The Center for Congregations introduces a new youth ministry and programming initiative for congregational leaders in central Indiana. The Youth Ministry Grant Initiative is open to all congregations in Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Marion, Morgan and Shelby counties.

This initiative is for congregations wanting to develop new and sustainable youth programming opportunities. Youth Ministry Grant Initiative includes financial support, as well as a thorough educational component.

Information sessions are 6-8 p.m. Tuesday, March 5, 2013; 10 a.m.-Noon Wednesday, March 6, 2013; and 2-4 p.m. Tuesday, March 12, 2013. All information sessions are held at Geist Christian Church, 8550 Mud Creek Road, Indianapolis. Registration is required to attend. Register at https://www.centerforcongregations.org/workshop/youth-ministry-grants-initiative.

Application information will be available at the information sessions and after.

Although this program is only open to congregations in Marion and contiguous counties, the Center’s Resource Grants program is available to all Indiana congregations.

The Center for Congregations strengthens Indiana congregations by helping them find and use the best resources to address their challenges and opportunities. Lindberg will work with northwest congregations on the issues that are most important to them.

The northwest Center provides resource consulting, as well as workshops, luncheons, long-term learning programs and matching grant opportunities.

Located in Crown Point, the office is at 9801 Connecticut Drive. The facility includes work stations, meeting spaces, a browsing library and full kitchen. The 2,500-square-foot office is in the Ameriplex at the Crossroads office park.

Center staff hope to see you on April 17.
Leadership, service, positive change and historic preservation are just a few of the exciting workshop topics available this spring. Take a look at our upcoming offerings and check out our website workshops page at https://www.centerforcongregations.org/workshops-list for details on these and other informative programs.

Positive Change for Congregations
Whether discussing major issues, planning a large gathering or simply handling the daily operations of a faith community, the benefits of using positive change processes can have lasting impact for congregations. Center staffer Susan Weber leads these luncheon workshops on Wednesdays, March 6 and April 10, 2013 in Evansville and Fridays, March 8 and April 12, 2013 in Seymour.

Essentials of Church Finance
Vonna Laue, author of Essential Guide to Church Finances and partner with the accounting firm CapinCrouse, explores with congregational leaders topics of church accounting practices, planning and budgeting, internal controls and risk management, and financial reporting. The workshop is Thursday, March 14, 2013 in Indianapolis.

Historic Preservation for Congregations 101
This luncheon workshop provides participants with a clear understanding of the historic preservation process and enlightenment about popular misconceptions. Historic Preservation for Congregations 101 is designed for congregational leaders and members whose buildings were constructed in the mid-1960s or earlier. The workshop is Thursday, March 14, 2013 in Indianapolis.

Service and Faith Formation in the Congregation
Faith and outreach are closely connected in spiritual development. In this interactive workshop, well-known family scholar Diana Garland explores how congregational life, faith practices and service to others shape children, teens, adults and families. The workshop is Thursday, March 21, 2013 in Indianapolis and Friday, March 22, 2013 in Fort Wayne.

Making Room
Making Room: Cultivating Communities of Inclusion with Children and Youth with Disabilities explores with participants a process and plan to meaningfully include children and youth with disabilities in faith communities. Educator and author Barbara Newman will walk through a practical process that wraps around children and youth with disabilities as congregations seek to use the gifts of individuals and support the needs of individuals. This workshop is Wednesday, April 10, in Austin and Thursday, April 11, in Zionsville.

Congregations and Abundant Communities
What does it mean to be a neighbor? What does it mean to be part of the community in which your congregation dwells? In this luncheon workshop, participants will be challenged to move from a mindset of “serving” their neighborhoods to the mindset of being a neighbor in their neighborhoods. This luncheon workshop is Wednesday, April 10, 2013, in Fort Wayne.

Ministry for the 21st Century Child
Congregations are invited to take a look at children’s ministry and spiritual formation, generational differences, and the role of children in worship. Educator, speaker, consultant and author Ivy Beckwith facilitates this comprehensive workshop that looks at spiritual nurturing, story, ritual, relationship and roles. The workshop is Wednesday, April 24, 2013 in Crown Point and Thursday, April 25, 2013 in Fort Wayne.

Reaching Millennials
Is your congregation seeking to attract more people in their teens through their thirties? Are you interested in cultivating the leadership of your congregation to include people in the Millennial generation? At this luncheon workshop, organizational and training leader Jennifer Fisher shares research to help congregations better understand and reach this large and upcoming generation. The workshop is Thursday, June 6, 2013, in Evansville.
What is your congregation working on this year? The Center for Congregations can help.

A pastor of a rural congregation up north called the Center asking this question: “Are there ways for us to improve our website without spending $10,000?”

A lay leader of an urban Indianapolis congregation sent us an email. She asked, “How do we find out if we are ready for a capital campaign to fund needed repairs?”

At a workshop, an attendee told a Center staffer, “We are looking for a new curriculum for our young adults. What would you suggest?”

Congregations in Indiana are addressing many different challenges and opportunities in 2013. Some of you are working to increase giving. Some are emphasizing youth ministries. Others are discerning their future direction for the next three to five years.

The Center for Congregations is prepared to talk with you about all these subjects and more. We won’t give you a single solution. We won’t pretend that we already know what’s right for you. We’ve found that there is rarely one right answer for any challenge. That’s why we take a resource approach. After 16 years of serving Indiana congregations, we’ve found that helping a congregation learn about outside resources to help them solve problems or take on opportunities is the best way for a faith community to find solid long-term solutions and not just the quick fix.

Regardless of what you are working on this year, we can connect you with tools that will help you learn, take action and achieve results. A congregation that is able to effectively address its challenges and opportunities, whatever those might be, is a resilient congregation and is less likely to be overly stressed by the inevitable demands of congregational life and social change.

Last year, we served 984 Indiana congregations. Every week we receive calls from congregations contacting us for the first time or for the twentieth time or anywhere in between. What challenges are you facing right now? We can help. We want your congregation to be strong, vital and everything God is inviting it to be.
Our Mission
The Center for Congregations strengthens Indiana congregations by helping them find and use the best resources to address their challenges and opportunities.

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