

# CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM

## INTRODUCTION

The Free Methodist Church in Canada is creating a learning environment to equip leaders for ministering in a fast changing world. There is no greater mission than to tell the story of Jesus Christ and we need leaders who can make that message clear and comprehensible. There is no tougher challenge than to call people to walk in an alternative reality from the dominant culture around us, and still show how His call is reaching out to that culture, personally in each life. We need leaders who are prepared to tackle the task with courage.

One of the 8 Core Values of The Free Methodist Church in Canada is learning. One attribute of a good pastoral leader is a commitment to being a life-long learner. Growing and learning is at the heart of Christian discipleship. The kind of leadership that we must have for our future is men and women who have a distinctive focus on improving the way they serve and walk with Jesus Christ.

Healthy pastoral leaders must grow in order for congregations to be healthier. Personal health precedes corporate health. Since we want our congregations to follow leaders who are growing we propose that each member of the Free Methodist Church in Canada (FMCiC) enter a life-long commitment to learning (LLL). It is called: "Continuing Education." It will provide MEGaP and our leaders a system for keeping accountable for exposure to new learning, which will help us keep the love of Christ fresh.

The Continuing Education Program provides a systematic way to account for professional development that helps to ensure quality continuing education. This system,

1. guides the minister in planning a CE program.
2. documents LLL to assist MEGaP in working with ministers' learning needs
3. establishes criteria for continued certification in the FMCiC (ordination or commissioning.)

This initiative has been mandated by General Conference 2002. It suggests a minimum requirement for Continuing Education Units (CEUs) per year. Those who are already committed to LLL will find it less challenging. The intent is to encourage growth in all ministers and raise the awareness of biblical call to excellence. John Wesley himself required all his ministers to be constantly growing and the same is true today. The National Ministerial Education, Guidance and Placement team encourages you to take seriously your need to grow.

### Defining a Continuing Education Unit

"One Continuing Education Unit (CEU) is twenty-four (24) contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under qualified supervision that meets: a. the professional development needs identified in a performance appraisal and b. health/growth needs identified by the minister in consultation with the Network Leader."

CEUs are documented events that are submitted to the Personnel office for tracking.

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Calculation of contact hours may include the following elements:

1. in-class time with direct participation between the learner and instructor.
2. activities in which there is no onsite instructor present, such as, supervised independent study, computer-assisted instruction, or project-based assignments may be counted if they meet the criteria.
3. field experience, laboratory assignments, and projects, if they are sufficiently structured to meet the criteria.

Examples of Laboratory Assignments:

- a) Completing NCD expanded analysis with calendarized implementation plan.
- b) Preparing a Job Description supervised by a facilitator with a calendarized implementation plan
- c) Using Performance Appraisal System Tools or the Life Plan supervised by a coach or the Network Leader with a calendarized implementation plan (one time only.)
- d) Planning steps to Church Development (i.e. attending Boot Camp, church revitalization training, seminars on how small churches can grow, etc.)
- e) National MEGaP training
- f) Network Leader's training
- g) Student Ministries Task Force
- h) Teaching a course sponsored by The FMCiC (i.e. foundational course, Toronto School of Church Planting, etc.)
- i) Leading a session at PCN, SPN, Network Leader's training
- j) Taking official board/leaders on a retreat (i.e. with written plans and teaching.)
- k) Missions trip in consultation with Cross Cultural ministries

Who is required to do CEUs and how many?

1. CEUs are required for members of conference to maintain their ordination or commissioning (optional for retirees and located ministers).
2. 1 CEU per year is the minimum. Life-long learners will do much more.
3. 5 CEUs must be accumulated in every five year block for certification in the FMCiC.
4. CEUs cannot accrue for more than the current 5-year block.

The CEU and Academic Credit

CEUs and academic credit are separate and distinct units of measure. The CEUs of The FMCiC are defined above. Degree or academic courses can count as CEUs once the minister has reached certification as ordained minister or commissioned minister. One academic course (3 semester credit hours) = 3 CEUs. You may accumulate CEUs only for each five-year block. For example, if you received 10 CEUs from 2009-2014 you still must start at 0 for 2015.

Please note: We recognize that one academic credit course in an accredited school would require far more than 72 contact hours (the equivalent of 3 CEUs). We encourage academic courses and yet want to demonstrate that our CEU requirements are a reachable goal for every minister.

CEUs start once the minister has reached certification: Ordained Minister or Commissioned Minister.

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## Accountability

1. Each member reports CEUs to the Personnel office for tracking at least annually.
2. The Personnel office tracks CEUs of all conference members.
3. A MEGaP interview may be suggested if CEUs are not completed and reported.

## Who Should Participate?

1. Ordained Ministers
2. Deacons ("grandfathered")
3. Commissioned Ministers
4. Located Ministers (optional)
5. Retired Ministers (optional)

## Some Suggested Target Areas

- Leadership
- Bible
- Doctrine
- Spiritual Growth
- Emotional Growth
- Church Planting or Consulting
- Church Revitalization
- Conflict Resolution
- Preaching
- Job Description/Performance Appraisal System (JDPAS) facilitating
- Counseling, marriage and family
- Leading sessions at SPN, PCN, Network Leader training
- Teaching a course (a foundational course, Toronto School of Church Planting course, etc., which would include developing it, teaching it the first time)
- Leading retreats for the local church (youth group, Board, Ministry team, etc.)
- Cross Cultural experience

Each individual should develop a sequence of courses/ seminars for a most effective CEU program, based on their annual performance appraisals.

## Financial Assistance

1. The place of ministry is strongly encouraged to help with continuing education for ministers.
2. You are encouraged to inquire about a subsidy from the organizers of the CEU event.
3. Request CEU financial assistance from the FMCiC through the Personnel office or Lorne Park Foundation. Please note that we have very limited funds available. We will strive to be equitable in extending financial assistance.
4. Invest in your own growth by investing in your own CEU.