



June 10, 2009

Dear Executive Presbyter,

The Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) invites you to submit a proposal for funding to initiate or continue a Clergy Colleague Group in your presbytery. These groups provide a forum in which pastors can exchange ideas, garner support, and build relationships. They are also another wonderful opportunity for presbyteries and the Board of Pensions to partner in a program that strengthens the clergy community.

Pastors often feel disconnected from one another. Opportunities to build friendships with and receive support from colleagues, which were readily available during their seminary days, may have diminished after they entered pastoral ministry or took a new call. To help alleviate this isolation, the Board has pledged partial financial support for the formation of Clergy Colleague Groups.

The Board will grant \$1,000 to presbyteries for Clergy Colleague Groups. The funds are designated to cover 50% of the cost for pastors to meet 10 times a year with a professionally licensed or certified group facilitator. The facilitator must be licensed as a clinical social worker, clinical psychologist, or counselor, or a member/fellow of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors or other board that licenses its members within the state where he/she practices.

Funding is contingent upon receipt of a copy of the facilitator's license and the confirmation of the group's participants. You will receive notification of approval for your group(s) followed by the funding when your application has been approved. The enclosed pamphlet provides additional details. If you have questions, please email me at gholmes@pensions.org.

Participants have responded positively to the groups; the program has helped them establish valuable peer relationships. If you have not previously taken advantage of this opportunity, the Board hopes that your presbytery will strongly consider offering this service to your pastor members.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gweneth A. Holmes".

Gweneth A. Holmes
Manager, Special Programs
gholmes@pensions.org