

Contact: Kelly Abraham, Executive Director
kelly.abraham@pcusa.org
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The Presbyterian Association of Musicians (PAM) has received a \$1,209,973 grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. to help establish our new program, *Child of Blessing: Growing Faith in Worship*.

The program is funded through Lilly Endowment's Nurturing Children Through Worship and Prayer Initiative, a national initiative designed to help Christian congregations more fully and intentionally engage children in intergenerational corporate worship and prayer practices.

The program is organized into seven cyclical phases over a five-year period:

- 1) Listen, Analyze, Synergize, Prioritize - Listen to understand the needs and interests of children, parents, congregations, and worship planners.
- 2) Develop - Create and curate materials for children, adult worship planners, and congregations that support multigenerational and multi-sensory worship.
- 3) Test - Pilot new initiatives, materials, or approaches in pilot congregations
- 4) Train - Provide training and support for worshiping communities and their leaders to effectively engage and nurture children including those who are differently-abled.
- 5) Disseminate - Share valuable insights, resources, and best practices with relevant stakeholders, including other religious communities and seminaries.
- 6) Evaluate - Regularly assess the impact and outcomes of initiatives and practices on children's spiritual growth, engagement, and sense of belonging.
- 7) Sustain - Establish long-term strategies to ensure the continued nurturing of children in worship, including ongoing training, evaluation, and adaptation of practices.

Examples of activities we will develop include training and resources for small, medium, and large congregations tested in more than 75 churches by the end of the five year grant period; weekly activities keyed to the all three years of the lectionary cycle; collaboration with our First Call Community and with seminaries to offer training and resources for pastors related to the value of multigenerational worship to both children and the worshiping community.



Kelly Abraham, Executive Director of PAM, noted that the meaningful involvement of children in worship is vitally important to the long-term health of the church. “Our goal is to help congregations find ways to acknowledge the gifts that children bring to the worshipping community and engage them in ways that matter, so that we all grow in faith together.”

PAM is one of 91 organizations funded through the latest round of the initiative. They represent and serve congregations in a broad spectrum of Christian traditions, including Catholic, mainline Protestant, evangelical, Orthodox, Anabaptist and Pentecostal faith communities. Several organizations are rooted in Black Church and Hispanic and Asian American Christian traditions.

“Congregational worship and prayer play a critical role in the spiritual growth of children and offer settings for children to acquire the language of faith, learn their faith traditions and experience the love of God as part of a supportive community,” said Christopher L. Coble, Lilly Endowment’s vice president for religion. “These programs will help congregations give greater attention to children and how they can more intentionally nurture the faith of children, as well as adults, through worship and prayer.”

About Lilly Endowment Inc

Lilly Endowment Inc. is a private philanthropic foundation created in 1937 by J.K. Lilly Sr. and his sons Eli and J.K. Jr. through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly and Company. While those gifts remain the financial bedrock of the Endowment, it is a separate entity from the company, with a distinct governing board, staff and location. In keeping with the founders’ wishes, the Endowment supports the causes of community development, education and religion and maintains a special commitment to its hometown, Indianapolis, and home state, Indiana. The principal aim of the Endowment’s religion grantmaking is to deepen and enrich the lives of Christians in the United States, primarily by seeking out and supporting efforts that enhance the vitality of congregations and strengthen the pastoral and lay leadership of Christian communities. The Endowment also seeks to improve public understanding of diverse religious traditions by supporting fair and accurate portrayals of the role religion plays in the United States and across the globe.