Ethical Ministry: Resource book for Facilitators and Participants

Half-day Refresher Program

A continuing education program for: Ministers, Candidates, Pastors, Chaplains, Pastoral Practitioners, Church Engagement Leaders and Lay People engaged in ministry.

Program and Process information.

Acknowledgement

This program has been adapted from material developed for the UCA Synod of VicTas by Rev. Lauren Mosso and Rev. Sharon Hollis, and is used with permission.

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Online Resources

The Refresher Case Studies can be downloaded from the UME website:

(ume.nswact.uca.org.au/ethical-ministry-half-day-refresher-program)

along with

Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice for Ministers

Code of Conduct for Lay Leaders

Guidelines for Councils of the Church when implementing the Code of Conduct for Lay Leaders

Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice for Lay Preachers

Uniting Employees will find their Code of Conduct in the Learning Campus area.

Themes for 2018

- 2018A: Boundaries
- 2018B: To be advised

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Goals of the Ethical Ministry Program

1. To ensure that all ministry practitioners, lay and ordained, are familiar with and informed by the Assembly document *Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice*.
2. To enable all ministry practitioners, lay and ordained, to engage in personal guided reflection on the practice of ministry through the medium of case studies.
3. To encourage and facilitate collegiality by requiring all ministry practitioners, lay and ordained, to be involved twice each calendar year, meeting for three hours in a small group to discuss issues of professional conduct and the practice of ministry.
4. To contribute to the development of a community of practice in which all ministry practitioners are supported and given help in the process of learning by peers and the Presbytery.

Attendance

Ministry agents for whom Ethical Ministry workshops are required (COMPULSORY)
*   All MOWs, Deacons and Pastors in full- or part-time placement or supply
*   Youth Pastors and other Lay pastoral workers in leadership roles
*   All Civil and Religious Chaplains in placement
*   Ministry agents waiting for or actively seeking placement
*   Retired ministers who are still participating in the preaching, teaching, pastoral or missional ministries of the church
*   Candidates for ministry

Others who may benefit from participation (VOLUNTARY)
*   Lay leaders in various capacities
*   POD candidates
*   Elders and Church Council members
*   Lay Preachers

Compliance

Ministry Agents are expected to participate in two half day ethical ministry refreshers each year. This includes a written reflection on an existing case-study, or crafting a case-study relevant to the set theme. The reflection is to be cited by the facilitators, and the case-study handed in for use in future sessions.

Any ministry agent who misses two ethical ministry refreshers without Presbytery's support will be required to re-do the two day ethical ministry course facilitated by Uniting Mission & Education.

Scheduling, Notification, Record-keeping responsibilities

*   Every Presbytery should arrange for enough people to become qualified facilitators to meet the need in that Presbytery, including requesting suitable ministers to undertake the necessary facilitator training.

- Every Presbytery, in conjunction with Uniting, schools and other agencies, should schedule an adequate number of workshops, twice a year, to meet the needs of their own ministers.
- Every Presbytery should advertise their time and place clearly and fully to every minister, church secretary and local Uniting coordinator, to other local church agencies and to their neighbouring Presbyteries. Details should be included in Presbytery mail-outs, websites and online calendars and updated whenever a change is made.
- Dates should be forwarded to Uniting Mission & Education (umeinfo@nswact.uca.org.au) for inclusion in their event calendar
- Presbyteries should coordinate with each other so that ministers have ample opportunities to attend workshops in their own or another Presbytery.
- UME should coordinate with Synod and Assembly to ensure ministers outside of Presbytery placements and chaplaincies can attend workshops tailored to their ministry
- Facilitators are responsible for keeping the role of attendance at each workshop and sending this promptly to the Presbytery secretary.
- Presbytery (and Uniting) will record attendance of all ministers registered as members of Presbytery (or employed with Uniting), whether in placement or otherwise connected with the Presbytery, and attendance of all others who participated voluntarily. Email confirmation of attendance may be sent to each participant by the Presbytery.
- The Presbytery Secretary will forward a copy of attendance at the end of each semester/theme to the General Secretary for Synod records.
- The Gen Secretary will ensure records are kept for the whole Synod, and where information gaps occur, will check with the relevant Presbytery secretary or UME.

Case Studies (see accompanying booklet)
- Each participant is required to prepare a brief analysis and reflection on <u>one</u> of the case studies provided; OR to write a relevant and usable case study based on their own ministry experience. This must be handed to the facilitator at or before the workshop. If not done, participation in the Workshop is not complete.
- Fresh Case studies should be sought by UME for each theme, including recurring themes. Care should be taken that these cover the breadth of ministry situations, a range of cultural, age and gender ministry issues, and are relevant to contemporary ministry.
- As the number of available case studies grows, participants will be asked to choose from a wider range of studies and may be able to choose one that corresponds to their situation. Facilitators will need to use discretion in choosing two case studies to use in each workshop and ensuring participants have those specific studies in advance.
- Case studies are stored online at
   http://ume.nswact.uca.org.au/ethical-ministry-half-day-refresher-program

Workshop Preparation

Booking and organisational stage

- ❑ Develop a calendar of workshops in cooperation with neighbouring Presbyteries
- ❑ appoint Facilitators, preferably two for each session, or 1 per eight participants
- ❑ Identify other people to become qualified facilitators through participation in and sharing leadership of this workshop
- ❑ book venues, make appropriate arrangements for refreshments
- ❑ notify appropriate participants within the presbytery, send out readings, case studies and prep.
- ❑ communicate with other presbyteries and with the Secretariat
- ❑ if you are holding a second (non-Code of Ethics) training session, please hold that session after the Ethical Ministry session. The main focus of the session/day is to be the Code of Ethics as attendance is mandatory for ministers.
- ❑ Notify UME of Presbytery dates and location for sessions (umeinfo@nswact.uca.org.au)

Before the session

- ❑ contact the venue to ensure refreshments will be available
- ❑ prepare a brief opening prayer or devotion (no more than 10 minutes)
    - o can include a brief Scripture reading, perhaps an excerpt from the lectionary for the week, music, silence, or just some quiet time to 'gather your thoughts' and an invitation to be open to what the day has to offer, a prayer for grace, compassion, honesty and insight.
    - o Please bring your choice of symbols
- ❑ prepare copies of the workbook

Participants' required preparation:

- ❑ Contact your Presbytery secretary to book into each session;
- ❑ ensure you have a current Code of Ethics; re-read it and bring it to training;
- ❑ **PREPARE BY** reading through all the case studies, considering how the Code of Ethics might be relevant to them and the subject of the workshop;
- ❑ **EITHER**:
    prepare a one page reflection on one of the cases in relation to your ministry practice;
- ❑ **OR**: reflect on an ethical situation relevant to the theme from your own ministry and write a brief case study similar to those in the Workbook (about half a page, no real names) This could be discussed in paired sharing. Email a copy to the Facilitator and UME for future use.
- ❑ Case studies and reflections MUST be handed to the facilitator to comply with Assembly participation requirements.

On the day of the session

- ❑ Arrive early to ensure venue is ready, chairs set up, etc.
- ❑ Provide spare copies of the Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice
- ❑ Consider providing drawing paper and pencils and music (with technology to play it) for reflection time at the end of session
- ❑ Name tags are helpful if people don't all know each other.
- ❑ Introduce people and help all to feel welcome and included
- ❑ You may wish to bring a bell or chime to ring to let people know it is time to swap during the paired sharing, and to call them back into the group afterwards. Please don't become part of a pair yourself as you will need to facilitate for others
- ❑ While one person can facilitate several groups, we recommend only facilitating one group on any given day. We also recommend co-facilitators so that people do not work alone, as discussions can become complex and facilitators can support one another
- ❑ Sessions are three hours long, so please build in a break either before or after the session. There is an opportunity for participants to have a cup of tea/coffee and/or a toilet break during the paired sharing section of the training without this becoming an extended break.

During the session

- ❑ Stick to the time allocated – start on time so you can end on time.
- ❑ Encourage participants in plenary, small groups and pairings to stay on topic – the purpose is to discuss our own ethical dilemmas – not to share stories of how other people have acted unethically.
- ❑ Distribute the handout for further reading and feedback at the end of the session.
- ❑ Co-facilitators please communicate with your training partner and model collegiality throughout the session.

After the session

- ❑ Collect sign-in sheets, submit them to your Presbytery contact person.
- ❑ Collect feedback sheets, submit them to your Presbytery (and UME if appropriate).
- ❑ Notify Presbytery and Secretariat of attendance – including people who were supposed to attend but did not – the Presbytery will need to follow up on those who do not attend this mandatory training.
- ❑ Only after attendance and reflection/case study have been confirmed, issue certificate (provided by UME) to each participant.

Session Outline	Time:	3 hours
Hospitality	*before start*	Eat lunch, get coffee
Worship	*12:15* *10 mins*	
Introduction (introduce Mutual Invitation process p.7, rules for interaction p.8-9)	*12:25* *5 mins*	• Housekeeping – toilets, fire exits, crying room… • The facilitator's role • Safe Place – note emotional safety, appropriate confidentiality especially regarding the paired sharing component of the training • Purpose of training – uphold the integrity of ministry within our Synod.
Discussion: **Theme and Case Study** Plenary: Smaller Groups:	*12:30* *15 mins* COEMP *(1 hour = 3 cases)*	Focus questions: CoEMP and Theological Insight: • Where does the Code of Ethics address the set theme? • Note anything from the reading supplied? • Theological/biblical insights on the theme? Case Studies- Facilitator to pick 2-3 • Which parts of the *Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice* relate to this scenario? • What is the ethical issue/dilemma? (there may be more than one per case study) • See questions after Case Studies
Paired Sharing: You may have some refreshments during this time.	*1:45* 1. 15 mins each 2. 10-15 mins 3. 5-10 mins *1 hour total*	1. In pairs think of an example from your ministry that relates to the topic – how did you resolve it? What did you learn from it? How are you practicing ministry differently as a result? 2. Dialogue with each other – What insights have we gained about prevention of ethical breaches in ministry practice? 3. End with: What would you like to bring to the group about your own experience, or about this discussion? (Don't discuss the other person's experience with the wider group.)

Session Outline	Time:	3 hours
Shared plenary discussion	*2:45* *10 mins*	• What new insights into CoEMP can you share? • What ambiguities, hidden issues emerged?
Concluding reflection (silence or background music) • Personal notes for supervision • Evaluation sheet	*5 minutes*	• As a result of today's conversation is there anything I want to discuss with my supervisor? • A time for Biblical / theological reflection: what themes from faith stories or scripture help you work through this ethical dilemma? • Are there any images that come to mind? • Participants may bring their own journal or drawing materials to use during this time. • hand out the article for further reading on the topic and the evaluation sheet • reminder to sign the attendance sheet.

Process Tools

Mutual Invitation Process[1]

Objectives: To facilitate sharing and discussion in a multicultural setting.

Type of Group: Any.

Size of Group: 4-15.

Setting: Participants should sit in a circle.

Materials: newsprint and markers.

Time required: depending on the size of the group. A good way to tell how much time will be required for each round of sharing is to multiply the number of participants by five minutes.

How to Proceed:

A. Let participants know how much time is set aside for this process.
B. Introduce the topic to be discussed or information to be gathered or question(s) to be answered. Write this on newsprint and put it up on a wall so everyone can see it.
C. Introduce the process by reading the following:

In order to ensure that everyone who wants to share has the opportunity to speak, we will proceed in the following way:

The leader or designated person will share first. After that person has spoken, he or she then invites another to share. Whom you invite does not need to be the person next to you. After the next person has spoken, that person is given the privilege to invite another to share. If you don't want to say anything, simply say "pass" and proceed to invite another to share. We will do this until everyone has been invited.

If this is the first time you use this with a group, it will be very awkward at first. The tendency is to give up on the process and go back to the whoever-wants-to-talk-can-talk way. If you are persistent in using this process every time you facilitate the gathering, the group will eventually get used to it and have great fun with it. A good way to ensure the process goes well the first time is to make sure there are a couple of people in the group who have done this before and, as you begin the process, invite them first.

Problems to Anticipate

This process addresses differences in the perception of personal power among the participants. Some people will be eager for their turn, while others will be reluctant to speak when they are invited. If a person speaks very briefly and then does not remember to invite the next person, do not invite for him or her. Simply point out that this person has the privilege to invite the next person to speak. This is especially important if a person "passes." By ensuring that this person still has the privilege to invite, you affirm and value that person independent of that person's verbal ability.

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[1] From *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb: A Spirituality for Leadership in a Multicultural Community*, by Eric H.F. Law. Chalice Press, 1993.

Ground Rules for Group Discussion[2]

1. Arrive on time, remain for the entire session, and do not wander in and out of the session.

2. Unless you're expecting an emergency call, please turn mobile phones off. If you must take a call please leave the room before doing so in order to minimise the interruption. Devices should only be used for reading the relevant materials for the session, not for Facebooking the conversation.

3. Listen. Hear what the other person is saying. Let them finish talking. Think before you respond. The same word or phrase may mean different things to different people, so it may be helpful to ask a question for clarification rather than making an assumption.

4. Talk about yourself and your own experience. You may ask questions of others, but do not challenge the validity of another's personal experience or point of view. Code of Ethics case studies are meant to be used as tools for learning more about how the Code applies to our own ministry practice. Sometimes discussions may need to hold a wide range of views, and guidance may be needed from the Facilitators to ensure that the spirit and intention of the Code of Ethics is being upheld in the discourse.

5. Keep your comments brief and to the point, so everyone has a chance to speak.

6. Do not generalise from your experience and feelings to the experience and feelings of others. Let people speak for themselves.

7. Do not attack, or try to hurt, or pass judgment on anyone, whether or not they are present.

8. Treat this group session as a confidential conversation, do not repeat elsewhere what is said here.

9. Stay on topic.

10. Please take responsibility to discern which material is appropriate for you to share in the wider group, what would be better suited to the 'paired sharing' and what should be shared only with your supervisor.

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[2] Adapted from http://lbgtrc.msu.edu/resources/groundrules-for-discussion-and-support-groups (accessed 17 May 2013).

Safe Paired Sharing

This is an invitation to engage with the topic on a more personal level, and to integrate your learning with your ministry practice. Participants are requested to keep discussions confidential, but at the same time to remember that paired sharing is in no way intended to take the place of a conversation with your supervisor. We are all vulnerable people. Collegial respect and care for one another are essential elements for Code of Ethics training, and of course they are also essential for ministry.

Sharing an example from your ministry could include:

- An actual (de-identified) situation that you feel comfortable to discuss in this setting
- A 'hypothetical' situation that could possibly happen to you or someone else – what steps would you take to resolve it, or how might you prevent a breach of the Code of Ethics? What choices might you make in this situation?
- You might start out with a situation when your own boundaries were violated by another person (de-identified) – but the fruit of the discussion would more likely be found in changing places. Instead of staying with what happened to you, what might the other person have done differently so they would not have acted unethically towards you? Or fruitful discussion might be found in thinking about how in your own ministry practice you seek to avoid such violations.

You may find it helpful to take some time at the beginning of this session to silently reflect and gather your thoughts. This could be a good way to work through which issues you feel safe about sharing in this context, and which ones you would rather save to discuss privately with your supervisor.

The suggested format for the paired sharing time is as follows:

Paired Sharing: (1 hour)

- For 15 minutes each: In pairs think of an example from your ministry that relates to the topic – how did you resolve it? What did you learn from it? How are you practicing ministry differently as a result?
- Dialogue with each other 10-15 minutes – What insights have we gained about prevention of ethical breaches in ministry practice?
- End with (5-10 minutes): What would you like to bring to the group about your own experience, or about this discussion? (Don't discuss the other person's experience with the wider group.)

Case Studies: (see accompanying booklet for actual case studies)

Introduction to the Case Studies

The following case studies form the basis of the program. This is a deliberate choice based on the recognition that ethical issues in ministry often require dealing with complex and difficult situations and people. The way we respond shapes our ministry and integrity. Hence, although the case studies are somewhat artificial, they draw on real life situations and therefore offer shades of grey. In each case considered, participants are invited to consider how they would respond in a similar situation.

The case-studies reflect varying ministry situations, such as chaplaincy, youth ministry, education and congregational settings. Participants may include ordained and lay, placed and without placement, employed and volunteer.

Discussion questions are included at the end of each case study. The questions are generic so as not to lead the conversation, but to provide a framework for a lively and thoughtful conversation.

Participants need to choose one case study from the whole resource book to prepare their written reflection.

Facilitators need to choose 2-3 case studies for the group to discuss

	uniting church in Australia, Synod of NSW & ACT	ETHICAL MINISTRY			
		Participant Feedback to the Presbytery Facilitator			
Presbytery:					
Facilitators:					
Workshop place and date:					
	Does the Workshop…		**YES**	**NO**	**Comments**
1	a.	a. Provide space for theological reflection grounded in the Gospel?			
2	a.	Integrate the UCA Code of Ethics & Ministry Practice with real issues participants face?			
	b.	Develop critical thinking about ethical issues?			
	c.	Help to expand awareness of ethical dilemmas in ministry?			
	d.	Help to explore appropriate responses to ethical dilemmas?			
3	a.	Promote a culture of accountability?			
	b.	Support church oversight & discipline structures & processes?			
	c.	Resource ministers & ministry agents for healthy ministry?			
4	a.	Support the obligation of ministers to receive professional supervision?			

	Does the Workshop…	YES	NO	Comments
5	a. Build on participant's experience & learning from previous sessions? b. Invite & foster collegial conversation & participation? c. Cater for different learning styles & cultural difference? d. Invite deeper thought about ethical issues?			

Suggestions and Recommendations

Modify workshop as follows:
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Recommended Actions (Office use only)

Action required	By whom?	By when?

Facilitators' signatures: