

The Rev. Amanda Ullrich and the Rev. Jeremy Ullrich

Amanda and Jeremy Ullrich live in Bartlett, Texas, with their three young children. A clergy couple, they met and married while pursuing undergraduate degrees at Texas Lutheran University in Seguin and went on to study at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn. Reflecting on their time in seminary, the couple agreed that moving so far from home felt overwhelming at times. They came from a close-knit community, and meeting new people was hard. Still, as Fund for Leaders (FFL) scholarship recipients, they knew the greater church community was behind them, supporting, challenging and praying for them as they opened themselves up to a new place and a new call.



Following seminary, the couple moved back to Texas. Jeremy served as pastor of Shepherd King Lutheran Church in Lubbock and Amanda as pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Levelland and St. Martin Lutheran Church in Littlefield. Amanda reflects, “I remember seeing the church sign read ‘Pastor Amanda’ and thinking, ‘Who is Pastor Amanda?!’ They could call me pastor before I could call myself that.”

As they fulfilled their ministry calls, Amanda and Jeremy grew their family, having three children over six years. Eventually, Amanda took a break from ministry to focus on raising them. She emphasized that the privilege to do so resulted from the gift of being debt-free once they left seminary.

In March 2021, Jeremy answered a new call at St. John Lutheran Church in Bartlett. Mindful of the role FFL had played in their lives and careers, Jeremy and Amanda set up automatic giving to the fund and included it in their will.

“When we were in seminary, a tiny chunk of money seemed like a lot,” says Jeremy. “But we thought about all the small chunks of money that it took to build our scholarships. A lot of those people were the people in the pew. That was the church loving on us before we even came to the church. We feel called to reciprocate that. We give to make a difference.”

Now, as regular donors to FFL, the couple hope to impart a message to other donors. Jeremy says, “I would encourage potential donors to think openly and broadly about the traditional minister model and the Holy Spirit’s journey. Our message of love and acceptance is attracting people who don’t fit the traditional mold, and the Holy Spirit is present and alive in those individuals in a real way. Some of the most exciting individuals in need of funding are folks who realized church was a found family and sought it out. We must recognize all of them are worthy.”

To learn more please contact the Rev. Marissa Krey, director, ELCA Fund for Leaders, at Marissa.Krey@elca.org, or visit ELCA.org/GiveFFL.