

LILLY GRANT SUMMARY

Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA

June 2016

Lilly grant to address economic challenges facing Rocky Mountain Synod rostered leaders

The Rocky Mountain Synod has been invited to participate in an initiative of the Lilly Endowment to address economic challenges facing rostered leaders. The synod has received a \$25,000 seed grant to fund the initial work leading up to a potential three-year grant of \$500,000.

The cost of seminary education, coupled with undergraduate debt loads, often results in major financial challenges, especially for first call leaders who often serve more economically challenged congregations. Rising costs of medical care and unanticipated medical emergencies can also take a toll.

Since the Rocky Mountain Synod is also in the midst of a strategic planning process, the timing is excellent for asking questions of sustainability. Rostered leaders will be asked to complete an online survey so that the planning team can assess actual fiscal challenges facing rostered leaders in our synod. Information from this will help determine how to design appropriate programs using the half-million dollar grant so that the most pressing challenges can be addressed. Receiving the Lilly grant will greatly strengthen the work of strategic planning and allow the synod to more powerfully support our leaders.

Pastor Ron Roschke, who recently retired as an Assistant to the Bishop in the Rocky Mountain Synod, is spearheading the Lilly grant initiative.

“Without the fiscal foundation of healthy leadership all other work in the church suffers,” he said. “We are striving to weave these passions for fiscal health into our character and identity.”

Receipt of the three-year grant would provide for the development of a Ministerial Excellence Fund which would be coordinated with a new effort for developing stewardship education among the congregations of our synod, as well as some potential aid to leaders with great need.



Rocky Mountain Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.