

Education for Ministry: New Curriculum and New Graduates

By Lisa Chisholm-Smith

Education for Ministry is a program of theological education by extension for ordinary Christians. There are four years of study, but participants commit for one year at a time, meeting in small groups with a trained mentor. The program combines academic study with integrative components to help participants take what they learn about Scripture, church history, theology and ethics into their own lives and hearts, supporting them in living out a vibrant baptismal ministry in the church and in the world. In the 2012 to 2013 academic year the Diocese of Ottawa had five active EfM groups in four deaneries—Lanark, Ottawa West, Pembroke and Stormont.

There has been some significant program developments this year. For some time now mentors and students across Canada have been asking for new materials. A new EfM curriculum will be launched for all four years of the program this month. The current burgundy binders of readings are all being replaced by published texts that embody fine, contemporary scholarship. The Common Lessons and Supporting Materials binder will also be replaced by a new Reading and Reflection Guide to support the work of the whole group. Existing mentors and new trainees will be introduced to these new curriculum materials as part of an EfM Mentor training led by the Rev. Canon David Fletcher (Diocese of Nova Scotia & P.E.I.) planned for August 22 - 24, 2013 at St Michael and All Angels Anglican Church in Ottawa.

The new EfM Canada Alumni/ae Association was launched here in Ottawa at the Joint Assembly (the combined meeting of the Anglican Church of Canada's General Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada's National Convention) July 3-7, 2013. Education for Ministry graduates, former students, mentors, trainers and coordinators and Board members are all eligible to join. The cost is \$25.00 per year (July 1-June 30). The proceeds will be deposited in the EfM Canada Bursary Fund to provide scholarships to EfM students. Thanks to EfM mentor, David McCreery, his wife Inez, and the Rev. Pat Martin (Incumbent, St Paul's Almonte and an EfM Canada Trainer) for assisting with set up and shifts at the EfM Canada display at Joint Assembly. It was great to have EfM Canada Director, the Rev. Dr. Catherine Dafoe Hall with us for this national gathering. Finally, our own Dr. Patricia Bays has decided to step down as an EfM Canada trainer and board member for a well-deserved change of pace. Thanks for all you have contributed to EfM both nationally and here in this diocese over many years of active involvement, Patricia!

There has been a lot to celebrate too. Two EfM classes graduated in 2013. The accomplishments of the five Pembroke deanery graduates and their mentor the Rev. Catherine McCaig were acknowledged during the opening worship at Congregational Resource Day on Sat. May 4, 2012. Executive Archdeacon David Selzer (in the absence of the Bishop who was in South Africa) offered a blessing and commissioning prayer for this class which included Patrick Leach, Jean Lopushanski, Lorna McLaren, Bev York, and Marie Zettler. Another seven EfM graduates, all from St Matthias Anglican Church in Ottawa, received their EfM certificates from Bishop John Chapman a week later at St Matthias' 125th Anniversary service on their parish's

patronal festival Sunday, May 12, 2013. The class of 2013 from St Matthias, mentored by their incumbent, the Rev. Joan Riding, included Margaret Cook, Peter Cormier, Janyce Elser, Susan Gates, Dr. Deirdre Piper, Judith Salley and Robert Watt. In the words of the commissioning prayer, "we give thanks for the witness" of each of these Anglicans "who have undertaken new challenges and learnings through Education for Ministry" and pray for them as God enables them to serve faithfully in the world God loves.