

LILY ENDOWMENT REPORT

The eight United Church-affiliated theological schools and the General Council Office have received a grant of nearly \$10 million (US) from the Lilly Endowment's Pathways to Tomorrow program. The period for the grant is 2026 to 2030.

Of the nearly \$10-million, \$2.5 million is set aside for an endowment, which will only be given by Lilly once the schools raise matching funds in the coming years. The intention is to create an endowment held by the United Church of Canada Foundation that will support the activities begun in this grant beyond 2030.

A four-member Implementation and Oversight Committee (IOC) was named to manage the details associated with this grant. The committee is comprised of Richard Topping, Marlene Britton, Gesse Zink and Jennifer Janzen-Ball, and had its first meeting in December 2025. Since then, a memorandum of agreement for the TSC to set the framework for this grant has been drafted, and a project/programme manager has been hired. The IOC will hold its next meeting in Vancouver, in person, and the project manager will also be in attendance.

Fund Allocation

An initial sum of \$35,000 has been disbursed to each school for the purposes of planning its involvement in this grant. Planning activities may involve research, meeting, or coordination, with the intention of deepening relationships between schools and United Church bodies such as regional councils, communities of faith and summer camps. Each school is expected to produce a proposal for the spending of grant funds over the grant period in ways that align with the key performance indicators of the application.

The proposal should include:

- A brief narrative of the planning process, including the parties consulted
- A description of proposed activities, including how they connect to the broader purpose, programs, and key performance indicators of the grant application to Lilly
- A budget for activities, anticipating that these activities will begin in academic year 2026-2027 and run until the end of the grant period.

The Centre for Christian Studies is extremely fortunate to have Dr. Esther Guillen working with us to ensure the production of this proposal. She has been in virtual meetings with the Principal, then with the staff of CCS, then with the Principal and the Keeper of the Circle of the Sandy Saulteaux Spirituality Centre. Dr. Guillen is currently in Winnipeg to hold in-person meetings with the various people involved in this proposal before preparing a final presentation.