

Addressing pastoral challenges

A \$1 million grant from the Lilly Endowment's National Initiative to Address Economic Challenges Facing Pastoral Leaders enables Everence® to help pastors of churches affiliated with Mennonite Church USA and Conservative Mennonite Conference. About half of the money granted to Everence will be available as matching funds to directly help pastors who need immediate financial assistance. The remainder will fund educational programs to help pastors learn how to better manage their finances and plan for retirement.

How to apply

Everence helps individuals, organizations and congregations integrate finances with faith through a national team of advisors and representatives. Everence offers banking, insurance and financial services with community benefits and stewardship education.

Everence is a ministry of Mennonite Church USA and other churches.

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Pastoral Financial Assistance Fund

Sponsored by the Lilly Endowment and Everence Financial

Everence offers credit union services that are federally insured by NCUA. We also offer securities and other products that are not federally insured and are subject to loss of principal. All products are not available in all states.

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Pastoral Financial Assistance Fund application guidelines

Through a grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., Everence established a fund to provide financial assistance to pastors from Mennonite Church USA and Conservative Mennonite Conference. This three-year program will target specific areas of need, such as:

- Retirement preparation
- Clergy tax education
- Student loan assistance
- Medical debt, credit card debt or other financial concerns

Matching grant requirement

Each Lilly Pastoral Financial Assistance Fund grant will need to be matched, dollar for dollar, by congregations, conferences, individuals or other funding sources. This Lilly Endowment requirement expands the amount of money available and the number of pastors who can be assisted. Each applicant should work with his or her congregation, district or conference leadership to help secure these funds.

Fund structure

Pastoral Financial Assistance Fund applications are available from MC USA and CMC denominational leadership, as well as conference ministers and area overseers. Pastors also may contact their regional Everence church relations representatives.

MC USA and CMC each have Pastoral Financial Assistance Fund oversight teams, which will review applications from their respective pastors to determine if the needs and requests identified meet the grant qualifications. Fund applications should not exceed \$5,000 per request, per year, but may be requested again in subsequent years. Exceptions may be made, but must be explained in the application and supported with a letter of explanation by the pastor's overseer or conference minister.

Eligibility requirements

To be eligible to participate in this program, individuals must:

- Be an active pastor of a Mennonite Church USA or Conservative Mennonite Conference congregation, and
- State a specific financial need in the areas of retirement preparation, clergy tax education, student debt, medical debt, credit card debt or other financial concerns.

Grant restrictions

Financial needs outside the framework of this grant include:

- Scholarships for seminary tuition or continuing education
- Sabbatical expenses
- Salary or benefit assistance
- Office or home upgrades

Application process

- Submit a completed application, along with a household budget form.
- Talk with your conference minister/pastor or overseer regarding the matching grant requirement.

Sustaining funding

In order to sustain this program beyond the three years of the Lilly Endowment grant, denominational leaders will establish a fund to which congregations and individuals may contribute. This will help MC USA and CMC serve the needs of future pastors.

Tax implications

Any Pastoral Financial Assistance Fund grant and matching grant awarded to a pastor will include an additional 20 percent of the total amount of the grant to address the tax implication of the gift. A check will be sent directly to the pastor to hold and use as called for by tax law.

For more information, contact:

- Terry Shue, Director of Leadership Development, Mennonite Church USA – TerryS@MennoniteUSA.org; (574) 523-3095 (direct); (866) 866-2872 ext. 23095
- Brian Hershberger, Executive Director, and Steve Swartz, Conference Pastor, Conservative Mennonite Conference – (740) 857-1234; office@cmcrosedale.org.
- Beryl Jantzi, Everence Director of Stewardship Education – (800) 442-7930; beryl.jantzi@everence.com.