

**EfM**

EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY

PROSPECTUS

# Education for Ministry

*A Program of Theological Education by Extension*

*The School of Theology Programs Center, The University of the South*

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Every baptized person is called to ministry. During the Service of Confirmation we ask God to "Renew in these your servants the covenant you made with them at Baptism. Send them forth in the power of the Spirit to perform the service you set before them." The Education for Ministry (EFM) program provides people with an opportunity to discover how to respond to the call to Christian service and carry out their ministries.

## **The University of the South**

The University of the South is located on the Cumberland Plateau in south central Tennessee. It is governed by twenty-eight dioceses of the Episcopal Church.

The University of the South first opened in 1868. It has a College of Arts and Sciences with approximately 1,300 students, a School of Theology with approximately 100 full-time students, and a summer graduate school. EFM is an extension program of the School of Theology. The University of the South is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, and the School of Theology is accredited by the Association of Theological Schools.

The University of the South, affectionately called Sewanee, is well known for producing church leaders. The past three presiding bishops of the Episcopal Church graduated from Sewanee.

The Education for Ministry program began with a vision of enrolling a few hundred students. Within a few years it developed into a program reaching several thousand students with groups around the globe.

In addition to EFM groups throughout the USA, EFM can be found in Germany, Great Britain, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the Bahamas, Hong Kong, Italy, and Switzerland. Over

## **The History and Scope of EFM**

70,000 persons have participated in the program, and in the United States more than 22,000 have completed the full four years. The 2002/2003 USA enrollment reached more than 9,000. More than eighty dioceses of the Episcopal Church as well as other denominations have contractual arrangements with EFM.

Lay persons face the difficult and often subtle task of interpreting the richness of the church's faith in a complex and confusing world. They need a theological education which supports their faith and also teaches them to express that faith in day-to-day events. As the emphasis on lay ministry has grown, EFM has come to play an important role by providing a program that develops an informed and knowledgeable laity.

## **Using EFM**

The EFM program does not evaluate or recommend individuals for ordination. Many people think that one must be ordained in order to be "a minister." The fact is that all baptized Christians are called to be active participants in the church's total ministry. This TOTAL MINISTRY is nothing less than the exercise of the church's vocation to continue the ministry of Jesus. He reconciled the world to God. We are called to incarnate that reconciliation in our own time and in our own place through worship, service to others, and by proclamation of God's Word to all people.

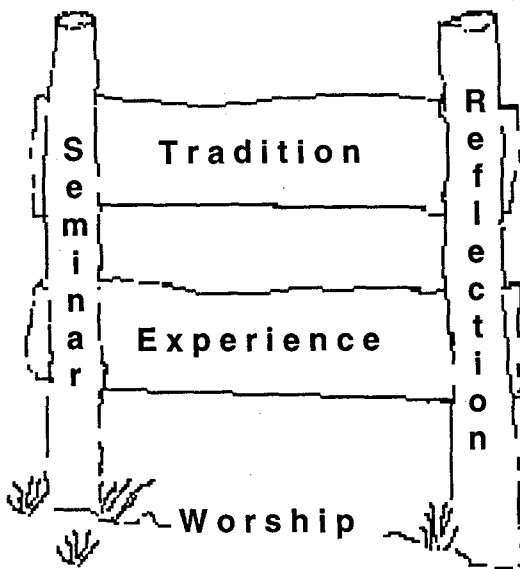
## **Our Call to Minister in the World**

The EFM program is preparation for the ministry to which we all are called. It is that vocation for which we pray at the end of the eucharist: "And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord."

The preparation for ordination vows usually takes place at a residential seminary. There candidates develop their knowledge of Holy Scripture and theology and grow in the skills of preaching, leading worship, and administering the church's sacraments, as well as in their ability to be spiritual directors. The EFM program does not teach these skills.

### The Program

The seminar group is the nucleus of the Education for Ministry program. A group consists of six to twelve participants and a trained mentor who meet weekly over the course of a nine-month academic year. These meetings are usually from two and a half to three hours in length.



Through **study, prayer, and reflection**, EFM groups move toward a new understanding of the fullness of God's kingdom. This process can be illustrated by a two-rail fence. One rail is the Christian tradition. The other is the collective experience of the group's members. The rails are linked by fence posts which represent the seminar sessions where life and study meet. The fence is grounded in the soil of regular worship which is vital to the life of the group.

Participants are given weekly assignments to study with the help of resource guides. Students are responsible for setting their own learning goals. They spend between two and four hours in study and preparation each week. In the seminars members have an opportunity to share their insights and discoveries as well as to discuss questions which the study materials raise for them.

Through discussion and guided reflection, the seminars furnish an opportunity to deepen understanding of the reading materials.

More important is the development of skills in theological reflection. The goal is to learn to think theologically. By examining their own beliefs and their relationship to our culture and the tradition of our Christian faith, participants can learn what it means to be effective ministers in the world. In coming to terms with the notion that everything we do has potential for manifesting the love of Christ, we discover that our ministry is at hand wherever we turn.

The seminar is supported by a life of prayer and regular worship. EFM groups are encouraged to develop a pattern of worship appropriate to their situations. Liturgical materials are furnished with the course materials.

### The Mentor

Seminar groups work under the leadership of mentors who contract to serve as guides and administrators. They are not teachers in the traditional sense who are expected to impart information about the Christian tradition. The role of the teacher is built into the program materials.

As administrator of an EFM group, the mentor is the person through whom the group communicates with the Programs Center. A mentor must work as an enabler rather than as an informer of people. Mentors may be lay or ordained persons. Criteria by which mentors are selected include: having experience in serious religious study, having a familiarity with methods of biblical scholarship, possessing a mature faith, being able to live with the ambiguity within the interpretations of the biblical tradition, possessing skills which help a group to develop its own life, and demonstrating a willingness to perform administrative duties.

Someone who wishes to be a mentor must attend a training session and be accredited as a mentor. Mentor training is available in Sewanee, in the dioceses under contract to EFM, and by special arrangements.

## **Mentor Training**

The period of accreditation for a mentor is eighteen months. Mentors must renew their accreditation by attending training to remain active. Only accredited mentors may enroll students for EFM groups. After mentors have completed their second training experience, mentor formation sessions provide new areas of growth and expertise for experienced mentors.

Mentors receive an honorarium in appreciation of their service. They are independent contractors and are not employees of the University of the South. Where and when mentors choose to meet with their seminar groups, as well as exactly how they will work together, are decisions they reach with their own students.

The Education for Ministry program is a four-year curriculum. Each "year" is a nine-month cycle of study. Students enroll for one cycle at a time. Groups may enroll in any month from September through May. We do not enroll students or new groups in June, July, or August.

## **Enrollment and Fees**

Each EFM group must be financially viable; therefore, groups must have a minimum of six students. To maintain an effective learning environment and to provide participation for everyone, EFM groups may not have more than twelve participants.

At the time of enrollment participants pay the full year's fee. In case of a move during the academic cycle, a participant may transfer to another group.

Participants in groups with institutional sponsorship pay a fee of \$340 for the 2005/2006 academic cycle. The non-sponsored fee 2005/2006 is \$450. Fees pay for the EFM materials and the honorarium for the mentor. Participants also need a Bible and may wish to obtain additional materials suggested in the bibliographies. To assist those in need, a fee reduction provision is available, based on the enrollment of the group.

A parish, diocese, or judicatory can be a sponsoring agency. Contracts provide an official link, honoraria for trainers to train mentors in the diocese, and a lower tuition.

## **Sponsorship**

EFM works with all denominations. Special contractual relationships cover agreements with other denominations and groups outside the United States.

EFM grants 18 Continuing Education Units (CEU) for each year of study. There are no examinations or papers. EFM does not grant college credits.

## **Credits for EFM**

# Contents of the Four Years

Participants in the EFM program study the entire sweep of the Christian tradition from the earliest period to the present. Participants learn the disciplines of biblical exegesis and interpretation, systematic theology, church history, ethics, liturgics, and ascetical theology.

The traditional content is not studied in a vacuum. Students belong to small “communities of learning” in which the events of each person’s life may be examined in the light of the materials being studied. While the course materials provide substantial academic content, the focus of the program is on life as ministry and understanding that ministry. EFM provides Christians with that basic skill which is the foundation of all Christian ministry—theological reflection. In doing this, participants sharpen their skills of personal and cultural assessment and enhance abilities to be effective in a variety of ministries.

**Outline of the Reading Materials:** The program recommends thirty-six group meetings during the course of an academic cycle. New members begin with the first lesson of year one. Participants in the same group may be studying at different levels. They read thirty-four chapters of academic content and five common lessons which help the group to get started, to learn to reflect theologically, and to develop its spirituality.

## The First Year

**The Old Testament:** Overview of the History of Israel • Introduction to the Critical Study of the Scriptures • The Book of Genesis • The Themes of Creation, Sin, Judgment, and Redemption • Beginning the Study of Theology, Ethics, and Liturgics • The Exodus-Sinai Event and the Establishment of the Tribal Confederacy in Canaan • The Covenant of God with His People • The Books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Joshua, Judges, and 1 Samuel • The Rise of the Monarchy • The Books of 2 Samuel, 2 Kings, Deuteronomy, Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah of Jerusalem, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel • Exilic and Post-Exilic Judaism • Judaism and the Beginning of Christianity • Second Isaiah • Ezra and Nehemiah • The Chronicler • The Psalter • The Wisdom Literature • The Maccabean Revolt • Judaism and the World of Jesus.

## The Second Year

**The New Testament:** Greek Culture • The Roman Empire • Judaism and the Second Temple • Galilee • Biblical “Criticism” and the Gospels • The Gospels of Mark, Matthew, and Luke • The Gospel of John • The Life of Jesus • The Mighty Acts of Jesus • The Cross of Jesus • The Exaltation of Jesus • The Acts of the Apostles • Pauline Christianity and the Epistles • The Letters of John • The Revelation of John • Hebrews • 1 Peter and James • 2 Peter and Jude.

## The Third Year

**Church History:** The Early Church Fathers • Gnosticism • Montanism • The Apologists • Irenaeus • Clement and Origen • The Great Cappadocians • Athanasius • Tertullian to Augustine • Nicea to Chalcedon • Early Liturgies • Spirituality: Monasticism, Mysticism, and Prayer • The Medieval Church • Aquinas and Bonaventure • Secularism, Religious Dissent • The Reformation: Luther and Calvin • The Catholic Reformation • The Radical Reformation • Anglicanism, Puritanism, Pietism • The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries • The Industrial Revolution • John Wesley: The Methodist Church.

## The Fourth Year

**Theological Choices:** Nineteenth-Century Anglicanism • American Church History. The Emergence of Modern Religious Thought • The Rise of Science • Kant, Schleiermacher, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Sartre, Camus, Whitehead • Tillich, Niebuhr, Moltmann, Cobb, Pittenger • Modernism • The Rise of Biblical Criticism • Ritschl, Barth, Bultmann • De-Mythologizing and Neo-Orthodoxy • The Rise of Fundamentalism • The Liturgical Movement • The Crisis of Suffering • The Theology of Liberation • Christianity and Religious Pluralism • Non-Christian Religions • Twenty-First Century Challenges.