



THE LOUISVILLE INSTITUTE

Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders

The Louisville Institute is a Lilly Endowment-funded program based at Louisville Seminary supporting those who lead and study American religious institutions.

Sabbatical... What does this word conjure for you? For many pastoral leaders, two things come to mind – “Wouldn’t that be an amazing gift!” followed quickly by, “It probably will never happen for me.” But what if it *could* be for you? It might include...

Rest... “Sabbatical” is rooted in the word “Sabbath,” the day on which the Creator rested from labor. Tying “sabbatical” to “Sabbath” underscores the rhythmic character of sabbatical rest – just as Sabbath happens every seven days, so sabbatical happens (ideally) every seven years. It is a gift of full, regular rest to those who nurture God’s people, corresponding to the ancient Levitical order that God’s people grant their cropland – their source of sustenance – a full rest every seven years.

Renewal... The purpose of giving the land Sabbath rest is the renewal of its fertility. Similarly, sabbaticals renew fruitfulness for pastoral leaders. In the Torah, “Sabbath” refers not only to the weekly rhythm of life and to the seven-year fallow plan – it is also a seven-times-seven-year plan, a Sabbath of Sabbath years called the Jubilee, in which everyone gets to start over again economically. Ultimately, Sabbath is about systemic renewal of opportunity.

Recreation... Perhaps we consider Puritan prohibitions of recreation on the Sabbath quaint oddities of history. Today we are at quite an opposite place, where the Sabbath day is reserved primarily for recreation. But simply an invitation to play (or to watch others at play) misses the point of Sabbath. Yet *renewal of creativity* – or *re-creation* – is an important sabbatical theme. In a sabbatical we are freed to pursue interests ordinarily excluded by the press of our daily vocational grind.

Devotion... More than anything else, Sabbath is a reminder that we are not our own, we are not self-made. For Walter Brueggemann, Sabbath is the central practice of salvation’s economy, in that only if we trust God to sustain us can we afford to stop our anxiety-driven frenzy of economic production. Worship, which Marva Dawn provocatively calls “a royal waste of time,” stands at Sabbath’s portal; contemplation of God and reflection on God’s ways with us lie at its heart; vocational and spiritual renewal are its firstfruits. We devote ourselves to “abiding in Christ,” so that we may be more fruitful when we go back to work.

Sabbatical: Slowing down, to fall in love again.

This year, The Louisville Institute is pleased to offer up to 40 sabbatical grants to pastoral leaders – an opportunity to engage all these dimensions of Sabbath, and more. Award amounts, deadlines, eligibility rules, and proposal guidelines are detailed in following pages. Good sabbatical proposals will strike a felicitous balance of rest, personal renewal, and reflection. They may include a component of re-creativity, that is, of producing something new; but the primary focus is on the person, not the product. Successful sabbatical proposal abstracts can be downloaded from The Louisville Institute website.

While we hope the following pages address all your questions, do feel free to email or call at any time if we can help you understand better how to prepare a first-rate proposal.

Every blessing,

Sheldon W. Sorge
Associate Director
Phone: (502) 992-5431
Email: ssorge@louisville-institute.org
Web: www.louisville-institute.org

Completed proposals must be postmarked no later than September 15, 2008. Sabbaticals shall be taken during a continuous eight-week or twelve-week period between March 1, 2009 and August 31, 2010.



Granting Pastors A Time Apart...

Eligibility and Application Requirements

The Louisville Institute will award Sabbatical Grants for Pastoral Leaders of \$10,000 (eight weeks) and \$15,000 (twelve weeks). These grants will provide the time and occasion for as many as 40 pastoral leaders to devote an extended season to prayer, study, and reflection for the renewal of their vocations.

Eligibility

The program is open to Christian clergy, church staff members, denominational staff, and others **employed in recognized positions of pastoral leadership, ordained and lay**. Seminary administrators and faculty members are not eligible for this grant program. In past years, most successful applicants have at least five years of pastoral experience, and anticipate five or more years of active ministry after the sabbatical.

The program is open to pastoral leaders in the United States and Canada. **Past recipients of Louisville Institute sabbatical, study, and research awards for pastoral leaders are not eligible.**

No Residency Requirements

Grantees are not required, nor expected, to be in residence at The Louisville Institute or Louisville Seminary. However, all grantees will be required to attend the annual SGPL Consultation, February 16-18, 2009, at The Louisville Institute's expense.

Awards will be announced on or before December 15th, 2008.

Timeline Options

To encourage a successful sabbatical experience, eight-week and twelve-week sabbaticals shall be taken in a single time segment. The Louisville Institute recognizes that in some extraordinary circumstances this may not be possible. A waiver may be negotiated after a grant is awarded. All proposals should be developed based on a single time segment.

Recipients of a Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders shall take their sabbatical in a single time segment, during an 18-month period between March 1, 2009 and August 31, 2010. Applicants who wish to take a sabbatical after that time period should apply in 2009.

A completed application must include the following:

- Applicant information form (page 7)
- Proposal summary form (page 9)
- Service Continuation Policy signature (page 10)
- Proposal narrative (outline on the next page; also see "Suggestions for a Successful SGPL Proposal" on page 4)
- Résumé (two page maximum). The résumé should include educational experience, including dates of graduation, ministry experience including dates of service, and other information about the applicant that will help the selection committee become better acquainted with the applicant (e.g., ministerial standing and date of ordination, community service and leadership, and any awards and publications).
- A Brief Description of Your Context of Ministry (Tell us about your congregation or organization and your role in it. Two pages, double-spaced, maximum.)
- One letter of recommendation (page 11). The letter should be from a colleague, ministry supervisor, or mentor, who is able to assess candidly your sabbatical plan and your readiness to complete it.
- An "Institution Support" form (page 13) signed by the appropriate representative of your church or organization verifying that you will be able to utilize a grant if awarded. The Institutional Support form may, but need not be, signed by the person writing the letter of recommendation.



Proposal Elements and Instructions

Because the Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders is a competitive program, applicants must take special care to communicate as effectively as possible why they are applying, what they will do during their sabbatical, and how they, their family, and their place of ministry will benefit from the proposed sabbatical plan. It is recommended that applicants share a version of their proposal narrative with a colleague in ministry or a mentor – ideally the one asked to write a letter of reference – to receive feedback and suggestions prior to submitting the application.

In constructing a proposal, applicants are encouraged first to clarify the unifying theme that will structure their time and plans, and orient the proposal around that theme. Proposals most likely to be funded will be those in which all sabbatical activities are well focused around a clearly articulated central theme, and whose overall design is well suited to the time frame in view.

We encourage and welcome proposals on a wide range of topics and interests. However, many applicants appreciate topic suggestions, both for possible consideration and as a stimulus to the development of their own topics. The following topics are offered only as suggestions:

- **Spiritual Practices** – What are the distinctive spiritual practices vital to Christian faith and life, and how may they be best cultivated for sustaining Christian ministry?
- **Pastoral Imagination** – How does the ongoing encounter with scripture, theology, and tradition nurture the pastoral imagination necessary for a flourishing pastoral ministry?
- **Worship** – How may churches create and adapt patterns of Christian worship that meaningfully engage successive generations of believers and seekers while remaining faithful to Christian tradition?
- **Changing Face of Ministry** – How may pastoral leaders renew their vocations and sustain their gifts in response to the ever-increasing pace of change in the life of the Church and the expectations of ministry?

Proposal Details

Proposal Summary (*form enclosed*): A description, in 200 words or less, of the theme and outline of your proposal and sabbatical plan.

Proposal Narrative: In approximately five pages (12-point font and double-spaced) describe your proposal in detail, using the following outline:

1. **Theme** – What is the unifying theme or topic for your proposal?
2. **Rationale** – Why is the proposed topic important to you and to the Church?
3. **Plan** – How do you intend to explore this topic? (Be as specific as you can be at this time as to bibliography, conferences, or events you expect to share in, travel important for your exploration, etc.)
4. **Benefit** – How do you anticipate this time apart for prayer, reflection, and study will bring renewal to your vocation, ministry, and relationships?
5. **Timeline** – What do you expect will be your schedule and timeline for your sabbatical? Keep in mind the following:
 - a. You must be released from all duties during the time of your sabbatical.
 - b. Eight- and twelve-week sabbaticals shall be taken in a single time segment. Applicants should therefore consider applying only for a sabbatical of a length they may take in a single segment. The Louisville Institute recognizes that in some extraordinary circumstances this may not be possible. A waiver may be negotiated after a grant is awarded. All proposals should therefore be developed based on a single time segment.
 - c. All Sabbatical Grants for Pastoral Leaders awarded in 2008 shall be taken between March 1, 2009 and August 31, 2010.
6. **Other** – Please share other plans or possibilities (writing or publishing, presentations, etc.) you hope will be a part of or emerge from your proposed sabbatical.

The use of the award is left to the discretion of the grantee. Potential uses of funds include the purchase of books, salary replacement, research materials (including computer hardware and software), travel (including meals and lodging), conferences or seminars, etc.

Completed proposals must be postmarked by September 15th, 2008.

Post Grant Reporting

Grantees will submit an online summary report to The Louisville Institute at the conclusion of their grant period. Grantees without online access may do so by mail. In addition, one copy of any published article and three copies of any published book produced during or as a result of the grant period should be sent to The Louisville Institute.



Suggestions for a Successful SGPL Proposal

The Louisville Institute Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders program recognizes that foremost among the many things in short supply for pastors is *time*. Nevertheless, a successful SGPL proposal will take time – time to reflect on the nature, purpose, and goals of your sabbatical, time to draft your proposal, time to seek comments and suggestions on your draft, and time to polish a concise, literate, and compelling narrative. Taking enough time to prepare the best possible proposal will enhance your chance for selection, as will careful attention to the following suggestions. Guidelines for preparing the sabbatical application are posted on our website at <http://www.louisville-institute.org/Grants/programs/sgplform.aspx>.

Focus

We have all heard – and may have preached – a sermon that was about everything and nothing at the same time. The preacher had so much to say about so many very important things the congregation got lost. Because the preacher did not focus, the congregation could not.

Like a successful sermon, a successful SGPL proposal will be well-focused. In your proposal narrative, you need to explain clearly **why** you want to take a sabbatical, and **how** the sabbatical plan you are proposing will meaningfully address that “why.” For example, a “why” rooted in the need for a season of prayer, study, and reflection ought not lead to a “what” of travel and conferences.

Integration

A successful SGPL proposal will develop the central theme of your sabbatical in a carefully integrated way. Each element of the plan and the proposal should relate clearly to the theme. The books in the bibliography, any travel plans, possible conferences, workshops or seminars, even the daily schedule, should fit together seamlessly and relate appropriately to the central theme of the sabbatical.

For example, the theme of your sabbatical might focus on the renewal of pastor and people through the renewal of worship. Your sabbatical plan would then center on experiencing, examining, and reflecting upon renewing occasions of worship. In well-integrated detail you will spell out plans to participate in meaningful worship experiences, offer a significant bibliography on liturgy and worship, and identify lectures, conferences, etc. you plan to attend. Assembling this information requires preliminary research on your part, but it makes an important contribution to the effectiveness of the proposal.

Balance

Pastors, on balance, have a problem with balance. Trying to do too much for too many people does that. Recipients of a Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders have a wonderful opportunity to address the need for more balance in their lives, and during the eight or twelve weeks of the sabbatical experience learn new and more balanced habits of heart and life.

Successful SGPL proposals will incorporate an integrated and focused balance into the sabbatical plan. Rhythms of prayer, study, and worship will balance opportunities of exploration and discovery. A sabbatical is not a vacation; but it is also not cramming for final exams nor is it a work project. Above all a sabbatical may be an invitation to cultivate the habits of heart and life that, when sustained, will uphold one through a lifetime of ministry. Integrating such balance into the proposal is an important first step.



Benefit

From time to time we hear from church colleagues who do not understand why their pastor should be granted a sabbatical. The benefits appear to them to accrue only to the one “on” sabbatical. In fact, of course, a sabbatical benefits many people. This truth should be articulated in the proposal. Your application should clearly state what benefits are anticipated for yourself from the experience, and also an awareness of the anticipated benefits to those to whom you minister, to your family, and to other significant relationships.

Successful Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders proposals, then, should be focused, integrated, and balanced, reflecting a focused, integrated, and balanced sabbatical *plan*. Benefits to yourself and others should be clearly expressed.

In writing the final draft of the proposal narrative, keep in mind that your proposal will be read by a selection committee of The Louisville Institute staff, board members, and pastors. You want to be clear, concise, and persuasive, because the SGPL program is a competition – we receive more than 300 applications each year and award no more than 40 grants. We say this not to discourage you from applying, but to encourage you to take the time needed to write a successful proposal!

A Note About Travel

Travel can be a valuable part of a pastoral sabbatical. Travel can also detract from a successful sabbatical. The time, wear and tear, and expense of extensive travel is frequently underestimated by grantees, to the detriment of their sabbatical experience. Applicants who include a significant travel component in their sabbatical plan, particularly foreign travel, must clearly relate their travel plans to the focus of their sabbatical, and must integrate travel plans into the overall plan in a compelling fashion. Travel for its own sake is rarely a persuasive part of a successful application for a Louisville Institute Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders.

A Word About Degree Programs and Tuition Expenses

The Louisville Institute frequently receives requests from pastors for scholarship assistance for Doctor of Ministry and other degree programs. No such assistance is available. Pastors enrolled in degree programs may apply for a Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders provided they meet all eligibility requirements. But the fact that an applicant is enrolled in a degree program is immaterial to the application – awards are granted for compelling **sabbatical** proposals, and will not be granted to cover tuition expenses associated with degree programs.

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Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders

Grant Application

Applicant Information (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Title: Rev. Dr. Rev. Dr. Sister Father Mr. Mrs. Ms. Other:

Name

Home Address

City State ZIP code

Office Address

City State ZIP code

Where do you prefer to receive mailings? Home Office

Telephone (home) (office)

FAX E-mail

Website

Employer

Position

Denominational affiliation

Title of proposed project

Proposed timeline for the project (study period number of weeks) – please check only one box:

8 12

Anticipated dates of sabbatical leave:

(continued on back)

Name and address of person writing letter of recommendation for you:

Name
Address
City State ZIP code
Daytime Phone

Where did you hear about this program?

Applicant's signature Date

Mail the complete application packet to:

Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders
The Louisville Institute
1044 Alta Vista Road
Louisville, KY 40205-1798

If you need further clarification, please contact:

Sheldon W. Sorge
Associate Director
Phone: (502) 992-5431
E-mail: ssorge@louisville-institute.org

All application materials must be postmarked by September 15th, 2008.

Please make sure you enclose the following in this order:

1. Applicant information form
2. Proposal summary form and signature/Service Continuation Policy
3. Proposal narrative
4. Résumé
5. Brief description of your Context of Ministry
6. "Institution Support" form

Please paper clip your application – do not bind or staple. All materials other than the Applicant Information, Proposal Summary/Service Continuation Policy, and Institution Support forms should be single-sided on paper no heavier than 24#.

Reminder:

The Letter of Recommendation must be returned directly from the recommender to The Louisville Institute, postmarked by September 15th, 2008.



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Proposal Summary

Describe your proposal in one paragraph of 200 words or less (type, print out, or attach in this space). Please send an electronic copy of this to us by email (klichty@louisville-institute.org) or enter it into the appropriate form on our website at <http://www.louisville-institute.org/Grants/programs/sgplform.aspx>.

(PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Name Date

Proposal title



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Expectations Concerning Post-Sabbatical Service in Your Current Place of Ministry

Many sabbatical policies include a requirement that persons taking a sabbatical promise to continue to serve in their current ministry for a minimum period of one or more years following the sabbatical. While the Louisville Institute does not maintain such a strict requirement, we do require that applicants be upfront with us about any foreseeable changes in their place of ministry, as outlined in the following policy:

- a. Since a sabbatical grant is intended to serve the well-being of ministers for the sake of the organizations they serve, Louisville Institute sabbatical grant recipients are expected to remain in their current place of service for at least one (1) calendar year after the sabbatical's completion.
- b. If sabbatical grant applicants or grantees learn that they may not stay in their current place of ministry for at least one (1) calendar year following the completion of their sabbatical, they shall immediately communicate this information to The Louisville Institute.
- c. The Louisville Institute reserves the right to decommit any grant (a) where the grantee changes ministry location before the sabbatical period begins, or (b) where, before the sabbatical period begins, the grantee enters into an agreement to change ministry location within one (1) calendar year of the sabbatical's completion.
- d. By signing below, the applicant formally acknowledges his/her obligations as set forth in paragraphs a) and b) above and further consents to The Louisville Institute's right to decommit any grant under the terms set forth in paragraph c).

Signature

Date



Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders

Letter of Recommendation

To be completed by applicant:

Name of applicant

Proposal title

In 1993, The Louisville Institute launched the Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders program, convinced that directly supporting the spiritual growth and vocational renewal of pastoral leaders was an important and effective strategy for increasing the vitality and effectiveness of churches and ministries. The Louisville Institute offers pastoral leaders a chance to step out and step back from the pace and pressures of ministry through its Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders program. We believe that when pastoral leaders have opportunity for learning, growth, and recreation, they also learn the habits and practices that sustain them in and for meaningful ministry. During a season of personal renewal, study, and reflection, pastoral leaders embrace the gifts of time and Sabbath for their lives and ministries. As they are renewed and strengthened so are their families and so is the Church. Through its Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders grant competition, The Louisville Institute will award up to 40 grants for eight-week or twelve-week sabbaticals. During this time recipients will devote themselves to a season of prayer, study, renewal, and reflection on their vocations and ministries.

We would appreciate your candid assessment of the applicant's capacity to carry out the sabbatical program of prayer, study, and reflection she/he has proposed. **Please sign and attach this form to your letter of recommendation to the address below, postmarked by September 15th, 2008.**

Signature _____ Date

Name (print) Title

Send to:

Sheldon W. Sorge
Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders
The Louisville Institute
1044 Alta Vista Road
Louisville, KY 40205-1798
Phone: (502) 992-5431
E-mail: ssorge@louisville-institute.org



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Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders

Institution Support

To be completed by applicant:

Name of applicant

Organization

Address

Date of Sabbatical

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On this form you are asked, as the appropriate official in the applicant's place of ministry, to verify support of the applicant's supervisory committee (pastoral relations, pastor/parish, personnel, etc.) for this application to the Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders program. **Please sign and return this form to the applicant.**

On behalf of (name of institution)

I certify that (name of applicant) has discussed with and has

the support of (name of committee) in making this application

to the Sabbatical Grant for Pastoral Leaders program.

Signed _____

Name (print)

Title

Date



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Louisville, Kentucky 40205-9924

What Is The Louisville Institute?

In late 1990, Lilly Endowment Inc. (an Indianapolis-based private philanthropic foundation) launched The Louisville Institute based at Louisville Seminary. Created in 1937 by three members of the Lilly family through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly and Company, the Endowment supports the causes of religion, education and community development. Lilly Endowment's Religion Division supports people and organizations striving to generate knowledge, communicate insights, nurture practices, and renew and sustain institutions that provide the religious resources upon which a flourishing and humane society depends.

As a program funded by the Lilly Endowment, The Louisville Institute builds upon the Endowment's long-standing support of both leadership education and scholarly research on American religion, focusing on North American Christianity, the historic African-American churches, and the Hispanic religious experience.

The Executive Director, James W. Lewis, and Associate Director, Sheldon W. Sorge, guide the work of The Louisville Institute and work closely with the Religion Division of Lilly Endowment. The Board of Directors assists by reviewing grants proposals and setting policies.

In order to advance our understanding of the character, problem, contributions, and prospects of American religion, The Louisville Institute encourages research and leadership education in ways that are mutually beneficial to both academics and religious leaders:

- by providing grants to academics, religious leaders, academic institutions, church bodies and selected other non-profit organizations;
- by convening conferences and other opportunities for conversation among religious leaders and researchers.

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