

**First Parish Project  
Participant Application**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: (day) \_\_\_\_\_

(night) \_\_\_\_\_

(cell) \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

DENOMINATION: \_\_\_\_\_

Please include:

1) One page resume

2) 3 page faith biography –

What spiritual process brought you to the point  
of going into pastoral ministry?

3) One brief letter of reference from a denominational  
office (bishop, district superintendent, executive  
presbyter, regional minister, associational missionary,  
etc.)

Send to:

Clarissa Youngblood-Fuentes

Hinton Rural Life Center

P.O. Box 27

Hayesville, NC 28904

Or Email to:

Clarissa@hintoncenter.org

Toll Free:

866-389-8336

The First Parish Project  
Hinton Rural Life Center  
P.O. Box 27  
Hayesville, NC 28904

Hinton Rural Life Center in partnership with  
The Lilly Endowment Inc.  
presents

## The First Parish Project

Group VII

September 2009 - March 2011



- ◆ **Ongoing peer support and learning community**
- ◆ **For seminary graduates 35 and under serving churches of smaller membership**
- ◆ **A national gathering of young pastors from all denominations for six sessions over two years**

*20 opportunities available.*

*Room, board and transportation from  
anywhere in the United States provided.*

## The First Parish Project

### A Support and Enhancement Program for Beginning Clergy

**F**irst Parish Project, funded by The Lilly Endowment and administered by Hinton Rural Life Center, is a continuing education program aimed at developing and sustaining effective pastoral leadership in the small membership church (understood in this context as those congregations that average 100 or less at the principal weekly worship service). It targets pastors who are (1) age 35 or younger, (2) serving their first full-time pastorate, (3) in a church of small membership. The program is ecumenical, i.e. open to clergy of all denominations.

**T**he program focuses on the transitions participants are undergoing, not only from seminary to a first parish but also the transition into the world of the small membership church. FPP gives special attention to understanding, appreciating, and coping with the unique dynamics of the small membership church. Beyond equipping pastors for ministry in the small membership church, the program is created for colleagues to develop a nationwide network of pastors/friends serving in similar situations. When young clergy come together and share their ministry stories we inevitably learn from one another, and serving one's first parish is a shared phenomenon.

**P**articipants are recruited through contacts with denominational bodies, seminaries, pastors, and FPP alumni. Each group of 20 meets on the 34 acre campus of Hinton Center in Hayesville, N.C. for two successive years. Each gathering lasts one week, Monday evening through Friday morning, and includes the following: didactic sessions on ministerial praxis by faculty/resource persons, community worship and Eucharist, covenant group time, table fellowship, and free time. Continuing Education Units are available to participants for their work in the program.

**I**n addition, a Hinton staff member is available to visit each participant's parish twice during his/her time in the program. The purpose of such visits is to lead participants' congregations in a visioning/planning process that will help congregation and pastor attend together to the important work of doing community assessment, discerning congregational gifts and strengths, and identifying ministry priorities. In this way the program invests in the development not only of the congregation's minister, but also of its ministry.

**A**s a result of participating in this program, ministers can expect to gain useful insight about ministry, particularly ministry in the small membership church; to develop ongoing supportive relationships with a diverse group of colleagues in similar ministry situations; to enjoy participating in a community of worship and prayer; to relax; and to enjoy Hinton's beautiful setting and its hospitality.

**T**he total program cost to the participant/church is \$900 to be paid in \$150 amounts at each session. The rest of his/her expenses are cared for out of the Lilly Foundation grant that underwrites the program.

**I**t is understood that upon acceptance into the program, the pastor agrees to participate fully in every aspect of the program throughout its duration. This is a matter of mutual respect and commitment, as well as a demonstration of appreciation to the organizations that make such an opportunity possible.

**T**he program is open to all recent seminary graduates under age 35 serving their first church of smaller membership.

## GROUP VII MEETING SCHEDULE

### Session I

September 14 - September 18, 2009

### Session II

November 16 - November 20, 2009

### Session III

April 27 - May 1, 2010

### Session IV

September 20 - September 24, 2010

### Session V

November 15 - November 19, 2010

### Session VI

February 28 - March 4, 2011



*For further information you may contact:*

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Hinton Rural Life Center

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