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Synod of Mid-America Announces Small Church Residency Program

Kansas and Missouri Presbyterians renew commitment to small churches

KANSAS CITY – The Synod of Mid-America (SoMA) and its six member presbyteries have announced plans to resurrect the Small Church Residency Program (SCRP), formerly administrated by the Presbyterian Mission Agency. The SCRП is a two-year pastoral residency program for first call pastors to serve small, underserved congregations.

“When the residency program wound down at the PMA a couple years ago we knew we had a unique opportunity,” said Synod Executive Landon Whitsitt. “The financial commitment needed to pair small congregations with qualified pastors was well within our ability, and it is a great opportunity to partner with our presbyteries on a program that has already shown to be successful in the past.”

The SoMA and its presbyteries will provide congregations with a subsidy to put towards the pastor’s compensation package, and will provide mentoring and a new pastors learning cohort for all candidates in the program. Additionally, the SoMA has worked closely with the Board of Pensions and the Presbyterian Mission Agency to ensure that candidates will be able to qualify for educational debt assistance programs valued between \$10,000-\$25,000.

“The Small Church Residency Program is a ‘win’ for everyone involved,” Whitsitt said. “Congregations get a pastor, candidates get a call, and the presbyteries of the synod get to ensure that the ministry of Word and Sacrament continues among faithful communities.”

Six congregations have been identified for the first cycle of the SCRП: Westminster Presbyterian Church (Versailles, MO), First Presbyterian Church (Neosho, MO), St. Andrew Presbyterian Church (Kimberling City, MO), First Presbyterian Church (Booneville, MO), First Presbyterian Church (Iola, KS), Community Presbyterian Church (La Plata, MO).

Candidate applications are due May 31, 2018, and can be submitted on the SoMA website. Visit synodma.org/residency for more details and a full project timeline.

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The Synod of Mid-America is a regional community of support for the six PC(USA) presbyteries in Kansas and Missouri.