

Convención receives major grant from Lilly Endowment

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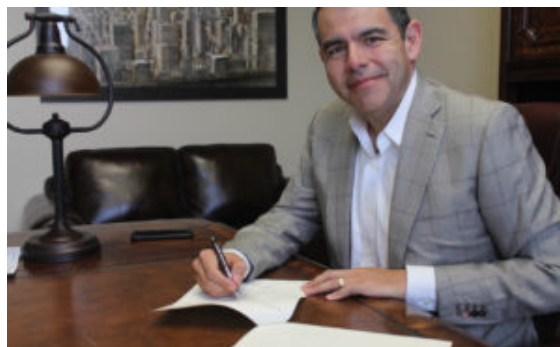
The Hispanic Baptist Convention of Texas received a nearly \$1 million grant from the Lilly Endowment to launch an initiative to help Hispanic churches thrive as they meet the distinctive ministry needs of their communities.

The Lilly Endowment awarded the \$999,839 grant to enable Convención Bautista Hispana de Texas to establish its *Iglesias Abundantes* program.

Iglesias Abundantes will help Hispanic Baptist congregations engage unique ministry challenges they face—varying immigrant generations, diverse language usage and rapidly changing cultural needs.

Over five years, up to 50 congregations will have the opportunity to participate in a congregational learning experience that will explore the challenges, solutions, resources and practices to help them address the unique demands of their ministry setting.

Congregations will create individualized *Abundante* Plans and be eligible to receive up to \$9,000 to implement their plans.



Jesse Rincones

“We appreciate the interest that Lilly Endowment has in our congregations and the confidence in Convención to award this grant,” said Jesse Rincones, executive director of Convención. “Hispanic Baptist churches will have the opportunity to engage their unique ministry challenges and develop thriving congregations that will bless their ministries, communities and the kingdom.”

The program is funded through Lilly Endowment’s Thriving Congregations Initiative, launched in 2019. The aim of the national initiative is to strengthen Christian congregations so they can help people deepen their relationships with God, build strong relationships with each other and contribute to the flourishing of local communities and the world.

Lilly Endowment is making nearly \$93 million in grants through the initiative. Grants will support organizations as they work directly with congregations and help them gain clarity about their values and missions, explore and understand better the communities in which they serve, and draw upon their theological traditions as they adapt ministries to meet changing needs.

Convención Bautista Hispana de Texas is one of 92 organizations taking part in the initiative. They represent and serve churches in a broad spectrum of Christian traditions, including Anabaptist, Baptist, Episcopal, evangelical, Lutheran, Methodist, Mennonite, Pentecostal, Presbyterian, Reformed, Restoration, Roman Catholic and Orthodox, as well as congregations that describe themselves as nondenominational. Several organizations serve congregations in Black, Hispanic and Asian-American traditions.

“In the midst of a rapidly changing world, Christian congregations are grappling with how they can best carry forward their ministries,” said Christopher Coble, Lilly Endowment’s vice president for religion. “These grants will help congregations assess their ministries and draw on

practices in their theological traditions to address new challenges and better nurture the spiritual vitality of the people they serve.”