**Syllabus**

**Exploring Christian Ministry**

**West Virginia South District Center for Ministry Formation**

**Location of the Course:**

District Office

700 Virginia Street West

Charleston, WV

**Course Dates:**

Saturdays 10 am to 1 pm

March 2, 9, 16, 23, and 30

**Name of the Instructor:**

Rev. Bret Layton

District Superintendent

**Instructor’s Address, Telephone, and E-mail Address:**

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Charleston, WV 25302

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**Module Vision Statement**

This module is designed for those persons who have received a call from God to full-time Christian ministry and for those who wish to explore the foundation and scope of the Christian ministry. During the module, learners will have the opportunity to examine the scriptures that provide a foundation for Christian ministry and the key components of ministry. The module content can be summarized as answers to three questions: What should the minister BE?, What should the minister KNOW?, and What should the minister be able to DO?

Learning is best accomplished in a collaborative and cooperative environment. A variety of learning activities are incorporated in this module including listening to lectures, completing homework assignments, and participating in discussion groups. Each learner is a valuable teaching-learning resource and will bear responsibility for the quality of the learning environment by preparing homework assignments and participating in class discussions.

This module is an introduction, a survey of the Christian ministry. As such, the module presents a variety of subjects but none comprehensively. Many topics that are introduced have been expanded into full modules and will be experienced by the learner at a later time. The learner should not expect complete answers to all questions during this module but should become aware of the range of issues and topics that encompass the Christian Ministry.

**Educational Assumptions**

The work of the Holy Spirit of Christ is essential to any process of Christian education at any level. We will consistently request and expect the Spirit’s presence within and among us.

Christian teaching and learning are best done in the context of community (people being and working together). Community is the gift of the Spirit but may be enhanced or hindered by human effort. Communities have common values, stories, practices, and goals. Explicit effort will be invested to enhance community within the class. Group work will take place in every lesson.

Every adult student has knowledge and experiences to contribute to the class. We learn not only from the learning leader and the reading assignments, but also from each other. Each student is valued not only as a learner but also as a teacher. That is one reason that so many exercises in this course are cooperative and collaborative in nature.

Journaling is an ideal way to bring theory and practice together as students synthesize the principles and content of the lessons with their own experiences, preferences, and ideas.

**Outcome Statements**

This module contributes to the development of the following abilities as defined in the U.S. Sourcebook for Ministerial Development.

**PROGRAM OUTCOMES**

Ability to reflect theologically on life and ministry

Ability to communicate publicly through oral and written mediums with clarity and creativity for the sake of fostering meaning

Ability to write an integrative philosophy of ministry that will answer “why I do what I do when I do it?

Ability to appropriately express pastoral care and concern for individuals and families in crises, passages, and the normal routines of life

Ability to offer spiritual counsel and to discern for referral counseling needs beyond the minister’s ability

Ability to apply the knowledge of basic helping skills gained from historic Christian and appropriate contemporary models

Ability to envision, order and participate in contextualized theologically grounded worship and to develop and lead appropriate services for special occasions (i.e., wedding, funeral, baptism, and Lord’s Supper)

Ability to apply Christian ethics to the issues of integrity, specifically as they relate to ministers and laity for authentic Christian faithfulness and public witness

Ability to apply understanding of his or her ongoing developmental needs across the life course of the minister to the pursuit of holy character

Ability to demonstrate a realistic self-understanding including personal strengths, gifts, weaknesses, and areas of needed growth

Ability to maintain the practice of Sabbath and healthy self-care

Ability to practice faithful stewardship of personal relations including gender relationships, marriage and family, personal finance, and professional conduct

Ability to maintain a healthy balance between family, church, and community commitments

Ability to analyze and describe congregations and communities

**Course Strategies**

To create a relaxed and congenial study atmosphere

To extract course content from the teachings of Scripture

To augment and illustrate material with shared experiences

To question freely and answer candidly with mutual respect

To relate our learning to our present and anticipated ministry to others

**Course Requirements**

1. Attendance & Participation

More than one class session missed (3 contact hours) will require either significant make up work or dropping the class without refund.

2. Reading

Thinking, Listening, Being; A Wesleyan Pastoral Theology by Jeren Rowell

Available from Amazon and www.thefoundrypublishing.com.

They Call Me Pastor by HB London and Neil Wiseman

Available from Amazon

3. Book Report on Thinking, Listening, Being; A Wesleyan Pastoral Theology – see the book report form

Due on March 23 at the beginning of the class session.

4. Final Project: Write a Personal Reflection Paper on the theme: “The Kind of Minister I Want to Be” using the book, “They Call Me Pastor” as a guide.

Due on March 23 at the beginning of the class session.

**Course Evaluation**

Attendance 100 points

Reading 100 points

Book Report 100 points

Personal Reflection Paper 100 points

Pass 280 and above

Pass with distinction 372 and above