

**The Stephenson School for Ministry Annual Report
October 2023 – September 2024**

Purpose of The Stephenson School for Ministry: To support theological education and formation for the current and future leadership needs of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania. Leadership formation for lay and ordered ministry continues while expanding our welcome to others, such as the Dioceses of West Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Pittsburgh, Bethlehem, and Delaware, and creating opportunities for collaborative learning. To offer alternative options for congregations and leadership to engage in formation of God’s action in the world using the best of technology.

2023-2024 Vocational Term Enrollments

Term	Dates	Total Enrollments
Winter 2023 Term	November 6, 2023-February 2, 2024	51
Spring 2024 Term	February 12-April 29, 2024	63
Summer 2024 Term	May 28-August 6, 2024	41
Fall 2024 Term <i>*first semester with 14 or 7 class meetings</i>	August 26 - December 2, 2024	85 <i>*GOE Prep registration is still open as of September 30, 2024</i>

Program/Cohort Enrollment in Fall Term 2024 *as of September 30, 2024

Program Track	Enrolled
Priesthood Training	4
Diaconate Training	9
Lay Preacher	7
Lay Worship Leader	7
Preacher & Worship Leader	2
Continuing Ed	26
Personalized Learning Path	7
Discernment	9

Dioceses Represented:
Bethlehem Central Pennsylvania Chicago Delaware Kansas Maryland Massachusetts Michigan New Jersey Pennsylvania Pittsburgh Southern Virginia West Virginia ELCA

Lay Evangelism	14
ULS Anglican Studies	2
Discernment, Worship & Preacher	2

Anglican Studies Certificate Program with Moravian-Lancaster Theological Seminary and Anglican Studies Seminar with United Lutheran Seminary:

The Anglican Studies certificate partnership continues to be a program offered by the newly formed Moravian-Lancaster Theological Seminary. The last two Anglican Studies graduates finished in May 2023. There are currently no Anglican Studies students in the seminary’s M.Div program. With a new organizing structure and system, SSFM and M-LTS need to create a new memorandum of understanding.

In the 2022-23 academic year, the experiment of an Anglican Studies Seminar with United Lutheran Seminary was completed. In the 2023-24 year, no ULS students were enrolled at SSFM through their Anglican Studies program. With the new academic year, two students are registered for the Anglican Studies courses hosted through SSFM. Since the July 2024 departure of the ULS Anglican Studies coordinator, Rev. Reed Carlson, PhD., SSFM is working with the new dean and the Anglican Advisory group to facilitate ease of student access and advising.

Community and Continuing Education:

SSFM is committed to providing continuing education and community-focused courses. All vocational courses can always be taken for not-for-credit learning. Here is a sampling of the previous year’s continuing education offerings:

Advent 2023: *There’s a Voice in the Wilderness: Advent Hymns*, 4-part Advent season workshop led by the Rev. Becky Zartman. 60 people registered from across the church and ecumenical partners to learn about the history of this season’s liturgical music and how the major scriptural and theological themes appear.

January-February 2024: *How to Pray*, led by the Rev. Dr. Luke Zerra engaged 18 people to explore the scriptural, historical, and theological underpinnings of four prayer forms and then had a chance to pray together using the practice.

February-March 2024: *How to Bible*, led by the Rev. Becky Zartman had 10 participants in an introduction to the content and context of Scripture.

February and April 2024: Two Online Workshops for Diocesan Teams. This was a closed invitation to bishops diocesan, commissions on ministry, canons to the ordinary, and formation leaders. The February 1st workshop was a data presentation that blended the sources of the Church Pension Group, Episcopal parochial reports, and transition ministry to provide a realistic view of where our church currently is and how it impacts future vision. The April 11th workshop led by the Revs. Katie Nakamura Rengers and Tom Brackett, shared what church planters and new Episcopal communities have been learning and what the wider church can learn from these new expressions. 75 people from over 20 dioceses registered.

May-June 2024: *People’s Theology of the Church*, 6 sessions with Dr. Joshua Davis. 26 registrants signed up for this course that discussed the New Testament’s vision of our current mission and ministry as followers of Jesus.

July 2024: *God, Gospel, and Gender* author event with the Rev. Margie Baker. 27 people signed up to hear about this important, newly published resource from Church Publishing.

August 2024: *The Celtic Way: Discovering Christ in our Midst*, three sessions with the Rev. Dr. Mark Scheneman. This offering had over 80 registered participants to explore the mission, history, and practices of Celtic spirituality.

October 2024: *Sober October* with the Rev. Erin Jean Warde as a book study of *Sober Spirituality* and cohort to explore the personal and cultural connections with alcohol. 8 have registered for this month-long online group.

Vital and Effective Leadership Institute (VELI):

Central Pennsylvania and Bethlehem continue to partner to offer this two-year cohort experience to newly ordained and new-to-the-diocese clergy. Coordinated by diocesan staff, Central Pennsylvania's Dr. Sarah Stonesifer Boylan and Bethlehem's The Rev. Canons Melinda Artman and Barbara Harrison Seward, there has been a cross-diocesan effort to form a colleague group. Spanning two years of planned programming, these monthly Zoom meetings create opportunities for worship, collegiality, and topic-focused discussion. Topics include, but are not limited to, entering/leaving well, budgets, leadership styles, and family systems. There are also in-person meetings with each respective diocese and a cross-diocesan meeting.

In May 2024, there were nine Bethlehem and four Central Pennsylvania "graduates".

In 2024-25, there are four participants from Bethlehem and seven from Central Pennsylvania.

SSFM Advisory Board:

There have been four Stevenson School for Ministry Board Meetings, with The Rev. Canon David Lovelace as Chair. The meetings were held in December 2023, February board retreat at ULS-Gettysburg, June, and September 2024.

The Advisory Board membership: The Rt. Rev. Dr. Audrey Scanlan, the Rev. Canon David Lovelace, the Rev. Michael Nailor, the Rev. Bradley Mattson, Mr. Rob Box, the Rev. Dr. David Zwifka, the Rev. Dr. Reed Carlson (resigned due to new position at Sewanee), the Rev. Canon Marianne Ell, the Rev. Canon Kristofer Lindh-Payne, the Rev. Dr. Shawn Strout, Dr. Vanessa Lovelace, and Ms. Tracy Robinson. Last year, an update to the by-laws provided space for diocesan (Maryland and Delaware) and organizational partners (United Lutheran Seminary and Moravian-Lancaster Theological Seminary) to be added to the advisory board. This representative board provides a full-picture of the needs and visions of our extended learning community.

The Rev. Deborah Jackson, DMin, former associate dean for community life at the School of Theology at University of the South, current associate dean of formation and recruitment at Church Divinity School of the Pacific, facilitated the February board retreat. This time allowed the advisory board to observe and reflect on the macro and micro views of leadership formation and how SSFM fits in the constellation of diocesan, parish, and member needs.

Mr. Rob Box, Treasurer for SSFM, has continued to engage us in financial development as he works with the Diocesan finance committee and our Canon for Finance Chad Linder to develop a budget that reflects the stabilization of income, driven by the growth in the student body and class sizes.

SSFM Financials Overview:

- 2025 SSFM Budget was submitted and approved by the Finance Committee and Council of Trustees.
- SSFM is ahead of budget for the calendar year 2024.
 - Expanded student enrollment.
 - Lower than budgeted instructional costs.
 - Partners and networked dioceses cost-sharing for enrolled students.
- SSFM broke even in the 2023 budget year.
 - With the current spending and budget, SSFM seems positioned to continue doing so in 2024, excluding the dean's compensation.

Check out our web page for more information: <https://diocesecpa.org/stevensonschoolforministry/>

We encourage everyone to sign up for a course!

Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. Sarah Stonesifer Boylan, Dean of the Stevenson School for Ministry, sboylan@diocesecpa.org

The Rev. Dr. Luke Zerra, Associate Dean of the Stevenson School for Ministry

The Rev. Canon David Lovelace, chair, SSFM Advisory Board