



# *Exploring Your Spiritual Journey*

A program of the Whitaker School of Theology

## ***Background***

Exploring Your Spiritual Journey is a discernment process that responds to the calling of the Holy Spirit and honors lay ministry as well as ordained ministry. The inclusion of people discerning a special direction in lay ministry together with those who sense a call to ordained ministry will enrich all who seek a focused and deepened ministry to serve as Jesus taught in the church and in the world.

The Exploring Your Spiritual Journey (EYSJ) Program is for any person who is seeking to understand God's work in his or her life. If you feel there is more to life than day-to-day living, then EYSJ may help you discern how God is calling you to live.

During the EYSJ year, in the midst of a Christian community, you will walk with a group of fellow seekers reflecting on God's call and on what it means to keep covenant with God. Reflection and prayer lie at the heart of this program. Through reflection and prayer you are led to a closer walk with God, in quietness to hear what God asks of you. In this community you will share a common life of discernment and exploration. You will reflect on your spiritual journey, identify your spiritual gifts and determine the resources, training and experience you will need to effectively carry out the unique ministry you have discerned.

In all of this, you will have the support and guidance of facilitators and a spiritual director. Most of all you will have the affirmation of this community of students who are walking with you on this journey. Participants are also expected to have the support of their rector, vicar or priest-in-charge.

## ***Description***

The EYSJ Program begins with an orientation session. During this session you will begin to get to know one another, establish the dates for the 14-16 sessions and choose a meeting place. There may be a Whitaker School of Theology retreat referred to as "The Opening Retreat." This first session brings the class together as a group, building community and offering support as each participant is encouraged to reflect on where you have come from and where you are going. At the end of eight to nine months together you may have another opportunity to gather as a community at the closing workshop.

The EYSJ group meets approximately every other Saturday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. It is very important to adjust your schedule to attend all of the sessions. Each session opens and explores diverse and creative ways of worship. Following worship, time is taken for each member to "check-in" and to share with the others what has been happening in his or her life since the previous meeting. There will also be opportunities to speak with others who are serving in the laity and in ordained orders, and to explore one's spiritual journey through scripture, tradition, stories and prayer.

Within the first month you will select a **spiritual director**. You will be aided in determining what to look for in a spiritual director and how to find one. This is a vital personal relationship in the EYSJ Program. The School provides a list of approved spiritual directors but does not supervise this personal relationship. The student and the spiritual director will agree on a fee, which is not included in the EYSJ tuition.

You will be required to do assigned reading, write reflection papers, share with the group the story of your spiritual journey, conduct interviews of a priest, deacon and lay minister and prepare a learning plan. You are encouraged to take no other classes during the year so that you have time for reading assignments, prayer, journaling, reflection and for developing a personal spiritual discipline.

At the end of the year you will have a better understanding of what God is calling you to do. You will have developed the beginning of a **learning plan** which will include an assessment of what you already bring to ministry, as well as describe the tools and skills you will need to develop and how that might be accomplished. You will meet with the Whitaker School Administrator and together you will make a decision whether continuing education should take place within the School or in other ways.

### ***Nuts and Bolts***

Applications are accepted throughout the year. Students applying will be notified within one month after an interview with an Exploring Your Spiritual Journey Peer Facilitator. The application form must be submitted with a \$50 non-refundable application fee. This fee will be applied to the student's tuition once the student is accepted. Upon acceptance into the program a payment of \$100 towards tuition must be received by the Opening Retreat on September 18 & 19, 2009.

The tuition for the Exploring Your Spiritual Journey program is \$1400. This is payable several ways: on a monthly basis, half tuition due at the beginning and the second half due mid way in the program, or another payment plan arranged with the Whitaker office in advance. This fee includes the program costs, the EYSJ peer group meetings, administrative services and the retreat. This fee does not cover mandatory spiritual direction. The student is responsible for any fees contracted with their spiritual director.

There are scholarship funds available. We suggest that students also first seek aid from their own congregation. Typical scholarship awards for Exploring Your Spiritual Journey are \$300 but may be as much as \$470 which equals one third of the tuition. It is expected that congregations may wish to contribute an additional one third. Scholarships will be awarded in the order of applications received until the funds are depleted. If you are interested in a scholarship please contact our office directly.

Students are expected to pay their fees or complete the appropriate forms at semester registrations. If a student is unable to make a payment due to changed financial circumstances, that student is expected to contact the office immediately to discuss the situation. New arrangements will then be put in writing and the student will be expected to fulfill those obligations.

**IMPORTANT:** Students whose accounts are not current will be ineligible for the services of the school and attendance at the Year End Celebration & Graduation Ceremony until those accounts

are paid in full. This includes class work, peer group meetings, administrative services and continuation in any of the other diocesan programs.

Students whose parishes are part of the **Whitaker Parish Plan** will receive a \$125 tuition credit. Full-time EYSJ students who belong to congregations that are part of the Whitaker School Parish Plan will receive a \$125 tuition credit per year, applied on a semester basis. Congregations can join the Parish plan by making a contribution to the School of at least \$1 per member. A membership runs for one year from date of contribution.

Tuition covers only about 75% of the actual cost of this program. Other funding for Exploring Your Spiritual Journey comes from contributions from individuals, congregations and the Diocese.



## *Exploring Your Spiritual Journey*

*is a program of the*

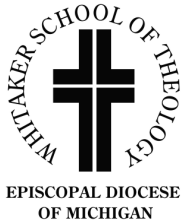
**WHITAKER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY**

Episcopal Diocese of Michigan

4800 Woodward Avenue

Detroit, MI 48201

Karen S. Robinson, Executive Director [krobinson@edomi.org](mailto:krobinson@edomi.org)  
(313) 833-4412



WHITAKER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY  
*Exploring Your Spiritual Journey*  
APPLICATION FORM

Registration Deadline is September 1, 2009

Please enclose a non-refundable application fee of \$50 which will be applied to your tuition.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (RES) \_\_\_\_\_ (BUS) \_\_\_\_\_

CELL \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

JOB \_\_\_\_\_

PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT \_\_\_\_\_

MARITAL STATUS \_\_\_\_\_

PARISH \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_

CLERGYPERSON \_\_\_\_\_ (Please print)

Have you told him or her about this program and your interest in participating in it?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**EDUCATION**

List your educational experiences since high school below.  
(please include classes taken at the Whitaker School of Theology)

SCHOOL	DATES ENROLLED	PROGRAM	CERTIFICATE/DEGREE

What are your strengths as a student?

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What are your weaknesses as a student?

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What are your needs as a student?

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Please describe your current ministry.

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What do you hope to accomplish/receive in the EYSJ program?

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Are you considering ordination?\_\_\_\_\_ If so, describe what steps you have taken.

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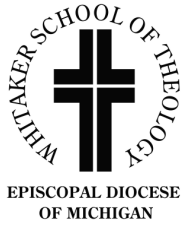
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Please share with us any information that may assist us in getting to know you better, and to help us plan your orientation.

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WHITAKER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY  
*Exploring Your Spiritual Journey*  
SCHOLARSHIP FORM

DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_  
CELL \_\_\_\_\_  
EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_  
CONGREGATION \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL PROGRAM COST \$ 1400.00

AMOUNT REQUESTED FOR SCHOLARSHIP \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Max is 1/3 of program cost = \$470.00  
If more financial support is required please contact the Executive Director directly

Please answer the following question.

*Are you applying for scholarship aid anywhere else? If so please list the amount and status of that request.*

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**Please complete this form and return it to the Whitaker School of Theology, Episcopal Diocese of Michigan, 4800 Woodward Avenue, Detroit, Michigan, 48201. Email: [krobinson@edomi.org](mailto:krobinson@edomi.org)**

AMOUNT OF SCHOLARSHIP GRANTED \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (FOR OFFICE USE ONLY)