

December 1, 2019

Dear Brother,

For more than a decade, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS) and the Board for Home Missions (BHM) have worked together to train another generation of mission-minded, outreach-oriented pastors. I thank God for this partnership and for the many blessings the Lord has bestowed on our church body through it.

I also thank God for the gifted pastors and their supportive congregations who participate in the Vicar in a Mission Setting (ViMS) program. Both the seminary and the BHM see you as an integral part of this work.

We want to come to you, our partners in the Lord's work, with an important matter for you and your congregation to consider as you apply for a vicar. Along with every other aspect of ministry, the costs for the ViMS program continue to rise. We are working on ways to slow the rising costs, but it remains an expensive proposition. The seminary has, on average, committed approximately \$230,000 a year to the program, with the BHM expending about \$290,000 a year.

We have been able to continue the program because of special gifts from people all over the WELS. When they hear about what we do together, they get excited. And rightly so! Future pastors are trained in active congregations where evangelism is a priority. They work alongside evangelical men who model ministry and mentor them. With your help, we look forward to this program continuing for many years to come.

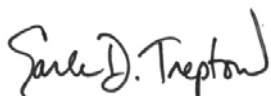
We are hoping to bring more outreach-minded congregations into the program, but we cannot do it with the funds available from BHM and WLS. Can you help? We understand the challenges of maintaining programs in a mission-minded congregation, but we also know that, as you have experienced the joys and blessings of training a vicar over time, you will gladly devote a substantial portion of your own budget to the support of our common efforts. Consider the following suggestions, depending on how many vicars the congregation has had in the last ten years:

Vicars serving the congregation in the last ten years	Suggested minimum contribution
1-3	\$12,000+
4-6	\$16,000+
7-10	\$20,000+

We are thankful for the congregations that go beyond these suggested minimums. If that describes your congregation, we would ask that you continue along the path you have established, increasing the contribution each year, as God gives the increase. Your increased support will allow more vicars to serve in outreach-focused congregations learning from mission-minded pastors.

Please share this with the leaders of your congregation.

In Christ,



Earle D. Trepton