

# ELCA Fund for Leaders

*for this church and for our future*

## *Guidelines for congregation scholarship funds - 2026*

**Nominations due by May 1**

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

#### Students must be:

- Enrolled at an ELCA seminary
- Registered for classes, internship or CPE
- Enrolled in MDiv (deacon or pastor), MA (deacon) or PhD degree program - OR - Enrolled in TEEM, TEIL certificate programs
- Pursuing rostered ministry in the ELCA (word and service or word and sacrament)
- Considered by the synod to be in good standing in the ELCA Candidacy Process

#### Examples of eligible students:

- TEEM, TEIL candidates
- Students receiving any other type of Fund for Leaders scholarship
- MDiv graduates from any seminary fulfilling Lutheran learning and formation candidacy requirements at an ELCA seminary (aka “Lutheran year”).
- TEEM graduates returning to seminary and entering a MDiv or MA degree program

### SELECTION PROCESS

- Congregations may make their selection decisions however they wish (award funds based on merit or need). Scholarships can be awarded equally or in differing amounts.
- Congregation scholarships are awarded for one year.
- All congregation awards are meant to be additive to other assistance a student may already be receiving and can be used for non-tuition expenses associated with their studies. *Note: scholarship funds used to cover costs beyond tuition, books, and fees (e.g., room and board, insurance, etc.) will count as taxable income to students.*
- If there are no qualified students from your congregation, or if your congregation chooses not to award a scholarship for a particular academic year, the ELCA Fund for Leaders may reallocate scholarship funds to ensure that ELCA candidates from across all synods are being provided with as much assistance as possible.

### 2026 TIMELINE

Please submit nominee information to Fund for Leaders by May 1 and e-mail instructions to students by May 15.

Mid-April	May 1	May 15-June 5*	First week of July	Mid-Sep & Mid-Jan
FFL informs congregations of Full Tuition scholarship awardees	<b>Deadline for congregations</b> to submit names of nominated students to Fund for Leaders	<b>Students register and apply</b> online in ELCA GrantMaker <a href="https://elca.fluxx.io">https://elca.fluxx.io</a>	<b>Students accept Grant Agreement</b> online in ELCA GrantMaker	FFL payments to ELCA seminaries: Fall 1/2 in Sep. Spring 1/2 in Jan.

\*No funds can be awarded to students who have not completed an application during the scholarship cycle.

### FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Instructions for students applying through ELCA GrantMaker: [Our Scholarships - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America \(elca.org\)](#) Scroll to: Interested in applying? Learn more [here](#).
- Any questions? Please contact us, or have students contact us, at [fundforleaders@elca.org](mailto:fundforleaders@elca.org) or 773-380-2940