



NEWS RELEASE

Transformative Learning Collaborative receives \$10M

BERKELEY, CA (March 19, 2026) — The Transformative Learning Collaborative is a collaboration of five leading theological schools, supported by a \$10 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. This is an ambitious new initiative designed to expand accessible, sustainable, and culturally responsive pathways for preparing pastoral and lay leaders.

The Collaborative brings together Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley School of Theology, BSK Theological Seminary, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, and Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary—institutions known for their innovation in theological education and their longstanding relationships with diverse Christian denominations across the United States.

Together, the schools are responding to one of the most urgent challenges facing Christian congregations today: creating a space for discernment and preparation for emerging ministry leaders and ensuring they have access to flexible, relevant, and community-rooted forms of theological education in a rapidly changing religious landscape.

A New Collaborative Model for Theological Education

Building on ongoing collaborations and partnerships in the graduate theological space, the five schools—each contributing their distinct strengths and institutional identities—will collaborate to develop non-degree resources and distribute them utilizing Kwaray, an innovative digital learning platform. Their learnings will inform a shared framework called Theological Education 3.0, a distributed and digitally enabled model that combines institutional collaboration with expanded access to leadership formation.

The initiative will focus on three key strategies:

Strengthening Governance and Institutional Leadership

Boards and presidents from all five seminaries will engage in shared retreats, governance learning cohorts, and collaborative planning processes. These efforts are designed to support bold decision-making and sustainable leadership in a time when many theological schools are navigating shifting enrollment patterns and rising operational pressures.

Equipping Faculty for Innovation

Faculty members across the five institutions will collaborate to design new non-degree learning pathways, experiment with interdisciplinary teaching approaches, and develop modular

educational offerings that reflect the lived realities of ministry, especially in under-resourced communities.

Leveraging Digital Infrastructure for Scale

Through Kwaray, a digital learning platform developed by Pacific School of Religion, the Collaborative will create shared continuing education programs, micro-credentials, and certificate offerings that can reach learners across institutions, denominations, and geographic regions.

Expanding Access to Leadership Formation

Over the five-year grant period, the Collaborative aims to engage more than 5,000 learners nationwide through flexible educational offerings designed for pastors, lay leaders, and community organizers.

The initiative will also produce a publicly available playbook outlining best practices for collaborative, digitally enabled theological education, offering a roadmap for seminaries and ministry training programs across North America.

This initiative is funded through Lilly Endowment's Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative, a multi-phase effort supporting theological schools in strengthening their capacity to prepare leaders for Christian congregations across the United States and Canada.

The five schools will celebrate the launch of the Transformative Learning Collaborative in a hybrid event on Wednesday, April 7th from 4:00-5:00 pm Pacific Time, with an in-person gathering at the Badè Museum of Biblical Archeology at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, CA.

About Berkeley School of Theology (BST)

BST is among the most culturally diverse seminaries in the country. The core values of soul freedom, service leadership, social justice, public witness, religious liberty and the spoken and written word in Scripture and beyond have guided and sustained this seminary for the last 150 years. For more information on all our programs, visit [bst.edu](https://www.bst.edu).

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