



Gifted, passionate and faithful leaders are essential for nurturing and developing vibrant congregations and ministries. To invite more people into the way of Jesus, our church needs rostered leaders healthy in body, mind, and soul. Generous support of the ELCA Fund for Leaders from individuals, congregations, and synods enables our church to invest in the people that will lead our church forward - free to serve wherever God calls them! Through them, we are creating and sustaining the church of tomorrow.

ELCA Fund for Leaders Introduces a new director

As we approach 2022 and the 25th anniversary of the Fund for Leaders, we are pleased to welcome the Rev. Marissa Krey to our team. As an ELCA mission funding director, Marissa has already been working across the church to raise support for the fund and is excited to help lead the 25th anniversary celebration. A Fund for Leaders recipient herself, she is keenly aware of how such generosity impacts a rostered leader’s ability to lead by example. “In a world that often teaches scarcity, our church needs leaders who operate from a default of abundance,” she says. “Fund for Leaders alums have experienced God providing for them in a tangible way. This allows them to step out in faith and encourage their congregations and ministries not to let anything get in the way of what they believe God is calling them to do.”

Greater funds, larger awards, more scholarships

Much of the news for 2020 was negative, but there was some very positive news for the Fund for Leaders. Throughout 2020, generous people, congregations and synods gave just over \$3.9 million in new gifts to the fund, enabling us to exceed our fundraising goal for the year by 16.5%! Thanks to such remarkable generosity, and to a good year of growth for the ELCA Foundation’s Endowment Fund Pooled Trust — Fund A, the combined value of our Fund for Leaders endowment funds as of Dec. 31, 2020, was nearly \$76 million — more than ever before!

Thanks to that good news, beginning with the 2021-2022 academic year, we've increased the value of our full-tuition scholarships 5.5%, to \$19,000 per year, and the number of new full-tuition scholarship awards from 40 to 45. Of the 45 selectees now moving forward in the scholarship selection process, nine of them (20%) are people of color or whose first language is other than English. In related good news, this year our Fund for Leaders Federal Chaplaincy Ministry scholarship selection committee was able to award \$8,000 scholarships to each of the three students who applied for the coming academic year, double the amount of money awarded last year. All four recipients will be pursuing military chaplaincy. Finally, our Mission Developer scholarship selection committee awarded 10 scholarships to current seminary students who have been lifted up as having special gifts in the area of evangelism and starting new/emerging faith communities. Thanks be to God!

Fund for Leaders and the Florida Bahamas Synod

Our Synod, along with our Synodical Women's Organization, also award partial scholarships each year from endowed funds managed by Fund for Leaders.

Florida Bahamas Synod members Pr. Mark Bernthal, Vero Beach, and Steve and Lynn Blackledge, Sarasota, serve on the ELCA FFL Advisory Board.

Visit www.elca.org/fundforleaders.