

First Call Theological Education by Extension

First Call Theological Education by Extension (FCTEE) is a three-year structured program of theological and pastoral education designed to assist newly called leaders in the transition to rostered ministry.

Who has responsibility for FCTEE programs?

FCTEE programs are designed by ALTS under the oversight of the CHE & the Association Council. The program will be evaluated by the seminary, and the evaluation will be reported to and approved by the CHE and the Association Council. If questions arise regarding doctrinal issues these will be evaluated by the CDCR.

What is FCTEE?

One of the most dramatic transitions in the life of a newly rostered person is the transition from seminary or non-rostered status to the first call to public ministry. For that reason, the ALTS has developed standards and expectations for continuing theological education during the first three years of rostered service.

Theological education doesn't end with graduation ceremonies at our seminaries. Rather, theological education is a process of lifelong learning. The church requires faithful leaders with abundant gifts and special qualities such as: (a) depth of theological understanding, (b) pastoral care, (c) competence to communicate across cultures, (d) capacity to reach out to un-churched people, (e) ability to make connections between faith and everyday life.

Foundations for these competencies have been laid in seminary education. To a large extent, however, the ministry skills are finally realized only in the practice of ministry in the setting of a specific congregation and its larger social, economic, and cultural context. Newly called leaders learn to do ministry and develop a "habit of the heart" for lifelong learning during these early years of service.

When The AALC met for its 2005 Convention, the newly elected seminary president, Rev. Franklin Hays, announced that ALTS would institute a First Call Theological Education by Extension program. Progress towards instituting this program has subsequently been reported to the CHE and the Association Council. FCTEE has developed into a plan to:

1. prepare the leaders needed for the mission challenges facing TAALC;
2. be sustained financially by the ALTS through a combination of grants and individual gifts; and
3. be appropriately accountable to the CHE and the Association Council.

ALTS has developed the proposal for First Call Theological Education by Extension (FCTEE) which incorporates this idea of designing a program specifically for the first three years of

transition (Core) for newly rostered and/or called pastors. ALTS will assess these programs yearly and report outcomes to the CHE and the Association Council.

What are the responsibilities of participants?

- Attend core events sponsored by ALTS
- Participate in a colleague group on a regular basis
- Work with the Church Council to have them support FCTEE by providing funds for travel and lodging for FCTEE events.
- Commit to sharing with the congregation the benefits of FCTEE
- Set aside some personal continuing education funds

How do congregations support FCTEE?

The congregation (or other calling body) expresses its commitment to supporting its newly rostered leader in the following ways:

- Providing time for the first call leader to participate in all components of the program.
- The congregation's Church Council should provide funds for travel and lodging for FCTEE events.

What kind of learning is involved in FCTEE?

The goal areas for learning in FCTEE are:

- ***Theological Education***
Continuing education in the proclamation of Law and Gospel
- ***Ministerial Identity***
Assuming a religious leadership role and finding a balance between ministerial and personal identity.
- ***Ministry Skills***
Learning how to provide leadership for the variety of functions in the life of a congregation or agency being served.
- ***Context of Ministry***
Discovering the history, values, and commitments that shape ministry in this particular place.

Learning in FCTEE involves theological reflection, practical education, and learning from peers and colleagues, with the understanding that the learning will enhance the pastor's ability to serve as an under-shepherd of Christ.

ALTS will design core learning programs, using existing resources if possible. These core programs may take place in retreat settings where participants can have stimulating conversations with association leaders, workshop leaders, and peers as well as receive further theological education and spiritual nurture.

FCTEE will include four components:

- One core event per year.
- Mentoring and/or colleague groups for peer support and guidance.
- Structured reading which supports and extends the other educational components and overall goals of the program.
- Additional support as required.

What are benefits of FCTEE for congregations?

When a congregation commits to this program for a newly called pastor, the congregation may expect:

- A graceful transition for the new leader from candidacy to congregational ministry
- A more vibrant ministry
- Increased support for the ministries of people in their daily lives
- A healthy relationship between the new leader and the congregation

How is FCTEE Funded?

The costs of the program are intended to be split between the seminary, the newly rostered leaders, and their congregations. Congregations are expected to include in their compensation package a continuing education item which helps cover the cost of core events and electives. Rostered leaders are expected to contribute some funds also. The seminary will help defray the cost of core events.

Ideas for creative financing of FCTEE

- Designate offerings (or a percentage) from ordinations and installations for a FCTEE fund
- A portion of core event cost billed to each congregation if newly rostered leader signs up for an event but doesn't attend
- Organize a designated gift fund and promote it across synod
- Special offerings for FCTEE
- First Call Alumni "Appeal" to build up a the FCTEE fund
- Connect FCTEE events to regular/recurring events to which all clergy are encouraged to attend
- TAALC create a line item in synod budget for FCTEE
- Offer a matching grant for FCTEE participants/congregations
- Offer scholarships to FCTEE participants
- TAALC designate some funds to FCTEE planning or core program support
- First Call scholarships offered (from designated gifts given by congregations or individuals)

- Develop grant proposals for various endowments to cover startup and initial operations costs.

Congregational support initiatives

- The congregation contributes travel cost and participant contributes room and board cost (in addition to the congregation's continuing education fund for the newly called leader)
- Encourage lay leaders to participate with rostered leaders in continuing education offerings by applying for local matching grants from Thrivent for Lutherans
- Congregations with foundations and endowments make gifts to the synod to support FCTEE and continuing education of all rostered leaders

Recommended Readings for First Call Theological Education by Extension

A preliminary bibliography for use in the FCTEE Structured Reading program component is provided below. Many of these items come from coordinators of FCTEE pilot programs in other Lutheran bodies. Some of these resources would be helpful not only for synods and newly called persons, but also for congregations receiving these people.

To help identify how these resources could be best used, they are distributed across the major goals of FCTEE, plus a leadership tools category.

Ministerial Identity

1. Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Life Together* (Harper, 1954).
2. Dykstra, Craig. *Vision and Character: A Christian Educator's Alternative to Kohlberg* (Paulist Press, 1981).
3. Hall, Douglas John. *The Steward: A Biblical Image Come of Age* (Eerdmans Press, 1990).
4. Harbaugh, Gary. *Pastor as Person* (Augsburg Fortress, 1988).
5. Luther, Martin. *Day By Day We Magnify* (Augsburg, 1982).
6. Luther, Martin. "Concerning Ministry," in *Church and Ministry*, Vol. II.
7. Oswald, Roy. *Crossing the Boundary* (Alban Institute, 1980).
8. Oswald, Roy. *New Beginnings: A Pastorate Start-Up Workbook* (1989).
9. Oswald, Roy. *Pastor as Newcomer* (1977).
10. Wingren, Gustaf. *Luther on Vocation* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1957)

Ministry Skills

1. Buttry, Daniel. *Bringing Our Church Back to Life* (Judson Press, 1989).
2. Callahan, Kennon L. *Effective Church Finances: Fund-Raising and Budgeting for Church Leaders*. (Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco, 1992).
3. Callahan, Kennon L. *Giving and Stewardship in an Effective Church: A Guide for Every Member*. (Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco, 1992).
4. Callahan, Kennon L. *Twelve Keys to Effective Church Leadership* (Harper Collins, 1990).
5. Durall, Michael. *Creating Congregations of Generous People*. (The Alban Institute, Herndon, VA, 1999).
6. Mead, Loren B. *Transforming Congregations for the Future*. (The Alban Institute, Herndon, VA, 1994).
7. Rendle, Gil and Mann, Alice. *Holy Conversations: Strategic Planning as a Spiritual Practice for Congregations*. (The Alban Institute, Herndon, VA, 2003).
8. Roberts, Fredric M. *Be Not Afraid: Building Your Church on Faith and Knowledge*. (The Alban Institute, Herndon, VA, 2005).
9. Schaller, Lyle. *Activating the Passive Church* (Abingdon Press, 1981).
10. Schmalenberger, Jerry. *Called to Witness* (CSS Publishing, Lima, OH, 1993).
11. Schmalenberger, Jerry. *Plane Thoughts on Parish Ministry* (1994).
12. Schmalenberger, Jerry. *Stewards of Creation: A Stewardship Preaching Series* (1987). [Out of Print: may be found from abebooks.com; gemm.com; or ebay.com.]
13. Standish, Graham N. *Becoming a Blessed Church: Forming a Church of Spiritual Purpose, Presence, and Power*. (The Alban Institute, Herndon, VA, 2005).
14. Steinke, Peter L. *Healthy Congregations: A Systems Approach*. (The Alban Institute, Herndon, VA, 1996).
15. Werning, Waldo J. *Christian Stewards: Confronted and Committed* (Neibauer Press, Warminster, PA, 2003).

The following books deal with the pastor as leader of the parish through understanding systems functions, council and committee work, and establishing boundaries.

Context for Ministry

1. Mead, Loren. *Five Challenges for the Once and Future Church* (Alban Institute, 1996).

Mead presents five key challenges facing today's church and how they represent opportunities for the evolutionary, transformative changes he believes must take place in congregations if the Church is to remain a viable institution into the 21st century.

2. Wink, Walter. *Engaging the Powers* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1994).
3. Meilaender, Gilbert. *Bioethics: A Primer for Christians-Second Edition*. Eerdmans, 2005.

Since it was first published in 1996, Lutheran ethicist Gilbert Meilaender's ***Bioethics: A Primer for Christians*** has become a fundamental text in many college and seminary classes as well as adult study groups in congregations. As new developments always threaten the shelf life of books on bioethics, the previous edition was in need of updating and expansion. Hence the second edition contains a chapter on "embryos: the smallest of research subjects" to address ethical issues surrounding embryonic stem cell research. Meilaender shifts away from his previous inclination that human life begins only after "twining." He writes: "The newly formed ovum has a top-bottom axis that sets up an equivalent axis in the embryo. Thus for example, where the head and feet will sprout is established in the first hours after egg and sperm unite. Even the earliest embryo, it seems, is more than just a featureless collection of cells; it is an integrated, self-developing organism, capable (if all goes well) of the continued development that characterizes human life – and we are right to react with awe and wonder at the mystery of its individual existence" (30). Chapter 9 on organ donation is rewritten in light of the ongoing and unfinished debate over brain death. [Review provided by Prof John T. Pless]

Leadership Tools

1. Leaflet Series on Preparing Lay Callers: "Visitor Follow-Up (AF 15-9103), "Congregational Care" (AF 15-9102), "Community Outreach" (15-9101).
2. Bloss, Julie L. *The Church Guide to Employment Law* (Christian Ministry Resources, Matthews, NC [704/841-8066], 1993).
3. Covey, Stephen R. *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. Also by Covey and Roger Merrill, *First Things First: A Principle-Centered Approach to Time and Life Management*.
4. Kallestad, Walt and Wright, Tim. *Reaching the Unchurched: Creating the Vision, Planning to Grow* (AF - 10-27603, video and workbook).
5. Oswald, Roy M. *Making Your Church More Inviting: A Step-by-Step Guide for In-Church Training*. (The Alban Institute, Herndon, VA, 1992).

Theological Studies

1. Bayer, Oswald. *Living by Faith: Justification and Sanctification*. Eerdmans, 2003.

Oswald Bayer of Tuebingen is a leading systematician who is equally at home in Luther studies. His *Living by Faith* is a finely-argued apologetic for justification as "basis and boundary" for all of theology. [Review provided by Prof John T. Pless]

2. Burgess, Joseph and Kolden, Marc (editors). *By Faith Alone: Essays on Justification in Honor of Gerhard O. Forde*. Eerdmans, 2004.

Not all the essays in this book are of equal value. However the essays by Bayer (“Justification: Basis and Boundary of Theology”), Kolden (“Earthly Vocation as a Corollary of Justification by Faith”) and Allison (“Pastoral Care in the Light of Justification by Faith Alone”) are worth the price of the book. [Review provided by Prof John T. Pless]

3. Day, Bart et al (editors). *Lord Jesus Christ, Will You Not Stay: Essays in Honor of Ronald Feuerhan on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*. CPH, 2002.

This collection of essays includes contributions by Rast (“Statement of the Forty-Four), Olson (Liturgical Aspects of the Lord’s Supper), Giertz (Christian Freedom), Kleinig (Liturgical Theology of Theodor Kliefoth) and others. [Review provided by Prof John T. Pless]

4. Forde, Gerhard. *The Captivation of the Will: Luther vs. Erasmus on Freedom and Bondage*. Eerdmans, 2005.

You are already familiar with the writing of Forde by way on his earlier book, *On Being a Theologian of the Cross*. In this new volume, Forde brings a life time of study and reflection on *The Bondage of the Will* into a concise introduction to this key writing of Luther. Forde notes “*The Bondage of the Will* should not be seen primarily as a negative work or merely one more theological debate, but as a desperate call to get the gospel preached. It is intended to be summons, not a dirge. It is the attraction of the argument that is all important. It is full of humor and theological gusto!” (xvii). This volume concludes with ten sermons preached by Forde. Good stuff here that will yield in gutsy preaching. [Review provided by Prof John T. Pless]

5. Giertz, Bo. *The Hammer of God-Revised Edition*. Augsburg, 2005.

You have already read *The Hammer of God* in PMM 150, read it again over vicarage in the revised edition that includes an essay on Giertz’s life, “The Atheist Who Became Bishop” and a final chapter omitted in the previous edition. [Review provided by Prof John T. Pless]

6. Mattes, Mark C. *The Role of Justification in Contemporary Theology*. Eerdmans, 2004.

An excellent overview and assessment of the place that the doctrine of justification plays in five contemporary theologians: Juengel, Pannenberg, Moltmann, Jenson, and Bayer. [Review provided by Prof John T. Pless]

7. Paulson, Steven. *Luther for Armchair Theologians*. Westminster John Knox, 2004.

A very readable and entertaining survey of Luther’s life and teaching complete with cartoons! Edifying and entertaining, this book could be used with a high school or adult Bible class. [Review provided by Prof John T. Pless]

8. Preus, Klemet. *The Fire and the Staff: Lutheran Theology in Practice*. CPH, 2005.

Preus presents a book that might be called “conversational confessionism.” He hits on all the hot topics: contemporary worship, preaching, church growth, evangelism, church fellowship and sacramental practice showing how Lutheran doctrine takes concrete shape. This book is well-suited for the rookie pastor attempting to learn how to talk about these items with lay people so that they see how the Gospel itself is at stake in church practices. [Review provided by Prof John T. Pless]

9. Kleinig, John W. *The Glory and the Service: Worship in the Old Testament*. Concordia Theological Seminary Press, Ft. Wayne, IN, 2004.

This is a transcript of lectures given at Westfield House, Cambridge England, in June of 1989. In these lectures Dr. Kleinig points out how God describes Himself as becoming our God through the Divine Service. The Divine Service is shown to have instituted by God at Mt Sinai, and further developed in Leviticus. In doing so, Dr. Kleinig touches on a number of hot button issues---the holiness of God, the sacraments, worship practice, sanctification, the priesthood of the believer, the office of the holy ministry, and closed communion---to name just a few. This is a must read for information on the true nature of worship. You should also follow up by reading Kleinig’s commentary on Leviticus, part of the Concordia Commentary series and available from CPH.

BIOGRAPHY - Choose one of the following:

1. Borg, Mary. *Writing Your Life: An Easy-to-follow Guide to Writing an Autobiography*. (Cottonwood Press, Fort Collins, CO, 1998).
2. Daniel, Lois. *How to Write Your Own Life Story: The Classic Guide for the Nonprofessional Writer*. (Chicago Review Press, Chicago, IL, 1997).
3. Roorbach, Bill. *Writing Life Stories*. (Story Press, Cincinnati, OH, 1998).
4. Wakefield, Dan. *The Story of Your Life: Writing a Spiritual Autobiography*. (Beacon Press, Boston, MA, 1990).