

# H. GEORGE ANDERSON FUND FOR LEADERS ENDOWMENT

*A Promise to Provide Scholarships for Seminarians from the Northeastern Iowa Synod, ELCA*

## Our Commitment to Grow Future Leaders

**This synod is committed to growing the number of candidates for parish ministry to fill an anticipated increase in open calls due to retiring pastors.**

The Northeastern Iowa Synod provides support and mentoring to those who feel a sense of call from God to serve in a rostered ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- Since 2010, 18 candidates from the Northeastern Iowa Synod have graduated from seminary and received approval for assignment to a synod and readiness to receive a letter of call. In that same time period, 45 pastors serving congregations in this synod have retired.
- Of the 93 pastors and rostered lay leaders serving congregations in the Northeastern Iowa Synod in 2015, 40 of those are age 60 or older. That means that nearly half of the active parish leaders in this synod have the potential of retiring within the next five years.
- The imbalance between the number of individuals entering candidacy for ministry in the Northeastern Iowa Synod and the number of active parish pastors retiring will continue to deepen unless action is taken to support and encourage a new generation of rostered leaders.

## Our Commitment to Support Seminary Students

In 2004, the Northeastern Iowa Synod Assembly initiated the Fund for Leaders Endowment as a way to help seminary students from the Northeastern Iowa Synod with the high costs of education and to encourage new people to enter the ministry. Renamed the H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders Endowment in 2015, the fund is committed to providing scholarships for seminarians from the Northeastern Iowa Synod to reduce their financial debt for education.

“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into the harvest.”

—Luke 10:2

### Katie Frush

Second Year Student  
Wartburg Theological Seminary  
Dubuque, Iowa



***“The amount of loans I have had to take without a scholarship, in addition to my undergraduate loans, can make the future look a little scary. I fully expect to be dealing with debt probably for the majority of time that I will be doing ministry, and that, at times, is a little frustrating to think about, but I also have faith that God will provide a way.”***

**“Congregations need leaders that are able to handle the great gift that we have in the Gospel and the Word of God.”**

**— The Rev. Dr. H. George Anderson**

### **The costs of seminary education can place a heavy financial burden on students.**

- The average annual tuition and fees for ELCA seminaries are about \$16,500 for the 2015-2016 school year. A typical student may also incur living expenses estimated at \$28,000 or more while in seminary.
- In 2012, 84 percent of ELCA seminary master of divinity graduates had educational debt, which averaged \$41,245. A graduate earning a typical first-call salary could expect to have difficulty managing educational debt repayment of \$31,500 or higher. (Source: Auburn Center for the Study of Theological Education)
- Extensive educational debt can hinder seminary graduates from accepting calls to smaller or lower-paying congregations simply because the salaries will not allow them to meet monthly loan payments of \$300 to \$600.
- Scholarship funding for seminary students can help relieve some of their debt and may help to attract more candidates for ministry and first-call pastors to the Northeastern Iowa Synod, where the majority of congregations are located in rural communities.

### **Daniel Hanson**

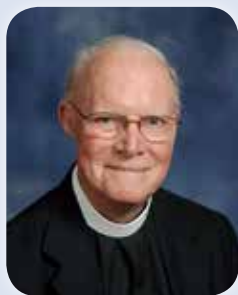
Senior, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.  
Recipient of an ELCA Fund for Leaders Scholarship

***“If I would not have had a tuition scholarship, I would have had to work five to 10 years before entering seminary, so the scholarship really made 10 years of ministry possible. I am excited to be able to answer God’s call in the present, knowing that I will be able to leave seminary at age 27 ready for full-time parish ministry.”***



### **About the Rev. Dr. H. George Anderson**

The Rev. Dr. H. George Anderson served as the second Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America from



October 1995 to October 2001. He served as president of Luther College in Decorah from 1982 to 1996, and prior to that he was on the faculty of Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, South Carolina, where he served as president from

1970 to 1982.

As Presiding Bishop, Anderson saw the need for a nationwide system to financially assist ELCA seminary students with the rising tuition costs and debts they faced. His vision led to the establishment of the ELCA Fund for Leaders endowment in 2000.

“Getting people through seminary was so critical to the church,” he said. “If seminary costs could not be funded through a churchwide program, we needed to find individuals who would be so impressed by the need that they would contribute.”

The Northeastern Iowa Synod’s H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders Endowment honors Anderson’s wisdom and vision to create a nationwide means to fully fund tuition scholarships for seminary students.

“Congregations need leaders that are able to handle the great gift that we have in the Gospel and the Word of God,” Anderson said. “It’s an immense thing — the Word of God. Not everybody can be a good steward of that great gift, so I think it is important that we help persons become leaders who can rightly divine the word of truth the Bible says.”

# Our Campaign Goal

To fully fund the H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders Endowment in order to provide full tuition scholarships for candidates from the Northeastern Iowa Synod who are attending ELCA seminaries.

- Generous offerings over the past 10 years have helped the Fund for Leaders Endowment grow to nearly \$100,000; however, it is vital that the endowment grow at a much faster rate to prepare for the impending retirement of nearly half of this synod's active parish pastors over the next five to 10 years, and the pastors retiring throughout the ELCA
  - Seminary students will receive distributions once per semester. For 10 students, which is the current number of Northeastern Iowa Synod candidates enrolled in ELCA seminaries, annual distributions would be approximately \$165,000.
  - The scholarship funds cover students enrolled in any ELCA seminary, including those in the off-campus distributive learning programs.
  - Donations to the endowment fund are tax deductible and invested in perpetuity through the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust as part of the "Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA."
  - Withdrawals for distribution will come from only the earned investment income; no funds will be taken from the endowment principal.
- The scholarship fund strengthens local congregations, the synod and the broader church because it can help increase the number of trained leaders available to serve in ministerial settings:

- Offering full tuition scholarships for seminary study removes potential

debt and encourages young adults and those with families to pursue answering the call toward lay or ordained ministries.

- Funding the full tuition costs of seminary means that first-call pastors and rostered lay leaders can begin their ministries without the burden of additional debt. This gives them more flexibility in what kind of calls they are able to accept financially, frees them from anxieties related to debt, and strengthens their ability to practice Biblical stewardship and tithing.
- First-call pastors who do not have to make student loan payments are in a better position to accept calls to smaller congregations, which can strengthen rural ministries of the Northeastern Iowa Synod.
- In addition to supporting seminary students, the H. George Anderson endowment fund is a way to also support the eight seminaries of the ELCA, including Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque where most of our candidates attend.
- Some 122 students across the country received scholarships in 2015 from the 40 synods that have their own fully funded scholarship endowments. The Northeastern Iowa Synod seeks to join that list to encourage those with a sense of call to ministry to seek out our candidacy program.

## NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD BY THE NUMBERS

- One of 65 synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- 242 rostered leaders (pastors, diaconal ministers and associates in ministry who are active, retired or non-active)
- 93 active rostered leaders serving congregations (pastors, diaconal ministers and associates in ministry)
- Active rostered leaders by age:  
10 under age 40  
17 ages 40-49  
26 ages 50-59  
32 ages 60-65  
8 ages 66 and older
- 151 congregations and two synodically authorized worshipping communities
- 55 congregations with an average attendance of less than 50
- 2 ELCA colleges:  
Luther College, Decorah  
Wartburg College, Waverly
- Part of a covenant cluster with three seminaries:  
Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque  
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago  
Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio



**“The importance of this fund to the future of the Lutheran Church in Northeastern Iowa can hardly be overstated. Let’s not let tuition costs be a stumbling block to those called by God to serve in this church.”**

**— Bishop Steven Ullestad, Northeastern Iowa Synod**

## Your Commitment Can Strengthen the Future of This Church

A gift to the H. George Anderson Fund for Leaders Endowment is the most effective strategy to ensure that faithful and talented men and women from the Northeastern Iowa Synod will be able to answer the call to leadership in the ELCA. This fund is part of an ongoing churchwide promise that candidates for ministry will have the opportunity to pursue a path toward informed faith and passionate discipleship for this church and for our future.

Immediate gifts to the fund can be made through cash, stocks, commod-

ities or the transfer of other assets. You can also plan a gift for the future, such as a charitable gift annuity, bequest, or life insurance proceeds. All gifts can be made in memory or in honor of someone dear to you, such as a pastor, Sunday school teacher, congregation, family member or another who has influenced your Christian faith.

Commitments may be paid over a multi-year period with payment beginning at the discretion of the donor. All gifts are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

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