



**The Way of Compassion, Inc**

**In supportive partnership with  
The Center for Engaged Compassion  
Dr. Frank Rogers, PhD  
Upper Room Ministries**

**Submitted to The Lilly Endowment, Inc.  
June 1, 2018**

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Jessicah Krey Duckworth  
Program Director, Religion  
Lilly Endowment Inc.  
2801 North Meridian Street  
P.O. Box 88068  
Indianapolis, IN 46208

Dear Jessicah,

It is with great anticipation that I write this letter to you, on behalf of The Way of Compassion, Inc requesting \$999,984 for a timely project designed to help clergy thrive and flourish. The Thriving in Ministry: Leading with Compassion project stands ready to partner with you in finding new strategies to strengthen ministers, congregations and the communities in which they live.

The Way of Compassion is a young grassroots online organization that was formed last year. This is perhaps the one thing that places us at a disadvantage in making such a significant request. However, there are advantages to being young, nimble and open to new possibilities, new ways. I believe that you will find that we have a highly esteemed “deep bench of support” with a solid and eager Board of Directors. We are also overwhelmed and grateful to Upper Room Ministries and the Center for Engaged Compassion for their pledge of support. Dr. Frank Rogers, JR, one of the most humble, brilliant, and compassionate educators that I have ever met, has also pledged his direct support for this project that is based on his life’s work, mission and passion.

This is a challenging time for our nation and the work of Christ. The continued polarization within the church is damaging the very fabric of influence that struggling communities need the church to have. We are eager to reverse this through compassionately bridging the isolation and segregation of clergy and congregations across denominational, socio-economic, political and racial lines.

Thank you for the impact that you and the endowment continue to make to support the health and well-being of clergy and congregations. I am one of those whose ministry you saved through the Youth and Spirituality Project between 1998-2002. I am ever in your debt.

Sincerely,

*Jeff Hayes*

Rev. Dr. Jeff Hayes, DMin.  
863-651-1532

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## **Executive Summary**

A transformational ecumenical network of 312 pastors, 3100 laity, and 156 churches, from three geographic regions including Indiana, Ohio/Western PA and Florida will partner together to create “fertile soil” in which ministry can flourish. Participants will be drawn from racially diverse contexts led by pastors in various stages of transition. The *Compassion Practice*<sup>1</sup> developed by Dr. Frank Rogers along with the Center for Engaged Compassion, and publishing partner Upper Room ministries will give participants a common language of compassion that is rooted in Christian contemplative traditions layered with wisdom and contemporary research in psychology, neuroscience and spirituality. The project will break the isolation of clergy and cross ecumenical boundaries as pastor and people collaborate to create authentic, engaged compassionate churches and local communities. Seasoned pastoral educators and clergy will be trained to support, engage and mentor participants. Regional three-day compassion retreats, one day refresher conferences, a 15-week congregational curriculum, online forums, webinars, video conferencing and one-to-one personal mentoring will support and sustain the project learning. The Executive Staff and Board of Directors of Indiana based *The Way of Compassion, Inc* will serve as the Implementation Team along with the Mentor Resource Team, and Pilot Churches. The Center for Engaged Compassion, and Upper Room Ministries will resource the evaluation tools along with an external evaluator and researcher, Dr. Melodi Guilbault, who was educated and mentored by Dr. Mike Wiese.

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<sup>1</sup> The “Compassion Practice” is the name for a particular 21st century spiritual exercise that has similarities to other ancient Christian practices like the Jesus Prayer, Centering Prayer, Ignatian Exercises or the thirteenth century “Meditations on the Life of Christ.” See Appendix A for more detail.

## **Thriving in Ministry**

### **Nature and Purpose of Pastoral Ministry**

In 1981, sitting in the auditorium during Anderson College's Spiritual Emphasis Week, a young sophomore wrestled with "THE CALL," as the preacher, with a down-home drawl, made a rousing appeal to respond to the presence of God. With a lump in the throat, and a knot in the belly, the student wondered: "Is this a 'calling'? What are these parts of me that have been stirred up; and from where does this 'calling' come? Is this God? Is it guilt? Is there a self-imposed pressure to take on the 'family business?' Or might this 'Jonah-like' aching and longing be connected to earlier, yes, very distinct invitations, at age 6, 13, and now 19, 'to follow Christ, to serve Christ, to love as Christ?'" Bumping and scooching past friends and fellow travelers, the sophomore "without one plea" took a familiar trek, to the "altared" front row space, proclaiming to self, responding to the Caller - "Here I am Lord, Use Me."

In his heart, this aspiring disciple responded that night to a calling that would come to sustain him, even through dark nights of the soul yet to come. And now, some 37 years later, this same not-as-young disciple, sits to write a proposal, seeking support from the Lilly Endowment to offer a project that draws pastors and laity deeper into God's compassionate embrace, strengthening resiliency, as they commit anew to love God and God's beloved community.

The nature and purpose of pastoral ministry begins with and in some respects ends with the Call. Understanding the meaning of the call and responding to that call is not always easy; but if one is to thrive in pastoral ministry, s/he needs a practice to remain grounded and connected to the compassionate presence of the Caller. Over the years, many foundational pastoral leadership tomes have been offered to help first year seminarians understand the many roles and purposes of pastoral ministry. As needed pastoral skillsets shift and change with varying contexts, each new generation of academy scholars and pastoral leaders is forced to reexamine anew the question, "What is the nature of pastoral ministry -- TODAY?"

While the purpose of pastoral ministry is ultimately defined by the One who calls, we believe that its essence can best be understood by three major interwoven roles: the Pastor as Presence and Companion; the Pastor as Team Leader and Theological Imagineer, and the Pastor as Story-weaver and Culture Shaper.

### **Theology of Pastoral Ministry**

"Be compassionate, as your father in heaven is compassionate" (Luke 6:36). Just as we believe that God is compassionately present, creatively with us, gracefully for us, and gently leading and forming, so too, the polarized world needs a church and a clergy that are fully and compassionately present, creatively companioning, and imaginatively leading the beloved community of God into a hope-filled future. Those called to pastoral ministry weave together, in transformative ways, the ancient and present stories of God, which heal the wounds of injustice, hear the cries for inclusion, and hold the longings for reconciliation and reconnection to the source of all Compassion.

The weight of the call is heavy, often too heavy to be carried alone. Carried alone, apart from the deep well-spring of an imaginative community, clergy risk burn-out and may turn away or abandon the call altogether. Therefore, clergy need a communal practice that allows them to remain resilient; one that allows leaders to receive grace, and embody resurrected new and imaginative potentials. Through the practice, resilient leaders grow a deep and abiding love of God that includes

deep compassion for self and a genuine compassion for others. These are the clergy and this is the church that the world needs today: One where clergy embody the reconciling presence of a compassionate God in a paradoxically connected, yet divided world.

### **The Marks of a Thriving Pastoral Leader**

The thriving pastoral leader is marked by innate and learned abilities that are developed, practiced, and nurtured over time. In much of the contemporary clergy leadership reality, there are two toxic models: One is pastor as employee of the congregation; the other is pastor as CEO. The pastoral hallmarks guiding this proposal are counter-cultural to both of these toxic models. Research of many organizations indicates that the following hallmarks are not the only marks of flourishing pastoral leadership. These will be the focus of this project.

**Deep Wells** - Thriving pastors develop an innate talent for quickly drawing resources from deep within to help them stay grounded to their call and the Caller, which sometimes requires re-grounding in the moment when they unexpectedly get “knocked off their feet.” This type of leader is intimately connected to the source of compassion from which s/he draws wisdom.

**Self-Care** - Thriving pastors understand their own need for the grace of God and practice regular self-compassion and self-care that is life sustaining, renewing, and healing. They also help those in their care learn to do the same. Loving God and loving self are the essential prerequisites for genuinely “loving neighbors as you love yourself.” Being genuinely open and present to others requires being compassionate to all parts of self, including those parts often labeled undesirable. We must deal with the “logs in our own eyes” before dealing with the “specks in others.”

**Appreciation for Community** - Thriving pastoral leaders appreciate the strength of community, nurture the priesthood of believers, and let go of centralized power in favor of team-based leadership. Going it alone is a recipe for burn-out, depression, and despair. Thriving pastoral leaders and supportive lay leaders seek to understand, lovingly connect with, sense the sacredness of, and embody new life for the communities to which they belong.

**Openness and Connection** - Self-aware leaders know what they know and what they need to know. Many pastoral skills can be taught or learned; others are truly gifts given by God. The reign of God requires child-like hearts and minds that are wildly open to and available for learning, friendship and growth. When our hearts are open to others and open to learn, we can hear the cries and needs of another and discern compassionate response. It goes both directions. Learning to listen and learn from one another is a mark of mature leadership. Lifelong learners who develop supportive friendships with peers and supportive others flourish and thrive.

**Navigational Wisdom** - Navigating the challenging demands of leadership requires a pastoral imagination that allows the leader to see the future with panoramic theological vision that is creative and full of life abundant, for the leader and the people. The pastor with this type of wisdom is able to see God at work and takes time to imagine or reimagine the possible ways that God is working in and among God’s people.

### **Current State of Pastoral Ministry**

#### **Common Challenges of Context and Transitions**

No matter the prestige of one's ministerial training, the academy cannot possibly prepare men and women for each of the unique contextual or transitional issues that clergy encounter as they enter their first placement or congregational call. The pastoral imagination needed to navigate difficult issues develops over time. It develops in symbiotic relationships between: pastor and

people, pastor and peers, pastor and self. The ministerial journey is not linear, nor is it static; it is dynamic and ever changing. During times of transitional stress, pastors especially need to be aware of the internal systems that can easily veer their journey off course. Life is unpredictable; ministry and spirituality are messy and complex. So we need a common understanding of our “belovedness” as well as a tool for experiencing the compassionate grace of God.

One of the common challenges for some targeted in this project will be the harmful impact of improperly conceived theologies of holiness, especially conflated with perfectionism. Flourishing leaders need to receive all of the interior movements of self, even the parts of self sometimes judged, or ignored. All of our internal parts are the daily “curriculum” of healthy thriving people.

### **Opportunities for Improvement**

Pastors share a common need to have a sustaining practice that helps them to catch their breath and become aware of the need for self-care and self-compassion, which allows for a compassionate response to the needs at hand. A grounded self awareness that taps into divine compassion is the starting place for successfully navigating through the numerous twists and turns of ministerial life. Utilizing a practice to ground clergy in the compassionate care of God will prepare them for each new transition, and assist them in adapting to new pastoral contexts.

### **The Missing Link**

Anyone who works with older adult ministry students, exploring and preparing for ministry vocation, discover a pattern that is clearly an indictment of the standard discipling methods and catechisms of Protestant congregations, especially those coming from evangelical, independent, “baptical,” or holiness traditions. Most ministry students and ordinands in these traditions have little or no exposure to any life sustaining contemplative practice other than corporate worship and petitionary type prayer or fasting. And if there is any awareness of the contemplative traditions, it is most likely to be either skeptical or purely theoretical in nature, not practiced long enough to take root within the inner places of the heart and soul. Younger students (25-35), however, appear to be readily open for this work as indicated by their curiosity and experimentation with a variety of contemplative practices. Many clergy, particularly those in the holiness traditions, have developed an unhealthy practice of hiding, burying or ignoring the hidden parts of their lives that eventually resurface abruptly, like a buoy buried deep under the water for a long time.

## **Program Purpose and Goals**

### **Purpose**

Pastors and congregations will cultivate hearts that beat to the pulse of compassion in order to strengthen personal resiliency and promote flourishing of all who are part of the beloved community. The program will teach and employ the *Compassion Practice*<sup>2</sup>, which is a 21st century contemplative practice that has both an inward and outward dimension for discerning an engaged compassionate response to issues and others. Participants will learn how to offer restorative, grounded, and healing compassion to self, others, and even the enemy. This work will ground pastors within an imaginative community of people seeking meaning and purpose as they each live out their callings in community with authenticity and compassion.

### **Goals - The Project will...**

... (1) *Restore* a desire within pastors for doing what they were Called to do from a place of

<sup>2</sup> See appendix A for a brief description of the Compassion Practice.

grounded connected compassion, giving pastors a renewed sense of vocational purpose allowing them to flourish, thrive and lead with compassion.

... (2) **Reconnect** pastors with their core self and to the endless and extravagant sacred source of compassion that will provide an inner source of strength and healing for the suffering that pastors carry within their inner, often hidden, world.

... (3) **Expand** the pastor's network of care and connectedness that is needed from peers and seasoned mentors in order to remain imaginatively creative and grounded during times of transition.

... (4) **Transform** the congregation's relationship with their pastor(s) by deepening understanding, extending compassionate care, and expanding the capacity of both the congregation and the pastor.

... (5) **Equip** pastors with tools to deepen their understanding of compassionate grace as they teach members of the congregation what they have learned about the transforming power of compassion.

... (6) **Bridge** the ecumenical and racial boundaries that prevent pastors and congregations from drawing wisdom from those "not quite like me," creating a local network of friends, peers, and people sharing a common language of compassion.

### **Who will Be Involved**

Clergy participants come from three regional areas, two in the Midwest and one in Florida. Participants are invited from various Christian traditions, including mainline, evangelical, independent, holiness, Wesleyan, Reformed and others. The initial cohort of participants will primarily come from Church of God (Anderson, IN) congregations in Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Florida. Each region will also extend a few invitations (one per region) to recent graduates of a seminary or ministry program that may be in transition to or from a congregational context.<sup>3</sup> The project structure insures that the ecumenical and racial mixture of clergy broadens each year.

### **Attending to Key Transitions, Contexts and Relationships**

As churches are invited, the implementation team will be looking for congregations that represent varying contexts with leaders in different stages of transitions. This will give us a richer research variant to compare as we evaluate the efficacy of this project to achieve the goals. Strengthening collegial relationships at the regional and local level is heavily embedded into the retreat design and the building of local (within 20 mi.) and regional (within 125 mi.) connections that will be both face to face and online. Relationships will grow across ecumenical and diversity boundaries. The Director of Pastoral and Congregational Connections will support these connections along with the Mentoring Resource Team.

### **Project Correlation to The Way of Compassion (TWOC) Mission**

The mission of TWOC to transform communities through creating a spiritual space for clergy and those disenfranchised with the church to reconnect with the abundant compassion of God as they learn to be compassionate to self and others through the *Compassion Practice*. This Thriving in Ministry: Leading with Compassion project correlates naturally from the core pulse of TWOC.

### **Program Activities**

There is very strong correlation between each goal and each activity. Activities A,B, and C

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<sup>3</sup> Jen Carney - a recent graduate of the Anderson School of Theology is one such person. Her support letter is included with the other Pilot Church letters. She will participate in the pilot training.

directly support goals 1-6. Activity D primarily supports goals 3-6, with secondary support of goals 1 & 2.

**A) COMPASSION RETREATS:** Two pastor/ministers from each church, attend two three night retreats where they will: 1) learn how to use the *Compassion Practice* year one 2) learn how to teach the practice year two. After the first year retreat, pastors will work in cohorts to practice. For fifteen weeks, pastors will experiment with a new weekly exercise related to the practice. Exercises are accompanied with audio and video based instructions guiding the pastors through the exercises. Live video conference webinars will also be available as well as one-to-one direction. Participants will post their experiences with the practice online weekly for the cohort to read and support. After fifteen weeks, pastors will continue practicing in whatever manner they choose. Pastors will remain connected to the cohort during this time to encourage and share experiences.

**B) TEACHING OTHERS:** Each pastor from the first year will invite another local pastor from a congregation that is not like them to attend the Compassion Retreat with them in the second year. The first year alum will participate again alongside their guests. The alum will experience the retreat again in order to deepen their understanding of how to teach the practice to their congregation. After the two retreats, pastors will be given curriculum resources to teach the practice to twelve lay persons in a weekly format during the Fall. Mentoring and coaching will be provided during the 15 week curriculum. This two-year cycle will start with a new class of pastors each year.

**C) REFRESHER CONFERENCES:** Six one-day Fall refresher conferences (two in each region) will be hosted by two rotating churches. These conferences will provide opportunities for fellowship, story sharing, worship, and specific sessions related to aspects of the *Compassion Practice*. Conferences will be guided by project leadership with local input and coordination. Conferences will be offered to members of the partner churches and their invited guests. A small fee for lunch and miscellaneous expenses will be charged. Project staff will provide facilitation. Video telecommunication will be used to invite distant leaders to present or share stories.

**D) MENTORING CONNECTIONS:** Members of the Mentor Resource team will be participants, facilitators, and mentors who will intentionally make themselves available throughout the retreats and in-between retreats. Organic relationships of support will be encouraged to grow. The Project Director and Program Manager will make weekly contacts with participants by phone, email, video chat, or visit while they are in the first two year cycle. The Director of Pastoral and Congregational Connections will especially focus on the local networks and the congregational connections. Both he and the Project Director will be available for congregational consultation.

### **Timeline**

**2018: Oct-Dec** -Recruit six additional pilot congregations, two from each region. Communicate dates for the first retreat in March and secure travel arrangements. Hire the Project Manager.

**2019:**The project will begin with a single 40-50 member pilot group retreat (Activity A/D) led by Frank Rogers in March. The pilot group will experiment with the practice over the next 15 weeks. Formative assessments will be taken via survey and interview throughout this period evaluating the chosen methods used in the cohorts. Each church will identify another church to invite in 2020. A total of 12 new churches from each region will be recruited. The Director of Advancement will be hired. Formative Assessments will be completed.

**2020:** Three retreats (Activity A and B/D) will be planned between Feb and March for each

of the three regions. Second year Pilot churches will attend the retreat and then teach the practice to twelve persons from the congregations in the Fall. Planning will begin for the six Refresher Conferences (Activity C) in 2021. Formative Assessments will be completed. A five-year fund raising plan will be approved by April and the funding campaign will commence.

**2021:** The activities (A/B/C) and assessments from 2020 will be repeated. Six Refresher Conferences (Activity D) will be conducted in the Fall hosted by two churches in each region.

**2022:** All activities (A/B/C/D) of 2021 are repeated. Six Refresher Conferences will rotate to other churches. The Director of Advancement will report the status of raising \$500,000 in three years. Expansion opportunities will be explored for 2024.

**2023:** The activities (A/B/C/D) of 2022 are repeated. Summative Evaluations completed.

## **Leadership**

### **Executive Team**

**Project Director - Rev. Dr. Jeff Hayes, DMin** is the founder and CEO of the Way of Compassion, Inc. Jeff is a certified facilitator of the *Compassion Practice* through the Center for Engaged Compassion and has served the Church of God in various ordained pastoral and educational roles. He has been involved in Christian Education, curriculum development and formation work at the local, state and national levels of the Church of God, including serving on the planning and implementation team for the Lilly Sustaining Pastoral Excellence:SHAPE project. Most recently, Dr. Hayes served the church as the professor of Christian spirituality, director and Dean for the Master of Ministry program and the Bachelor's degree in Transformational Christian ministry at Warner University, Lake Wales, FL.

**Director of Pastoral and Congregational Connections - Rev. Dr. Arthur Kelly** is a retired but still teaching educator who has served as teacher and administrator in Christian higher education for over forty years; was co-author, national facilitator and trainer for the SHAPE, the Lilly Sustaining Pastoral Excellent project; and has served the Church of God in various ordained pastoral and educational roles. He has been involved in Christian Education, curriculum development and formation work at the local, state and national levels of the Church of God.

**Project Manager** - This will be the first new position filled upon receiving funding. The person in this position will coordinate the activities on the timeline and manage the details of recruitment, retention, information sharing, record keeping, publicity, reporting, and scheduling.

**Part-time Director of Advancement** - This position will be a new hire January 1, 2020 in order to build a supportive network of churches, organizations and individuals to match and replace the dollars received from the Lilly foundation for the continuation and expansion of this work.

**Dr. Earl Michael Eastman, Ed.D, MRE, MA** - Earl has been an Advancement Officer at several major Colleges and Universities. His single largest gift ever received was a \$35 million gift to start a college of pharmacy. He has offered his services as a pro bono fund raising consultant.

**Scott Seslar, CPA** - Scott is a university professor of accounting and owner of the Scott Seslar, CPA Firm. Scott is contracted with to provide accounting and bookkeeping services.

### **Primary Supportive Partners**

**Frank Rogers and the Center for Engaged Compassion Network of Facilitators**  
Dr. Frank Rogers and the Center for Engaged Compassion has provided a letter of support and willingness to partner with the Thriving in Ministry:Leading with Compassion project. The

partnership will consist of consultation, resource and leadership support. Dr. Rogers and the network of trained facilitators will be significant assets in both the delivery and evaluation of the program. Frank will be contracted to facilitate the first four retreats in years one and two. Staff members of the Center for Engaged Compassion will be contracted and consulted in the further development of formative and summative assessment and research tools.

***Steve Bryant, Sharon Collins and the UpperRoom Ministries***

The staff of UpperRoom Ministries have a keen interest in expanding the work of Frank Rogers. Upper Room Ministries has accepted an invitation to come alongside the project in order to speak into the initiative as it unfolds but also to learn from the project with the desired outcome to sustain the work through a replication or adaption of their own. The partnership also lends support and credence to participation by mainline congregations.

***Mark Yaconelli founder of the Hearth Community***

Mark has agreed to be a consultant and resource leader as needed. Mark is a trained facilitator of the *Compassion Practice*. Mark will be contracted to lead a final discernment assessment retreat.

**First Year Pilot Churches**

Twelve churches, four from each region, will be enlisted to participate in the pilot group. Two churches from each region have already pledged support and provided a support letter. Three of these congregations are primarily caucasian in makeup, two are primarily African-American, and one is a mix of Caribbean cultures. Three churches come from urban contexts and three from more rural. Letters of support are included after the partner support letters.

*Solid Rock Church, Kissimmee, FL - Pastor Whitfield Blenman and Pastor Mark Nelson*

*34th Street Church of God, Tampa, FL - Bishop Thomas Scott*

*First Church of God, Wauseon, OH - Pastor Mike Harmon*

*New Springfield Church of God, New Springfield, OH - Pastor Jonathan Holloway*

*Grove City Church of God, Grove City, PA - Pastors Gene and Amy Worline*

*Arlington Church of God, Akron, OH - Pastor Diana Swoope*

*Miamisburg First Church of God, Miamisburg, OH - Pastor Treves Wilson*

**Mentor Resource Team (see appendix C for full listing)**

A team of pastoral educators have committed to go through the pilot training in order to serve as supportive mentors and connectors with pastors as they go through the program.

**Expected Outcomes**

**Deliverables - Short Term and Long Term**

The support of the Lilly Endowment will allow the Way of Compassion (TWOC) to have a significant impact on pastors, congregations, and communities. The gift of support will allow TWOC to deliver the following results:

- A. Thirteen Compassion Retreats will train 312 diverse pastors to teach the *Compassion Practice* to 3100 lay persons. Eighteen Compassion Refresher conferences will be hosted by and open to 156 congregations, concentrating the work within sixteen cities or counties and bridging ecumenical and racial boundaries in those cities.
- B. The Way of Compassion will be able to hire and pay its Executive staff who have offered their part-time services to-date pro-bono. Two full-time staff positions and two part-time staff positions will be hired to implement and sustain this critically vital ministry.
- C. A seven-year funding plan will be created with the goal of matching the Lilly endowment gift by 2026 in order to multiple and sustain the endowment's ministry.

by 2026 in order to multiply and sustain the endowment's ministry.

- D. Research evidence will show that as a result of the project:
1. Pastors and laity are better at self-compassion and care and express less isolation.
  2. The *Compassion Practice* is accessible and beneficial to pastors and laity in multiple contexts.
  3. The relationship between pastors and people improves through developing a compassionate appreciation and understanding of one another.
  4. The *Compassion Practice* helped pastors discern appropriate response to difficult leadership decisions and transitions.
  5. Participating in the activities of the project renewed pastors' sense of vocational purpose.
  6. Pastors developed a stronger network of peer support and friendship.

## **Evaluation**

### **Formative Evaluation and Steering Team**

A six member team consisting of the executive team and three members of the Board will be appointed to serve as a formative evaluation and steering team. The team will conduct continuous evaluation of the project creating and using both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Pre and Post assessment tools will be very important throughout the project. A validated tool for measuring self-compassion is included in Appendix D as an example of the type of instrument that might be utilized. (The self-compassion tool focuses only on the inward dimension of the project.) The team will work with the outside evaluator, Dr. Melodi Guilbault<sup>4</sup>, to develop a working model of assessment prior to the first activity. We will also contract with our subject area partners to serve as consultants in this process as we develop sound and validated assessment measures. Demographic data will be collected and kept during each activity of the project so that we can track and follow the actual participants, what their context is, and what transitions they are facing.

### **Measure of Success and Disappointment**

The project targets two groups of people that must work together to create the environment for healthy thriving pastors, congregations, and communities. The evaluation process will measure the changes and shifts in the hearts, minds and relationships of clergy and laity. Questions will be explored such as: How do clergy assess themselves and their leadership differently after participating in the project? How does the congregation assess any changes in the leadership of the clergy? How did the project affect change on the lay participants? A secondary group that should be listened to in the evaluation process is the members of the congregation who did not participate in one of the trainings or Refresher Conferences. Can this group name any shifts or changes in their lay and clergy leaders? Success will be celebrated if there are even incremental improvements in perceived well-being and positive feelings of regard for self and others as a result of better self awareness, self-compassion, mutual respect, stronger relationships, and a restored sense of purpose. We will feel disappointed if the project does not help to bridge the ecumenical and racial boundaries that plague the church, if segments of the clergy cannot harness the resources of the *Compassion Practice* for themselves and others, and if the project does not improve and create a healing and

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<sup>4</sup> Dr. Melodi Guilbault, is a Professor at New Jersey Institute of Technology in Marketing and Statistics. She is a former student of a frequent Lilly grant evaluator, Dr. Mike Wiese, who recommended her and offered to consult with her in the creation of the research model.

restorative place for people to catch their breath long enough to notice the humanity in one another.

### **Summative Assessments**

Dr. Melodi Guilbault will work with the Formative Evaluation Team to gather and analyze all of the research data. After her final assessments are gathered, she will provide the team and the Board with her summative analysis, based on interviews, focus groups, evaluation surveys and validated instruments. The Executive Team and the Board will then prepare a separate and supplemental report compiled and discerned while on a two day retreat led by Mark Yaconneli to discern the meaning found in the work and the project completed together.

### **Sustainability and Continuation**

If the funding for this project is approved by the Lilly Endowment, the Thriving in Ministry: Leading with Compassion project will become the sole focus of The Way of Compassion's (TWOC) ministry. One benefit of being an online organization is that the overhead costs are minimal, requiring fewer dollars to keep the project supported through alternative sources of income. TWOC also does not have to worry about those unexpected organizational overhead costs or competing organizational budget priorities that often plague larger denominational and academic organizations. In preparation to match the funding provided by the Lilly Endowment, the pro-forma budget for the project includes a part-time Director of Advancement at the end of year one to develop and implement a comprehensive plan to invite partner churches, individuals, state associations, business leaders, and others to match the dollars received from Lilly so that this important and critical work can continue and be sustained. A Director of Advancement will work with the Executive Director and the Board to develop a stewardship/PR campaign that will be launched by the middle of Year Two with the goal of raising \$500,000 by the end of year seven.

As a supportive resource partner Upper Room Ministries is eager to learn from the project with the intent of investigating how they might continue and extend the reach of this work within their network of partnering churches. There are also other Church of God state and national agencies in Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and Florida who may be willing to partner in the future. An invitation has been extended. These natural partnerships were not possible at this time because each of these institutions, including Anderson University, were submitting their own Thriving in Ministry grant proposals. After October, these partnerships can be explored anew.

### **Organizational Capacity**

#### **Who is The Way of Compassion (TWOC)**

TWOC is an approved entity of the Church of God (Anderson, IN) incorporated in the State of Indiana by Rev. Dr. Jeff Hayes in 2017, for the purpose of creating a spiritual space, a transformational online community of individuals who are committed to live compassionately in the world. The community was founded to target two groups of people: Clergy who need a safe space to call home, and others disconnected or alienated from a local community of faith. The goal of TWOC is to teach individuals the *Compassion Practice* with the hopes of eventually connecting them to a local ministry of compassion.

Rooted in the Wesleyan Holiness movement, TWOC intentionally seeks to desegregate across denominational, racial and socio-economic lines. Members of its Board of Directors come from a diverse denominational background. The inaugural slate of board members was recruited by the President and Founder based on their giftedness and diverse perspectives. A board profile can be

found in appendix B.

### **Current Operating Budget and Future Sources of Support**

The organization's current operating budget is based solely on in-kind donation of volunteer hours by the founder Jeff Hayes and his wife, Karen. The overhead costs for an online organization are small compared to the overhead needs of site based entities. For a short season, the Hayes' personal financial resources have allowed them to donate their time and focus to this start-up ministry. Support from the Lilly Endowment will quickly "jumpstart" the ministry. TWOC has contracted with Scott Seslar, CPA to handle bookkeeping and accounting for TWOC.

TWOC's Executive Director, Advancement Director and the Board of Directors will immediately begin developing a 7-year plan to raise funding for this work of compassion which will include direct appeal for support to 1) partners and participants in the project, 2) regional and state associations, 3) larger churches interested in supporting this compassionate work in exchange for access to training and resources, and 4) other religious interest groups such as the the Church of God Peace fellowship and Christian Women's Connection. A funding campaign will also be initiated to invite the pastors, churches, and laity benefiting from the project to make a regular "pay it forward" investment.

### **From Prospectus to Proposal - A Narrative**

In many ways, the journey towards writing this proposal can be traced to 1998 and the Lilly funded Youth and Spirituality Project that saved the ministry of that sophomore who wrestled with the Call at Anderson University in 1981. Fourteen years into the ministry, a transition happened when a tragic freak event decapitated a 13 year old while on a youth event, plunging a veteran youth minister into the dark night of the soul. The mentoring relationship formed with Mark Yaconelli in those days later led me to the work of the Center for Engaged Compassion and Frank Rogers. This work, the *Compassion Practice*, along with spiritual direction from Frank Rogers opened expansive new possibilities that included a deep healing of inner wounds still buried from that tragic night.

While the journey from darkness to light took nearly twenty years, the journey from prospectus to proposal took just seven weeks! I wish that there could have been more time to develop additional partnerships, which could have included even more voices in the shaping of this proposal. I am, however, quite pleased with the surprising partnerships and receptive voices that were able to assist and speak into this proposal. This project that had been slowly bubbling to the surface for over a year was suddenly propelled forward at rocket speed once the call for proposals was noticed at 12:53AM on April 10. A book could easily be written on the power of networking through social media! Early on, as I was told, over and over: "Sorry - we are writing one of those too," I began to wonder if there was enough time. I am thankful for the many colleagues, former students, mentors, board members, pastors of anchor churches and newly discovered partners that answered emails, brainstormed over coffee, returned a call, responded to a LinkedIn message, reviewed ideas posted on facebook, or made recommendations. The eyes, ears and hearts of many, wise, mostly grassroots folk of all ages, have helped shape a project worthy of the Lilly Endowment's consideration. I believe this project has the power to transform pastors, church and communities. I wonder where I would be today if it had not been for the Lilly Endowment's support for the Youth and Spirituality Project. **My passion, the mission of the Way of Compassion, and the purpose of this project are to help clergy hear once again the sweet music of their call, for the sake of the church, for the sake of others, and for the sake of their own well-being.**

## Appendix A - Definition of the Compassion Practice

The Compassion Practice is a simple, yet multidimensional, four step exercise that has an inward and an outward focus. The Compassion Practice describes the inward focus as “taking your pulse;” and the outward focus is “taking their pulse.”

Sometimes the Compassion Practice is used to simply take our own pulse, a three step process. Other times, the focus is on understanding the other, which requires the full four steps. The four step process of discerning compassionate action towards another is: 1) Catch your Breath and Get Grounded. 2) Take Your PULSE. 3) Take the Other’s PULSE. 4) Discern Compassionate Action or Response.

The process of “taking your own pulse” is heavily informed by a contemporary therapeutic modality known as Internal Family Systems (IFS). The Center for Self Leadership teaches and certifies therapists in the therapeutic model. Frank Rogers has woven the wisdom from psychology with centering and imaginative prayer practices in a way that is transformative, mindful, and connected to the compassionate radical way and teaching of Jesus.

### The Pulse of Compassion

These six dimensions compose the essential PULSE of compassion. In short, we define compassion as:

**P-Paying attention.** Perceiving another’s (or self’s) experience with a nonjudgmental, nonreactive clarity.

**U-Understanding empathically.** Being moved by the sometimes hidden suffering within that person (or self).

**L-Loving with connection.** Being filled with and extending an all embracing care.

**S-Sensing the sacredness.** Recognizing and savoring the cosmic expanse of compassion that holds and heals all wounds.

**E-Embodying new life.** Yearning for the restorative flourishing to be birthed within another (or self).

**ACT-**Then from the *PULSE* of this compassionate connection, we respond with tangible acts of healing, kindness, and care.

(Excerpted from Frank Rogers, Jr., *Practicing Compassion* (Nashville: Fresh Air Books, 2015), pg 27.)

**Accompanying Materials**

## **Current Year Budget**

As mentioned in the cover letter, the organization was founded in 2017. After noticing the call for proposals on April 10, we have raced against the clock to get this in the mail by the June 1 deadline.

The organization to date has not had need of a budget. The work of the organization has been all in-kind gifts by the founder, his wife, and Arthur Kelly.

The organization currently has \$4485 in its checking and savings.

As mentioned in the cover letter, we realize that is the biggest weakness of this proposal. We only hope that you will stop and consider what this proposal really demonstrates. In just seven weeks, we were able to conceive, design and present a model for transformative work. We can make things happen, we have the people resources, supportive partners, and capacities to lead this project.

## **Letters of Support**

The following letters of support are included so that you might understand the interest and level of enthusiastic support that this project has already generated.

### **Letters from our Supportive Partners**

Dr. Frank Rodgers, Jr - Muriel Bernice Roberts Professor of Spiritual Formation and Narrative Pedagogy, Co-Director, Center for Engaged Compassion.

Stephen Bryant - Publisher and World Editor, The Upper Room

Earl Michael Eastman - Pro bono Fundraising Consultant

Dr. Michael Sanders- Dean of Faculty and Professor of Christian Formation at Warner University a member of the Mentor Resource Team

Jen Carney, MTS, MA Intercultural Service, a highly trained female ministry student in “transition” waiting and looking for an opportunity to serve

### **First Year Pilot Anchor Churches**

34th Street Church of God, Tampa, FL - Rev. Dr. Thomas Scott

Arlington Church of God, Akron, OH - Rev. Dr. Diana Swoope

First Church of God, Grove City, PA - Pastors Gene and Amy Worline

First Church of God, Wauseon, OH - Pastor Michael Harmon

Miamisburg First Church of God - Pastor Treves Wilson

New Springfield Church of God, New Springfield, OH - Pastor Jonathan Holloway

Solid Rock Church of God, Kissimmee, FL - Rev. Dr. Whitfield Blenman and Rev. Mark Nelson

May 29, 2018

Jessicah Krey Duckworth  
Program Director, Religion  
Lilly Endowment Inc.  
2801 North Meridian Street  
P.O. Box 88068  
Indianapolis, IN 46208

Re: The Way of Compassion, Inc.  
Thriving in Ministry: Leading with Compassion

Dear Jessicah,



As Co-Director of the Center for Engaged Compassion and Professor of Spiritual Formation at the Claremont School of Theology, I am delighted to offer my enthusiastic support for the Way of Compassion's Leading with Compassion Project and to offer my own services of teaching and collaboration throughout his project as it is helpful. Additionally, the Center for Engaged Compassion has a growing network of trained facilitators who stand ready to support this effort when called upon. Dr. Hayes has completed both our certificate program in Jesus' spiritual path of radical compassion and our facilitator training program in teaching our curriculum developed by our center. He is on our website as a certified facilitator sponsored by the Center for Engaged Compassion. Dr. Hayes has not only internalized personally the practice of three-fold compassion (knowing God's compassion, self-compassion, and compassion for others), he has been teaching this path at both the undergraduate, graduate and parish levels. The program he has developed through The Way of Compassion, Inc. is both well-designed and timely. Dr. Hayes has gathered an impressive group of congregations and church leaders from multiple denominations committed to deepening Christian compassion in their own lives and within their religious communities. His formation and support strategies are proven approaches to transformation in the hands of his skilled leadership. In this time of extreme polarization that is threatening the bonds of community within congregations and society as a whole, organizations like The Way of Compassion are essential. It promises to more widely make accessible the compassion that is personally and socially restorative, the compassion that is at the heart of the spiritual path taught by Jesus.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Rogers, Jr.", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Frank Rogers, Jr.  
Muriel Bernice Roberts Professor of Spiritual Formation and Narrative Pedagogy  
Co-Director, Center for Engaged Compassion



**The Upper Room**  
1908 Grand Avenue  
Nashville, TN 37212

May 25, 2018

Rev. Dr Jeff Hayes, DMin  
The Way of Compassion, Inc  
Thriving in Ministry: Leading With Compassion  
1910 Summer Place  
Anderson, Indiana 46012

Dear Dr. Hayes,

As a global ministry dedicated to supporting the spiritual life of Christians seeking to know and experience God more fully, The Upper Room is pleased to express our strong support for the Leading with Compassion project. This project aligns with several of our past, present and future goals to advance the work of Frank Rogers and the work of the Center for Engaged Compassion. We welcome the opportunity to partner with you in this effort and appreciate your openness to allow us to speak into and learn from the project as it unfolds. We also look forward to exploring ways with to further strengthen, advance and sustain this work into the future.

The project itself is very timely. Regardless of one's particular vocational stage, no matter the context of ministry, clergy need a transformative practice that will sustain them through an often unpredictable journey. We believe the Compassion Practice can help clergy remain grounded in the source of their calling as they engage the pulse of compassion that holds and heals. We are also particularly interested to see what clergy learn and how they benefit from teaching the practice to members of their congregation. The fertile environment created through a common language will enable ministry to thrive.

We look forward to hearing that this project has received the support of the Lily Endowment and are ready to wholeheartedly support this effort to build regional networks of churches, pastors, and lay leaders that share a language of compassion. The transformative impact on ministers, churches and communities will be something to measure and watch. We believe that the project will certainly support the vision of The Upper Room to foster a community of people and congregations who are seeking God, building a vision of new life in Christ, nurturing one another by sharing experiences of God's love and guidance, and encouraging one another in Christian action to transform the world.

Sincerely,

Stephen D. Bryant

Publisher and World Editor, The Upper Room

May 30, 2018

Lilly Endowment Inc.

Indianapolis, IN

To Whom it May Concern:

This is a letter of support for Dr. Jeff D. Hayes concerning his application for the Thriving in Ministry Grant. It has been my pleasure to know Dr. Jeff Hayes since he was a young boy in elementary school. He grew up in a pastor's home where he continuously observed the care and nurturing of all those in his community by his parents. Three concepts that are descriptors of Jeff are: extremely creative, highly compassionate, skillful with technology. Dr. Hayes understands the needs of pastors due to his significant pastoral experience in the local church setting and his experience as a teacher/administrator in online course teaching in higher education. His educational experiences include a seminary degree and an earned doctorate.

I have a strong belief that this form of ministry tugs at his internal heartstrings. With that in mind it will be an honor to support Dr. Hayes and his ministerial fundraising endeavors pro bono. The way in which I can be most helpful is in advancement and private philanthropic efforts in sustaining the ministry in perpetuity.

Included you will find a copy of my executive summary resume. Should you wish to discuss Dr. Jeff Hayes I am available to answer any questions you might have.

Sincerely,

Earl Michael Eastman, Ed.D.

## **Executive Summary**

**Earl Michael Eastman, 8014 Planters Knoll Terrace, Bradenton, FL 34201, 941-350-7925**

[michael.eastman@mybayside.church](mailto:michael.eastman@mybayside.church)

### **Education**

BA & MRE, Anderson University, Anderson, Indiana

MA, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

Ed.D., Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana

### **Professional Experience**

Bayside Community Church, Director of Kingdom Builders, Bradenton, Florida

Ringling College of Art and Design, Senior Development Officer, Sarasota, Florida

Manchester University, Vice President of Advancement, North Manchester, Indiana

Ball State University, Director of Development, Muncie, Indiana

University of Cincinnati, Executive of Alumni Relations, Cincinnati, Ohio

George Mason University, Director of Alumni Relations, Fairfax, Virginia

Anderson University, Director of Alumni Relations and Church Services, Anderson, Indiana

### **Related Work Experience**

Mission Assignment, Cairo, Egypt, Service in local church setting, Christian Education Adult Leadership Development,

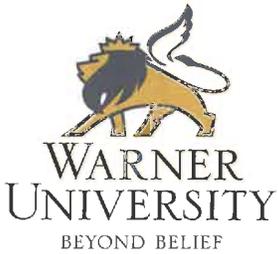
Significant fundraising experience in several multi-million-dollar campaigns, raising over one million dollars annual fund, major gifts, and gift and estate planning,

Significant experiences in cultivation, solicitation, closing and stewardship of gifts at all levels

Largest single gift ever received \$35 million to start a college of pharmacy

### **Awards**

Recipient of the Independent College Advancement Associates, 2011 Ernest A. Sheetz Mentor Award



May 30, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to recommend Dr. Jeff Hayes. I have been a friend and colleague of Jeff's for the past 20 + years. He is an outstanding person with great passion and skills for the development of persons and building up of the Body of Christ.

Jeff envisioned, planned, and implemented the Servus Innovatus Weekend for our Online Ministry Degree at Warner University. This was a weekend retreat that involved online students, professors, and staff from Warner University. A rich experience of information, formation, and many students gave testimony to transformation through this experience.

Jeff also was the driving force who envisioned, planned, and implemented our new Master of Ministry Degree at Warner University. This degree was developed as an online degree and Jeff wrote the prospectus that was approved by our accrediting association.

Jeff has the proven ability to bring a network of people together in order to impact their lives as well as the lives of those they care for in their ministry assignments.

I can recommend Jeff without reservation.

If I can be of any further help, please contact me at:  
[michael.sanders@warner.edu](mailto:michael.sanders@warner.edu)

Michael D. Sanders, D.Min.

Dean of Faculty and Professor of Christian Formation

13895 Highway 27 Lake Wales, FL 33859 phone: 863-638-1426 fax: 863-638-7290



May 31, 2018

Lilly Endowment Inc.  
Indianapolis, IN 46208

I write to you today in support of The Way of Compassion project Leading With Compassion that has been submitted as a proposal to the Lilly Foundation for a grant to fund the development of this project to engage clergy and lay ministers in thoughtful, compassionate relationship and interaction with themselves and others as they grow and develop in their respective areas of ministry.

Having grown up in the church and, specifically, the Church of God (Anderson, IN), and being a seminary graduate, I have been very excited about The Way of Compassion that Jeff Hayes has been developing. I have served in ministry on local, state and national levels in our particular church movement. My experience, as well as the experiences shared with me by my generational peers, has been that there is a great need for the work of The Way of Compassion within our church organization, as well as with the larger church. The amount of divisive discourse and compartmentalization of self within the church has given rise to an enormous need for church people, including ministers, to be well versed in compassionate engagement over reaction, healthy integration of self, and emotional intelligence. I believe The Way of Compassion could be vital in providing the necessary training for these ends, not only to ministers and lay leaders, but in a way that will permeate into the lives of the congregants with whom those ministers and leaders work.

Additionally, we are a church that believes strongly in ecumenical relationship and work, which is in harmony with the work of The Way of Compassion. The ecumenical thrust of this organization is especially appealing with people of my own generation (end of Generation X through early Millennials) in the Church of God, for whom ecumenical relationships are a great priority and piece of our theological construct.

There is a demographic within the Church of God, of which I am a part, made up of persons who are trained for ministry, having previously served churches and other aspects of the national church, but are not currently serving in vocational ministry. The Way of Compassion would not only be a helpful tool to navigate one's sense of call, but also for those who have been wounded in ministry to find healing and, perhaps, be able to reenter vocational ministry.

Thank you for considering The Way of Compassion for a Lily Grant. I look forward to the ways this grant will be a blessing to the wider church and to all who encounter this way of growth and healing.

Jen Carney, MTS, MA Intercultural Service

# Thirty-Fourth Street Church of God

3000 North 34th Street • Tampa, FL 33605 • Telephone: (813) 248-6548 Fax: (813) 247-4337  
www.34thstreetcog.org

Rev. Dr. Thomas Scott, Senior Pastor



*"The Church That Is Touching The Community"*

May 30, 2018

Jeffrey Hayes, DMin  
The Way of Compassion Inc.  
1910 Summer Place  
Anderson, IN 46012

Dear Dr. Hayes;

On Behalf of 34<sup>th</sup> Street Church of God, we are pleased to support through partnership/participation with you in the Leading with Compassion: Thriving in Ministry Initiative. We are excited to work with you again and to have an opportunity to learn how to share the gospel in a different way. We especially look forward to promoting spirituality and compassion in our community where these two words sometimes lose their meaning.

We have always been very intentional in serving our community! It's a joy to team up with likeminded organizations like yours who walk their passion out. Thirty-Fourth Street Church of God has served the community for the last 103 years. We have established ministries that interface with the community on a weekly/quarterly basis through our food pantry that provide food for seniors and disabled persons, our bike program that provides transportation for men and women who need transportation for work, our Angel Tree program that provide children with gifts during Christmas whose parents are incarcerated, and Community Survival Day that provide school supplies for children returning to school for the new school year, Spring Harvest for families looking for an alternative activity for Halloween, and Light House Sunday where we invite men and women from a local ministry who were once alcohol and drug addicted (their choir and pastor minister to the church and we provide an offering of support and give them a Sunday dinner) to worship with us.

Therefore, we are delighted to offer our support and appreciate the opportunity to learn how to further put our faith in action.

Yours In Christ,



Rev. Dr. Thomas Scott,  
Senior Pastor

6/1/2018

Rev. Dr. Jeff Hayes, D. Min.  
The Way of Compassion, Inc.  
Thriving in Ministry: Leading with Compassion  
1910 Summer Place  
Anderson, Indiana 46012

Dear Dr. Hayes,

Arlington Church of God has been leading with compassion since it was officially established in 1917. Our official mantra is “Faith Out Loud!” We believe the world needs voices of faith speaking into all of life’s situations. Through the three schools for children from 8 weeks old to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade that we either directly sponsor or house in our building, as well as the creative summer jobs programs for young people and also many other acts of compassionate faith that we exercise through collaboration with the city and other entities, Arlington Church of God seeks to do what this project is supporting. As such, I believe that we are prime candidate. It is our joy to sign on as one of the partners who will help to facilitate this work. Thank you for the invitation!

My firm belief is that all things rise or fall on leadership. Statistics have not been favorable for the longevity of pastors. Most do not make it to retirement in the job. Many who do have remained out of financial necessity and not necessarily the call of their ministry. Sustainability is a real problem for clergy. The “Thriving in Ministry: Leading with Compassion” seems to be a great way in which pastors can stay connected with the One who has called and the true purpose for such. True Compassion, or love if you will, settles and sustains all who truly experience the ministry. This is a prime atmosphere in which not only can ministry thrive, but all those who are graced to receive it.

Arlington Church of God looks forward with great anticipation in hopes that this project has received the support of the Lily Endowment. We are prepared to wholeheartedly collaborate with this project. True compassion is transformative. The impact that this type of ministry can have on pastors, ministers, churches and communities is actually beyond metrics, though surely much will be captured in the process. This type of project is what Arlington Church of God seeks to do every day. It will be interesting to learn more, see more and do more in the love of Christ as we join in with this project..

Sincerely,

Reverend Dr. Diana L. Swoope

Senior Pastor

Arlington Church of God



## First Church of God

I am Gene R. Worline, Lead Pastor/Vision Caster at the First Church of God, Grove City, PA. Grove City is a borough of approximately 12,000 people living in the local vicinity. It's a typical small town with many church bodies that continue to be a revolving door for disgruntled parishioners. We continue to see many churches that have no compassion for the beliefs of other believers therefore much division is found within the churches of the borough. If a change doesn't take place within our context we will be witness to a disinterested and disgruntled Body of Christ and one that will miss out on the celebrations of successes and ministries to the disenfranchised.

After 15 years, I'm currently in the stage of ministry of reinventing ministry which means I must be able and willing to tackle new challenges and cast new visions that lead to a body/community of believers that are truly transformed in compassion. I've cast countless ideas and strategies around our guiding premise to "love God and love others."

My theological understanding of pastoral ministry is rooted in Ephesians 4:11-16 as an equippier of "His people for works of service". This passage clearly states that "Christ gave" me to the body to continue to disciple in a way that fulfillment is brought to the Great Commission and the Great Commandment through loving God and loving others, and making disciples that make disciples by going out. This is a challenging endeavor as I am currently in a bi-vocational ministry called by God to lead His people here in Grove City.

I believe that this endeavor, under the leadership of Dr. Jeff Hayes will be an asset to bringing about a solidification in the body that will be a catalyst that sets the First Church of God apart by being a uniting factor in our community of Grove City and throughout Western Pennsylvania.

For myself, I believe this endeavor will reinvigorate the calling that is, once again grounded in compassion, for the people in the body of Christ and to those not yet part of the body of Christ. After 15 years I am at a stand-still and I believe this will enhance my leadership abilities which in turn will be poured out into the people of God and those that are seeking and the hope all are looking for.

For the body here at First Church of God it will give us the tools to help us to continue to grow and be set apart, to be transformed, and to be a catalyst of transformation within the body and outside the body as we go to make disciples in compassion. It will also give us tools to teach compassion in a new way such as the online networking component of connectivity beyond our setting. This tool will be an excellent place of continual transformational maturity and unity.

I and the body of Christ are looking forward to this endeavor and support Dr. Hayes in "The Way of Compassion."

Gene Worline, Lead Pastor  
First Church of God, Grove City PA.



QUALITY *Life* SERVICES

*Grove City*

Hello, my name is Amy Worline. I am a licensed and ordained minister in the Church of God and work as a full-time Chaplain for Quality Life Services (QLS) in western Pennsylvania. I serve at the QLS Grove City location, 400 Hillcrest Ave., Grove City, and the QLS Chicora location at 160 Medical Center Rd., Chicora. I also serve as an Associate Pastor at the First Church of God, 1333 W. Main St., Grove City, Pennsylvania. I received my ordination in 2007 and have served in the church in multiple areas.

I began working for QLS in 2012. I work at two of their nursing homes which have a capacity of up to 110 residents in each. I serve as a spiritual guide to the homes, assisting residents and their families, as well as the staff members and friends in spiritual needs. I provide confidential, non-judgmental listening, counsel, guidance, and prayer. I offer support in crisis, bereavement counseling, and guidance in ethical decision making. I provide various spiritual educational opportunities such as bible study, small group activities, monthly communion opportunities, as well as a wide range of worship services, prayer times, and devotional possibilities. I have performed funerals and memorial services, as well as twice yearly remembrance services to honor those who have passed away in the previous six months. I do multiple visits, have prayer with individuals in various locations, as well as sing, hold hands, and visit with anyone and everyone. When I came to QLS, I was given a job description. Ultimately, I have created that position to uniquely fit who I am and to whom I serve.

I have been given other responsibilities for QLS as well. Quality Life Services is a family owned business that has been around for 45 years, they have eleven nursing homes, seven personal care homes, five independent living communities, a pharmacy, and a family home health and Three Rivers Hospice group. We have a chaplain presence in each of these locations. I have the blessing of overseeing these chaplains. Connecting with them on a regular basis and coordinate quarterly meetings with them. We encourage each other and provide a safe place to connect and discuss the demands of our jobs.

Pastoral/Chaplain ministry can be so very demanding. I understand that as a pastor or a chaplain, I am a shepherd taking care of the flock that God has given me, no matter where they are or who they belong to. People will come and go, both in the church and in the nursing home, some will sink in and grasp a deeper understanding of how God is moving in their lives and others won't want the responsibility of being a disciple of Jesus.

The Way of Compassion appeals to me. The struggles of keeping our hearts and our minds on mission for the ways of God can become real. The demands of those in need, looking to us for answers, or the reality of disappointments can become a burden. I often tend to take care of others before I take care of myself, the "loving others as yourself" becomes a challenge. I need a place where I can grow and thrive without feeling weighted down by the burdens and concerns of others.



## First Church of God

507 N Fulton St, Wauseon, OH 43567  
 419-335-1491 (Office), 419-335-8406 (Fax)  
[www.wauseoncog.org](http://www.wauseoncog.org)

May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Re: Thriving in Ministry Grant

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Pastor Mike Harmon. I have been in full-time pastoral ministry for almost 20 years. Most of that ministry time has been spent helping churches that are in need of redeveloping their ministry focus and vision in order to start a new church lifecycle. Part of this process requires that a strong look is taken at the history of the church and its leadership. As I have journeyed with these churches I have observed that most of them share a few things in common. One commonality the churches I have worked with, in this capacity, is that somewhere along the line the laity has misaligned their focus. Their focus stops being on doing as Christ did and what He is calling His followers to do and be. Another commonality I have observed has been the similar misaligned focus by pastors who were leading these churches. Somewhere along the line the focus stopped being about teaching and leading people to as Jesus did and started being more focused on people pleasing, budget growing and swelling numbers.

As I reach the probable halfway point of my career I feel an unsettledness in my spirit. I desire to help churches and pastors get back to being like and doing as Christ did. I see that we live in a culture that is desperately seeking hope and compassion. A hope and compassion that I believe is only found in and through Jesus Christ. I believe that the responsibility of feeding this need in our current culture fall on the church and the pastors/leaders of those churches. However, the hurdle that exists is that pastors and churches are unlikely to be effective at leading others to find hope and compassion in and through Jesus Christ if they are not experiencing it for themselves.

I believe that the “Thriving In Ministry: Leading with Compassion” program will provide an excellent platform for pastors and church leaders to personally get back in touch with the hope and compassion offered through Jesus. As they do, there is a much higher probability that they will be more effective to lead other to a greater understanding and experience of Hope and compassion through Jesus in their ministry context. I believe that Dr. Jeff Hayes and “The Way of Compassion” have the capacity and resources to make this project a reality.

I look forward to seeing what God is going to do as a result of this project and encourage you to get behind this project.

Blessings,

Pastor Mike Harmon  
 Lead Pastor  
 First Church of God, Wauseon, Ohio

**LIVE B.I.G.**

*Build Relationships – Introduce Others to Jesus – Grow Disciples*



To whom it may concern,

My name is Pastor Treves Wilson, I am the Youth Pastor at Miamisburg First Church of God in Miamisburg Ohio. I would like to share with you my interest in The Way of Compassion Church. The reality is simple, we as a nation and a world have lost the idea of what it means to be compassionate toward another. All one must do is turn the news on at any given time and my point is proven. What interest me about TWOC is the opportunity to rediscover what compassion looks like, what compassion feels like, to put compassion into practice, and to be able to teach others over a course of time the things learned through TWOC. What interests me even further is the opportunity to share these things with the young adult generation as they prepare to head out on their own, giving them a stronger foundation to stand firm in the Image of Christ.

I believe that part of the mission of the church is to love others. This means that the church must show compassion to others, even the enemies of the church; without compassion there can be no love. This also means that we must understand who we are, and we are a people that Jesus Christ set the example of compassion for in the Beatitudes in the Book of Mathew. I believe that TWOC can be the vehicle that brings compassion back to the forefront of the minds of the people of the church that will help transform this nation and even the world back to what God intended, and that is to be a people full of love.

Having known Dr. Jeff Hayes for a few years now and having experienced his leadership through the online learning program at Warner University, through which he was very instrumental in me achieving my Bachelor of Science Degree in Transformational Christian Ministries, I have the utmost confidence that Dr. Hayes can organize and run TWOC with excellence. Dr. Hayes has the ability and giftedness to lead and teach others, through which his compassion for people comes through. I am excited that Dr. Hayes is willing to take on this endeavor, and I look forward to working with him and experience all that God has in store for TWOC.

We can win this nation and world back to a life of compassion, and TWOC can be a great way to accomplish this. The opportunity to be in on the ground floor of something like TWOC that has the potential to spread kindness and love exponentially is very exciting, and I believe that this endeavor lead by Dr. Hayes will make a huge impact in the lives of those associated with this program.

Sincerely,

Pastor Treves M. Wilson



5-29-18

New Springfield Church of God is located in a rural corner of Mahoning County, Ohio. The church facility is about a mile away from the small rural town of New Springfield. Mr. and Mrs. G.T. Clayton founded NSCOG in 1898. The church currently worships in its newest addition that was completed in 2002. There is one service at 9:30 a.m., and Sunday School follows at 11:00 a.m. At NSCOG there is one full-time lead pastor, a visitation pastor, youth pastor, children's director, administrative assistant, and a janitor who work anywhere from 10-30 hours a week. The services are a healthy mix of music, prayer, scripture, and teaching. Our vision is to be a place where people can come and learn about the Savior, Jesus Christ, where family is valued, and you can find hope for today, tomorrow, and eternity. Our mission is to reach our community by planting New Hope, New Life, and New Beginnings in the hearts of people, nurtured through love and compassion into a life with Christ.

I personally have an interest in this project because of the healthy characteristics that "The Way of Compassion" promotes. Jeff writes on The Way of Compassion website that: "Together we are learning to be more compassionate to self and others; becoming aware of our own pulse and the breath that sustains each of us. As we become more aware of our own parts and pulse, we are better able to compassionately notice the pulse and needs of others." As a full-time pastor, the demands and challenges that I face every day can become overwhelming. I personally need ministries like The Way of Compassion so that I can operate from a place of peace and compassion, rather than operating in a way that promotes burnout. There simply are not enough resources available that adequately provide a consistent and healthy approach to ministry. To have a resource available like The Way of Compassion would be life changing for me and for ministries across the world.

Jeff Hayes and his extended family have literally changed the course of my life. His encouragement and support have allowed me to complete my Bachelor of Science Degree in ministry and later my Master of Ministry Degree. His ability to organize, institute, and follow through with major projects is second to none. I am so thankful for knowing Jeff and I am forever grateful with how he changed my life.

Sincerely,  
Jonathan Holloway

Senior Pastor  
New Springfield Church of God  
3649 E. Garfield Rd  
New Springfield, OH 44443

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***"Impacting the Kingdom by Impacting Lives"***

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Rev. Dr. Whitfield D. Blenman, Senior Pastor

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May 29, 2018

Rev. Dr Jeff Hayes, DMin

The Way of Compassion, Inc  
Thriving in Ministry: Leading With Compassion  
1910 Summer Place  
Anderson, Indiana 46012

Dear Dr. Hayes,

Solid Rock Community Church is pleased to write this letter of support and commendation on the timely project that you have invited us to participate with. We look forward to partnering with you as we have done so in the past with other educational endeavors. Many adults in our congregation have previously benefited from the ministries, which were under your care. We have great confidence in the integrity of your leadership and are thankful to be able to unite with you on this project.

Solid Rock Community Church has been serving the greater Kissimmee, Florida area since 1968. We are a congregation made up of over 30 countries from around the world. We are actively engaged with our community by providing outreach to three of the local schools Mill Creek Elementary, Denn John Middle School and Gateway High School in the area. We were recently chosen as the local school partner of the year by Gateway High school. We also provide food twice a month to needy families in the community. We partner with the ACCESS program here in the state of Florida for needy families who need government assistance. Solid Rock provides outreach to the local jail by providing Bible study and other services as needed.

We are eager to see how the Compassion Project will support our ministries and the well-being of our pastoral staff and ministry leaders. We are proud to be one of your anchor congregations in Florida and look forward to interactions with some of our brother and sister congregations in our area in the years to come.

Sincerely,

*Mark E. Nelson*

Rev. Mark E Nelson  
Associate Pastor, YP

***"A Place To Connect"***