Education for Ministry (or as it’s better know, EfM) is a program for adults who desire to grow deeper into scripture, church history and theology in a small group. Definitely not your grandmother’s Bible study program, EfM understands that adults a responsible for their own learning and that bible study is more than reading scripture and being “taught” what it means. Each EfM seminar group is comprised of six to twelve adults, led by a mentor (or two) who guides and administers the group, each group covenants to meet weekly for 2.5-3 hours in person (although there are also online groups for whom travel to a local group may be difficult), for prayer, discussion, and theological reflection.

Developed by the School of Theology at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, in addition to EfM groups throughout the USA, EfM can be found in Germany, Great Britain, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the Bahamas, Hong Kong, Italy, and Switzerland. Over 70,000 persons have participated in the program, and in the United States more than 22,000 have completed the full four years. The 2006 USA enrollment reached more than 8,000. More than eighty dioceses of the Episcopal Church as well as other denominations have contractual arrangements with EfM.

In its prospectus, Education for Ministry is described as:

Lay persons face the difficult and often subtle task of interpreting the richness of the church’s faith in a complex and confusing world. They need a theological education which supports their faith and also teaches them to express that faith in day-to-day events. As the emphasis on lay ministry has grown, EfM has come to play an important role by providing a program that develops an informed and knowledgeable laity.

The EfM program does not evaluate or recommend individuals for ordination. Many people think that one must be ordained in order to be “a minister.” The fact is that all baptized Christians are called to be active participants in the church’s total ministry. This TOTAL MINISTRY is nothing less than the exercise of the church’s vocation to continue the ministry of Jesus. He reconciled the world to God. We are called to incarnate that reconciliation in our own time and in our own place through worship, service to others, and by proclamation of God’s Word to all people.
Throughout the summer, *Education for Ministry* has been training new and old mentors with new materials. Understanding the theological reflection is at the core of EfM as is empowering individuals to discern their ministry in daily life, new materials have been written to reflect the world within which we now live. Since the beginning of the EfM program more than 20 years ago, participants received print materials for each of the four years of the program, studying each year one at a time.

- Year 1: Hebrew Scriptures
- Year 2: The New Testament
- Year 3: Church History
- Year 4: Theology, Ethics, and Interfaith Encounters

Beginning with the 2013-2014 year, standard text books will be used that are accessible in a variety of formats (print, ebook, audio, etc.). You can view an overview of the program here that specifically notes the book titles and themes.

The additional new material for EfM is the Reading and Reflection Guide, what had once been Year A, B, C, and D of Common Lessons. The first “volume” (Volume A: Living Faithfully in Your World) will focus on theological reflection and how one applies the learnings to living out one’s faith – another words – MINISTRY!

For more information, visit the [Education for Ministry website](#) or download the [Prospectus](#).