

It's for YOU

"When I first heard about the debt-relief grants, I was hesitant to apply-\$2,000 wasn't going to change anything or even make a dent. Except it did change something. When the grants team approved my application and my calling body enthusiastically agreed to provide the matching funds for the grant, I was no longer carrying the burden alone. There was a new freedom and grace knowing I had the Church Together making space to hold my concerns and offering their support."

"I am the pastor of a fairly small congregation and my salary will probably never be fully up to synod guidelines [and] there isn't much extra to add to my retirement fund..."

"I am in my first call as a pastor and have been facing tremendous student loan debt, along with the challenge of a first call salary..."

"I am in a part time-call with a salary under \$30,000 a year. My husband and I relocated and are still paying off moving expenses..."

For more info on MEF:

Contact Julie Nelson

Associate Director

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Ministerial Excellence Fund

Generosity in partnership with Lilly Endowment Inc.
and the Rocky Mountain Synod





This is for YOU! Educate, Equip, Enact
3E is a grant all rostered ministers
can participate in.

| Grant Type | Grant Amount | Incentive – Additional \$ | Maximum Possible | Frequency |
|--|---|---|------------------|-----------|
| Education Debt Relief (seminary & undergraduate) | \$5,000 (4 of 4 criteria met) \$4,250 (3 of 4 criteria met) \$3,500 (2 of 4 criteria met) | N/A | | One-time |
| Credit Card Debt Relief | \$2,000 | Raise up to \$1K, match up to \$1K | \$4,000 | Yearly |
| Medical Debt Relief | \$2,000 | Raise up to \$1K, match up to \$1K | \$4,000 | Yearly |
| Retirement Savings Incentive | \$2,000 | 55 or older: Raise up to \$1K, match up to \$1K | \$4,000 | Yearly |
| Continuing Education | \$2,000 | N/A | \$2,000 | Yearly |
| Other Debt Relief | \$2,000 | Raise up to \$1K, match up to \$1K | \$4,000 | Yearly |
| Emergency Debt Relief | Up to \$1,000 | N/A | | Yearly |

To inquire:
[https://www.rmselfca.org/
lilly-MEF-initial-inquiry](https://www.rmselfca.org/lilly-MEF-initial-inquiry)

Education Debt Relief criteria checkpoints:

1. Congregation operating expenses \$200K or less
2. Annual household income \$65K or less
3. Outstanding debt for education is 80% or more of annual household income
4. Outstanding debt apart from education debt (but not including mortgage) is 50% or more of annual household income

Revised July 11, 2018

Rostered ministers do not go into ministry to get rich. In fact, most pay a deep financial price in preparing for ministry. Because churchwide support for seminary education has decreased significantly, students have had to increase their loans. As a result, many face severe financial challenges: college and seminary debt are burdensome, other forms of debt can impair ministry, and saving sufficiently for retirement can become impossible. Newer rostered ministers tend to be in congregations with fewer resources. In partnership, and because we share in the burdens of the other, we have established the Ministerial Excellence Fund (MEF) to provide grants to those who need assistance. To apply, go to <https://www.rmselfca.org/Lilly-MEF-Apply>.