

Flourishing in Ministry: Exploring Meaning, Means and Practice

Ministry can be both exhilarating and exhausting especially in the midst of seismic cultural shifts. While you as a pastoral leader have opportunities to bring good news, the expectation to over-work and be consistently present is normalized. You as a pastor are often encouraged to ignore your own life in the service of others. These dynamics can be particularly challenging in the midst of change and routinely lead to burnout. Clarity about what it looks like and feels like when you are thriving and specifics about how to achieve your own and others' thriving can encourage and sustain you in your vocation.

Our stories and the values inherent in them significantly shape who we are, how we live, and how we practice ministry. The convictions we hold about loving God, self, and the relationship between these is primarily communicated to us through stories we inherit from our families, our congregations, and our culture. Do the stories we live by allow us to care for ourselves as well as others? Do our stories of call help us flourish in ministry or leave us floundering?

This five day online intentional workshop is designed for mid-career clergy interested in exploring the different facets of personal and professional flourishing and in developing strategies for increasing one's resiliency.

Workshop Description:

This workshop employs two approaches to lay a foundation for understanding the connection between our values, our stories, and the ways they support/inhibit our flourishing. By exegeting our life stories, we can identify those which sustain us and those which do not. An assessment tool explores and clarifies our deepest commitments, how they influence us and the way we lead, and identifies potential areas of growth. Keeping these values in mind, we engage the questions above by considering a close reading of our own life stories. We will learn practices of flourishing, including re-storying, practicing love, self-compassion, and honoring the body as steps toward creating a sustaining story of life and ministry that moves us toward flourishing.

Methods of instruction include introductions to values assessment and to narrative practices of care, small group work, as well as journaling and reflective writing. Participants are asked to take an online assessment and to read Karen Scheib's *Attend to Story: How to Flourish in Ministry* (Foundery Press, 2018) prior to attending. The cost of both is included in the registration fee.

While the week centers around sessions, there will be open time for reflection and relaxation. We strongly recommend that you set aside time to be present to the hard work of self-reflection and transformation. To encourage you to get away from the distractions and pressures of work, we will reimburse you for lodging for up to \$150 per night for 5 nights at a retreat center or hotel within 75 miles of your home address.

DR. BARBARA MCCLURE

Dr. Barbara McClure ("Bar") is a professor of pastoral theology and practice at Brite Divinity School. She has been exploring the flourishing life for more than twenty years, examining: What is human flourishing? What does flourishing look and feel like? What might it take to flourish? What difference does it make if we flourish or not? What would it take for us all to flourish? Bar has led many classes, workshops, and retreats on the topic, bringing clarity to participants about flourishing (or lack thereof) in their own lives and helping them find ways forward to deeper, richer vocations. Her most recent book is *Emotions: Problems and Promise for Human Flourishing* (Baylor University Press, 2019).



DR. KAREN SCHEIB

Dr. Karen Scheib is Emerita Professor of Pastoral Care and Pastoral Theology at Candler School of Theology at Emory University. She taught 27 years (22 at Candler). She is the author of *Attend to Stories: How to Flourish in Ministry* (Foundery Press, 2018), *Pastoral Care: Telling the Stories of Our Lives* (Abingdon Press, 2016) and *Challenging Invisibility: Practices of Care with Older Women* (Chalice Press 2004). She was ordained as an elder in the United Methodist Church in 1982 and has served as pastor for 10 years, hospital chaplain and pastoral counselor. Her research interests include narrative practices of care, the role of creativity and imagination in pastoral care, creative writing as a healing and spiritual practice, congregational and multi-cultural practices of care, and the relationship of faith and health.

