

Grace Vocations Scholarships: Raising up a new generation of leaders for God's work in the world

Applications for Grace Vocations Scholarships are being accepted through June 15, 2022. If you've heard of these scholarships before, perhaps you thought they are for students going to seminary to become a pastor. While that is certainly true, the mission and purpose is far broader as the first paragraph on the application clearly states:

Recognizing the blessings of strong leadership, Grace Lutheran Church is committed to an intentional focus of raising up a new generation of leaders for the mission and ministry of the church. Through the Church Vocations Initiative, Grace will provide support, encouragement, and financial assistance to members who wish to pursue a vocational ministry, either within the church or in the secular world.

In a world changed by Covid-19, itself a corona or crown of thorns, questions about what truly matters have come to more prominence. There are entire fields of study on the impact of spirituality on physical and mental health. Others study eco-spirituality as a means for supporting environmental sustainability – literally the work of protecting Creation given to us by God in the first chapter of Genesis. Careers in equity, fairness, and building a values-based economy can also be a route for pursuing God's work in the secular world.

All these fields of study and career goals qualify as pursuit of a vocational ministry that can be supported by a Grace Vocations Scholarship. Recent recipients have used it to pursue medical and social work degrees as well as seminary study.

There are those who hear a clear call to ministry while for others the signal can break up for a long time in their lives. Vocations Scholarship recipient Amy Gillespie started out studying psychology, getting a Master of Social Work, and then working in social services before going to seminary and becoming a pastor. She phrased it this way when asked how being a Vocations Scholarship recipient helped her:

It helped me knowing that the people of Grace saw something in me, that they were willing to take a chance on a college kid who didn't know exactly what path she would take. At that point, it wasn't clear that I'd have a church vocation, but I always felt that support and encouragement!

Vocation Scholarships are Grace's way of strengthening the signal so that the word of Christ can be heard.

- Scholarships are available for members of Grace who are full-time students in a graduate program or their last two years of undergraduate work.
- Email Esther Armstrong (earmstrong@graceriverforest.org) for a copy of the application.
- Applications are also available at the reception desk at Grace.
- If you have questions, please reach out to Pastor Lyle (dlyle@graceriverforest.org) or Kate Hogenson at khogenson@loyaltylandscape.com.
- Applications are due June 15!