

## LAY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY The Two-Track Approach

In 2002 the Lay School of Theology adopted a new two-track model. The Laity Enrichment Track (LE) will be a continuation of the present Lay School model. The Commissioned Lay Pastor Track (CLP) will be provided for Commissioned Lay Pastor candidates who are approved for the track by their Presbytery Committee on Ministry.

LE Track students and CLP Track students will enroll in and attend the same classes. Students in the CLP Track will be assigned extra reading and will complete an examination or paper to be graded by the Lay School faculty who teach the course. Faculty who teach CLP track students will receive extra compensation for the extra responsibilities. This additional cost will be covered by a \$20.00 academic fee paid by the students each time they attend Lay School.

### Core Courses for the Laity Enrichment Track:

1. Worship and Sacraments (Spring)
2. Old Testament Survey (Spring)
3. New Testament Survey (Fall)
4. Reformed Theology (Fall)
5. Polity (Spring)
6. Church History (Spring)
7. Pastoral Care (Fall)

### Core Courses for the Commissioned Lay Pastor Track:

1. Old Testament Survey (Spring)
2. New Testament Survey (Fall)
3. Reformed Theology (Fall)
4. Polity (Spring)
5. Church History (Spring)
6. Pastoral Care (Fall)
7. Worship and Sacraments (Spring)
8. Preaching (Fall)

The Committees on Ministry have supervision over Commissioned Lay Pastors. In order to enter the CLP track at the Lay School, the person must be endorsed for the CLP Track by the Committee on Ministry in his or her Presbytery. If courses have been taken previously in the Lay School, it is up to the Committee to determine whether or not those courses count toward commission as a CLP.

If a person has been enrolled in the Lay School previous to 2002, and he completes the required core course work (seven courses), then he will receive a Lay School of Theology *certificate* in the Laity Enrichment Track. If a person begins the CLP Track in 2002 or later and completes the course work (eight courses) with satisfactory grades, then he will receive the Lay School of Theology *diploma* in the Commissioned Lay Pastor Track.

## LAY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

The Lay School of Theology is a joint venture of the five South Carolina presbyteries which is offered twice yearly on weekends in spring and fall and meets at the White Oak Conference Center located between Chester and Winnsboro. Sessions begin after dinner on Friday evening and conclude with lunch on Sunday. Students stay at motel-type accommodations and meals are served in the conference center dining hall. General sessions, classes, and worship take place in the adjacent classroom building.

Students are lay persons who desire in-depth study of Bible, church history, or theology. Faculty members are ministers and Presbyterian educators, active or retired, with particular interest in this enterprise. Several courses are offered at each session (both core courses and electives).

There are two “tracks” set up for students: the lay enrichment track and the CLP track. The CLP track is intended for those interested in acquiring the necessary training for certification as commissioned lay pastors (Book of Order G-14.0801) and requires endorsement by the Committee on Ministry of the student’s presbytery. CLP track students are assigned a take-home test or essay, to further document their participation and understanding of the class just attended. Lay-enrichment track students have no additional obligations either prior to or following the class. Course material in class is the same for both.

Students receive a “certificate” (lay-enrichment) or “diploma” (CLP track) upon completion of the cycle of core courses (New Testament, Old Testament, Church History, Reformed Theology, Polity, Worship and Sacraments, Pastoral Counseling). There is an additional course, Preaching, for CLP students. For a student to complete the full cycle would require 7 or 8 sessions (in about 4 years).

Additional benefits of the Lay School include opportunities for fellowship and camaraderie with other students and with faculty in a relaxing weekend away from the distractions of the usual weekly routine. Many students return time after time for these reasons as much as for the course contents.