

# **THE CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM OF LUTHERAN CHURCH - CANADA**

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Holy Scripture exhorts us to grow in knowledge and makes it clear that this process never ends in this life.

In most professions today it is expected that opportunities will be given both for growth in knowledge and skills and that the people in the profession will participate in workshops and courses available.

This need also applies to pastors and other professional church workers. If they are to serve the people of God to the best of their ability, they need to continue their education.

University and seminary education does well in preparing people to enter church vocations. However, to face the needs of people in an ever-changing world, constant involvement in academic and spiritual growth is required.

Continuing one's education requires both financial and time investments. This Plan sets forth the underlying principles and their practical application in order to help every parish/institution and church worker achieve the goal of continuing professional education.

Every parish/institution and church worker is encouraged to take part in this Plan. The benefits will not only be for the workers and parishes/institutions they serve, but for the whole ministry of reaching and serving people with the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ.

## **GENERAL OPERATING PRINCIPLES**

The Continuing Education Program of Lutheran Church - Canada shall operate according to the following principles:

1. Participation of the full-time church worker shall be voluntary.
2. Costs of participation are normally shared between the parish/institution, the worker and the District/Synod.
3. Rostered Church Workers may, without congregational approval or financial participation, participate by a minimum contribution of \$300.
4. Full-time, non-rostered parish professional church workers may enroll in the plan with the full participation of the parish.
5. Benefits are restricted to participants.
6. Benefits can be accumulated.

## **OPERATING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **1. Participation in the Continuing Education Program**

- 1.1 Participation in the Continuing Education Program shall be voluntary. The decision to participate shall normally involve the mutual agreement of the parish/institution and its worker(s). Every professional church worker is encouraged to participate in the Continuing Education Program.
- 1.2 Each year the minimum amount allowed for each participant shall be established by Synod's Continuing Education Committee.
- 1.3 All deposits are recorded in the name of the worker. Funds contributed by the parish/institution and the District/Synod can only be used for the worker's continuing education.
- 1.4 The worker and the parish/institution must agree on the selected continuing education event (see also 3.2.1).
- 1.5 When a worker participates in the Continuing Education Program without the approval or financial participation of the parish/institution, the need for the parish/institution approval is waived. This, however, does not eliminate the necessity of the worker to arrange the necessary time off to participate in continuing education events.

### **2. Benefits**

- 2.1 Deposits and time off may be used in the year in which allotted, provided both the parish/institution's and worker's commitments have been remitted.
- 2.2 Normally, continuing education funds should be on deposit with the Synod's Continuing Education Fund for a minimum of sixty (60) days prior to withdrawal.
- 2.3 Deposits may be accumulated from year to year. Time off may accumulate to a maximum of twenty-six (26) weeks (except as noted in 2.5 and 2.7).
- 2.4 Deposits may be used only for participation in continuing education events and for related costs as defined or limited in Section 3.2. Time off may be used only for continuing education events as defined and limited in Section 3.2.
- 2.5 If the worker transfers from one participating parish/institution to another, accumulated deposits are maintained in his/her account. Up to four weeks of accumulated time off may also be transferred.
- 2.7 If the worker transfers to a non-participating parish/institution, changes occupation, retires, dies or leaves the Synod, the worker's portion of accumulated contributions, plus interest, is paid out to the worker or to his/her estate. No allowance is made for unused time off. Unused funds deposited by the parish/institution or District/Synod will not be included in this pay-out.

- 2.8 To determine the amount of unused Continuing Education Funds deposited by the parish/institution and District/Synod, all Continuing Education withdrawals will be charged as follows: 75% to the parish/institution and District/Synod portion of the account and 25% to the worker's portion.
- 2.9 All remaining unused funds deposited by the parish/institution and District/Synod will be used in the development of Continuing Education programs by the Continuing Education Committee of the District last served by the worker.
- 2.10 A worker who retires from full-time ministry but continues to serve on a part-time basis is eligible to continue in the Program.

### **3. Withdrawal of Funds**

#### **3.1 *Advance Notice***

Requests for participation in a continuing education event not exceeding twenty (20) days duration can be approved by the parish/institution with whatever advance notice it considers adequate. Requests for participation in a continuing education event requiring longer absences or a leave of absence without pay must be approved by the parish/institution and by the District President six (6) months prior to the date on which the event is held or the leave of absence intended.

Money and time deposited in the Continuing Education Fund may be withdrawn sixty (60) days after the Enrollment Form and funds have been received from both parish/ institution and worker each calendar year.

#### **3.2 *Eligible Application of Funds***

- 3.2.1 Courses at institutions other than those owned and operated by LCC need the approval of the Continuing Education Committee.
- 3.2.2 Up to \$100. per year may be used for books and periodicals with the approval of the parish/institution.
- 3.2.3 Workshops, seminars, credit or non-credit courses must be approved by the parish/institution. Approval is not required except as noted in 3.1 and 3.2.1.
- 3.2.4 Certificate, diploma or degree programs must be approved by the parish/ institution. Approval is not required except as noted in 3.1 and 3.2.1.
- 3.2.5 Sabbaticals, leaves of absence, or other extended leaves are to be approved by the parish/institution and District President as noted in 3.1.

### **4. Administration**

#### **4.1 *Lutheran Church - Canada***

- 4.1.1 There shall be a Lutheran Church - Canada Standing Committee known as the Continuing Education Committee of Lutheran Church - Canada. It shall be responsible to the Council of Presidents of Lutheran Church - Canada.

- 4.1.2 The Committee shall consist of the Synodical President or his representative and the three Vice-Presidents of the Synod..
- 4.1.3 The Committee is responsible for its own internal organization.
- 4.1.4 The Committee shall develop policies, procedures and forms for participation in the Program.
- 4.1.5 The Committee shall co-ordinate the programs of the District Continuing Education Committees.
- 4.1.6 The Committee will review Continuing Education opportunities and explore and suggest possible future events sponsored by LCC institutions.

## 5. Other

5.1 Annual participation is recommended at the following **minimum** levels:

- \$300. per year by the parish/institution
- \$100. per year by the worker
- \$ 50. per year by the District/Synod

A minimum of forty (40) hours (one week) per year of time off for planned continuing education purposes (see 3.1).

5.2 The worker who actually receives the funds shall be responsible for any tax implications.

5.3 Deposits and accumulated time off are restricted to the period of service in a parish/institution or agency of Lutheran Church - Canada.

5.4 Workers contemplating sabbaticals or extended leaves may wish to set additional funds aside in a Registered Retirement Savings plan in the year(s) prior to the sabbatical.

5.5 When a church worker is considered for a call, the calling parish/institution shall be advised by the worker as to the amount of accumulated time.

5.6 Accumulated time may be used for preparation as well as actual course time.

5.7 Time must be withdrawn when attending workshops, seminars or courses. Time record shall be one-half week increments: 1 - 3 days = 1/2 week; 4 - 7 days = 1 week. Unless advised by the congregation, time deducted will be equivalent to the number of days the continuing education event is in session. Course title, course length, amount of time and money being withdrawn, and required signatures must appear on the Continuing Education Withdrawal Form before funds will be disbursed.

Students engaged in professional study for longer periods of time shall submit a congregation-approved program for reasonable amount of time being withdrawn for the event.

**OUR COMMON COMMITMENT TO CONTINUING EDUCATION**

For the Calendar Year 20\_\_

**NAME OF CONGREGATION**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address) (Postal Code)

**NAME OF WORKER**

(See Note 2)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address) (Postal Code)

The above-named congregation and its worker, in conjunction with the \_\_\_\_\_ District of the Lutheran Church - Canada, do hereby agree to participate in the Continuing Education Program of the District for the calendar year on the following basis:

**FINANCIAL COMMITMENT**

Congregation	\$ _____	(Minimum \$300.00)	
Worker	\$ _____	(Minimum \$100.00)	
District	\$ 50.00		
Total	\$ _____		Total Accumulated _____

**TIME COMMITMENT**

The congregation further agrees to provide \_\_\_\_\_ week(s) of time off, with pay (minimum - one week) during the calendar year for continuing education purposes, in addition to vacation time and mandatory participation in circuit, regional and district conferences.

We have read the information on the Continuing Education program and agree to the policy.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Worker For the District  
\_\_\_\_\_  
For the Congregation

- Notes:
1. Where several congregations form a single parish, this agreement applies to the parish, not each congregation.
  2. Where a congregation has more than one worker, a separate agreement is to be made with each worker whom the congregation wishes to enroll.

The congregation and the worker should sign this agreement and send it to the Synod Office for review and endorsement by March 31, 2007. Photocopies will be returned to the congregation and to the worker. Please include a cheque from the congregation for its portion of the commitment and a cheque from the worker for his/her portion of the commitment with this form.

The congregation and worker will be given an opportunity each year to renew or terminate the agreement.

**CONTINUING EDUCATION FUND WITHDRAWAL FORM**

**Name of Worker** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Congregation** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Continuing Education Funds Applied to:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Funds being withdrawn** \_\_\_\_\_ **Balance Remaining** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time being withdrawn** \_\_\_\_\_ **Balance Remaining** \_\_\_\_\_  
(½ week, 1 week, 2 weeks, etc.) \*

**SIGNED:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Worker \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Congregation \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Continuing Education \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\* ½ week = 1, 2, or 3 day course; 1 week = 4, 5, or 6 day course