



CATALOG

New York School of Ministry

An Ecumenical, Educational Program of the

New York Conference, United Church of Christ

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NEW YORK SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

The Rev. Dr. Marjorie Purnine, Dean

The New York School of Ministry (NYSOM) educates and equips women and men for a variety of ministries in local churches – Christian education, pastoral care, church music and pastoral leadership. NYSOM offers four certificate programs, designed to provide personal enrichment and training for all aspects of congregational leadership. We serve individuals discerning a call to ministry, by offering classes and a community of peers, spiritual discernment in continuing conversations with a mentor, supervised ministry, and bi-annual retreats. We serve local churches across the state by training lay leaders and those who will seek authorization from their associations to be licensed ministers, commissioned ministers, and ordained ministers.

CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

1. The Christian Studies Program
2. The Christian Leadership Program
3. The Advanced Christian Leadership Program
4. The Ministry of Word and Sacrament Program

With the exception of the Christian Studies program, NYSOM courses of study are intended for members of local churches who wish to prepare for some form of local church leadership

and whose life circumstances prevent them from enrolling in a traditional educational institution. It is not the intention of the New York Conference for NYSOM to compete with or supersede the role of seminaries and divinity schools in the life of the church but to make theological training available for those who would not otherwise be able to obtain it.

THE CHRISTIAN STUDIES PROGRAM

This program is designed both for persons who want to deepen their understanding of the Christian faith through study that goes well beyond what may be reasonably expected in a local church adult education program, and for those who are discerning a call to ministry and wish to begin a theological education and formation program, even as they seek to discern the specific type of authorized ministry to which they are called. This program, designed to be completed in three years, must be completed in five years, unless an extension is granted by the Curriculum Committee.

Pre-Requisites

Letter of Recommendation from home church

Requirements

1. Completion of the following 20-hour core courses in a classroom setting:

Old Testament I & II

New Testament I & II
History of the Christian Church
Christian Theology

2. Completion of two elective courses.
3. Twelve meetings with a mentor or spiritual director, spread over a period of no less than two years.
4. Attendance at three NYSOM fall retreats and three NYSOM spring convocations.

Tuition

The basic tuition for this program is \$660, payable in annual or semi-annual installments for up to three years. The cost of each NYSOM course is \$200.

CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

This program is for persons who desire to serve local churches in some capacity of leadership. Students who complete the pastoral leadership course of study will be eligible to apply to association Committees on Ministry for licensure to preach and administer sacraments at a specific ministry location for a specified (and renewable) period of time. This program, designed to be completed in four years, must be completed in six years, unless an extension is granted by the NYSOM Curriculum Committee.

Pre-Requisites

1. Letter of Recommendation from home church
2. High School Diploma or equivalent

Requirements

1. Completion of the following 20-hour core courses in a classroom setting:

Old Testament I & II

New Testament I & II

History of the Christian Church

Christian Theology

American Church History

UCC History & Polity

2. Completion of requirements for one of four areas of interest (Pastoral Leadership, Christian Education, Pastoral

Care, or Worship and Church Music, one of which must be declared by the beginning of the student's third year in the program. (See "Area of Interest Requirements" below)

3. Eighteen meetings with a mentor or spiritual director.
4. Completion of Boundary Awareness Training (offered through the New York Conference)
5. Attendance at four NYSOM fall retreats and four NYSOM spring convocations.

NOTE: If an enrollee in this program has already received the Christian Studies Certificate, s/he need not enroll in courses already completed, provided the Certificate was conferred no more than five years prior to the application for the Christian Leadership Program.

Area of Interest Requirements

Pastoral Leadership

1. Completion of the following 20-hour courses:

Liturgy & Worship
Pastoral Care
Congregational Life

2. Completion of one year of supervised ministry. At

least six months of this ministry must be of a pastoral nature in a local church setting.

Christian Education

1. Completion of two courses in Christian education. These courses may be either independent studies or courses in a classroom setting. If a Christian education course is taken over an entire semester through an accredited seminary or divinity school, it will count as two 20-hour courses.

2. Completion of one year of supervised ministry. At least six months of this ministry must involve providing Christian education in a local church setting.

Pastoral Care

1. Completion of two 20-hour courses in pastoral care.

2. Completion of one year of supervised ministry. At least six months of this ministry must involve providing pastoral care.

Worship and Church Music

1. Completion of the 20-hour course: Liturgy & Worship and another course or independent study in the area of worship/liturgy.

2. Completion of one year of supervised ministry. At

least six months of this ministry must involve planning and leading worship.

NOTE: All course requirements for Pastoral Leadership, Christian Education, and Pastoral Care may be met by completing the Certificate Program in Christian Ministry at New York Theological Seminary, Manhattan. All course requirements for Pastoral Leadership or Pastoral Care may be met by completing the Lay Theological Education Program at Capital Region Theological Center, Albany. Students enrolled at CRTS who choose Christian Education or Worship and Church Music as their area of interest, as well as students enrolled at NYTS who choose Worship and Church Music, must complete their area of interest courses through alternate programs.

Tuition

The basic tuition for this program is \$1,200, payable in annual or semi-annual installments for up to four years. If the Christian Studies program has already been completed, the tuition will be \$540, payable for up to three years. Tuition must be paid in full before a Christian Leadership Certificate is granted. The cost of each NYSOM course is \$200.

ADVANCED CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

This program is for persons who discern a call to commissioned ministry in the UCC, when the Committee on Ministry decides that NYSOM provides the appropriate educational and formational path for them. Commissioned ministers are recognized in a particular ministry area by the entire United Church of Christ and may circulate a profile in search of ministry placement. This program, designed to last two years, must be completed in four years, unless an extension is granted by the NYSOM Curriculum Committee.

Pre-Requisites

1. Completion of Christian Leadership Program
2. Letter of Recommendation from home church
3. In Care status with home association
4. Letter from the Chair of the student's Committee on Ministry, stating the student's In Care status and the committee's decision that NYSOM is deemed the appropriate educational and formational path.

Requirements

1. Attendance at 4 weeks of the Summer Academy at Lancaster Theological Seminary. The Academy is offered for two weeks each summer, and registrants may attend one or both weeks. Other seminaries' summer programs must be approved by the Dean.

2. Completion (with grade of Pass) of four elective courses through the LTS Summer Academy (or other seminaries' summer programs approved by the Dean). At least two must be related to the area of ministry for which the student seeks commissioning. The students are strongly encouraged to take the workshops and evening courses at LTS Summer Academy as well. Students may take two evening courses in one area to meet the area requirement that one morning elective would meet (4 elective courses will still be required).

3. Completion of one year of supervised ministry

4. Two years of regular meetings with a mentor or spiritual director (six sessions per year)

5. Attendance at two NYSOM fall retreats and two NYSOM spring convocations

6. Attendance at one annual meeting of the New York Conference

Tuition

The basic tuition for this program is \$1200, payable in annual or semi-annual installments for up to two years. This tuition must be paid in full before an Advanced Christian Leadership Certificate is granted. Tuition for the LTS Summer Academy, which includes course fees,

room, and board, is \$800/week.

MINISTRY OF WORD AND SACRAMENT PROGRAM

This program is for persons who discern a call to ordained ministry in the UCC, when the Committee on Ministry decides that NYSOM provides the appropriate educational and formational path for them. Ordained ministers are recognized by the entire United Church of Christ and may circulate a profile in search of ministry placement. This program, designed to last four years, must be completed in six years, unless an extension is granted by the NYSOM Curriculum Committee.

Pre-Requisites

1. Completion of Christian Leadership Program with Pastoral Leadership Area of Interest
2. Letter of Recommendation from home church
3. In Care status with home association
4. Letter from the Chair of the student's Committee on Ministry, stating the student's In Care status and the committee's decision that NYSOM is deemed the appropriate educational and formational path.

Requirements

1. Attendance at 6 weeks of the Summer Academy at Lancaster Theological Seminary. The Academy is offered for two weeks each summer, and registrants may attend

one or both weeks. Other seminaries' summer programs must be approved by the Dean.

2. Completion (with grade of Pass) of six elective courses through the LTS Summer Academy (or other seminaries' summer programs approved by the Dean). At least one elective course must come from each of the following areas: Bible, Worship, Christian Education, Pastoral Care. The students are strongly encouraged to take the workshops and evening courses at LTS Summer Academy as well. Students may take two evening courses in one area to meet the distribution requirement for that area (6 elective courses will still be required).

3. Participation in the four-year NYSOM Ministry Practicum. The Word and Sacrament students and their mentors will meet for a daylong facilitated discussion three times a year (fall, winter, and spring). 2008-9: Theology; 2009-10: Ethics; 2010-11: Preaching; 2011-12: Practical Issues in Ministry (systems theory, self-care, and other issues to be determined). Reading and writing will be assigned in preparation for these sessions.

4. Completion of one year of supervised ministry

5. Four years of regular meetings with a mentor or spiritual director (six sessions per year)

6. Completion of one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (or equivalent approved by the student's Committee on Ministry).
7. Attendance at three NYSOM fall retreats and three NYSOM spring convocations
8. Attendance at three clergy retreats
9. Attendance at three annual meetings of the New York Conference
10. An international experience (a travel seminar or service-learning trip). Both the NY Conference and Lancaster Theological Seminary offer such opportunities. Proposals for other international experiences or equivalent broadening experiences in the US (e.g. Disaster Response Team trips) must be approved by the Dean. A 3-5 page reflection paper on the experience should be submitted to the Dean after the trip.

Tuition

The annual tuition for the 2008-2009 academic year is \$625. As it is designed to be a four-year program, the Word & Sacrament Program's annual tuition will be charged for only four years. The tuition is payable in annual or semi-annual (September & March) installments. The cost for the NYSOM Ministry

Practicum is included in the basic tuition. Financial aid is available. Tuition must be paid in full before a Ministry of Word and Sacrament Certificate is granted. Tuition for the LTS Summer Academy, which includes course fees, room, and board, is \$800/week. CPE is to be completed at the student's own expense.

Communication with Committees on Ministry

When a student enrolls, the Dean will send him or her a letter stating the requirements to complete the program. At that time, any adjustments to the program (if warranted, depending upon the student's previous experience) will be made in writing. A copy of the letter will be sent to the student's committee. The committee will then approve that recommendation, or, if there are concerns, communicate them through the chair to the Dean.

The Dean will work with the student and in conversation with the chair of the student's committee to obtain an appropriate mentor. When the mentor is chosen, the committee can then decide whether or not to use that mentor as their liaison with the In Care student.

Each year, NYSOM will send the committee a copy of the student's annual progress report. Upon the student's completion of the program, the Dean will notify the chair of the student's Committee on Ministry.

CERTIFICATE PROGRAM INFORMATION

Mentor Meetings

Every student in a certificate program is required to engage in regular discernment conversations with a mentor or spiritual director. In the Christian Studies Program, 12 meetings are required; in the Christian Leadership Program, 18 are required; in the Advanced Christian Leadership Program, 12 are required; and in the Ministry of Word & Sacrament Program, 24 are required. These hour-long conversations should be spaced about eight weeks apart. The main, but not exclusive, focus of these sessions is the student's personal discernment about a sense of divine call and vocation, as well as any issues impinging on his or her faith and spiritual perspective during the course of study. Through these conversations, we hope that our students can reflect upon how God is active in their studies, ministry, and lives, and that they can wrestle with the call they hear as they discern their particular vocations. Students have the option to meet either with a spiritual director or with a mentor (and some meet with both). Mentors are not trained spiritual directors and are not expected to be. They are experienced clergy who can challenge their students, offer a reality check as well as emotional support, and walk with them, playing a vital part in their formation for ministry. The student's mentor or spiritual director may not serve as either a ministry supervisor or independent study director.

In the Word & Sacrament Program, the mentor's role becomes

multi-faceted. In addition to discernment conversations, some of the time together will be focused on the reading and the student's preparation for the Ministry Practicum. Mentors will be sent the three or four books required of their students each year, so that their conversations can inform the students' thinking and writing. Mentors are invited to attend the Ministry Practicum sessions with their students as well, to bring their particular experience and perspective to the seminar discussion. NYSOM compensates mentors \$30 for each session and \$30 plus mileage for Word & Sacrament mentors attending a Ministry Practicum session.

Supervised Ministry

All students in the Christian Leadership, Advanced Christian Leadership, and Ministry of Word and Sacrament Programs must complete a year of supervised ministry. Each supervisory relationship must last a minimum of six months. There are three kinds of possible arrangements for supervised ministry:

1. A person serving a church will carry out ministry in that church, with a supervisor from a nearby church.
2. A person not currently serving a church will carry out ministry in the supervisor's church.
3. A person will carry out ministry in a non-church setting about which the supervisor has expertise.

The supervisor will be appointed by the Dean in consultation

with the student. As enrollees need to be exposed to a variety of models of ministry, mentors may not serve as supervisors. However, a student's home pastor may serve as a supervisor.

Before beginning the unit of supervised ministry, the student and supervisor will complete a learning covenant that sets specific goals for the student and strategies for reaching those goals. The learning covenant shall also clearly state the time and place in which supervised ministry will take place, and the ministerial tasks to be performed. The learning covenant must be approved by the Dean before the unit of supervision begins.

During supervision, the student will work 6 to 8 hours per week in an agreed-upon ministry setting, and meet with the supervisor at least one hour per month. At the supervisory sessions, the supervisor will lead the enrollee in reflection on ministry, using methods commonly employed in Supervised Ministry/Field Education at seminaries.

At the close of the unit of supervised ministry, both the supervisor and the student shall write final reports to be sent to the Dean. Those who serve as supervisors will be given an honorarium equal to \$30 for each month of supervision. The honorarium will be paid to the supervisor by NYSOM after the final reports have been received by the Dean. At the recommendation of either the supervisor or the Dean, the student may be required to repeat the supervision requirement before completing his or her program. In that case, \$360 of

additional tuition will be charged to compensate the second supervisor.

Units of supervised ministry may be negotiated, begun, and completed at any time during the student's course of study. However, only supervision given when the student is enrolled in NYSOM will count toward completion of his or her program.

Application of Previous Studies to NYSOM Programs

Applicants are welcome to provide transcripts of completed courses of study that may substitute for NYSOM requirements. Substitutions will be considered on a person-by-person basis by the Dean. Course content, hours of study, and length of time since course completion may all be considered in determining applicability to a NYSOM program.

Alterations to a Course of Study

Exceptions to program requirements are strongly discouraged. However, unforeseen circumstances may justify them. Any exceptions to the requirements noted in this section must be reviewed and approved by the Curriculum Committee.

Leaves of Absence

Circumstances such as death in the family, workplace changes and health crises may interfere with a student's course of study. A student may apply to the Curriculum Committee for a leave of absence. Leaves will be granted for a period of one

year, may be renewed, and may not exceed a total of two years. In the event that a student has not enrolled in a course, attended a retreat or convocation, or met with his/her mentor for twelve months, and has not applied for leave of absence, the student's enrollment will be discontinued.

Student Appeals

If a student has any grievance regarding the performance of personnel of the school, she or he may make a formal appeal to the Curriculum Committee by writing a letter requesting such an appeal to the Dean. The Curriculum Committee is obliged to respond to the appeal within 30 days of its receipt. If the grievance involves inappropriate conduct of a personal or sexual nature, the Curriculum Committee is obliged to refer the matter to the Commission on Ministry, in addition to taking any action it deems appropriate.

NEW YORK SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

COURSE OFFERINGS

NYSOM's required courses are offered on a three-year rotation schedule. This ensures that students can meet the core requirements in three years.

YEAR ONE:

FALL

Old Testament I - This introductory Bible course focuses on Genesis through Esther. Students engage in the critical study of the text and are taught exegetical method.

Congregational Life - This course explores the various dynamics at work in the life of a local church, toward the end of gaining insight into how to nurture a healthy and productive faith community.

SPRING

Old Testament II - This introductory Bible course focuses on Job through Malachi. Students engage in the critical study of the text and are taught exegetical method.

Foundations and Practice of Pastoral Counseling - This course addresses the basics of counseling in a variety

of situations where there is a pastoral element in the professional relationship, encouraging students to develop a clearly articulated picture of the strengths and limitations of one's pastoral and professional role, skills, and setting.

YEAR TWO:

FALL

New Testament I - This introductory Bible course focuses on the Gospels and Acts. Students engage in the critical study of the text and are taught exegetical method.

From Resurrection to Reformation: the History of the Christian Church

(1-1650) - This course offers a broad overview of church history through the Reformation with an emphasis on ideas and events that have continuing influence on Christian practice and belief.

SPRING

New Testament II - This introductory course focuses on the epistolary material of the New Testament and the book of Revelation. Students engage in the critical study of the text and are taught exegetical method.

Advanced Topics in Pastoral Care and Counseling -

This course offers an integrated pastoral and behavioral sciences approach to some of the more challenging situations faced by helping professionals.

YEAR THREE

FALL

American Church History (1600-2010) - This course offers an overview of the development of Christian churches in the United States with an emphasis on ideas and events that have shaped the denominations of the students.

Liturgy & Worship - This course surveys the history of Christian liturgy, examines the theology of worship and the sacraments, and offers practical instruction to enable students to make informed choices when planning liturgies. One quarter of the course is devoted to preaching.

SPRING

Introduction to Christian Theology - This course introduces students to the primary themes of Christian Theology. Students write papers or sermons that address the topics of Christology, the Doctrine of the Trinity, and the Purpose of the Church.

UCC History and Polity - This course surveys the historical and current documents that illuminate the breadth of theology that informs the United Church of Christ. It provides an overview of the history of the UCC since 1957 and examines the covenantal structure of the church, the responsibilities and accountability of authorized ministers, worship, and vocation in the UCC.

ELECTIVES

Preaching - This course focuses on the practice of preaching, from Biblical exegesis through delivery.

Family Systems Theory and Pastoral Leadership - This course focuses on how Family Systems Theory helps pastors be as healthy as they can be in ministry and how they can use their personal process of “differentiation” to maximize their leadership capacities in congregations.

**THE NEW YORK
SCHOOL OF MINISTRY
FACULTY**

Central New York

Rev. Wayne E. Gustafson (teaches all Pastoral Care and
Counseling courses)

Interim Minister, The Park Church, Elmira, NY
(2007-present)

Pastoral Counselor/Contract Therapist, Susquehanna
Family Counseling Ministry (2002-present)

Clinical Pastoral Education: Seven Units, Basic,
Advanced, and Supervisory

Certified Fellow – American Association of Pastoral
Counselors

Licensed Mental Health Counselor in NY

D.Min in Psychology and Clinical Studies, Andover
Newton, 1979

M.Div Andover Newton Theological School, 1972

Ordained Minister in the United Church of Christ

Rev. Steven D. Johnson (teaches History of the Christian
Church, American Church History and
Introduction to Christian Theology)

Co-Pastor, Federated Church of Maine, Maine, NY

(2004-present)

Adjunct Professor of Philosophy and Ethics, Broome
Community College, Binghamton, New York,
1995-1997, 2006-present.

Minister for Higher and Theological Education,
National Staff of the United Church of Christ
(1998-2004)

Ph.D. in Theology, Drew University, 1995

M.Div Eden Theological Seminary, 1989

Ordained Minister in the United Church of Christ

Rev. J. Mark Lawson (teaches Congregational Life; New
Testament I & II)

Pastor, United Church of Christ in Bayberry,
Liverpool, NY (1995-present)

Adjunct Assistant Professor of Religious Studies,
LeMoyne College, Syracuse (1994-present)

Dean, New York School of Ministry (2003-2007)

Ph.D. in New Testament, Southern Baptist
Theological Seminary, 1990

M.Div Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1987

Ordained Minister in the United Church of Christ

Rev. Marjorie Purnine (teaches Old Testament I & II;
Liturgy & Worship)

Dean, New York School of Ministry (2007-present)
Adjunct Assistant Professor of Religious Studies,
LeMoyne College, Syracuse (2008-present)

Ph.D. in Religion and Literature, Boston University,
2005

M.A. in English, Syracuse University, 1993

M.Div. Yale Divinity School, 1989

Ordained Minister in the United Church of Christ

Rev. Richard Cowles, Jr. and Rev. Marian Shearer
(teach

UCC History and Polity)

Upstate Regional Conference Ministers, New
York

Conference UCC (2001-present)

Western New York

Rev. Jonathan Lawrence (teaches New Testament I &
II)

Associate Professor of Religious Studies and
Theology, Canisius College (2005-present)

Visiting Faculty, Christ the King Seminary, East
Aurora (Summer 2006, 2008 & 2009; Fall
2008)

Co-Pastor, First Baptist Church, Niagara Falls,
NY
(2008-present)

Ph.D. in Theology, University of Notre Dame,
2004

M.Div. Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1997
Ordained Minister in the American Baptist
Churches,
USA

Rev. Kenneth Neal (teaches Old Testament I & II;
Congregational Life)

Adjunct Professor of Religious Studies, Niagara
University (2005-present)

Pastor Emeritus, Cleveland Heights Christian
Church, Cheektowaga, NY

D.Min, Drew Theological Seminary, 1988

M.Div. Yale Divinity School, 1961

Ordained Minister in the Disciples of Christ and
the
United Church of Christ

Course Information

NYSOM Courses are Open to All

While our certificate programs prepare students for some form of authorized ministry, people don't need to be enrolled in NYSOM to take advantage of our courses. Courses may either be taken for a grade or audited.

Classroom Course Availability

An enrollment of eight students is required to guarantee that a classroom course is offered. In cases where 2-7 students enroll, the professor will be given the option of teaching the course for a reduced level of compensation. At present, classes are offered in the Conference Office in Syracuse and in the Buffalo area.

Formats for classroom courses will vary. Some will meet for 10 weekly two-hour sessions. Others will meet for five four-hour sessions on Saturday. Still others may be offered over two weekends in six sessions on Friday evenings, Saturday mornings, and Saturday afternoons. NYSOM will make every effort to maximize the feasibility of the program for all participants. Ability to offer alternatives will, of course, depend upon availability of teaching faculty and facilities.

Auditing Courses

Classroom courses may be audited without enrolling in a NYSOM program. The cost of auditing a course is \$100. An audited course may not be applied at any point toward the completion of a NYSOM program. For the purpose of counting enrollees, an audit will count as a half enrollment. Therefore, the presence of auditing students will increase the minimum enrollment for the course. Auditors will not be required to write a final paper or to take exams, yet, in Pastoral Care courses, auditors will be expected to participate fully (including written participation) in small group classwork.

Grades

At the close of each classroom course, a student will receive a grade based on performance indicators determined by the instructor. Students will also be assigned grades for work in independent studies. NYSOM will use a 4-point grading scale as follows:

A	4.0	A-	3.6	B+	3.4
B	3.0	B-	2.6	C+	2.4
C	2.0	C-	1.6	D	1.0
F	0.0				

Students must receive a C- or higher in all courses to receive the certificate for which they are studying. Supervised Ministry Placements will be graded on a pass-fail basis only

and no numerical value will be assigned. A student's courses and grades will be recorded on a NYSOM transcript and sent to committees on ministry upon graduation (or upon request).

Alternative Courses

Students may substitute coursework through other educational institutions for coursework offered through NYSOM. Generally speaking, any course covering the same subject matter that is offered by an accredited institution of higher learning or by a recognized Christian Continuing Education program, requires a minimum of 20 hours of classroom instruction, and includes some means of formally evaluating the student's work, may substitute for any of the core courses or elective classroom courses. All course substitutions must be approved by the Dean.

Biblical courses that cover the entire Old or New Testament in 20 hours will substitute for one of two courses offered through NYSOM. In this event, one of the two NYSOM courses, or an equivalent, must be taken. Courses in Old or New Testament offered over a traditional semester (36-40 hours) will substitute for both NYSOM courses in either Old or New Testament. For instance, the Introduction to New Testament course offered through New York Theological Seminary will be considered an equivalent to both New Testament I and II offered through NYSOM.

Independent Studies

Some students in the Christian Leadership Program will receive credit through independent studies. NYSOM encourages creativity in the design of these studies in order to craft a program that best suits the needs of each student. Each independent study must include a minimum of five sessions of 1-2 hours each in personal consultation with an independent study director, and must also include at least one measurable assignment for the purpose of assessing a grade. Students should contact the Dean to obtain the list of appropriate independent study directors in their region. All proposals for independent studies must be approved by the Curriculum Committee before such studies commence. At the end of the independent study, copies of graded and commented upon papers should be sent to the Dean.

Grievance Procedure for Grades

If a student feels she or he has been unfairly graded by a classroom teacher, or has any grievance regarding her/his academic performance, the student may make a formal appeal to the Curriculum Committee by writing a letter requesting such an appeal to the Dean. The Curriculum Committee is obliged to respond to the appeal within 30 days of its receipt.

Fall Retreats and Spring Convocations

The extended NYSOM community – our students, graduates, mentors, and friends – gathers twice a year: in the fall, for a spiritual retreat, and in the spring, for our Convocation. These gatherings, which last from dinner on Friday night through dinner on Saturday, are open to all and are held at Stella Maris Retreat and Renewal Center, in Skaneateles. They offer an important opportunity for students to meet peers from across the state and to be with others who are at various points in the process of discerning a call to authorized ministry. In these 24-hour events, there is time to learn, to worship, to share experiences in ministry, to relax with and to get to know one another. The fall program focuses on spiritual formation and the spring program addresses an important element of ministry. In the fall, there are opportunities to engage in new spiritual practices; in the spring, the students in each program have a chance to gather with the Dean for conversation. The spring Convocation concludes with our graduation ceremony, which is incorporated into the closing communion service.

Recent Fall Retreat Programs

November 2008:

“Modes of Discernment: Listening to our
Still-Speaking God,” Rev. Beth DuBois, Leader

November 2007:

“Spiritual Self-Care or Making Time/Space for your
Relationship with God,” Rev. Beth Dubois, Leader

Recent Spring Convocation Programs

May 2009:

"Ministry Through an Interim Lens,"
Rev. Lynn Carman Bodden, Leader

April 2008:

“An Introduction to Family Systems Theory as it Applies
to the Church”, Wayne Gustafson, Leader