

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Church Benefits Association Receives \$30M Hub Grant for Clergy Wellness

(Minneapolis, MN) December 9, 2025 – The Church Benefits Association (CBA) has been awarded a \$30M Hub Grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc. (LEI) in Indianapolis, IN. This transformative grant will support clergy wellness programs for CBA member organizations. Member organizations will have the opportunity to apply for grants focused on clergy wellness initiatives covering the mental, emotional, spiritual, physical, and financial health of clergy.

CBA members have identified the **challenge of supporting pastors' mental, spiritual, physical, and financial wellness** and a collective desire to support them. According to the Hartford International University for Religion and Peace, nearly half of clergy claimed frequent or occasional loneliness, highlighting relational challenges. The report emphasizes that enhancing clergy wellness requires a holistic approach addressing personal practices, relationships, spiritual nourishment, congregational cultures, and systemic factors. Supporting clergy to flourish sustainably necessitates persistence in tending to the interplay of factors impacting their health [1]. A 2019 study by Duke Clergy Health Initiative points to the interconnectedness of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual leadership – the core components of clergy wellness [2].

Over the next three years, CBA will focus on four key components of the grant:

1. Clergy wellness research
2. Denominational-specific programs
3. “Be Still and Know” leave grants for small-church pastors
4. CBA Core4 – an ecumenical wellness program

As its first step in fulfilling the grant’s expectations, CBA is hiring a Vice President of Grants and Programs. This full-time position will begin as soon as the successful candidate is identified. Learn more about the position and how to apply [here](#).



CBA has previously benefited from LEI grants including three planning grants and one capacity building grant. The recent \$700,000 capacity building grant was used to provide critical resources for expanding CBA program offerings and strengthening the value to member organizations. “Since first engaging with LEI in 2018, CBA has been working faithfully on expanding capabilities and strategic planning. This grant is the culmination of several years of intentional work to add value to CBA member organizations,” shared Rev. Jeff Thiemann, CBA Executive Director.

In announcing the grant, CBA Board Chair, Rev. Dr. Todd A. Adams, stated, “These are game-changing dollars that will support CBA member organizations seeking to ensure pastors are supported, nurtured, and encouraged in their service to the church.” Adams went on to share, “CBA member organizations offer amazing retirement and health programs to our pastors, and it is the goal of our member organizations to ensure pastors are physically, financially, spiritually, emotionally, and mentally well enough to enjoy these benefits they have earned through faithful service to the church.”

Over the next year, a grant committee, coordinated by the new Vice President of Grants and Programs will develop the process by which CBA member organizations will be able to apply for grant funding programs in 2027 and 2028.

CBA is a 110-year-old organization serving as a professional development association for 50 church benefit providers. CBA members serve over 110 denominations and approximately 250,000 pastors. Collectively, CBA organizations manage more than \$100B in assets.

[1]<https://www.hartfordinternational.edu/news-events/news/harford-institute-religion-research-releases-new-clergy-wellness-report>

[2]https://clergyreligionresearch.duke.edu/sites/default/files/The%20State%20of%20Clergy%20Wellbeing%20in%202023%20100124-2_WEB.pdf

