

Year Three: Church History

Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years, by Diarmaid MacCulloch, explores this formidable topic in a single volume. MacCulloch's narrative begins with Christianity's Hebrew origins and takes the reader through major turning points in Christianity's rise and its impact not only in the Mediterranean world, Western Europe, and the United States, but in often neglected areas of study such as Africa, Latin America, and Asia. Appendixes and additional Christian texts add further resources to this accessible narrative.

Year Four: Theology, Ethics, and Interfaith Encounters

Fourth-year participants will read three books: *Theology for a Troubled Believer*, by Diogenes Allen; *The Christian Moral Life*, by Timothy F. Sedgwick; and *My Neighbor's Faith*, by Jennifer Howe Peace. What does it mean to live into our baptism? How does what I believe or what another person believes inform the choices we make? All three of these texts explore what it means to be a Christian in a diverse, exciting, and sometimes puzzling world.

An Invitation

Jesus invited his disciples to “strike out into deep water.” The texts we study together will plumb the depths of our spiritual life and witness, enabling us to think theologically, to develop a sustaining spirituality, to integrate our belief with our behavior, and to respond to God's call to us. Will you join us?

St. Timothy's Episcopal Church



Education for Ministry Program

Each baptized person is called to ministry. The Education for Ministry (EfM) program provides people with the education to carry out that 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.” EfM offers an opportunity to discover how to respond to the call to Christian service.

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 that supports their faith and also teaches them to express that faith in day-to-day events. EfM develops an informed, knowledgeable laity.

St. Timothy's Episcopal Church
202 North Goldsboro Street, Wilson NC 27893
252-291-8220

The Seminar

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.

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, participants develop 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 lay 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. They have an opportunity to share their insights and discoveries as well as to discuss questions raised by the study materials.

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. Through study, prayer, and reflection, EfM groups move toward a new understanding of the fullness of God's kingdom.

Each EfM seminar group is led by a mentor, who is the administrator of the program and the discussion guide—not a teacher in the traditional sense, but an enabler and facilitator of the life of the group. Mentors may be lay or ordained persons who have received training and accreditation at Sewanee.

The School of Theology of the University of the South awards a certificate of completion to EfM students who have completed the four years of the program.

Enrollment and Fees

EfM is a four-year curriculum. Each year is a nine-month cycle of study. Participants enroll for one cycle at a time. At the time of enrollment, participants pay the full year's fee of \$350. Fees cover the materials and the administrative costs of the course. The course materials do not include a Bible or items on the reading lists, which students may wish to obtain on their own, but they are not required to purchase these books. The years are taken in sequence, but do not have to be taken in contiguous years.

Curriculum

While the course materials provide substantial academic content, the focus of the program is on life as ministry and understanding that ministry. EfM participants have the opportunity to practice theological reflection, which is at the heart of all Christian ministry. The seminar may include participants who are in different levels of the

program. Each year of the program has a focus. Participants read thirty-four chapters of academic content designed for their specific year as well as common readings that invite the group to focus on the ministry theme selected for that year.

Year One: Hebrew Bible (Old Testament)

In addition to the Bible, participants will read *A Short Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*, by John J. Collins. The text is divided into four sections: The Torah/Pentateuch; The Deuteronomistic History; Prophecy; and The Writings. Collins's work is a leading textbook in First Testament studies. This abridged version is designed for general readers, and it offers a background to the books of the Old Testament, historical context, and a review of the scholarly debate related to specific writings. Maps, images, and other resources make this readable text a valuable reference work for continuing reflection.

Year Two: the New Testament

Along with the Bible, second-year participants will read *Introducing the New Testament*, by Mark Allen Powell, which summarizes each book of the New Testament, gives the background and history of the book and its author, and explores the major themes of each text. Maps, tables, charts, diagrams, a glossary, and suggestions for further reading support this engaging survey.