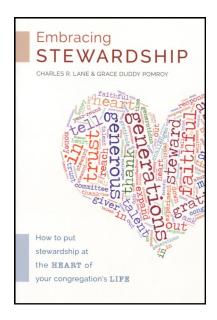




Central/Southern Illinois Synod

April 2016

Part of our stewardship ministry is to assist individuals and congregations with the development of financial strategies that will help them to be good stewards of the resources that God has given them. This issue of "Steward Tips" focuses on "*Embracing Stewardship*", a stewardship book; and what you and your congregation can do to help address the issue of seminary educational debt.



Embracing Stewardship

You and your congregation are invited to order copies of "Embracing Stewardship: How To Put Stewardship at the Heart of Your Congregation's Life" by Charles R. Lane and Grace Duddy Pomroy at a reduced rate. The book provides a solid framework for the practice of stewardship and also includes chapters like:

- Talk about money when you aren't asking for any
- Conduct an excellent annual response program
- Tell your congregation's stewardship story to the congregation
- Develop a plan for thanking
- Expand the ways of giving to the congregation
- Talk about stewardship all year
- Reach new audiences
- Talk about money in two distinct ways

This book normally sells for \$20 (which includes \$5 for postage + handling). Through the Mission Support & Stewardship Education Committee, this book is available for only \$10.00! You may order multiple copies of the book.

Order forms are available on the synod website, www.csis-elca.org Complete order form and return to the synod office along with a check payable to "Central/Southern Illinois Synod" for \$10.00 per copy ordered. May 15, 2016 is the order deadline. Book orders will be distributed this year's synod assembly, June 2-4, 2016. A limited number of additional copies may be available for purchase at the synod assembly at the LOW introductory rate of \$10.00.

Stewardship Perspective: Seminary Educational Debt



The Supply of and Demand for Clergy in the ELCA

A report entitled "The Supply of and Demand for Clergy in the ELCA", written by Adam DeHoek and Kenneth Inskeep, released by ELCA Research and Evaluation in March, 2016, indicated the following data (between 2005-2014):

- The number of clergy serving congregations has declined from 9,105 to 6,868.
- ELCA M. Div. graduates at ELCA seminaries went down from 245 to 209.
- First year enrollments in ELCA seminaries decreased from 310 to 214.

The report concludes: "...among active clergy serving congregations the most significant component of loss is the number of retirements" and "the most significant component of gain is new ordinations".

The authors state: "The church needs more persons who will consider ordained ministry and become ordained pastors. Clearly, those concerned about the future of the church should seek out and encourage people they believe might be good pastors and open to the call. Programs to do so should be encouraged and supported by the church."

The Path to Ordination

In order to become a pastor in the ELCA, candidates must have earned an undergraduate degree before entering seminary. Students are not required to have an undergraduate degree (or minor) in religious or biblical studies in order to attend seminary. The seminary curriculum for a Masters of Divinity degree usually involves four years of study, including one year of internship, a quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education, and possibly some additional time in contextual education. The ELCA seminaries estimate that the average cost of a seminary education (excluding internship) costs approx. \$35,000-\$40,000 per year x three years=\$105,000-\$120,000 per student. This is over and above the expenses incurred by the student for their undergraduate education. It is not difficult to see why attempts to reduce seminary educational debt is a priority for students.



Pedal for a Purpose

The offerings for the 2016 Pedal for a Purpose have been designated for the reduction of seminary educational debt. This year's ride, May 30-June 2, seeks to raise \$30,000 for this cause. Checks may be made payable to: "Central/Southern Illinois Synod" with a note "Pedal for a Purpose". Checks may be sent the synod office at 524 S. Fifth St., Springfield, IL 62701-1822 or offerings may be brought to the 2016 synod assembly, which will be held in East Peoria, IL, June 2-4, 2016. Thank you for your generous support! For more information about Pedal for a Purpose, visit www.csis-elca.org