

**The Evans-Smith Institute of Church Leadership  
Virginia Union University  
Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology  
The Center for Lifelong Learning and Leadership  
Richmond, VA**

**New Certificate Program Tracks Beginning Fall 2017  
One-Time Program Registration Fee \$60  
Course Tuition \$125**

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**Certificate in Ministry Empowerment  
“The MET”**

**Overview**

Ministers in today’s churches have varied responsibilities within the life of congregation. In addition to their duties as worship leaders and preachers, they serve as officiants for weddings and funerals, and moderate the business of local churches and denominations/associations. This certificate program (affectionately known as “The MET”—The Ministry Empowerment Track) offers classroom instruction for pastors and ministerial leaders who desire introductory classes in ministerial leadership. In some cases, these courses may be used as intentional refresher courses in preparation for ordination. The program assists senior pastors who are committed to preparing newly-called ministers and current ministerial associates for leadership in the church or need to immerse themselves into a brief course of study. Taught by seasoned and skilled ministerial leaders, this “*minister-in-training*” program is for those who need more formal opportunities to learn about their call and ministry charge.

**Program of Study**

The certificate consists of five courses, fifty hours of classroom contact hours. (Students can take these courses in any order.)

### *From the Call to Placement*

The call to ministry is an important moment in a person's life. This class invites students to discern the diverse ways in which God calls and the diverse ministries to which God calls us into service. Not limited to people who have a call to pulpit ministry, church leaders will find this course to be a good way to identify the nature of their work in the local church. The course will introduce participants to denominational resources and ministry opportunities that exist within and outside of the local church.

### *Baptist Polity (Or elective course from another certificate track)*

This course is a survey of Baptist polity and beliefs. The instructor and participants will identify the basic ordinances of Baptist congregations and address questions around Baptist practices in contemporary church life.

**Note: Participants who are not Baptist may elect a course from a separate track to complete the requirements for "The MET" certificate.**

### *Sacred Occasions*

The minister performs numerous tasks in her/his leadership position. Several responsibilities are sacred and remind us all of the precious nature of life. The course instructs students on the basic principles of moments such as baptism, communion, baby dedications, funerals, business meetings, and weddings. The instructor will introduce resources that assist with carrying out these events in the life of the church.

### *Preaching and Worship*

A call to ministry is a call to preach the gospel—often from a church pulpit. The sermon is one of the more visible expressions of leadership in the worship experience. The minister should understand, then, the elements of the order of worship and develop a way to prepare the sermon as a centering moment. This course presents models for both. Opportunities to write and assess sermons and worship designs will sharpen the skills of class participants.

### *The Minister as Leader*

The minister is a leader in the church. Persons look to ministers for knowledge and direction. This fact alone makes it important for the minister to understand who

she/he is as a leader. This course presents leadership styles and provides assessment opportunities for participants to identify their leadership characteristics.

## **Certificate in Christian Studies**

### **Overview**

The certificate in Christian Studies is the institute's primer for participants who want to explore the basics of the Christian faith. Courses in this certificate track survey the Christian faith from historical and biblical perspectives. The course of study is designed to prepare participants for leadership in multiple areas of congregational life. With courses that provide theory and practice, the participant will learn the basics and more.

### **Program of Study**

The certificate consists of five courses, fifty hours of classroom contact hours. (Students can take these courses in any order.)

### ***Who Wrote the Bible?***

The Bible is a fascinating and inspiring collection of texts. Written across centuries, writers told the story of their belief in God and God's work in history. This course looks at this wonderful collection and provides resources for studying it. The instructor will build on devotional approaches to the study of the Bible by presenting resources for reflecting on its historical and literary aspects.

### ***The Christian Story***

The history of the church did not end with the Acts of the Apostles. Modern Christians inherited a host of ancestors who prayed, organized, fought, and died to live for their Lord. Course participants will learn about some of the people who left an unquestioned mark on the Christian church(es) from the first century to the dawn of this current day.

### ***Christian Beliefs***

The scriptures we read, the traditions that we inherit, and the revelations that we receive, shape our beliefs. This course gives participants an opportunity to reflect on those beliefs. The instructor will assist students with discerning and declaring

their faith statements about God, Jesus the Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the church—among other topics.

### ***21<sup>st</sup> Century Ministry***

Recognizing that the church has changed over time, this class gives participants an opportunity to identify the unique challenges of the present age. The instructor and participants will develop strategies for the churches and communities that they serve.

### ***Elective***

**Note: Participants may elect a course from a separate track to complete the requirements for this certificate course of study.**

## **Certificate in Christian Education**

### **Overview**

Many leaders in the church find themselves in teaching ministries. The Christian education certificate track prepares participants to exercise their gifts as creative teachers. This track will introduce participants to principles of teaching and learning. Using group activities, best practices in teaching with technology, and strategies for fostering faithful youth are prominent in this course of study.

### **Program of Study**

The certificate consists of five courses, fifty hours of classroom contact hours. (Students can take these courses in any order.)

### ***Teaching Youth***

The children and youth in our church bring energy to the classroom. Successful teaching channels that energy with activities and lesson planning that is age appropriate and relevant. This course prepares youth ministry leaders and children's ministry teachers with strategies for leading dynamic youth Christian education sessions.

## ***Planning for Christian Education Ministries***

Designed for Christian education ministry leaders, the course will help participants map the education offerings for the local church calendar. The education ministry is an important resource for the church. Intentional planning for everything from Vacation Bible School to ordering Sunday school books will be content for this course.

## ***Resources for Effective Teaching***

This course introduces participants to materials for developing lessons and instructional activities that will empower students in your classroom. The instructor for this course will guide participants on the use of Bible dictionaries and commentaries, and online resources for strong biblical teaching.

## ***Group Dynamics***

Teaching small or large groups comes with its challenges. The instructor and participants will identify ways to bring diverse learners together for common learning experiences.

## ***Technology and Teaching***

The purpose of this course is to bring multimedia into the church's classrooms for effective teaching and learning. From mastering learning tools such as slide show presentations, to showing videos, or managing social media, participants will learn ways to implement these platforms in their teaching practices.

# **Certificate in Church Leadership and Administration**

## **Overview**

The certificate in Church Leadership and Administration is designed for church leaders in any local church ministry. The courses provide an outline of the ministry opportunities and moments that require serious preparation and reflection for church leaders. Whether the ministry leader is planning a civil protest or preparing an agenda for a church meeting, this certificate gives participants resources for their ministry contexts.

## **Program of Study**

The certificate consists of six courses, sixty hours of classroom contact hours. (Students can take these courses in any order.)

### ***Justice and Advocacy***

From the prophets to Jesus, the religious plumb line of the Christian traditions has always leaned toward justice. Placing today's church in conversation with these traditions, this course connects faith with justice in society. The instructor and participants will identify issues and practices for churches to address as advocates for the communities they serve.

### ***The Deacon as Leader***

Deacons carry many responsibilities as leaders in the church. For example, deacons teach Bible classes, visit sick and shut-in members, and serve communion. Critical to their success is a biblical foundation and people skills that inform the work that they do as servants. The instructor will present models of leadership for the diaconate ministry (deacons and deaconesses). The purpose of this course is to strengthen the ministry of the deacon for congregational health and well-being.

### ***Money and Ministry***

Instructor and participants will explore new ways of understanding money as a resource for the church's ministry. Christian believers support the ministry of the church through its tithes and offerings. The church can learn other ways to generate resources and serve its communities. The course will introduce participants to social entrepreneurship, grant opportunities and grant writing aids, and best practices in creating a culture of generosity for the church.

### ***Outreach and Hospitality***

There is life and work to do outside of the church's four walls. Evangelism, missions, and outreach ministries are just the start of the local church's witness. While formal hospitality ministries include greeters and ushers, the whole church can learn what it means to welcome the friend or guest.

## ***Technology and the Church***

Websites, social media, email, tablets—you name it—are present in today’s church environment. Using them well or not can aid or block churches from connecting with certain groups of people. This course is designed to assist participants with creating strategies for employing technology as an outreach and congregational care resource. Focusing more on technology as a communication tool, the instructor will focus on ways to share a congregation’s profile and news with the world and/or with its members.

## ***Church Meetings with Purpose***

Preparation is the key to a purposeful, concise, and efficient meeting. Participants will learn how to lead and participate in a meeting that has these traits as its aim. Participants will see meeting designs that include the traditional and contemporary ways to carry out meetings in a local assembly.

## **Certificate in Congregational Care and Grief Ministry (Partnership with the Barry T. Young Center for Ministry Formation)**

### **Overview**

The certificate in Congregational Care and Grief Ministry is designed to assist congregational leaders with helping people with the difficult moments in their lives. The world is much more aware of the problems that result when a person’s mental health is neglected. The course of study will address death and dying and mental health concerns such as trauma, addictions, and depression. Courses in this certificate program will give participants assistance with knowing when to refer persons for professional care.

### **Program of Study**

The certificate consists of five courses, fifty hours of classroom contact hours. (Students can take these courses in any order.)

### ***Mental Health as Ministry***

The purpose of this course is to make mental health awareness a key to congregational care. Participants will learn how to encourage self-care and be aware of certain mental health red flags and trauma in themselves and members of

the congregation. The tips in this course will be the basis for making awareness and care a ministry priority for the local church.

### ***Home/Hospital Visits***

Visits to sick and shut-in members are important practices for caring for the church community. The instructor will present best practices for being present at the bedside of these members who need care.

### ***Grief Ministry***

Death is a part of life. The church is positioned well to serve bereaved family and friends in their time of loss. People with the gifts to listen and be present during these moments will learn how to care at this crucial stage of life. Participants will also learn how to organize grief ministries in their congregations.

### ***Caring for Children and Youth***

Our children come to us with their unique burdens and concerns. The instructor and participants will learn about human growth and development through empathy and active listening exercises. Participants will also learn strategies for negotiating certain types of social anxieties and trauma in youth as an important part of caring for their growth as disciples of Christ.

### ***Caring for the Congregation***

All leaders can care for the congregation from their various positions of responsibility. The purpose of this course is to provide space for leaders to think about the church as a center for healing and wholeness of all people. Participants will learn ways to see the health of the whole person (e.g., diet, exercise, prayer, good relationships, etc.) as consistent with the teachings of the Christ.

## **Certificate in Sacred Music and Worship**

### **Overview**

The certificate in Sacred Music and Worship gives worship ministry leaders ways to explore and experiment with varied expressions of music and the arts in the church. The certificate includes courses for ministry leaders in dance, drama, and



other art forms. This program track encourages preparation for intergenerational music and liturgical gifts in worship.

## **Program of Study**

The certificate consists of five courses, fifty hours of classroom contact hours. (Students can take these courses in any order.)

### ***Planning the Music Calendar***

The purpose of this course is to give music ministry leaders tools for planning the music selection for the year. Making communication with the pastor an integral part of the process, participants will learn to align the music ministry with the mission of their local congregations and the seasons and moments of the church's life.

### ***Children and Youth Choirs***

This course encourages the selection of diverse, age-appropriate songs for children. The instructor and participants will share and exchange best practices for organizing and leading children's and youth choirs. Course instruction will include teaching tactics and relationship-building ideas.

### ***Worship and the Arts***

Artists live among us in the church. Though we sometimes limit the arts to music in worship, the arts infuse worship with visual inspiration and words of encouragement. From spoken word and drama to paintings and praise dance, worship can find meaning in these expressions of service. The instructor and participants will develop ways to make the arts a vibrant part of congregational life.

### ***Sharing the Gospel through Song***

Musicians and directors lead through musical instruction and direction. Sometimes directing or leading several choirs, these leaders can embrace new practices for organizing the ministry by seeing themselves as teachers. Music leaders invite congregations to learn more about God through the gospel proclaimed in song. Participants will embrace the history, message, and performance of songs as teaching and evangelism moments in worship.

## *Diversifying Worship*

The purpose of this course is to encourage creativity and diversity in the worship experience. The instructor will demonstrate the ways in which hymns, anthems, and contemporary gospel can coexist in the life of a congregation—on the same Sunday. Participants will also explore the multiple art forms, instruments, and interpretations that can inspire worship participants on Sunday morning and beyond.

