



Wabash Pastoral Leadership Program

at Wabash College, funded by Lilly Endowment Inc.

December 15, 2008

Reverend Nathan Wilson Selected for Wabash Pastoral Leadership Program

CRAWFORDSVILLE, IN — Reverend Nathan D. Wilson has been selected to participate in the Wabash Pastoral Leadership Program. Rev. Wilson is the Senior Minister at the First Christian Church in Shelbyville, Indiana.

The Program targets Indiana pastors with between five and 10 years of experience following their graduate seminary studies and invites them to participate in a two-year program of leadership development and pastoral reflection.

The focus of the Wabash Pastoral Leadership Program will engage pastors in explorations of critical economic, educational, and political challenges facing Indiana communities and help them develop the knowledge and skills to become stronger leaders in their congregations and communities.

Rev. Wilson received his undergraduate degree from Asbury College and earned his master's degree in divinity from the Lexington Theological Seminary, where he received the Riley B. Montgomery Award in Theology. He also received a graduate certificate in International Studies from the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey in Switzerland.

“From a number of outstanding pastors who applied, we selected a representative group with very high potential for leadership from diverse churches throughout Indiana,” said Program Director Raymond Brady Williams. “They have rich academic backgrounds and life experiences, and we look forward to lively discussions of important issues and challenges that face communities and churches in Indiana.”

“Pastors play important roles in sustaining the vitality of local Indiana communities,” said Craig Dykstra, senior vice president for religion at the Endowment. “We are delighted that Wabash will create a leadership program that recognizes and honors their work, helps them understand more deeply challenges faced by Indiana, and prepares them to become increasingly effective leaders in congregations and communities.”

Pastors involved in the program will meet on the Wabash College campus 10 times over a two-year period to meet with civic, government, business, and religious leaders to discuss issues that affect local Indiana communities. The pastors will learn about a range of topics, such as statewide efforts to strengthen public education, Indiana economic initiatives,

government responses to property tax and other issues, the impact of immigration on local communities, and advances in medical research and their impact on health care.

In addition, the pastors will participate in a study tour in North America during the first year and an international study tour in the second year of the program to learn about transnational contexts. One group of pastors will begin in January 2009 and the second in 2011.

Williams is the founding director of the program. He is the LaFollette Distinguished Professor in the Humanities *emeritus* and he was the founding director of the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion, also funded by Lilly Endowment.

“For many years the College ran the Wabash Executive Program that developed potential for leadership in executives in business and industry,” said Williams. “The College now runs the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning that develops leadership in faculty of colleges, universities, and seminaries. So it is exciting to be part of this new profession-specific leadership program for talented pastors in Indiana.”

The program will be housed in Trippet Hall on the Wabash College campus. Please contact Dr. Williams (williamr@wabash.edu or 765-361-6336) for additional information.