

The Episcopal Church is the only major denomination in the United States that does not have a central funding source to support seminarians in their education and training. Today, funds come from sponsoring parishes and dioceses and through scholarships from seminaries, and we give thanks for those who give faithfully. These gifts help seminarians, but the financial need greatly outstrips the current level of giving.

FUNDING FUTURE LEADERS (FFL) is an initiative of The Society for the Increase of the Ministry (SIM) to provide scholarships to meet the financial needs of seminarians. Since 1857, SIM has awarded \$6.5 million to 4,400 students, but today much more is needed. In fact, it will take \$10 million in scholarships annually to ensure that seminarians do not incur *additional* debt while they are in seminary. The financial goal of FUNDING FUTURE LEADERS is to raise \$200 million in the next 20 years to produce the income for the needs-based scholarships.

Just as we are all called to ministry, we are all called to support one another in preparing for and carrying out those ministries. To find out how you can respond to God's call to help seminarians, visit www.FundingFutureLeaders.org, send an e-mail to info@FundingFutureLeaders.org, call 860.233.1732 or fill out the form below. Thank you for your financial support enabling men and women to answer God's call on their lives.

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Name

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Enclosed is a cash contribution of \$ _____.

(Please make checks payable to FUNDING FUTURE LEADERS.)

Please contact me about making contributions through a:

_____ Gift of Stocks or Real Estate _____ Bequest _____ Planned Gift



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ANSWERING GOD'S CALL

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*"Here I am."*



Those were Samuel's first words when God called him in the night. Initially, young Samuel thought that it was the prophet Eli who was calling, but with Eli's help, Samuel was able to discern God's call.

As Christians, God calls all of us to ministry. For some, the call, much like that of Samuel's, is to ordained ministry—to administer the Sacraments, to preach and teach the Word of God and to lead others in ministry.

The Most Rev. Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, writes, "*Vocation is what's left when all the games of self-deception have ceased.*" However, some cannot answer God's call to an ordained vocation because they do not have the financial means to attend a theological seminary.

Since a three-year seminary education costs between \$50,000 and \$90,000—and even more for those with families—many men and women must go into debt to finance their training. In a survey among students at the 11 Episcopal seminaries, 58 percent had debt averaging \$42,874 only *halfway* through seminary.

Faced with such costs and potential debt, some cannot consider seminary at all. Others quit after starting seminary, and still others cannot pursue parish ministry because of financial considerations.

For the Episcopal Church to grow, we must have a solid, diverse supply of committed, articulate, well-prepared leaders. Likewise, if we hope to develop excellent leaders for the 21st century, we must solve the seminarian debt crisis.



support them can answer the call of God, then we're not giving our Church a fair shake at all the gifts God has provided us."

The Society for the Increase of the Ministry (SIM), with support from the Episcopal Church Foundation and in collaboration with other Episcopal organizations, has launched FUNDING FUTURE LEADERS: A National Endowment for Episcopal Seminarians (FFL) to address the seminarian debt problem.

The financial goal of FFL is to raise \$200 million over the next 20 years. The endowment income of \$10 million will provide needs-based scholarship grants for seminarians—approved by their bishops and diocesan commissions on ministry—who are studying for a Master of Divinity degree at Episcopal seminaries.

The purpose of FUNDING FUTURE LEADERS is to ensure that seminarians do not incur *additional* debt while they are in

seminary. You can help solve the seminarian debt crisis by:

- **Praying** for the Episcopal Church and our seminarians
- **Contributing** to the FFL national scholarship endowment by means of a direct cash contribution, stocks, a bequest or other planned gift.
- Helping us **identify** and **access** potential donors.

For more information, visit [www.FundingFutureLeaders.org](http://www.FundingFutureLeaders.org), send an e-mail to [info@FundingFutureLeaders.org](mailto:info@FundingFutureLeaders.org), call 860.233.1732 or mail the form below to FUNDING FUTURE LEADERS.

Thank you for your investment in the newest generation of clergy. Your continued support will help develop committed, Christ-centered, dynamic, articulate and well-prepared ordained leaders for the Episcopal Church in the 21st century.

## HOW TO SOLVE THE SEMINARIAN DEBT CRISIS



*"If Episcopalians knew about the economic challenges facing seminarians, they would want to help support the newest generation of clergy."*

Stephanie Yancy, Class of 2006  
General Theological Seminary

In a world of growing religious extremes, the Episcopal Church provides a powerful center alternative, a *via media*, based on Scripture, tradition and reason. The Episcopal Church invites people to take a life-long spiritual journey to discover the truth of the Gospel in their everyday life. Our clergy lead the Church's effort to reach out to the millions who hunger for the life-giving message of Jesus Christ.

Yet many of our clergy are under an unnecessary burden. Their indebtedness from college and seminary weighs them down in their ministry and their personal life.

In a 2006 survey of the class of 2007 at 11 Episcopal seminaries, 58 percent of the students had debt. The average debt was \$42,874 only *halfway* through their training. Meanwhile, the annual median compensation package (including housing allowance) for new Episcopal clergy is \$44,500; yet bank lenders say you need \$60,000 of income to pay for living expenses and to effectively manage debt of \$38,000. (*Christian Century*, August 10, 2004)

The reasons for the dramatic increase in seminarian debt in recent years are:

- Increased costs of undergraduate and seminary education
- A very recent trend of younger seminarians, who do not have accumulated financial resources
- Lack of adequate funding sources for those pursuing a Master of Divinity degree in preparation for full-time ministry.

**The Episcopal Church remains the only major denomination in the United States that does not have a central funding source to support seminarians in their education and training.**

Some seminarians receive financial assistance from their sponsoring parishes and dioceses, and seminaries work very hard to raise funds for scholarships for their students. However, the amounts vary widely. Without a central funding source, no coherent plan exists to financially help those who respond to God's call to ordained ministry.

As one seminarian said, "If only the rich or those who can find rich people to

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