

Lilly Endowment Grants \$500,000 for United Methodist Clergy in Missouri Impacted by Pandemic

The Missouri United Methodist Foundation has received a new grant of \$500,000 as part of Lilly Endowment Inc.'s National Initiative to Address Economic Challenges Facing Pastoral Leaders.

This is the third Lilly Endowment grant to MUMF since 2016, bringing the total to more than \$2 million. The grants helped MUMF start and continue to grow its program Clergy & Church Financial Ministry (C2FM). This latest grant is specifically aimed at UM clergy and their families in Missouri who have been hard hit by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The Lilly Endowment grant arrives at a critical moment for Missouri's UM pastors as they grapple with pandemic fallout," shares Foundation CEO David Atkins. "It is a very challenging season, and our pastors are really feeling the strain."

The new grant will support C2FM's ongoing mission in service to all Missouri clergy, and it adds targeted funding for pastors especially impacted by the pandemic. This will include those who have experienced financial losses such as reduced household income, depleted savings and healthcare costs.

Funding will also be available for short-term pastoral renewal, family vacation or sabbatical leave opportunities, as well as vocational educational opportunities and educational enrichment programs for children of clergy.

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"This new phase of support from Lilly Endowment demonstrates a profound awareness that the economic challenges facing pastoral leaders have multiplied significantly during the pandemic, especially for clergy who are under-resourced or under-represented," said C2FM Director Rev. Mark Struckhoff.

Citing the findings of Missouri Conference leaders, three groups of pastors in Missouri have experienced significant economic hardships from the pandemic: clergy of color; pastors on "minimum salary"; and part-time pastors who do not qualify for health insurance. "Targeted outreach to these pastors is a priority for C2FM in the coming weeks and months," Struckhoff says.

Since 2016, C2FM has awarded more than \$550,000 in direct aid to nearly 20% of appointed pastors in the Missouri Conference. C2FM also reaches an average of about a third of Missouri's clergy annually with educational programming and personalized coaching services.

MUMF will receive the first \$250,000 of the new grant in December 2021. The second \$250,000 must

be matched by qualifying gifts and pledges raised by MUMF/C2FM. Thus, the potential total funding in support of C2FM from the new Lilly Endowment grant is \$750,000.

Lilly Endowment Inc.'s National Initiative to Address Economic Challenges Facing Pastoral Leaders supports a variety of religious organizations across the nation as they address the financial and economic challenges that can impair the ability of pastors to lead congregations effectively.

Lilly Endowment Inc. is an Indianapolis-based private philanthropic foundation created in 1937 by three members of the Lilly family — J.K. Lilly Sr. and sons J.K. Jr. and Eli — through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly & Company. The Endowment exists to support the causes of religion, education, and community development.



Lilly Endowment's religion grant-making 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.



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