



**Financial Relief Grant Guidelines  
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Indiana**

**Purpose**

The Christian Church in Indiana, in partnership with Lilly Endowment Inc., is intentionally focused on strengthening clergy in Indiana. It is our desire to use designated funds to resource and support the pastoral leaders of our congregations as they develop congregations as mission centers which affirm the local and global character of the church. The purpose of the Financial Relief Grant is to form a partnership between clergy and the regional church through direct financial assistance to help them alleviate their financial burden by up to \$10,000 to be applied toward debt relief, retirement, or healthcare. Priority will be given to ordained or commissioned Disciples ministers whose standing is held by the Indiana Region who are serving in congregational settings.

Our goal is to empower clergy to flourish by continuing to offer bold, confident leadership in the area of finance and stewardship, while being involved in mission and ministry to their community and the world. A financial literacy academy, required for grant recipients, and subsequent financial consultation will assist the clergy person in building the capacity to sustain and build on this increase provided by this program.

Note: Travel, lodging and registration for the financial literacy academy and subsequent financial coaching will be included as part of grant funding. The pastor's spouse is required to attend the personal financial literacy portion of the academy occurring on the first day each spring. Two lay leaders (as designated by the congregation) are required to attend the congregational financial literacy portion of the academy occurring twice per year on day two.

Assistance of up to \$10,000 (with an additional \$2,000 offset for taxes) will be funded after the grantee has met all criteria outlined in the guidelines and the required matching funds have been raised by the Indiana Region. Funding may be used for

- Debt reduction
- Retirement planning
- Healthcare costs

**Limitations on Funding**

The primary purpose of the Financial Relief Grant is to provide assistance to clergy with standing who are facing financial difficulties that may prevent them from offering bold, confident leadership to their congregations. The following standards apply:

1. Support will be limited to one occurrence.
2. Support is limited to clergy with standing within the Indiana Region.
3. **Application deadline is January 31, 2020. Send completed application and Family Budget Worksheet to Sarah Riester, [sarah@indianadisciples.org](mailto:sarah@indianadisciples.org) or mail to 1100 W. 42<sup>nd</sup> St, Suite 150, Indianapolis, IN 46208.**

**RECIPIENT CONGREGATIONS OR THEIR CLERGY MAY NOT APPLY FOR ANY OTHER GRANT UNDER THE CLERGY ECONOMIC INITIATIVE SUPPORTED BY LILLY ENDOWMENT INC.**

## **Criteria for Financial Relief Support**

Support is contingent upon:

1. Completion of application and personal financial statement.
2. Grantee Pastor attending four sessions (over two years) of the region sponsored financial literacy academy.
3. Spouse and two congregational leaders attending financial literacy sessions as outlined in the grant guidelines.
4. Clergy receiving at least one and as many as three consultations with a financial advisor for subsequent guidance and accountability.
5. Matching funds being raised by the Indiana Region to support the financial relief.
6. Clergy person will submit final report of how the funds were used and an updated financial plan.
7. Grantee will meet twice annually (over two years) with a peer learning group.

## **FINANCIAL LITERACY ACADEMY**

Grantee is required to attend four two-day sessions of the academy over two years (spring and fall each year).

### **Planned Session Dates**

#### **Clergy**

May 1-2, 2020  
October 9-10, 2020  
May 2021  
October 2021

#### **Clergy Spouse**

May 1, 2020  
  
Friday Session

#### **Lay Leaders**

May 2, 2020  
October 10, 2020  
Saturday Session  
Saturday Session

### **Location**

2020: Interchurch Center, 1100 W. 42<sup>nd</sup> St., Indianapolis, IN  
2021: TBD

### **Course Outline**

#### **Clergy Personal Financial Literacy (Spring day 1)**

Living debt free, saving for retirement, understanding the Pension Fund, budgeting, insurance and investment counsel, understanding clergy taxes, reporting and tax benefits. This is to be attended by the pastor and spouse, where applicable.

#### **Congregational Best Practices (Spring day 2)**

Clergy compensation and benefits, creating and adhering to a balanced budget, handling money, accountability and transparency, financial examinations. This is designed for the pastor, board chair, and treasurer (or two church appointed designees).

#### **Clergy Preaching and Teaching Stewardship (Fall day 1)**

Creating compelling sermons on tithing and giving, stewardship as a holistic approach to managing God's resources, pastoral ethics and integrity in stewardship, outreach and missional giving, and leaving a legacy for future generations. This is designed for clergy only.

#### **Congregational Fundraising (Fall day 2)**

Finding alternate sources of income, creating a culture of generosity, effective use of building resources as a stream of income, creating green by going green, programs that pay, and cultivating and managing estate gifts. This is designed for the pastor, board chair, and treasurer (or two church appointed designees).

NOTE: Not all topics will be covered in each session. Consequently, it is imperative that the participants attend each required session over a two-year period.

