

FAQs about the Bishop's Seminarian Fund

Doesn't the ELCA support seminary students?

Yes, but not like it once did. According to Financial Aid Office at Trinity, the actual cost of a year of seminary (including housing) is \$36,208. The tuition cost for next academic year will be \$16,800. The average student loan debt of seminary graduates who had to borrow money for their education is \$32,596. This does not include any undergraduate debt the seminarian may have taken on.

The truth is that it is getting harder and harder to find first calls that will allow graduates to service their indebtedness and still live in the communities they are called to serve.

The ELCA's Fund for Leaders is working to help this situation on a national basis, and we are in conversation with them about this appeal.

We have a seminarian from our congregation. Will our money go to her/him?

Absolutely. In that case, you don't even have to send a check to Synod House. Use the money you collect to support them in whatever arrangement you currently use. Just let us know what was raised through this appeal, and the person to whom you are sending it, please.

Where do we send the cash?

DON'T SEND CASH! You can send a separate check made payable to the Southeast Michigan Synod and indicate on the memo line – Seminarian Fund or if it's easier for you to include this amount in your regular Benevolence check, go ahead, but please let us know the amount you collected for our records by sending in the enclosed Report Form.

Can we do this on a different day than May 8?

Absolutely. It would be great if you could let us know that, however.

Can we get a Seminarian to be with us that day?

If you have a relationship with a seminarian, by all means invite him or her to be present if possible. Going forward, my hope is that we can strongly encourage our local candidates to be with our congregations on this day as a scheduled event.

How many seminarians are we trying to support through this appeal?

My records show that we have 14 students currently in seminary, studying for ordination. We will post a list of names and schools on our website so that you and your congregation might pray for them by name.

Is this going to be an annual event?

This is the fifth one so far!

Bishop Donald P. Kreiss

Revised April 13, 2016