them better organize their financial life. And we have offered educational opportunities for them, alongside their lay leaders, in good stewardship practices. As a result we have ministers who feel more confident and competent. We have clergy who feel better equipped to lead because their fear, rooted in their finances, has lessened. And we have congregations who have awakened to the opportunity to provide sustaining support to their pastor.

As I reflect on the opportunity I have had to lead the church for 45 years I give thanks. I pray that those who follow me will have a similar chance to serve and know the support I have experienced as they fulfill their call. I invite you to join me in a gift to FLOURISH!

Rice



Partnerships empower us to alleviate some of the economic challenges facing Indiana Disciples clergy and help them to FLOURISH!



Lilly Endowment Inc.
established the National Initiative to Address Economic Challenges Facing Congregational Pastors and offered grants such as ours.



Pension Fund of the Christian Church
serves as our partner in financial education, grant programming, and offers clergy financial resources.



Congregation and individuals Clergy and lay leaders are able to offer bold and confident leadership because the FLOURISH! Program is supported by congregations and individuals providing matching funds required for the program.



Comments from FLOURISH! grantees

"I learned that I am not alone in my struggles."

"The FLOURISH! Program has significantly impacted my life and ministry. I have learned important financial planning skills both personally and for the church, found a voice for speaking clearly and boldly about personal and church finances, have grown in my theological perspectives, and have found new partners in ministry."

"Through your gifts and support of FLOURISH! you are helping ministers live their call without the discouragement of such financial stress. Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

YOUR SUPPORT

is essential to the success of the FLOURISH! Program. To share in this effort, send your gift to:

**Christian Church in Indiana
FLOURISH! Program
1100 W. 42nd St. Suite 150
Indianapolis, IN 46208**

Or make a donation at
indianadisciples.org/flourish

Your gifts to support the FLOURISH! Program are tax deductible.