



**Dakotas Conference**  
The United Methodist Church



**Grow. Reach. Heal.**

*The Dakotas Conference vision is for all congregations to live out Jesus' call to grow in love of God and neighbor, reach new people, and heal a broken world.*

## Ministerial Student Aid Resources

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The Dakotas Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, the Dakotas United Methodist Foundation and GBHEM offer student aid for certified candidates through Seminary and Course of Study Loan/Grants, Merit Scholarships, and Excellence in Clergy Leadership Scholarships, as well as debt reduction relief for new clergy within the conference. For current student guidelines, click [here](#) or contact the [Leadership Development Office](#).

The following programs are available:

**[Seminary Loan/Grant](#)** – Offered through the Dakotas Conference. Yearly max \$2,000; lifetime max of \$6,000; \$2,000 forgiven per years of service.

**[Debt Reduction Grant](#)** – Grants to reduce educational debt are now combined into a single application and process which can be accessed through the Investing in Leaders Resource Grant. The criteria and grant parameters can be found within the expanded Investing in Leaders Resource Grant guidelines.

**[Course of Study/Kairos Loan/Grant](#)** – Offered through the Dakotas Conference. Yearly max \$2,000; lifetime max \$9,000; \$2,000 forgiven per years of service.

**[Merit Scholarship](#)** – Offered through the Dakotas Conference and the Dakotas Foundation. Amount is dependent upon the number of applicants and amount of funds available. In previous years, close to \$100,000 has been available for distribution. Candidate must express intent to serve in the Dakotas Annual Conference for a minimum of 5 years following graduation. Application deadline is April 1. Students may reapply each year they are enrolled.

**[Investing In Leaders Financial Well-being Resource Grant](#)** – The Investing in Leaders debt reduction grant has combined with the Debt Reduction Grant offered by the Board of Ordained Ministry (from both Annual Conferences) to expand the opportunity for clergy from the Dakotas and Minnesota Annual Conferences to improve their financial well-being. The grant now offers up to \$5000 per year for up to five years (a total of \$25,000) to reduce education debt and connects clergy to the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to achieve financial health goals.

**[Excellence in Clergy Leadership Scholarship](#)** – Offered through GBHEM.org in partnership with the Dakotas Conference and Dakotas Foundation. Amount awarded from \$2,000 - \$12,500. Application deadline is March 5.

**Continuing Education Fund** – Offered through the Dakotas Conference Board of Ordained Ministry. Clergy can apply for \$600 each quadrennium to use for an educational opportunity of their choice.

**Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Program** – Offered by the Center of Pastoral Excellence at Christian Theological Seminary. Congregations can apply for grants of up to \$50,000 each to support a renewal program for their pastor. Pastors will be considered eligible if they are ordained, currently serving in a ministerial role within a local congregation, in good standing with the Dakotas Conference, and have shown a commitment to education.