

NEWS RELEASE FOR RECIPIENTS OF GRANTS IN THE 2020 NATIONAL CLERGY RENEWAL PROGRAM

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Contact: The Rev. Kristin Krantz
 301-829-0325 / rector@stjamesmtairy.org

St. James' Episcopal Church in Mt. Airy has received a grant of \$32,000 to enable its minister, The Rev. Kristin Krantz, to participate in the 2020 National Clergy Renewal Program. St. James' is one of 140 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, prayer and immersive arts and cultural experiences.

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 address 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 3,000 congregations have participated in the program, including the 140 congregations receiving grants in 2020.

St. James' and Rev. Krantz designed a sabbatical program that played off the name of a family ministry program in the congregation called "Time-Out Together." Rev. Krantz's time away will focus on quality time with her family, including a highly anticipated spiritual pilgrimage walking the Camino di Santiago in Spain with her sons. The congregation will use her time away for communal renewal through fellowship events and opportunities for spiritual refreshment. They are humbled and extremely grateful that their grant was selected by the Endowment this year.

"Pastors play an important role in nourishing the spiritual lives of individuals and in guiding the work of the Christian congregations they serve," said Christopher L. Coble, Lilly Endowment's

vice president for religion. “Through these grants, we seek to honor pastors for their extraordinary service and enable them to engage in a brief period of rest and renewal. We have learned that such experiences invigorate the leadership of pastors and bring new vitality to their congregations as well.”

The Rev. Dr. 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.