

Dear Lucie Witte and the Council of Lutheran Women,

Thank you so much for the incredibly generous check! I will never forget the first time you all sent me this award two years ago. I was sitting in the seminary library. School was going well. I was getting great grades in my classes. I enjoyed spending time with my friends as well as meeting new ones (one of whom being my future wife). I knew I was struggling financially but I did not realize how much. I looked at my bank account and realized I did not have enough money to pay all my bills and purchase groceries for the following weekend. It was the first time in my life I truly felt poor (despite there being plenty of people who had it worse off than me). Then I opened your letter and right there was a check for \$600. I was so incredibly thankful then, as I am thankful now for that same \$600 dollar check you sent this year as well.

I am pleased to inform you that I am doing significantly better financially. I have started my vicarage at St. Stephens Lutheran Church in Hickory, North Carolina. I just got married back in July and I am finally settling into a groove here. I know of some people who spent four years of college preparing to be teachers, and then they hated working in the classroom. Thankfully, I love being a vicar and I am confident I will love being a pastor one day. I am also excited to have two years of marriage under my belt before I become a pastor as well. And even though I am doing much better financially, the gift you sent still goes such a long way. Once again, thank you so much for all you do to help and support God's working kingdom here on our earthly walk.

Sincerely Jake Childers