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NAE Launches Campaign to ‘Bless Your Pastor’

The National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) today launched a new national campaign to help congregations “show and share God’s love” for their pastors in creative and practical ways. The Bless Your Pastor (BlessYourPastor.org) campaign is part of a larger initiative to address financial challenges faced by pastors and is funded by a \$1 million, 3-year grant from Lilly Endowment Inc.

The Bless Your Pastor campaign will encourage and equip churches to consider creative ways to bless their pastors and to take up a special appreciation offering for their pastors. Some churches may decide to extend this campaign to church staff members, in addition to their pastors.

Brian Kluth, national director of [NAE Financial Health](#) and spokesperson for Bless Your Pastor, said, “Having been a pastor myself, with three children and a wife who needed major medical treatments, I understand the financial struggles many pastors and their families face — and the tremendous difference it makes when a congregation shows their pastor they are there for them, all the way, sharing God’s love and blessings in practical ways.”

“Bless Your Pastor is about people in the church sharing their time, talents and treasures to creatively bless their pastors and church staff members,” Kluth said. “Some examples can be babysitting, doing car repairs, offering low or no cost medical and dental care, sharing a vacation home, and providing gift cards to the pastor and family.”

Churches that sign up for the Bless Your Pastor campaign at BlessYourPastor.org will receive a robust toolkit that will make it easy to launch and spark excitement for the campaign in their churches. The toolkit includes a list of “50 Creative Ways to Show God’s Love to Your Pastor”; a short training video for church boards and leadership teams; a timetable for organizing this behind-the-scenes effort; template letters and emails; social media graphics; and more.

According to national research from the NAE, LifeWay and InTrust, most pastors and their families operate with

limited financial resources to meet their current and long-term needs:

- 90 percent of pastors feel financial pressure.
- 50 percent make less than \$50,000 per year while serving their churches 50-60, or more, hours per week.
- Nearly 60 percent of pastors do not receive retirement or healthcare benefits from their churches.
- 3 out of 10 pastors have student loan debt averaging \$36,000.

The NAE will send an Amazon gift card to the senior pastors of the first 1,000 congregations that take up a special offering for their pastors (and staff, if applicable) and complete the online form at BlessYourPastor.org.

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About Lilly Endowment Inc.

Lilly Endowment Inc. is an Indianapolis-based private philanthropic foundation created in 1937 by three members of the Lilly family — J.K. Lilly, Sr., and sons, J.K., Jr., and Eli — through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly & Company. The Endowment exists to support the causes of religion, education and community development. Lilly Endowment's religion grantmaking is designed to deepen and enrich the religious lives of American Christians. It does this largely through initiatives to enhance and sustain the quality of ministry in American congregations and parishes.

About National Association of Evangelicals (NAE)

The mission of the National Association of Evangelicals is to honor God by connecting and representing evangelical Christians. The NAE includes more than 45,000 churches from 40 denominations and serves a constituency of millions. Founded in 1942, the NAE is currently led by President Leith Anderson.