

New Ministry Licentiate

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In the Spring of 2021, the senate of Emmanuel and St. Chad College in Saskatoon approved a new Licentiate in Theology, designed in partnership between the College based out of Saskatoon and the august Ministry Developer conglomerate called Western Education Collaborative Anglican Network, affectionately known as W.E.C.A.N. Each Diocese within the Council of the North and Western Provinces has the opportunity to connect with Emmanuel and St. Chad College for this great opportunity. Unless otherwise indicated in our August 2022 Schedule of courses, these courses are free online.

Various Paradigms for Learning This is a pivotal time in the history of the Anglican Church of Canada. The Holy Spirit has been moving in special ways! Over the last ten to twenty years, in the western and northern parts of this great land, there has been a group of Ministry Developers in organized Diocesan ministry schools who have been working tirelessly and quietly within their own dioceses, empowering and educating folks for lay and ordained ministry within their own contexts. Emmanuel and St. Chad's Principal Iain Luke shared that: "We have noticed the Holy Spirit's activity most clearly in the way the project has brought people together who felt they were working on their own, especially people in very small dioceses in which there are very few people working on ministry education. When we've connected up the different dioceses and colleges, we realized we were all working on the same project. God is drawing upon our collective experience to do something new to undergird a new model of theological education and understanding of what ministry is."

Something new is percolating. Do you perceive it? The leaders of the various diocesan programs who are engaged in grass roots ministry development reached out to each other and to Emmanuel and St. Chad College to develop a greater resource base. There are gifts in this new arrangement. ESC Principal Luke confirmed that: "The college is devoting resources to this. We are dedicating staff time, digital library resources, support for local instructors, curriculum design and review, and it is **a centrepiece of our vision of theological education for the future in western and northern Canada.**" In distinguishing between the two current streams of ministry preparation, Iain Luke comments that: "The historical seminary has been focused on preparing people for a career as well as vocation. It has used a professional model of the clergy that ends up excluding a big swath of the church. The licentiate is looking at the church as it exists in the communities we serve and asking how we have that knowledge and bring that into the service of the Church."

Council of the North Bishop Lesley Wheeler-Dame of the northern Canadian Diocese of Yukon says: "From my perspective, what we have developed through WECAN and ESC will allow a great number of learners to have access to education because it is not a one size fits all. People who fit well in small towns can also do the learning. In my diocese, locally-raised people would not be attracted to a solid three-year stay in a city for seminary studies and living outside of their ministry context." As is the case for many dioceses, people who are drawn into lay and ordained ministry are often bi-vocational people with paid employment or run a business in the same town: some are worker-priests and non-stipendiary deacons, who cannot up and leave their faith communities to carry on without ongoing spiritual support and nurture. Many people, out of necessity and in their varied learning styles, learn best while doing

ministry. The meagre resources available for ministry cannot also support ordinands financially while they live far away for three years of seminary.

Contextual Ministry People learning about ministry within their own context have the prerogative to find fresh and culturally-appropriate ways to share the Good News. Ven. Dr. Kara Mandryk, the director of Henry Budd School for Ministry says that: “Contextual Ministry training and theological education is rooted in both the context of the Anglican Church in Canada and the learner community. Students are already ministers. We recognize that people participating in this program are already in ministry and have both formal education along with community and land-based training. We find that students bring ministry and life experience to this program that they can share. This ministry education model is based on an adult education model. There is an assumption embedded in learning objectives that students have a lot to teach as well as a lot to learn.”

As each diocese has its own unique challenges and gifts, diocesan leaders are being asked to contact the College so that we can offer relevant support in this Educational Collaborative Network. In the WECAN group, we have a few diocesan ministry schools who are opening their Licentiate-designated courses online for free to students in dioceses who are registered with Emmanuel and St. Chad College. This reflects the collaborative spirit of the WECAN movement.

What Will the Bishop Say? ESC Principal Iain Luke suggests that “The Licentiate would give the Bishops some confidence that their local candidates for ordination and lay leadership are getting a quality education. That’s different from the seminary but is good in its own way because it serves different needs. This kind of program gives Bishops a bigger range of opportunities for preparing people for leadership.”

Should you wish to be a part of this program as a learner, instructor or donor, please don’t hesitate to email Principal Iain Luke: iain.luke@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca or the ESC Licentiate Coordinator, Rev. Dr. Trish McCarthy: trish.mccarthy@saskatoontheologicalunion.ca or call us at 306 975 1550.