

EfM

exploring faith matters

Prospectus

A Programme
of Theological Education

www.efmuk.org.uk

INTRODUCTION

Every baptised person is called to ministry. The EfM programme provides people with the education to carry out that ministry. EfM offers an opportunity to explore with others the richness of our Christian heritage in order to discover our own way of living and working to God's praise and glory. Lay people face the difficult and often subtle task of interpreting the richness of the church's faith in a complex and confusing world. They need the kind of theological education which supports their faith and which also trains them to express this in day-to-day living. In addition, as emphasis on lay ministry grows, EfM can be an important part of that growth by providing a programme that develops an informed and knowledgeable laity.

Many people think that a person must be ordained in order to be a "minister". The fact is that all baptized Christians are called to be active participants in the church's total ministry. This total ministry is nothing less than the exercise of the church's vocation to continue the ministry of Jesus. He reconciled the world to God. We are called to incarnate that reconciliation in our own time and in our own place through worship, service to others, and by proclamation of his Word to all people.

The EfM programme began in the USA with a vision of enrolling a few hundred students. Within a few years it developed into a programme reaching several thousand students with groups around the globe. The first EfM Group met in the Gloucester Diocese in 1988. There are now EFM groups in many different parts of the UK.

THE PROGRAMME

The Seminar Group

The seminar group is the nucleus of the EfM programme. A group consists of six to twelve students and a trained mentor who usually meet weekly for 36 sessions over the course of a year. These meetings are usually from two-and-a half to three hours in length.

Most seminar groups have a very relaxed atmosphere and often meet in the home of one of the group members. EfM groups can meet wherever they choose, but the room needs to be basically comfortable, free from distractions and have access to a kettle!

Study

Students are responsible for setting their own learning goals. They spend between three and five hours in study and preparation each week. In the seminars students have an opportunity to share their insights and discoveries as well as to discuss questions, which the study materials raise for them.

Reflection

Through discussion and guided reflection, the seminars furnish an opportunity for students to deepen their understanding of the study materials.

More important is the development of skills in theological reflection. The goal is that students learn to think theologically. They learn what it means to be effective ministers in the world by examining their own experiences and beliefs, and their relationship to the culture in which we live and the traditions of the Christian faith. In coming to terms with the notion that everything we do has the potential for manifesting the love of Christ, we discover that our ministry is at hand wherever we turn.

Worship

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.

The Mentor

Seminar groups work under the leadership of mentors who contract to serve as facilitators and administrators. They are not teachers in the traditional sense who are expected to impart information about the Christian tradition. The teacher's role is built into the programme materials.

The mentor is the person through whom the group communicates with EfM UK and via them to the EfM Programme Centre whose home is in Sewanee, The University of the South, Tennessee, USA. A mentor must work as an enabler rather than as an informer of people. Mentors may be lay or ordained persons. Criteria by which mentors are selected include: having experience in serious religious study, having a familiarity with methods of biblical scholarship, possessing a mature faith, being able to live with the ambiguity within the interpretations of the biblical tradition, possessing skills which help a group to develop its own life and undertaking the basic administration required by EfM UK.

Mentor Training

Someone who wishes to become a mentor must attend a training session and have their suitability for accreditation assessed. Mentor training is provided by qualified trainers. Contact us if you wish to discuss training as a mentor. Once accredited, a mentor must attend further training every year. Only registered mentors may enroll students for EfM groups.

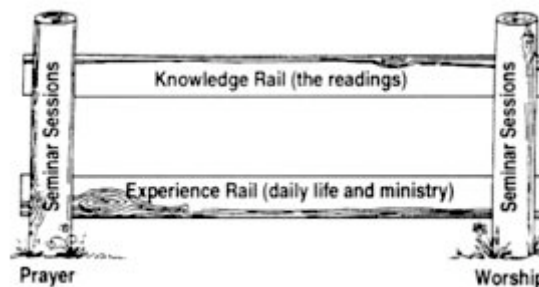
EDUCATIONAL MODEL

Education for Adults

EfM is a programme which is intended for those who want to take an adult look at their faith with all the joys and fears which that can sometimes bring. It is worth noting that in America the average age of EfM students has held very strongly at 42 years of age. This does not mean that you cannot do EfM if you are 80 or 18, but it does suggest that it is particularly appropriate to those people who are ready to take another look at their faith as they enter mid-life.

The programme stands by one of the very basic principles of adult education, which states that adults learn what they want and need to learn at a time that is right for them. The primary responsibility for learning, therefore, belongs with the student. The amount of effort a person puts into EfM is directly proportional to what they will gain from it. In EfM there are no test papers and no exams although there is opportunity for personal written work.

Through study, prayer, and reflection, EfM groups move toward a new understanding of the fullness of God's kingdom. This process can be illustrated by a two-rail fence.



One rail is the Christian tradition. The other is the life experience of the group's members. The rails are linked by fence posts that represent the seminar sessions, where life and study meet each other. The fence is grounded in the soil of regular worship that is vital to the life of the group.

Syllabus

The EfM programme is a four-year curriculum. Each "year" covers 36 sessions. New students usually begin with the first lesson of the first year. Frequently students in the same group are reading different years.

Participants in the EfM programme study the entire sweep of the Christian tradition from the earliest period to the present. Students learn the disciplines of biblical exegesis and interpretation, systematic theology, church history, ethics, liturgy and modern theology.

The traditional content is not studied in a vacuum. Students belong to small “communities of learning” in which the events of each person’s life may be examined in the light of the materials being studied. While the course materials provide substantial academic content, the focus of the programme is on life as ministry and understanding that ministry. EfM provides Christians with that basic skill which is the foundation of all Christian ministry - theological reflection. In doing this, it sharpens the skills of personal and cultural assessment and enhances students’ abilities to be effective in a variety of ministries.

The Reading Materials

Annually, students read thirty-three chapters of academic content and five Common Lessons. These Common Lessons help the group get started, learn to reflect theologically, develop its spirituality and life of worship, and examine the potential for various kinds of ministries. Each year the students encounter a new cycle of Common Lessons so that they complete four different cycles during their time as EfM Students. For topics covered in the reading materials please refer to pages 6 & 7.

Enrolment

Students enroll for one year at a time. Each EfM group must be educationally and financially viable; therefore, groups must have a minimum of seven members, one of whom is the mentor. To maintain an effective learning environment and to enable participation for everyone, EfM groups may not have more than twelve students.

At the time of enrolment students either pay the full year’s tuition or pay a deposit and authorise a standing order for the balance over a year. In case of a move during the academic cycle, a student may transfer to another group if one is available.

The course fee for a standard student (currently £195.00 per year) contributes towards the cost of EfM materials, the running of EfM UK and attendance at the annual Convention and Graduation. The fee also subsidises the training of mentors and the production of publicity materials and promotion of EfM UK.

Completing EfM

On completion of four years of study students will receive a diploma from The University of the South. This is usually awarded at the annual Convention that takes place in Birmingham in September of each year.

The First Year - The Old Testament

Overview of the History of Israel
Introduction to the Critical Study of the Scriptures
The Book of Genesis
The Themes of Creation, Sin, Judgment and Redemption
Beginning the Study of Theology, Ethics and Liturgics
The Exodus-Sinai Event and the Establishment of the Tribal Confederacy in Canaan
The Covenant of God with His People
The Books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Joshua, Judges, and 1 Samuel
The Rise of the Monarchy
The Books of 2 Samuel, 2 Kings, Deuteronomy, Amos, Hosea, Micah,
Isaiah of Jerusalem, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel
Exilic and Post-Exilic Judaism
Judaism and the Beginning of Christianity
Second Isaiah
Ezra-Nehemiah
The Chronicler
The Psalter
The Wisdom Literature
The Maccabean Revolt
Judaism and the World of Jesus

The Second Year –The New Testament

Greek Culture
The Roman Empire
Judaism and the Second Temple
Galilee
Biblical “Criticism” and the Gospels
The Gospel of Mark, Matthew and Luke
The Gospel of John
The Life of Jesus
The Mighty Acts of Jesus
The Cross of Jesus
The Exaltation of Jesus
The Acts of the Apostles
Pauline Christianity and the Epistles
The Letters of John
The Revelation of John
Hebrews
1 Peter and James
2 Peter and Jude

Third Year - Church History

The Early Church Fathers
Gnosticism
Montanism
The Apologists
Irenaeus
Clement and Origen
The Great Cappadocians
Athanasius
Tertullian to Augustine
Nicea to Chalcedon
Early Liturgies
Spirituality: Monasticism, Mysticism, and Prayer
The Medieval Church
Aquinas and Bonaventure
Secularism, Religious Dissent
The Reformation: Luther and Calvin
The Catholic Reformation
The Radical Reformation
Anglicanism, Puritanism, Pietism
The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries
The Industrial Revolution
John Wesley: The Methodist Church

The Fourth Year - Theological Choices

Nineteenth-Century Anglicanism
American Church History
The Emergence of Modern Religious Thought
The Rise of Science
Kant, Schleiermacher, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Sartre, Camus, Whitehead
Tillich, Niebuhr, Moltmann, Cobb, Pittenger
Modernism
The Rise of Biblical Criticism
Ritschl, Barth, Bultmann
De-Mythologizing and Neo-Orthodoxy
The Rise of Fundamentalism
The liturgical Movement
The Crisis of Suffering
The Theology of Liberation
Christianity and Religious Pluralism

Central Contacts:

The Revd. Haydon Wilcox

EfM UK Administrator

Available for all general enquiries, applications for mentor training, seeking to Group etc.

Telephone & Fax: **01252 621639**

Please leave a message and your telephone number on the answer machine

E-mail: administrator@efmuk.org.uk

Arrangement can be made, via the Administrator, for a trainer to visit any area in the UK to speak and promote EfM.

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