

The Collegetville Institute is seeking to identify gifted Minnesota pastors and ministers to participate in our pastoral leaders fellowship program.

The program aims to bring an ecumenical group of participants together with professionals from other sectors of Minnesota society, toward the goal of helping to strengthen these religious leaders' sense of themselves as civic leaders and public theologians.



In 1948, Reinhold Niebuhr, Protestant pastor and one of the Christian tradition's most exemplary public theologians, appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine's 25th anniversary issue. An icon of faith in tumultuous times, Niebuhr's voice addressed, and influenced, the pressing social and political issues of his day. We wonder how many religious leaders today are following Niebuhr's example of seeking to speak theologically to a wide range of public issues, and a wide range of people.

Niebuhr was only the most prominent of public theologians in his day. Past religious leaders whether Roman Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish, were commonly viewed as leaders within a wider community, town, city, state, or even the nation as a whole. Religious leaders frequently addressed an audience broader than the immediate community they served, and they spoke or wrote from a theological perspective about a wide range of issues including work, poverty, addiction, health care, and criminal justice. Sometimes they addressed such issues relating to the common good with common sense, sometimes with more fervor than wisdom (think of the costs of Prohibition—a public policy prominently championed by Protestant religious leaders). The **Collegetville Institute Fellows Program** seeks to recapture the traditional idea of the religious leader as public, or civic, leader, but to do so in informed partnership and conversation with other leaders from areas such as business, medicine, law, and education.

Specifically, the new Institute initiative will form a peer group of 12 accomplished pastors, 5 to 10+ years out of seminary, and convene this group over a period of 22 months. This group will meet regularly with, and learn from, leaders of other professions in Minnesota who have a high stake in contributing to the fabric of public life in our state.

The program seeks not to stake out advocacy positions concerning particular public issues, but to help clergy to speak from an informed position about complex matters, and to exercise practical wisdom in their roles as public leaders. We hope to encourage religious leaders to speak out publically, for example, on issues of employment in Minnesota, but we want them to speak only when they have a firm grasp of the complex issues that impact the labor force and the business community.





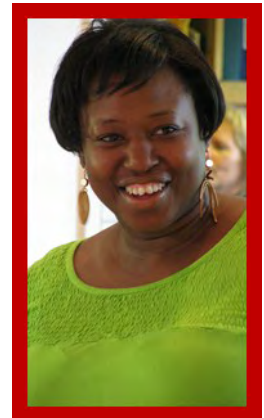
With the work of this grant the Institute responds to Jesus' command to love our neighbor as our self. That command requires us to love our neighbor in the fullness of his or her life, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. In this sense, religious leadership "refers to every moment of our life, to every space and every realm," as theologian Paul Tillich stated. Such leadership reflects the conviction that "the universe is God's sanctuary. Every work day is a day of the Lord, every supper a Lord's supper, every work the fulfillment of a divine task, every joy a joy in God."

That's the vision of religious leadership we hope to implement in the **Collegeville Institute Fellows Program**, for the good of Minnesota, for the good of the church, and for a common good greater than both.

The program, designed for pastors and ministers, focuses on those who have Master of Divinity or equivalent degrees, and five to ten years experience in pastoral roles in the metropolitan area of the Twin Cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

Collegeville Institute Fellows will:

- Participate in an ecumenical colleague group of twelve 12 individuals for 22 months with the potential of creating for participants a support system lasting long past the close of the fellowship program.
- Attend eight cohort meetings, two at the beautiful, lakeside apartments of the Collegeville Institute, and six at the Minnesota Humanities Center, a restored architectural landmark near Lake Phalen in St. Paul, that features comfortable hotel rooms with private baths and delicious meals prepared by their executive chef.
- Hear from civic and professional leaders and experts on key cultural issues.
- Sharpen their skills at social analysis and theological reflection.
- Expand their horizons concerning the community for which they see themselves responsible as leaders and thus expand their visions of themselves as pastoral leaders.
- Gain the confidence to become active participants in conversations about matters of public import both within and outside the congregations/parishes they serve.
- Plan and present a pastoral project of their choosing for their congregation/parish or community.
- Receive a \$4,000 stipend and have all travel costs relating to meetings covered by the Collegeville Institute.



The content and schedule of meetings for the cohort is as follows:

August 26 (noon) - 27 (noon), 2013

Inaugural meeting (at the Collegeville Institute)

(Subsequent Meeting Dates To Be Determined)

October 2013 (9am first day to 4pm second day)

The Changing Face of Minnesota and Its Implications for the Future
(at the Minnesota Humanities Center)

January 2014 (9am first day to 4pm second day)

Business and the Future of Minnesota's Economy (at the Minnesota Humanities Center)

April 2014 (9am first day to 4pm second day)

Criminal Justice in Minnesota (at the Minnesota Humanities Center)

July 2014 (9am first day to 4pm second day)

Education and the Achievement Gap in Minnesota (at the Minnesota Humanities Center)

October 2014 (9am first day to 4pm second day)

The Challenges of Health Care in Minnesota (at the Minnesota Humanities Center)

February 2015 (9am first day to 4pm second day)

Poverty in Minnesota (at the Minnesota Humanities Center)

May 2015 (noon first day to 4pm third day)

Capstone Meeting (at the Collegeville Institute)

To nominate pastors and/or ministers for a Collegeville Institute fellowship or to receive an application packet, please send names, addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers to Gary Reiersen, Program Director.

Contact Gary by email at greierson@comcast.net or phone at 612-669-5211.

Application deadline: May 1, 2013



The Collegeville Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research is a meeting place and residential center where a diverse mix of people from various faith communities, including scholars, writers, professionals, artists and corporate leaders, gather to connect faith to the world and its pressing social issues. The purpose of the Collegeville Institute is to support research, publication, and education on the important intersections between faith and culture.

Participants seek to discern and communicate the meaning of Christian identity and unity in a religiously and culturally diverse world.

The Collegeville Institute exists to mediate religious conflict and disunity and to build bridges between faith traditions. Here people share in practicing and teaching the art of living together.

To fulfill its mission, the Institute provides opportunities for people to come together for research, study, prayer, reflection, writing, dialogue, and outreach on issues of faith in today's world.



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