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Contact: Ronni Kloth  
317.916.7304 | [klothr@lei.org](mailto:klothr@lei.org)

## **Lilly Endowment Names New Program Director for Religion**

INDIANAPOLIS – Jessica Krey Duckworth, assistant professor of congregational and community care leadership at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., will join Lilly Endowment, effective August 1, as a program director in its religion division.

“Jessica Duckworth is a highly respected scholar and teacher with a passion for helping to strengthen the ministries of Christian churches,” said Christopher L. Coble, the Endowment’s vice president for religion. “Her service as a pastor and seminary professor makes her deeply knowledgeable about the challenges facing churches today.

“Jessica’s experiences include several Endowment-supported projects: She was a Fund for Theological Education Ministry Fellow, conducted extensive research for Princeton Theological Seminary’s Faithful Practices Project, and participated in faculty workshops hosted by the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Religion and Theology. We are delighted that she will bring her wisdom to our staff and help the Endowment advance its mission to strengthen the leadership and enrich the vitality of Christian churches.”

Duckworth is ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. Prior to her professorship at Luther Seminary, she served as assistant professor of Christian formation at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. She has engaged in extensive research that focuses on Christian practices that sustain vibrant congregational life. Her academic work also has attended to the spiritual questions of young adults and ways that Christian churches can reach out to a new generation. She recently published a book on strengthening the relationship between newcomers and established members through congregational practices entitled *Wide Welcome: How the Unsettling Presence of Newcomers Can Save the Church*.

Duckworth served as an associate pastor at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Doylestown, Penn. for nearly two years. She holds a Doctor of Philosophy in practical theology with an emphasis on Christian education from Princeton Theological Seminary, a Master of Divinity from The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, and a Bachelor of Arts from George Washington University.

Lilly Endowment Inc. is an Indianapolis-based private philanthropic foundation created in 1937 by J.K. Lilly and his two sons, Eli and J.K. Jr., with gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical company. The Endowment exists to support the causes of religion, education and community development. Lilly Endowment's religion grantmaking is designed to deepen and enrich the religious lives of American Christians. It does this largely through initiatives to enhance and sustain the quality of ministry in American congregations and parishes.