

Dear Friend,

In 2013 the Collegeville Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research launched a new program called the Collegeville Institute Fellows Program. Funded through a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment, the initiative has engaged gifted Twin Cities area pastors and ministers – both ordained and lay – in pastoral leadership development. You can find out more about the current programs by [visiting our website](#).

The Collegeville Institute is now extending that program to church leaders in rural areas and in towns and cities throughout greater Minnesota. **As director of this new program I write to ask for your assistance in identifying worthy candidates.**

The program aims to bring an ecumenical group of participants together with professionals from other sectors of Minnesota society -- in education, business, health care, agriculture, social services, immigration – toward the goal of strengthening these church leaders' sense of themselves as civic leaders and public theologians.

This new effort, **the Collegeville Institute Rural Minnesota Fellows Program**, provides a unique leadership development opportunity for **pastors in the early to middle years of their career**. The program is designed, then, for those who are approximately 5 to 15 years out of seminary, with 20 or more years to give in ministry to church and community.

Specifically, this new initiative will form **a peer group of 12** accomplished pastors drawn from communities throughout Minnesota, but outside the Twin Cities metropolitan area. We will convene this group over a period of 22 months when Fellows 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. Fellows will receive \$4,000 in stipends over the period of the program. More information is available in the attachment.

Can you help by nominating pastors and ministers for this unique program? Nominees will be invited to apply, and we will not reveal the identity of those who nominated them.

Please contact me (see below for my email address and phone number) with names of people you think would be a good fit for this initiative. Parish or congregation name, address, phone, and email addresses would also be helpful, if you have them, but just names and congregation would be sufficient to point me to the right direction to get the contact information.

If you know other persons who might be able to nominate potential participants, please let me know or pass along this email to them. Please send your nominations by June 20, 2017; the program will begin in October 2017. I sincerely appreciate any assistance you can give on this.

With all best wishes,

Dr. Bernie Evans, Director
Collegeville Institute Rural Minnesota Fellows Program
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