

2012 Continuing Education Covenant

Refreshment, encouragement, support, excitement, renewal, improvement, reinvigoration, restoration, rejuvenation, stimulation are words that bring joy to ELCA pastors and rostered lay leaders. All these words describe the wonderful outcomes of planning your continuing education with your key congregational leaders (or agency supervisor). Continuing education for rostered leaders is even more than all these words. It is a spiritual act, a major stride toward growing in grace and in the knowledge of God his begins when the rostered leader and congregation leaders enter into a Continuing Education Covenant mutual leadership and support. (See reverse side for four simple but important steps to a Covenant.)

**We, the undersigned,
agree to be mutually supportive in assisting**

_____ (name of rostered leader)

**in a continuing education process during _____
year(s)**

In one or more of the following categories:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| _____ Bible or Doctrine | _____ Ministry Practice and Skills |
| _____ Personal, Spiritual | _____ Ministry Development |
| _____ Church and Society | _____ Other: _____ |

(Describe area of study and/or specific topic below.)

I expect this continuing education plan will help me in leading the congregation (agency) to:

We/I, (laity names or supervisor name)

have assisted in developing this plan and are committed to support this Covenant.

(Rostered leader signature)

(Lay leader or supervisor signature)



Southwestern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Planning Your Continuing Education

Four Steps To The Covenant

Step One: Gather a small group of people who care about you and the church's ministry. This could be the mutual ministry committee, the executive committee, or a specially designated group. You need to have people who are committed to your leadership growth and to the shared ministry.

or

have a continuing education conversation with your supervisor;

or

meet with two or three peers and a lay leader who will both affirm and challenge you.

Step Two: Get ready for the meeting. Pray and dream about your best case scenario. Explore opportunities. Talk to colleagues and peers. Find out about leading congregations or agencies which are doing exemplary work in similar settings. Secure information from continuing education centers, college and seminary brochures, and materials about ELCA seminars, conferences, lectureships. Discover topics which challenge and strengthen you, your family, your congregation, your agency. Check the categories at the center of the Continuing Education Covenant.

Step Three: Have the meeting. Express your appreciation. Offer the chairperson an agenda, i.e., General Subject: Strengthening the Ministry. Discussion points: Identify two (or more) ministry activities where your leadership is a key factor. Talk about what is going well and what needs some help. Examples: Sunday morning adult Bible Study; outreach to young families, etc. Share your dreams about continuing education and how they may relate to these ministries. Distribute the informational materials you secured in Step Two.

Talk about the opportunities and available funding. (Every ELCA rostered leader is expected to invest at least \$300, the congregation or agency at least \$700, annually.) Ask for suggestions. Then this is very important write down a brief plan. When there is mutual agreement, ask them to covenant and pray with you to achieve the plan.

Step Four: Formalize the mutual commitment by signing the Continuing Education Covenant. Fill out the Covenant and make copies, sending the original to the synod office.