

**ELCA**  **CONTINUING EDUCATION COVENANT**  
Southeastern Iowa Synod

Refreshment, encouragement, support, excitement, renewal, improvement, reinvigorate, restore, rejuvenate, stimulate – are words that are important to the rostered leaders of the Southeastern Iowa Synod. All these words describe the outcome of planning your continuing education with your key congregational leaders or agency supervisor. Continuing education for rostered leaders is even more than these words. It is a spiritual act, a major stride toward “growing in grace and in the knowledge of God.” This will begin when the rostered leader and the congregation leaders enter into a Continuing Education Covenant for mutual leadership and support.

(see reverse side for important steps)

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

\_\_\_\_\_

(name of rostered leader)

**in a continuing education process during** \_\_\_\_\_  
year(s)

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:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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 Synod Bishop for signature. A signed copy will be returned to you.  
The original will be on file in 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 specially designated group. You need to have people who are committed to your leadership growth and to the shared ministry.  
  
**or** have a continuing conversation with your supervisor.  
  
**or** meet with two or three peers and a lay leader who will both affirm and challenge you.
  
- 2) 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 which 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 which challenge and strengthen you, your family, your congregation, your agency. Check the categories at the center of the Continuing Education Covenant.
  
- 3) Have the meeting. Express your appreciation. Offer the chairperson an agenda, i.e. 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.
  
- 4) Talk about the opportunities and available funding. (Every rostered leader is expected to invest \$300, and the congregation or agency \$700, annually) Ask for suggestions. Then – this is very important – write down a brief plan. When there is mutual agreement – ask them to covenant and pray with you to achieve the plan.

Fill out the Continuing Education Covenant and formalize the mutual commitment by signing it. After it is signed, you will receive a signed copy. If funds are needed, please feel welcome to complete a Financial Aid form. To download a Financial Aid form, **please see the Application for Financial Aid section**, or call the synod office at (319) 338-1273 to have one sent to you.