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PRESS RELEASE

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Vineyard USA Receives Thriving in Ministry Initiative Grant

Vineyard USA has received a grant of \$1 million to help establish a new initiative to help their pastors thrive in congregational leadership. It is part of Lilly Endowment Inc.'s Thriving in Ministry, an initiative that supports a variety of religious organizations across the nation as they create or strengthen programs that help pastors build relationships with experienced clergy who can serve as mentors and guide them through key leadership challenges in congregational ministry.

Lilly Endowment is making nearly \$70 million in grants through the Thriving in Ministry initiative.

During the next five years Vineyard USA will use the grant to mentor, coach, and provide spiritual direction to approximately 90 senior pastors (1 out of every 6 in the Vineyard), who are facing significant challenges in the following affinity groups:

- Bi-vocational pastors
- Women senior pastors
- La Viña pastors
- Pastors facing retirement
- Pastors of color
- Pastors succeeding long-term pastors
- Church planters

Bubba Justice, National Coordinator for Vineyard USA, said: "We are thrilled to receive this grant. With these resources we will be able to focus attention on strengthening our leadership core in the Vineyard, as well as serving the Body of Christ with the leaders we will nurture in sustainable leadership for years to come."

Vineyard USA is one of 78 organizations located in 29 states that is taking part in the initiative. The organizations reflect diverse Christian traditions: mainline and evangelical Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox.

Thriving in Ministry is part of Lilly Endowment's grantmaking to strengthen pastoral leadership in Christian congregations in the United States. This has been a grantmaking priority at Lilly Endowment for nearly 25 years.

"Leading a congregation today is multi-faceted and exceptionally demanding," said Christopher L. Coble, Lilly Endowment's vice president for religion. "When pastors have opportunities to build meaningful relationships with experienced colleagues, they are able to negotiate the challenges of ministry and their leadership thrives. These promising programs, including Vineyard USAs work to help their leaders thrive, will help pastors develop these kinds of relationships, especially when they are in the midst of significant professional transitions."

Lilly Endowment Inc. is an Indianapolis-based private philanthropic foundation created in 1937 by three members of the Lilly family - J.K. Lilly Sr. and sons Eli and J.K. Jr. - through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly & Company. While those gifts remain the financial bedrock of the Endowment, the Endowment 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. The Endowment maintains a special commitment to its hometown, Indianapolis, and its home state Indiana. Its grantmaking in religion focuses on supporting efforts to strengthen the leadership and vitality of Christian congregations throughout the country and to increase the public's understanding of the role of religion in public life.