

## Invest in Excellence



The cornerstone of Indiana Yearly Meeting's Ministerial Excellence Initiative is the Ministerial Excellence Fund. Overseen by a steering committee, the General Superintendent and the Ministerial Advocate, this fund is the source of the financial support to release IYM pastors into vital ministry and out from under educational debt, limited retirement and health care options, and inadequate compensation.

A generous grant from the Lilly Endowment provided the seed funds to launch this important initiative. But ongoing success depends on the support of those within the Yearly Meeting who share a concern to fully release Friends ministers.

Friends with a heart for this cause can support the effort through financial and in-kind donations. Other ways to become involved might include an insurance policy that someone no longer needs, a bequest, Charitable Gift Annuity or trust.

To learn more about how you can help and how wise estate planning could result in a win-win situation for your family and Indiana Yearly Meeting, contact IYM Ministerial Advocate Matthew Hisrich at [matt@iym.org](mailto:matt@iym.org) or 765.319.3244.

## Ministerial Excellence Initiative



VITAL MINISTRY FOR  
VITAL MEETINGS

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# Ministerial Excellence Initiative



INDIANA YEARLY  
MEETING OF  
FRIENDS

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# Releasing our Pastors

In one of the epistles of George Fox he advised, “That care be taken from time to time, as Friends are moved thereunto, for relieving faithful Friends’ necessities, and for other services of truth...that ministering Friends may not be cumbered with outward things, but kept out of them.” The concept of meeting the needs of ministers so that they can be freed, or “released,” to minister is not just a Quaker concept, but a New Testament principle.

Unfortunately, a survey of Friends’ pastors uncovered a plethora of personal economic challenges. For instance:

- Educational debt ranges from \$2,000 to over \$50,000 among IYM pastors
- A significant number of IYM pastors report feeling stressed about health care coverage and retirement savings
- Some IYM pastors lack coverage altogether, and others have left pastoral ministry due to financial constraint

Pastors who are not operating under severe economic burdens will be more fully released to serve their congregations and communities without distraction. This is why Indiana Yearly Meeting, assisted by a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment, has created the Ministerial Excellence Initiative.

- Doug Shoemaker,  
Indiana Yearly Meeting  
General Superintendent

Indiana Yearly Meeting’s Ministerial Excellence Initiative presents an opportunity to think broadly about how to foster and sustain ministerial excellence and vitality within our meetings.

With this initiative, IYM seeks to spur conversation among member meetings and provide support to those in need of assistance and interested in exploring paths to greater health and impact.

The Ministerial Excellence Initiative focuses on three primary areas:



## 1) Education

- Tax preparation trainings and retirement trainings made available for pastors
- Funds available for meeting with a professional financial planner
- Presentations, written and electronic materials available to meetings regarding pastoral finances and IYM’s pastoral compensation guidelines
- Materials available on tax preparation, retirement planning, financial planning, and available health care options

## 2) Alleviation of financial burden

- Continuation of Continuing Education Fund for pastors
- Continuation of Scholarship and Loan Fund for seminary training
- Continuation of assistance for retired IYM pastors
- New matching funds available to pastors for educational debt retirement
- New matching funds available to meetings to create or bolster existing retirement plans and health care plans
- New matching funds available to meetings for emergency needs

## 3) Encouraging creative solutions to Meeting needs

- Meetings interested in matching grants will engage in a discernment process designed to help them think through their future direction and how to achieve and sustain IYM standards for pastoral compensation
- Begin / foster existing discussion of Meeting health, sustainability, and hopes
- Begin / foster existing discussion about Meeting accountability and transparency
- Work with pastors and church leaders to share ideas, experiences, and concerns on an ongoing basis