

Covenant Orientation

Vocational Excellence Syllabus

Purpose: This course is designed to explore the meaning of credentialed and endorsed ministry in The Evangelical Covenant Church and the responsibilities and competencies of those called to these positions. Attention will be given to enhancing self-awareness as well as ways to assist participants to become more healthy in ministry. The course centers around the themes of character, constancy and competency for those called to ministry.

Objectives: At the end of the course students will be able to...

1. Articulate clearly a Biblical and theological understanding of vocational life and ministry in The Evangelical Covenant Church.
2. Participate fully in personal and vocational assessments as they relate to the practice of ministry
3. Know the Rules for the Ordered Ministry and the Ethical Principles for Covenant Ministers as they apply to one's life and ministry.
4. Describe and commit to ongoing development of the pastor/minister as leader.
5. Identify patterns and spiritual formation disciplines within the ministerial journey that contribute to health and excellence.
6. Create a "Life Rule", including a self-care plan, which embraces a spiritual and behavioral code that sustains ministerial health. (Note specifics in Reader distributed in class.)

Requirements:

Attendance and Participation: Participants are expected to be in attendance at all sessions. No early dismissals for travel plans can be accommodated. This session is interactive and participants will engage in various exercises throughout the process.

Pre-course preparation: Rest well before coming. Anticipate making new friendships with colleagues in ministry from around the world. Participants are expected to be familiar with the reading and video assignments listed in the required learning materials list below.

Required Learning Materials: Reading and viewing all learning materials is to be completed in advance of the first session. Learning materials will provide general background for the experiences and will be referenced periodically during the sessions. All learning materials are available electronically as a download listed below except the books which must be purchased.

Course Materials

Required Resources

- Calling and Character by William Willimon, Abingdon Press, 2000
- Rest in the Storm by Kirk Byron Jones, Judson Press, 2001
- Made Healthy in Ministry by C. John Weborg, Wipf & Stock, 2011
- Reader for the course: Vocational Excellence in the Evangelical Covenant Church will be given during class.

Work in class:

Each person will spend an hour with a Midwest therapist analyzing and debriefing the results of the tests taken ahead of time. You will be asked to release one copy of your printed report to Ordered Ministry to be kept in a confidential file so we can assist you in maintaining ministerial health. Spiritual direction will also be available. See requirements for further information.

Assignments

1. One of the keys to successful ministry is a deep understanding of one's self, including one's strengths and vulnerabilities. This knowledge can only increase the pastor's capacity for healthy ministry. Inventories, conversations and times for reflection comprise this process, which is designed to enhance self-understanding and identify practical steps for further growth as a pastor and person. These instruments are not an assessment of your call to ministry, rather an opportunity to explore who you are as you live into your call, being aware of the uniqueness of your personality and giftedness.

To this end we require completion of the following Midwest Ministries Assessments: MMPI-2, Sentence Stem Completion, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Wagner Enneagram Personality Styles Scales, and Autobiographical Questionnaire. They will be sent to you by Midwest Ministry Development Network. They will take approximately 6-8 hours to complete.

RETURN THEM TO MIDWEST MINISTRIES NO LATER THAN THE DEADLINE ON THE PACKET.

Individuals may not attend the class unless all requirements are submitted to Midwest Ministries by the deadline on the packet which is sent to you.

2. Before the start of class read all three books (see below) and respond to 5 questions for each book (CO Manager will send in separate email).

Calling and Character by William Willimon, Abingdon Press, 2000

Rest in the Storm by Kirk Byron Jones, Judson Press, 2001

Made Healthy in Ministry for Ministry by C. John Weborg, Wipf & Stock, 2011

3. Write a "Life Rule" (6-8 pages) including the following: (**NOTE:** We will go over during class)

a) Introduction to Life Rule, responding to the following:

- How are your practices of ministry going to be changed because of this course?
- What have you learned about yourself in this class: what are your potential concerns/vulnerabilities and benefits?

b) "Life Rule" incorporating all elements of the class.

Add **your name** to the top of each assignment with your chosen question printed out.

- Each paper should **be four to five double-spaced pages** (no more than six, please!)
- Use 1 inch margins of Times New Roman or Arial font in 12 point size.
- Grading: Life Rule assignments must be completed 4 weeks after class.

All assignments should be sent by email to covenant.orientation@covchurch.org.

Please do not send your assignment as a PDF. Please submit assignment with student name and assignment title.