

Maria has served three years in her current call. The congregation is changing. She needed to examine her ministry skills closely and work out a plan to equip herself to meet new challenges in ministry over the next five years. Three areas came to mind. She wanted to deepen her own spiritual life so she would have personal resources to draw on, she wanted to increase her adult education skills, and examine the issues that youth in the congregation were facing so she would be better prepared to communicate with them and offer them support.

Maria and her congregation are members of the Continuing Education Plan for ELCIC's professional leaders. This is a way that leaders and congregations and agencies cooperate to keep standards high among pastors, lay diaconal ministers, and lay professional workers. The Church benefits from having servant leaders with a thorough grounding in Christian teaching and practice, as well as issues in the society in which ministry takes place. Leaders who practice healthy self-care and know their need to grow continually in competence and understanding as faithful disciples of Jesus are an asset to the Church.

Maria decided to look for courses and resources that would help her accomplish her goals. She spoke to colleagues about their experiences in continuing education. She phoned the Synod Office and checked with Leadership for Ministry in the National Office for resources they knew of in these areas. She looked over information from educational institutions in her area and brochures that came from seminaries and theological colleges further away. She thought about her own learning style and considered workshops, classes, guided groups and individual study. She knew the amount that had accumulated in her CEP fund and the amount of study leave she was entitled to. She calculated how much she could expect to add over the next five years. She planned to report to the congregation after each experience as to how her goals for development and the congregation's goals for mission and ministry had been served.

## GUIDELINES: CEP STUDY LEAVES AND FUNDING

Leadership for Ministry in the ELCIC National Office has responsibility for overseeing CEP. There are provisions for short- and long-term study leaves. All study leaves should further the individual's goals for ministry and serve the congregation's or agency's goals for mission.

Each professional leader contributes a minimum of \$150 yearly. Each parish/employer contributes a minimum of \$300 yearly. A larger amount may be contributed on the basis of 1/3 being paid by the professional leader and 2/3 being paid by the parish/employer. The total amount is credited to the account of each participating professional leader. As the plan is administered nationally through the Department of Finance and Administration, accumulated funds remain in the account of the professional leader regardless of the locale of service in the ELCIC.

Interest on accumulated funds is designated for the long-term revolving fund and granted for extended study leaves.

It is recommended that all professional leaders and parishes/employers join CEP. However a professional leader may join without the parish/employer by contributing a minimum of \$150 yearly.

Hereafter, this brochure will refer to the professional leader as *the member*.

### A. SHORT-TERM (1 day to 12 weeks)

1. The parish/employer is requested to grant the member a minimum of two weeks study leave per annum (in addition to vacation time) accumulative over a period of six years to a maximum of 12 weeks.
2. A member may withdraw funds as needed from the member's account through a signed application endorsed by the church council/employer and the synodical bishop.
3. A member temporarily without employment in the ELCIC may withdraw funds from the member's account for study leave subject to the endorsement by the synodical bishop.

4. Since many members continue to serve after they retire, any balance remaining in their accounts is available to them for study leave during retirement, subject to endorsement by the synodical bishop. If a member chooses not to make use of CEP, he or she may request that personal contributions shall be returned to the member. The balance of the account shall be transferred to the long-term fund.
5. If a member terminates service in the ELCIC the balance in the member's account, with the endorsement of the synodical bishop, shall be available to the member for purposes of retraining. If the member elects not to apply for the funds within 12 months of terminating service, personal contributions shall be returned to the member. The balance of the account shall be transferred to the long-term fund.
6. If a member transfers to the ELCA the balance in the account may be transferred to the appropriate ELCA unit, applied for during service in the ELCA or returned to the member.
7. In the event of a member's death, the balance in the member's account will be made available to the designated recipient listed on the application for membership. If there is no designated recipient the balance shall be transferred to the long-term fund. The designated recipient may be changed at any time by sending a written request to the ELCIC National Office.

### B. LONG-TERM (4-12 months)

1. To be eligible to apply for long-term benefits, the member must have been an **active** contributor to CEP for **at least one full year** and have been in an approved ministry for at least five years in Canada.
2. Having secured permission for an extended leave of absence (4 months or more) from the parish/employer and synodical bishop, a member may apply through the National Office, to the Program Committee for Leadership for Ministry for a grant from this fund. Normally for long-term study, a member will be involved in a degree program (academic or clinical) requiring full-time residency.

3. The parish/employer will be encouraged to contribute a portion of the member's salary during this leave (e.g. employed 3 years—20%; 4 years—30%; 5 years—40%; 6 years—50%, etc.). This would include the understanding is that the professional leader returns to the parish/employer for at least one year following the study leave if the parish/employer desires that the professional leader return.
4. A member who is applying for long-term funds may also use funds from his or her CEP account for this purpose.
5. The size of grants awarded in a given year will depend on availability of funds and number of applicants. Consideration will be given to need.
6. The maximum grant awarded per individual for any one year will be \$5,000.
7. The total amount awarded per individual in any 10-year period shall not exceed \$25,000.
8. Applications for long-term funds will be considered annually by the Program Committee for Leadership for Ministry. **Applications must be received by January 15 each year** for the upcoming academic year for which funds are required.

**NOTE:** All extended study leave for pastors are to be planned with the synodical bishop for purposes of career counseling and so that adequate arrangements can be made for pastoral services during the absence.

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada encourages high standards for its professional leader. A fundamental requirement is a thorough grounding in the Christian faith and Holy Scriptures coupled with an understanding of the world and society in which ministry must take place. In addition, servant leaders need to grow continually in competence and understanding in order to be faithful in discipleship.

The Continuing Education Plan of the ELCIC, under the direction of the Program Committee for Leadership for Ministry, offers the means by which pastors, diaconal ministers and lay professional leaders may:

- develop present knowledge and skills;
- acquire new knowledge and skills;
- experience growth for more effective ministry.

Continuing education can be done through workshops, classes, retreats, guided groups and individual study. Whatever the format, continuing education should be planned to further the individual's goals for ministry and to serve the congregation's or agency's goals for mission. Continuing education in the ELCIC, therefore, is seen as a joint effort between the professional leader and the congregation or employing unit.

**COMPUTER PURCHASES  
WILL NO LONGER BE AN  
ALLOWABLE BENEFIT AS  
OF JANUARY 1, 2004**

**Application Forms are available from:**

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada  
Continuing Education Plan  
302-393 Portage Avenue  
Winnipeg MB R3B 3H6**

or from your Synod Office

Rev.02/03

*Equipping...*

*Challenging...*

*Refreshing...*




---



---

## Continuing

## Education

## Plan

## Renewing Professional Leaders in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

---



---

