



Syllabus

What the Course Entails

The Education for Ministry programme is a four-year curriculum. Each year consists of 36 sessions. New students always begin with the first lesson of the first year. Frequently students in the same group are reading different years.

Participants in the EFM programme study the entire sweep of the Christian tradition from the earliest period to the present. Students learn the disciplines of biblical exegesis and interpretation, systematic theology, church history, ethics, liturgy and modern 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 programme 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, it sharpens the skills of personal and cultural assessment and enhances students’ abilities to be effective in a variety of ministries.

Outline of the Reading Materials

Annually, students read thirty-three chapters of academic content and five Common Lessons. These Common Lessons help the group get started, learn to reflect theologically, develop its spirituality and life of worship, and examine the potential for various kinds of ministries. Each year the students encounter a new cycle of Common Lessons so that they complete four different cycles during their time as EFM students.

Year 1: 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 and Micah
Isaiah of Jerusalem, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel
Exilic and Post-Exilic Judaism
Judaism and the Beginning of Christianity
Second Isaiah
Ezra-Nehemiah
The Chronicler
The Psalter
The Wisdom Literature
The Maccabean Revolt

Year 2: The New Testament

Greek Culture
The Roman Empire
Judaism and the Second Temple
Galilee
Biblical "Criticism" and the Gospels
The Gospel 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

Year 3: 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

Year 4: 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