

Announcement

**To: National Church Officials for Ministerial Development
Mary Jo Flory-Steury
Church of the Brethren**

From: Sheldon Sorge, The Louisville Institute

Re: Sabbatical Grant Opportunities

June 23, 2008

Dear Mary Jo,

We at the Louisville Institute are pleased to announce our 15th annual competition for sabbatical grants for pastoral leaders. Last year we awarded 48 grants to applicants from a pool numbering over 350, and we anticipate a strong set of applicants again for this year's competition, which closes on September 15. However, though we do not lack for applicants, we seek to broaden our applicant pool beyond the "usual suspects" that already know about the Institute.

That is why I am writing you. I am hoping that you might be willing to spread the good word about this program to people in regional offices, so they can share it with pastoral leaders in their regions. Our data indicate that one of the primary places where applicants learn of our sabbatical grant program is through regional church officials. And we suspect that few folk are in a better place than regional church officials to know which pastoral leaders might benefit most from a funded sabbatical.

Details of our grant application process and eligibility requirements are available on our website, www.louisville-institute.org. I invite you to peruse the website to familiarize yourself with the program, and to pass our website address along to your network of regional officials. By way of summary, here are some core program facts:

- Applicants must be regularly employed in a recognized religious leadership position. Applicants may be ordained or lay, and may or may not have a formal theological degree. Eligible positions include pastors and other parish ministers, chaplains, faith-based community agency leaders, and church judicatory officials.
- Awardees will ordinarily have been in their current place of ministry at least five years, and will plan on staying in their current place for at least a year beyond their sabbatical. They will be at least five years away from retirement. Exceptions are possible, especially in church polities built on an interagency model.
- Awards are made for either eight- or twelve-week sabbaticals. Sabbaticals are taken in a continuous single period. Applicants choose whether to apply for an eight-week sabbatical, with a \$10,000 award, or for a twelve-week sabbatical, which bears a \$15,000 award. The size of award request has no bearing on the chances of receiving an award.
- Applications are due no later than September 15, 2008. Award announcements will be made by December 15, and sabbaticals must be taken between March 1, 2009 and August 31, 2010.

- **Full program information and application materials are available at our website, www.louisville-institute.org.**

Thank you for helping us get out the word about this opportunity for rest and renewal for our pastors. We look forward hopefully to a day when giving pastors a sabbatical will be a widely practiced standard in the church; until then, we continue to labor to make sabbaticals widely available to pastors, many of whom would not otherwise have opportunity for one.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss further our sabbatical program, or any other grant programs.

Every blessing,

**Sheldon W. Sorge, Associate Director
The Louisville Institute**

502-992-5430