



# Missional Leadership Cohort for Episcopal Clergy 2019-2020

## Overview

Leaders across churches today face massive challenges on two fronts: understanding a pluralist culture that no longer supports Christian identity and practice; and leading faith communities through processes of learning, adaptation and innovation in mission. Meaningful engagement with complex challenges like these functions best in communities of peers who mutually encourage, support, challenge and deepen one another, while being held accountable to a disciplined structure of action/reflection under the guidance of experienced mentors and coaches.

The Missional Leadership Cohort is a structured learning community that offers teaching, mentorship and accountability for church leaders in partnership with committed peers and faculty and staff. It offers the promise of intensive, transformational leadership development for a missionary church with flexibility and accommodation for the demands facing full-time, working clergy.

## Outcomes

- To understand more deeply contemporary cultures and the challenges and opportunities they pose to the formation of Christian identity and practice.
- To gain biblical and theological insight into the triune God's mission and the church's missionary identity.
- To engage key social science literatures in organization and leadership in relation to church life and leadership.
- To reflect critically on specific missionary challenges of the participants' contexts.
- To engage in action/reflection experiments intended to address those challenges.
- To articulate a renewed understanding of one's pastoral identity and practice for 21st century ministry.

## Process

The cohort participants (capped at 12) commit to an 18-month learning journey. There are three in-person gatherings of three to four days each, interspersed with reading and online engagement. Participants compile a portfolio of artifacts over the course of the program that showcase their learning and growth. This may include reflection papers, sermons, congregational curricula, a journal, surveys, interview or focus group transcripts and analysis, worship bulletins, websites, videos and other media. The work addresses current ministry challenges identified by participants and other teams in their ministries.

"This has given me  
a language for an  
alternative way to lead.

I felt overwhelmed  
before, but now I feel

excited."—2014-16

Program Participant

"I wish every priest I  
know could experience  
this. I believe this  
leadership experience is  
one of the fundamental  
things the Church needs  
to flourish at this time.

—2017-18 Program

Participant

"I'm so grateful to  
have been a part of  
this. I have a much,  
much clearer sense of  
direction, purpose, and  
hope thanks to this work  
than I would have had  
without it." —2014-16

Program Participant

## Eligibility

The 2019-20 Missional Cohort Program for Episcopal Clergy seeks ordained priests who have established basic pastoral competence yet hold promise for outstanding leadership in the church, with a significant time horizon in ministry ahead of them. Cohort candidates will therefore:

- Possess at least three years of ministry experience following seminary;
- Be engaged in ministry full-time;
- Be willing to take risks—personally and in their contexts—to learn and innovate in mission;
- Commit to participating in three three-to four-day retreats and an estimated average of two to four hours per week of experimentation, study and peer engagement outside of the retreats for the life of the 18-month program. This includes monthly video coaching sessions.

Candidates from minority groups are strongly encouraged to apply. Because there are many more qualified candidates than can be accommodated in the program, the cohort will be chosen in a manner that seeks to promote diversity.

## Cost

Thanks to a generous grant from the Hamilton and Mildred Kellogg Trust, the only cost for participants will be their own travel to the meetings. Tuition, lodging, food and supplies will be covered by the grant. Meetings will be held in Minneapolis/St. Paul or nearby areas.

## Schedule

- First Gathering (May 20-23, 2019)
- Second Gathering (October 21-23, 2019)
- Final Gathering (May 18-20, 2020)

## Program Leaders

**Program Director:** Dwight Zscheile, Ph.D., is an Episcopal priest, vice president of innovation, and associate professor of congregational mission and leadership at Luther Seminary. His books include *The Agile Church: Spirit-Led Innovation in an Uncertain Age* (Church Publishing, 2014); *People of the Way: Renewing Episcopal Identity* (Morehouse, 2012), *Participating in God's Mission: A Theological Missiology for the Church in America* (with Craig Van Gelder, Eerdmans, 2018), and *The Missional Church in Perspective* (with Craig Van Gelder, Baker Academic, 2011).



**Associate Director:** Blair Pogue, D.Min., is rector of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in St. Paul, MN, an innovative, multi-cultural congregation focused on helping its members join God in daily life. She previously served rural and suburban congregations in Virginia and is an experienced teacher and mentor of clergy.



Additional guest faculty and speakers will participate in the program.

## Applying to the Missional Leadership Cohort

Please submit the completed application materials by December 1, 2018:

- Application form
- Discernment questions
- Current resume or CV
- Names of three professional references

Download, complete, and mail your application, or apply online at [luthersem.edu/episcopalcohort](http://luthersem.edu/episcopalcohort).

## More Information

Contact [kairos@luthersem.edu](mailto:kairos@luthersem.edu). Send applications to: Lifelong Learning, Luther Seminary, 2481 Como Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108