



ELCA Fund for Leaders

Core Values of the Fund for Leaders Scholarship Program

Rooted in Faith: *Scripture, prayer and the sacraments are central to our faith.*

Spiritual maturity emerges through intentional practices and seasons of reflection, struggle, and transformation. ELCA rostered ministers are called to be deeply rooted in the word and to engage in a variety of spiritual disciplines. ***A successful applicant will articulate not just what they believe but how their beliefs impact the rhythms of their daily life.***

Humble Curiosity: *We lead by listening and learning.*

A faithful leader cultivates a posture of humility and recognizes that personal and spiritual growth often comes through collaboration, open-mindedness, and a willingness to be shaped by the experiences and insights of others. ***A Fund for Leaders scholar should demonstrate a passion for lifelong learning and share openly about how their beliefs and theology have evolved and grown over time.***

Grace-fueled Resilience: *We persevere not by our own strength but by trusting in God's sustaining grace.*

Throughout life's challenges, we are comforted and guided by the Spirit's presence and develop the spiritual and emotional endurance necessary for faithful ministry. We know, as Lutherans, that our ability to persevere is rooted in God's abundant grace, especially amid suffering and setbacks. ***We hope that applicants to the Fund for Leaders scholarship program will be vulnerable and share how the Spirit's presence has sustained them through hard times.*** As pastors and deacons, they will be called upon to bear witness to God's deep and abiding love, which is often revealed in times of pain, uncertainty, and fear.

Compassionate Presence: *We embody Christ's love through authentic relationships with our neighbors near and far. John urges, "Let us not love with word or speech but with actions and in truth" (1 John 3:18 NIV).*

Ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ bring a heart attuned to the needs of others. Compassion shapes our calling to walk alongside those who are suffering, to listen deeply and to advocate for justice. Empathy is not optional; it is the lens through which we see and serve all that is beloved by God, including the earth.

A Fund for Leaders scholar should demonstrate a commitment to living and proclaiming Christ's compassionate love in both their personal relationships and their public witness in local, state, national and international arenas. We hope our scholars will become transformative leaders in the ELCA's anti-racism efforts.

Integrity and Authenticity: *We lead with transparency and faithfulness to our convictions. We speak the truth in love.*

Integrity calls us to align our inner beliefs with our outward actions, even when it costs us. Authenticity fosters trust and allows people to move forward with us even when we do not all agree. ***A successful Fund for Leaders applicant will speak from the heart, trusting that the Spirit will equip them. We hope applicants will share about times they have maintained their core convictions when faced with competing values or priorities.***