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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LCEF Opens Second Round of Grace Place Wellness Sabbatical Scholarship Program

(St. Louis, MO) — Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) is pleased to announce the return of the Grace Place Wellness Sabbatical Scholarship Program, providing $7,500 grants to Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) church workers preparing for their first sabbatical. The application window is now open, with a submission deadline of October 31, 2025.

Launched in 2024, the program awarded scholarships to four LCMS church workers in its inaugural year. Now, in its second year, the program continues to support the long-term spiritual, emotional and physical wellness of LCMS church workers by helping them step away for intentional periods of rest, renewal and growth.

“This scholarship is about more than just time off,” said Rev. Dr. Greg Walton, Vice President of Ministry Solutions at LCEF and leader of Grace Place Wellness. “It’s about building longevity in ministry and nurturing the health of those who care deeply for their congregations and communities. A sabbatical can be life-giving, for both the church worker and the church.”

The $7,500 grants may be used to offset salary and benefit costs, support interim staffing and fund travel, retreat or educational opportunities tied to the sabbatical experience. To be eligible, applicants must be ordained or commissioned LCMS church workers taking their first sabbatical.

Interested applicants and congregations should visit lcef.org/apply for full eligibility criteria and application materials.

“Healthy, faithful ministry needs healthy, faithful leaders,” said Bart Day, President and CEO of LCEF. “Through this scholarship program, we are walking alongside church workers in a meaningful way, encouraging them to pause, rest and return to ministry with renewed energy and clarity.”

The Grace Place Wellness Sabbatical Scholarship is part of LCEF’s broader commitment to the well-being of LCMS church workers. Since acquiring Grace Place Wellness in 2022, LCEF has expanded its reach to offer tools, resources and encouragement for those called to serve in ministry.

To learn more or begin your application, visit lcef.org/apply.

About Lutheran Church Extension Fund
Lutheran Church Extension Fund is a nonprofit organization that empowers LCMS ministries by providing loans, investments and other resources to support their growth. Since 1978, LCEF has

partnered with individuals, congregations and ministries to help build a future for the church, strengthening its ability to spread the Gospel and serve communities worldwide.

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