

The Mental Health Initiative is an educational and grant program designed to assist Indiana congregations in addressing mental health and wellness among their members. The Center for Congregations is committed to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and therefore encourage congregations of color and rural congregations to apply.

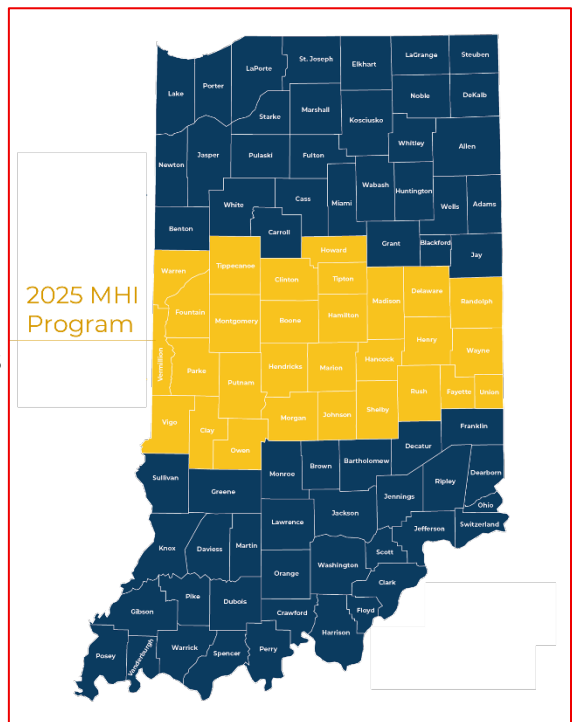
In 2025, a cohort of 30 congregations from Central Indiana will be selected.

Eligible counties include:

Boone, Clay, Clinton, Delaware, Fayette, Fountain, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Henry, Howard, Johnson, Madison, Marion, Montgomery, Morgan, Owen, Parke, Putnam, Randolph, Rush, Shelby, Tippecanoe, Tipton, Union, Vermillion, Vigo, Warren, Wayne

As a result of participating in the Mental Health Initiative, you will:

- Understand ways that your congregation can benefit from the intersection of mental and spiritual wellness
- Harness your congregation's spiritual practices and faith claims to promote healing and mental well-being
- Understand cultural dynamics that can limit the discussion of mental health in congregations
- Be equipped to identify and offer mental health resources to support your faith community
- Find rejuvenation and healing while learning how to offer it to your own congregation
- Learn ways to support clergy people and their spiritual and mental wellness



Selection Process:

- Submit application by Wednesday, October 15, 2025, to be considered for the cohort.
- Congregations who apply will be notified by mid-December 2025.
- This is a competitive initiative. Not all congregations who apply will be selected.

Details for the Cohort of Selected Congregations:

- Timeline:
 - January - April 2026: Educational component of the cohort
 - October 2026: Submit Project Proposal
 - November - December 2026: Grant checks awarded
 - January - December 2027: Implementation and reporting of Mental Health project

- Team Member Requirements:
 - Select 2-4 people from your congregation to be your Mental Health Initiative team.
 - Designate one person as the Project Director who is expected to attend all sessions.
 - Include a pastor or clergy person on your team.
- Educational Session Requirements:
 - Cohort participants must attend three educational sessions.
 - Educational sessions are comprised of in-person and online gatherings.
 - Stable internet or cellular connection is expected and Zoom access is required.
 - Two to four team members may attend each educational session.
 - 2025 sessions are scheduled for:
 - January 15, 2026 – Program Orientation (6pm-7pm Eastern Time on Zoom)
 - Friday, February 13, 2026 (9am – 3pm Eastern Time in-person in Indianapolis)
 - Friday, April 17, 2026 (9am – 3pm Eastern Time in-person in Indianapolis)
 - Other Requirements for Accepted Congregations:
 - Meet for two hours per month as a congregational team January 2026 – October 2026.
 - Meet for thirty minutes per month with a Center for Congregations consultant January 2026 – October 2026.
 - Complete monthly assignments on the Center for Congregations' online Grant Portal January 2026 – October 2026.
- Project Proposal and Funding:
 - Cohort participants will submit a Project Proposal in October 2026.
 - The maximum grant dollar amount awarded is \$40,000, or 90% of the total cost of grant activities, for each project. Therefore, each congregation's financial responsibility is 10% of the grant eligible expenses and must be in the form of dollars and cannot include in-kind donations.
 - Congregations may apply for and receive less than \$40,000.

Grant eligible activities may include, but are not limited to, a combination of the following (all activities must be related to mental health):

- Guest speakers (food/travel costs)
- Retreats (food/travel costs/supplies/facility rental)
- Licensed counselor for family, group, or individual sessions where insurance is not available (not applicable for salary of licensed counselors already on staff at a participating congregation)
- Conference attendance (registration, travel and lodging expenses)
- Online courses related to mental health
- Books
- Curriculum
- Training (i.e. Mental Health First Aid, Celebrate Recovery)
 - Coursework in pursuit of a degree is not grant eligible
- Technology or building improvements/fixed assets that support mental health activities