

**THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF CENTRAL NEW YORK**  
**COMMISSION ON MINISTRY**  
Guidelines for Continuing Education for Clergy

Canons III.9.1 and III.7.5 charge the Bishop and Commission on Ministry to require and provide for the continuing education of priests and deacons and to keep a record of such education. This document lays out the expectations and guidelines for continuing education for clergy in the Diocese of Central New York.

**Number of contact hours** (a contact hour is defined as each hour the student and instructor are together in a learning situation):

- **Full time stipendiary clergy** should complete forty contact hours of continuing education during each calendar year.
- **Part time stipendiary clergy** should complete a number of contact hours commensurate with their part time status during each calendar year. For example, a clergy person employed half-time should complete twenty contact hours; a clergy person employed quarter-time should complete ten contact hours.
- **Non-stipendiary and retired clergy** should complete at least eight contact hours of continuing education during each calendar year. (Please note: attendance at the annual Clergy Retreat fulfills this requirement.)

**Areas of study accepted as meeting these guidelines:**

- The Holy Scriptures
- History of the Christian Church
- Christian Theology
- Christian Ethics and Moral Theology—including environmental ethics and theology
- Christian Worship according to the use of the Book of Common Prayer, the Hymnal, and authorized supplemental texts
- The Practice of Ministry in contemporary society, including leadership, evangelism, stewardship, ecumenism, interfaith relations, mission theology, environmental stewardship and care of creation, spirituality, and the historical and contemporary experience of racial and minority groups
- Professional Studies: Leadership Development, Congregational Development, Communications, and Finance
- Other areas as approved by the Bishop or her designee

**Ways to complete contact hours:**

- Academic courses or seminars at a seminary or other appropriate educational institution
- Conferences sponsored by church or other appropriate organizations
- Web-based learning platforms
- The College for Congregational Development
- Diocesan workshops and trainings

- Adventures in Ministry – each session can be counted as two hours
- Diocesan Clergy Retreat, Ministry Fair, and Leadership Day
- Intentional program of Independent Study approved by the Bishop or her designee

Continuing Education time is not to be used by clergy as additional vacation or leisure time. Contemplative Retreats, Spiritual Direction, Prayer Groups, Colleague Groups and the like are important and valuable, but are not counted toward meeting these continuing education requirements. However, Directed Retreats that have an educational component can be counted toward continuing education.

**Accountability:**

- All clergy should keep a record of their own continuing education.
- All clergy should complete and submit a “Continuing Education Annual Report” each calendar year. The report form can be found on the diocesan website under the ‘Resources’ drop down menu on the “For Clergy” tab.
- Continuing Education Annual Reports are due to the Commission on Ministry Education’s Training and Resources for Ministry Team *no later than January 31<sup>st</sup>* of the year following the reporting year.

Questions regarding these guidelines can be directed to the Rev. Dan Handschy, chair of the Commission on Ministry, at [djhandschy@gmail.com](mailto:djhandschy@gmail.com).