



CALL WAITING

For many of us, call waiting is a useful tool to have for our home or business phones. We need to respond to people that need us. Some calls are just more important than others and need to be answered promptly.

There are many individuals in our synod who have felt the call to ministry, but have put this important call on hold. With the need for pastors, this is an emergency call and we as a church can not afford to keep them waiting. In many cases, the reason they have put this important call to ministry on hold, is money. We need to hear the “Call Waiting” signal and respond with our love, support and our monetary gifts.

Those who have not put the call to ordained ministry on hold have often put themselves in a financial situation that forces them to hold off paying their seminary debt. This holding pattern is even more serious because it causes guilt that the pastor is not adequately providing for her/his family, as I Timothy 5:8 would tell them, *“Whoever does not provide for relatives, and especially family members, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”* This guilt is intensified when the pastor can not act on the call to encourage good financial stewardship in their congregations when they feel challenged to respond themselves. In some cases, the only way to start paying for their debt, is to look for a new call before they or their current congregation is ready.

The third area that is put on hold for a pastor also relates to their obligation to provide for their families. If a pastor is not paid at suggested guidelines, their pension suffers and they fall behind being able to provide for their loved ones in the future.

P.S. The phone is still ringing. The need is great. Please answer this call. It’s still an emergency and can not be put on hold any longer!



THE CHALLENGE

**How can you or your congregation help support
“THE SW MN SYNOD FUND FOR
LEADERSHIP SUPPORT?”**

First, I would like to challenge each congregation or parish alignment within the Southwestern Minnesota Synod to strive for a \$500 gift to this fund during April. Maybe this gift could be matched through a fundraiser or through the involvement of Thrivent.

Secondly, I have worked with many of the congregations in our synod to create or help build their endowments. I know most congregational endowments lift up the synod or other ELCA ministries through their bylaws. I would further suggest for those congregations who have an endowment that they would also consider a gift of \$500.

Thirdly, I would ask each member who is able, to make a personal gift that flows through your congregation to help with this synodical effort that flows back to support your congregation.

As part of what I do in my position with the synod, I would encourage anyone who is interested in making a testamentary gift to your congregation, the synod or the national and global ministries of the ELCA, or any other what I call “Visions for Ministry,” to call me. I would welcome the chance to visit with you for a personal and confidential conversation to facilitate your wishes. You may contact me by mail, by phone or through my e-mail:

Bill Elmstrom
SW MN Synod Planned Giving Coordinator

744 Highland Hwy
Ortonville, MN 56278

Phone: 320-839-3326 Work
800-542-0942 Cell

e-mail: Elmstrom@wat.midco.net