



ELCA Fund for Leaders 2022-2023 class

ELCA Fund for Leaders

EQUIPPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS

The ELCA Fund for Leaders is the scholarship program of our church supporting students of tremendous promise who are attending ELCA seminaries as they prepare to become pastors and deacons. By making seminary more affordable, the ELCA Fund for Leaders enables more future ministers to go to seminary and helps them graduate with less debt, empowering those whom God calls into ministry to go and serve as the church needs and the Holy Spirit leads.

The ELCA Fund for Leaders was created by an action of the 1997 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, providing its first scholarships in 2000. Since then the program has supported over 1,200 qualified candidates with more than \$28 million in scholarship support.

Our alums – past recipients of scholarships – are now serving congregations and organizations across the ELCA and around the world. These pastors and deacons were able to accept calls where they were needed most, free from the concern of paying burdensome student loans.

The long-range goal for the ELCA Fund for Leaders is to provide full-tuition support for every candidate at an ELCA seminary. Currently, ELCA Fund for Leaders endowment funds have a combined value of \$80 million. Though we've come a long way since the Fund for Leaders was established, we still have a way to go before reaching our goal of the \$400 million needed to support all candidates for ministry at our ELCA seminaries.

"I am so excited for the ways in which the Holy Spirit is leading me in this discernment journey, and thankful for the space that the Fund for Leaders program has given me to pause, listen and follow," said Wilmus "Roger" Randolph III, a 2019 FFL federal chaplaincy scholarship recipient.

Providing this support will not only have an impact on those who receive scholarships; it will help the whole church because excellent leaders will be able to follow the call to rostered ministry and will positively impact those they serve. We are church together, and each of us has a unique role to play in furthering the mission and ministry of the ELCA.

OUR IMPACT



The Fund for Leaders is providing nearly **\$3.2 million in scholarship assistance to 345 ELCA seminary students** during the 2023-2024 academic year.



Since its creation the program has supported **over 1,200 qualified candidates with more than \$28 million** in scholarship support.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



I was 32 when I started seminary. I was feeling overwhelmed and seriously doubting my call when I received word that I had been awarded a Fund for Leaders scholarship. If my call to Word and Service is what God has freed me to do through Christ, then the Fund for Leaders has been the saving grace that has allowed me to answer it."

DEACON EMILY ORNER

2018 Fund for Leaders scholarship recipient



When I served as president of Wartburg Theological Seminary, one of our most significant partners in growing enrollment and reducing seminary debt became the Fund for Leaders. Growing deeply faithful, high-capacity seminary students means that churches will have leaders and the gospel will have proclaimers for decades to come."

THE REV. LOUISE N. JOHNSON

Executive for Vision, ELCA, and former president of Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa



I have a passion for supporting pastors, perhaps because of my experience growing up in a parsonage, as well as my life in ELCA congregations. The Fund for Leaders provided an ideal pathway for my plan to make a significant gift to the ELCA. Endowing a Fund for Leaders scholarship allowed me both to honor my father's memory and his decades of ministry and to support future church leaders. It has been a transforming experience to observe the impact of my gift for the exceptional individuals who are answering the call to ministry without financial burden. Giving to the Fund for Leaders has never been more important."

DIANE G. HILL

Member of the Fund for Leaders Leadership Table and member of All Saints Lutheran Church, Palatine, Ill.



Deacon Emily Orner, 2018 Fund for Leaders scholarship recipient



Wilmus "Roger" Randolph III, 2019 Fund for Leaders federal chaplaincy scholarship recipient

GET INVOLVED

There are many ways you can strengthen the work of the ELCA Fund for Leaders, including:

- Current gifts, including cash, checks, credit card donations, securities and real estate.
- A multiyear pledge of up to five years.
- Establishing a named endowment, which may be designated to a synod, region or congregation and provides annual tuition assistance into perpetuity.
- Monthly gifts to provide consistent, ongoing support.
- Planned gifts, including life-income gifts (such as charitable gift annuities and trusts), bequests and current gifts from retirement accounts, funded with noncash assets.
- Establishing a donor-advised fund.

Your mission funding director can assist you in finding the method that best fits your wishes and financial planning needs, and connect you with the ELCA Foundation should you wish to explore planned gift options. Get in touch with us at 773-380-2700 or, toll-free, at 800-638-3522.

ELCA.org/Give



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