



# VITAL LEADERS

## ENDOWMENT FUND

The Vital Leaders Endowment Fund was established to sustain rural ministry and enhance the quality of leadership for pastors and deacons. This fund supports rostered ministers in a variety of ways, including **Student Loan Debt Repayment** and **Pension Equity Grants**. These grants are a way for the synod to provide care for rostered ministers in our synod who faithfully contribute to the work we do together. To maintain a healthy culture in the EaND Synod and to be considered for one of these grants, it is expected that rostered ministers participate in synod assembly, fall theological conference, and complete boundaries training every three years.

Any ELCA rostered minister who is/was under call in the Eastern North Dakota Synod during 2025 is eligible to apply.

## STUDENT LOAN DEBT REPAYMENT GRANT

This grant is intended to help relieve rostered ministers of student loan debt. The grant amount is a percentage of what is paid by the rostered minister over the course of the year. The percentage paid by the endowment fund increases with each year of service in the Eastern North Dakota Synod, up to six years. Your first year, you receive \$100 per month of service in the EaND Synod, after that, the base is \$750.

### Application Details:

- In order to receive funds, you must have made payments in 2025.
- There are two forms (tabs) to the application - the Cover Sheet and the Calculation Sheet. Both forms need to be completed.
- All application data must be entered into the excel document (form). No handwritten applications will be accepted.
- Supporting documentation of all loan payments must accompany your application. (A print out from your online account will suffice)
- If you received a debt repayment grant last year, please make sure that the synod payment is not included in your total paid for 2025.
- Please verify your lender information and make sure your lender mailing address and account details are correct! Do not just copy your information from last year, as your loans may have been sold to a different company or changed the address for payment processing. If there are any changes to your lender information between submitting the application and the time the grants are disbursed, you are responsible for notifying the synod office. If your grant payment is returned due to incorrect information, your grant may be forfeited.

- Incomplete applications will not be accepted.
  - To protect your personal information, electronic applications will not be accepted.
  - Completed applications must be postmarked or dropped off at the synod office no later than April 30, 2026.
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## PENSION EQUITY GRANT

This grant is intended to assist rostered ministers who may be compensated under synod guidelines to ensure that their pension is not compromised as a result of accepting a call under guidelines. If your total defined compensation is less than \$60,000, you are eligible for this grant.

### Application Details:

- Supporting documentation of compensation from Portico must accompany your application. (A screen shot of your total defined compensation page will suffice)
  - All application data must be entered into the excel document (form). No handwritten applications will be accepted.
  - Incomplete applications will not be accepted.
  - To protect your personal information, electronic applications will not be accepted.
  - Completed applications must be postmarked or dropped off at the synod office no later than April 30, 2026.
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### Contact Information:

If you have questions about these grants or application, please contact the synod office or [endowment@eandsynod.org](mailto:endowment@eandsynod.org).

#### Mailing Address (mail applications):

Eastern North Dakota Synod  
PO Box 2019  
Fargo, ND 58107

#### Office Address (drop-off applications):

1555 43rd St S, Suite 100  
Fargo, ND 58103

Office Hours: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9am-4pm