

CONTINUING EDUCATION COVENANT

Refreshment, encouragement, support, excitement, renewal, improvement, reinvigorate, restore, rejuvenate, stimulate are words that bring joy to ELCA rostered leaders: pastors/associates in ministry/deaconesses/diaconal ministers. All these words describe the wonderful outcomes of planning your continuing education with your key congregational leaders or agency supervisor.

Continuing education for rostered leaders is even more than all these words. It is a spiritual act, a major stride toward “growing in grace and in the knowledge of God.” This begins when the rostered leader and congregation leaders enter into a “Continuing Education Covenant” for mutual leadership and support.

**We, the undersigned,
agree to be mutually supportive in assisting**

_____ **(name of rostered leader)**
in a continuing education process during _____
(years)
in one or more of the following categories:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| _____ Bible or Doctrine | _____ Ministry Practice and Skills |
| _____ Personal, Spiritual | _____ Ministry Development |
| _____ Church and Society | _____ Other: _____ |

Describe area of study and/or specific topic below.

I expect this continuing education plan will help me in leading the congregation (agency) to:

.....
We/I (laity names or supervisor name) _____
have assisted in developing this plan and are committed to support this covenant.

Rostered leader signature

Lay leader or supervisor signature

Synod bishop or designee signature

Mail the covenant to the Indiana-Kentucky Synod bishop, who will sign it and return a copy to you. One copy will be kept on file at the synod office.

PLANNING YOUR CONTINUING EDUCATION

Four steps to the covenant

1. Gather a small group of people who care about you and the church's ministry. This could be the mutual ministry committee, the executive committee, or a designated group. Invite people who are committed to your leadership growth and to the shared ministry. You could also have a continuing education conversation with your supervisor or meet with peers and a lay leader who will both affirm and challenge you.

Get ready for the meeting. Pray and dream about your best case scenario. Explore opportunities. Talk to colleagues and peers. Find out about leading congregations or agencies that are doing exemplary work in similar settings. Secure information from continuing education centers, college and seminary brochures, materials about ELCA seminars, business type conferences, lectureships. Discover topics that challenge and strengthen you, your family, your congregation, your agency. Check the categories at the center of the Continuing Education Covenant.

2. Have the meeting. Express your appreciation and offer the chairperson an agenda. *Example:*

General Subject: *Strengthening the Ministry*

Discussion points:

- Identify two or more ministry activities where your leadership is a key factor.
- Talk about what is going well and what needs some help.

Examples: Sunday morning adult Bible study; outreach to young families, etc.

Share your dreams about continuing education and how it may relate to these ministries.

Distribute the materials.

3. Talk about the opportunities for funding. (Congregations in the Indiana-Kentucky Synod are expected to contribute a minimum of \$700 annually and the rostered leader to contribute \$300. There is also continuing education funds available from the Indiana-Kentucky Synod to supplement these contributions.)

Ask for suggestions and write down a brief plan. When there is mutual agreement, ask them to covenant and pray with you to achieve the plan.

4. Formalize the mutual commitment by signing the Continuing Education Covenant.

Fill out the covenant and make copies, sending the original to the synod office:

Indiana-Kentucky Synod, ELCA
911 E. 86th St., Suite 200
Indianapolis, IN 46240

To apply for a Continuing Education grant from the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, use the form at the end of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod Minimum Compensation Standards document, available at www.iksynod.org under the "Resources" tab.