

North/West Lower Michigan Synod of the ELCA Seminary Debt Reduction Assistance Application

PERSONAL INFORMATION (PLEASE PRINT)			DATE OF APPLICATION
First Name	Middle Initial	Last Name	Primary Telephone Number
Address			Email Address
Other names used in seminary, candidacy, or ministry			
Seminary / Theological School			Date of Graduation
First Call Location			Date of Ordination
Current Congregation / Ministry Site			Date of Installation
Address			Phone

Please provide a brief statement summarizing your current ministry, vision for ministry, and goals for the next five (5) years in ministry. (Please be brief, but attach additional sheets if needed.)
Please provide a brief statement explaining why you are requesting assistance based on your overall personal finances and budgeting. (Please be brief, but attach additional sheets if needed.)

Education Related Debt Information¹

SEMINARY / THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL DEBT INFORMATION (Attach additional sheets if needed.)	
Total Current Outstanding Debt	Current monthly payments & monthly principal amount
Lending Agency Name	Name on Loan
Lending Agency Address	Loan Number
NON-SEMINARY/THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL DEBT INFORMATION (Attach additional sheets if needed.)	
Total Current Outstanding Debt	Current monthly payments & monthly principal amount
Lending Agency Name	Name on Loan
Lending Agency Address	Loan Number

I understand and authorize verification of the debt amount through the seminary I attended and/or loan provider and that this request is confidential within the NWLMS Seminary Debt Reduction Assistance Team, Bishop's office, and Executive Committee of the Synod Council.

I also understand and agree that as a condition of receiving seminary debt reduction assistance I am required to (1) remain an active, called rostered minister within the NWLMS for three (3) years after receiving assistance; (2) fulfill financial literacy education and counseling requirements; (3) share information with others within the NWLMS about the program's existence and benefits.

Signature	Date
Return completed form to: The Rev. Julie Schneider-Thomas, Bishop North/West Lower Michigan Synod ELCA 2740 Fuller Ave. NE Grand Rapids, MI 49505-3746 P: 517-321-5066; bishopjst@mittensynod.org	Applications are due on or before January 31, 2027 Applications submitted after this date will not be considered. Refer to the checklist on page 3 to ensure all required documents are included.

Bishop's Initials _____

¹ Applications with seminary debt will be prioritized above those with only non-seminary debt. Grants for those with only non-seminary debt may be awarded depending on funding available for grants.

For a complete application, attach the following:

All applicants:

- ☐ Documentation of attendance at boundary training within last three years
- ☐ Letter of recommendation from my current congregation's church council president
- ☐ Letter of recommendation from my current congregation's church council treasurer
- ☐ Copy of my annual Rostered Leader Annual Report

Applicants who completed seminary more than 12 months ago:

- ☐ Summary of continuing education/synod activities/events attended in the last twelve months

Applicants who completed seminary within the last 12 months:

- ☐ Transcript
- ☐ Summary of seminary activities, clinical experience, internship information, work/study, any synod activities, etc.

Applicants who received a prior award:

- ☐ Summary of financial literacy counseling and education attended or completed since your last award, along with highlights of significant learnings.

Any applications missing documents cannot be considered until the missing items have been submitted.