

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***Center for Congregations President Tim Shapiro Announces Retirement After 23 Years of Visionary Leadership***

**Indianapolis, IN** — After more than two decades of visionary leadership, transformational program development, and deep commitment to congregations in Indiana and beyond, Tim Shapiro, President of the Center for Congregations, has announced his intention to retire, concluding a remarkable tenure marked by undeniable growth and impact.

*“After 23 years of service, I’ve decided to retire as President of the Center for Congregations. It’s been one of the great joys of my life to walk alongside Indiana’s congregations and support the people who lead them. Thanks to a wise and committed board, an extraordinary staff, and the ongoing trust of the Lilly Endowment, the Center is in a strong and hopeful place for this transition. Together, we’ve partnered with more than 60 percent of congregations in Indiana, and we’ve seen again and again how vibrant and essential congregational life is across the state. I’ve been especially grateful for the chance to share what we’ve learned in books like *How Your Congregation Learns*, *Divergent Church*, and *The Formative Power of Your Congregation*. As I step away, I carry with me deep gratitude, especially for the congregations that have made this work so meaningful.”*

— **Tim Shapiro, Center for Congregations’** President

Since joining the Center in 2002, Tim has led the Center for Congregations through seasons of unprecedented growth, transforming it from the Indianapolis Center for Congregations, focused primarily on Central Indiana to serving congregations in all of Indiana’s 92 counties, with satellite offices in Crown Point, Fort Wayne, Seymour, and Evansville. His thoughtful leadership and care-filled attention to how congregations learn, grow, and must be supported in order to flourish is deeply appreciated by the Center’s Board of Directors.

*“Tim’s humble leadership, thoughtful scholarship, and careful stewardship of its resources has helped the Center reach diverse congregations throughout Indiana. Whether it was funding for a project particular to a congregation or developing relevant initiatives such as *Connect through Tech* and the *Mental Health Initiative*, Tim’s unique skills and style made sure the stories of each community were valued and appreciated. It has been an honor to know and work with Tim.”*

— **Elizabeth Clay, Center for Congregations’** Board Chair

The Center for Congregations’ impact is made possible by the generosity of the Lilly Endowment. The combination of Tim’s creative program development and the Lilly Endowment’s commitment to deepen and enrich congregational life through philanthropy has been instrumental. The Lilly Endowment lauded Tim’s deep knowledge of his congregational life

and innovative program development, his scholarly approach to community challenges, and his ability to drive meaningful outcomes across diverse congregations.

*"Tim Shapiro has guided the work of the Center for Congregations with great skill and grace. Under his leadership the Center has widened and deepened the many ways that it listens to congregational leaders and helps them find resources to address their challenges. The Center is recognized as a highly trusted source of support by congregations from a broad spectrum of Christian traditions across Indiana. Lilly Endowment is grateful for Tim's steady and thoughtful work and celebrates what the Center has accomplished under his leadership."*

— **Christopher L. Coble, the Lilly Endowment's** Vice President for Religion

In recent years, Tim's leadership has focused on transforming the Center to ensure that its impact is equitable and reaches all congregations to support their flourishing. As Tim prepares to transition, he leaves the Center having built an ecology of programs that support congregational thriving in Indiana. "The Center is in an outstanding position for this transition, Tim said. "Our board guides us with wisdom, our staff brings talent and teamwork, and the Lilly Endowment continues to trust and support our mission. The Center's work with congregations is contributing to the highest impact we've ever had—and the future shines even brighter."

As the Center for Congregations community celebrates Tim on his retirement, the Center's board of directors is actively working to ensure the work of the Center continues through the search for the Center's next President, to be named in early 2026. To ensure a smooth and strategic leadership transition, Tim will remain with the Center in an advisory capacity until mid-2026. The board has appointed Rev. Dr. Dick Hamm, former Board Chair, as Chair of the Search Committee. The national search will be conducted with the support of the executive search firm Isaacson, Miller, with input from staff, stakeholders, and community partners.

*"It will be truly difficult to find someone to follow Tim Shapiro's excellent leadership. He has built the Center for Congregations into a positive force for every congregation in Indiana during these past 23 years. Moving an organization from five staff members to 30 staff members, as Tim has, is an amazing accomplishment! He has shifted his own leadership style to match each new phase in the life of the Center. What a gift!"*

— **Dick Hamm, Center for Congregations'** President Search Committee Chair

Please join the Center for Congregations and our family of partners and congregations in celebrating Tim's service and impact. Details of celebrations of Tim's retirement are forthcoming and will be announced in the coming weeks.

For more information about the transition and search process, please visit:  
<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/center-congregations/president>

For more information about the Center for Congregations, please visit:  
<https://www.centerforcongregations.org/>

**Media Contact:**

Christos Reid  
Marketing and Communications Strategist  
[creid@centerforcongregations.org](mailto:creid@centerforcongregations.org)  
317.237.7799