

EfM

E D U C A T I O N F O R M I N I S T R Y

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Issue Info

Strategic Planning for EfM

A Special Visit

Good News for EfMers on the Go

The "Voices" Inside the Vision

Statistics

EfM Website

EfM Online

Our Friend

A Message from Dean Stafford

This is a promising and exciting time in *Education for Ministry*. EfM has transformed the lives and ministries of tens of thousands in the Episcopal Church and far beyond. The searching theological reflection that grows out of deep study of the Christian tradition, interacting with the shape of people's actual lives, has proved to be a place where the Holy Spirit works in quiet power. EfM matters a very great deal to the church's life and mission. EfM is going forward.

I have asked Sissie Wile to become Interim Director of Education for Ministry, heading the staff here in Sewanee. Her long experience in EfM and her skill and wisdom in leadership are outstanding resources for EfM's progress over the next two years. I have also asked the Rev. Dr. Charles Kiblinger to serve as a consultant to EfM. His extensive EfM experience, brilliant work in parish ministry and continuing education, and skill in organizational analysis and planning make him ideal to help discern the ways EfM will move into the future. I am deeply grateful to them both. A strategic planning team starts its work this summer. Charles has already been talking with EfM leaders and students all over the country. The insights, hopes and dreams he gathers will help to inform the work of the team as it seeks to discern how EfM is called into God's future.

The devoted leaders of EfM in the field—the trainers, coordinators, and mentors who make it happen—are an amazing gift. The participants active in theological reflection are at the heart of EfM. I am deeply grateful to the staff of EfM and of the Programs Center here in Sewanee, whose intelligent, hard work provides the sinews that hold EfM together. Especially at this time we are all grateful for the ministry of the Rev. Johnna Camp as Director of EfM for the last several years. And finally I am grateful for the ongoing support of the University of the South, which is the foundation of the program's success.

EfM matters to the church and the world. I believe that God will bless EfM, as we move into God's future "with gladness and singleness of heart."

(The Very Rev.) William S. Stafford, Ph.D., D.D.
Dean of the School of Theology

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Strategic Planning for EfM

By Charles Kiblinger

The Very Rev. Charles E. Kiblinger began work as a consultant to EfM last December. He has been working with the staff, interviewing EfM leaders and participants and most recently preparing for strategic planning. Charles was the University Chaplain when EfM was beginning. He is a trainer and has been a mentor for 30 years. After leaving Sewanee in 1981, Charles served as Rector of St. James' Parish in Jackson, Mississippi, Dean of St. John's Cathedral in Denver and was the Director of Continuing Education at Virginia Theological Seminary.

Education for Ministry is alive and well. In recent conversations with more than a hundred students, mentors, coordinators and trainers as well as former leaders of EfM, the report is that EfM continues to thrive. EfM was born in the 1970's in a very different world and its current leaders, participants and graduates are mostly over 55 years old. Now as we face the challenges of the new century it is time to revisit the vision and mission of EfM and ask how it will adapt, grow and evolve in a different age. Its central focus on the realization of our baptismal ministry will not change, but how we deliver its transformative process will be forever evolving. For this reason we speak of EfM as being in a time of transition just as the church is in a time of transition in a world far removed from the post World War II era.

For some time, leaders of EfM have known that intentional planning for the future was in order. Thus we have begun the process of a strategic plan. It began with conversations with people all over the country and has continued with a survey of all trainers, mentors, coordinators and a random sample of 800 students. With this information in mind, a strategic planning team made up of people representing all the facets of EfM will gather in early July and again in the fall to articulate anew the vision and mission of EfM and to ask how that vision will be realized in the next decade. The work of the team will be carried out over the next year by an executive committee. As this plan takes shape, the conversation with the larger EfM network will continue.

Since this work coincides with a change in the leadership of EfM, the strategic plan will provide a guide to the structure and personnel requirements of the program. Choice of new leadership will flow out of vision, mission and a strategic plan. This is an exciting time for EfM and we are deeply appreciative to all of you for your contribution to the process in the surveys, interviews and the many ways you support EfM.

A Special Visit

On May 9, the Most Reverend Katharine Jefferts Schori visited with EfM trainers and staff members from the University of the South and the School of Theology. She toured the Programs Center and met with staff members, after which we gathered together in the training room for conversation. Presiding Bishop Jefferts Schori is a graduate of EfM and mentored a group in Oregon for several years. She reminded us that, "EfM is a great gift to the Church."

The Presiding Bishop was brought up-to-date with the current status of EfM, including the addition of EfM Online. Bill Stafford, Dean of the School of Theology, described EfM's intention for Strategic Planning which will begin in June, 2008.

Presiding Bishop Jefferts Schori was asked how EfM can best serve the Church. She encouraged EfM to address the "growing edges of the Church," including diversity of age and culture and suggested the formation of "groups that bridge the boundaries of the Anglican communion." She was encouraged by our development of EfM Online and saw it as an exciting model for connecting students separated by distance and other boundaries.

We were honored that Bishop Jefferts Schori graciously included EfM in her visit to Sewanee. Her clarity of vision and compassionate concern for all energized each one of us for the work of strategic planning and continued commitment to the mission of EfM.

Sissie Wile,
Interim Director

Good News for EfMers on the Go!

Beginning with the distribution of EfM materials in the summer of 2008, a CD version of the text will be included in each textbook and CLSM. Students who travel frequently will now be able to take their readings with them without the added weight of the "Big Old Book." Another feature of this format will be the capacity to search for items in the text. This format will also be more accessible to text-to-speech software.

The CDs will be offered for purchase to graduates and students who have completed specific years. The Programs Center will publicize the cost and date of availability later in the year.

The “Voices” Inside the Vision

A recent EfM graduate described the outcome of his four years as an EfM student as “a more comprehensive, in-depth understanding and articulation of my faith, its history, its ongoing witness in the world with respect to the complicated issues it now faces. The EfM course gave me a ‘voice’ in which to honestly reflect and make sense of my faith journey in all aspects of my life.”

As we work together on a strategic plan to carry EfM creatively and safely into the future, this is the distinction we must stay focused on to guide our thinking. This is what EfM is all about—excellent theological education that gives meaning, enriches understanding, and adds an informed and confident voice that can be heard in the increasingly chaotic and complex environment where people live and work today. This program brings hope, optimism, and light to the lives of those whom God calls to it. These are the outcomes we must continue to deliver.

As we think strategically about EfM’s future, we ask for the prayers and support of all whose work collectively makes EfM a rich and life-giving journey—our students, mentors, graduates, coordinators, trainers, and staff. We will listen for your “voices” as we visualize the future generations who will benefit from EfM’s face-to-face and online offerings.

Cynthia C. Hargis,
EfM Program and Online Coordinator

EfM USA - as of December 31, 2007:

Total graduates:	25,671
Total trained or enrolled one or more years:	76,431
Groups:	1,043
Students:	8,145
Sponsoring dioceses:	87
Sponsoring parishes:	16
Coordinators:	87
Trainers:	50
Mentors:	1,363
Lay/Clergy:	1,125/238
Female/Male:	876/487

EfM Online:

Accredited online mentors:	20
Active online groups:	9
Online students:	74

EfM International – Enrollment as of March, 2007:

Australia	462
Bahamas	100
Canada	407
New Zealand	180
United Kingdom	10

EfM Website

To view the most current EfM Mentor Training schedule and other useful resources, visit us on the Web at: <http://www.sewanee.edu/EFM/>

EfM Online

Is EfM online different from face-to-face? Yes! Paradoxically, our separated-ness has created a kind of intimacy and has provided a place for deep sharing. Perhaps it is from a deep yearning for connection to the other or the safety of physical boundaries, but my EfM online groups have shared at deep levels of vulnerability and tenderness.

Another joy of EfM online has been sustained conversations about our readings. Because we post reflections to our weekly readings on a discussion board, we have many days to consider one another’s contributions before responding ourselves. It’s like having a living, yet suspended, conversation. Issues of faith matter deeply; our conversations challenge and confirm; they sometimes present me with new ways of thinking and, perhaps because I am a slow learner, I need this time to consider how to understand new ideas in light of my experience and positions. I am grateful that EfM has embraced the Internet to enable us to grow in Christ together in the world.

Jenifer Gamber,
Online Mentor

Beginning in June, a pilot online course (a first for EfM) will be held for training online mentors.

We are pleased to announce that EfM Canada now offers EfM online.

For more information about EfM online please visit our website at:

<http://www.sewanee.edu/EFM/EFMONLINE.htm>

Brenda McDonald

On October 30, 2007, the EfM Programs Center family lost a co-worker and dear friend. Our Brenda McDonald suffered a heart attack and passed away. Many of you spoke with Brenda - she was among the ones that answered your calls on the 800 line. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with her family—Brenda is greatly missed.

Matthew 5:4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

