



# LIFELONG LEARNING

Virginia Theological Seminary

## UPCOMING AT VTS

Connect with us and access our offerings! To register for a program, class, or webinar, visit the [VTS Eventbrite webpage](#). To hear of new offerings, subscribe to the [Continuing Education monthly newsletter](#) and [follow Lifelong Learning on Facebook](#). And, browse the [Lifelong Learning YouTube channel](#) for recordings of past events. Upcoming events include:

### Mid-January | [Companion Café: Sustenance for the Journey](#)

*Starting mid to late January, groups meet for 6 one-hour sessions with small group leader.*

Are you feeling weary? Would you like companions on the journey during this time of social isolation? Companion Café provides an opportunity for connection with others in a similar ministry context through guided conversation in small groups facilitated by spiritual directors/retreat leaders. This is an opportunity to engage with like-hearted people for fellowship, encouragement, and support in this time of pandemic separation. During the registration process you will be asked questions to best place you into a group. Groups will be formed on an ongoing basis and will begin meeting in mid to late January 2021.

### January 16 | [Listening for God: A Workshop on Discerning Vocation in Everyday Living with Dr. Kathy Staudt](#)

*Saturday workshop, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. (Eastern) via Zoom*

Should I choose this path rather than that one? What is the meaning of the experience I am having? How can I follow Christ more faithfully? What would that even mean? As we leave 2020 behind and move into the New Year, take time to sit with questions like these, and listen for God's direction through quiet prayer, guided meditation, and conversation with others who are on the same journey. This popular workshop is particularly suitable for persons seeking to identify, articulate, and clarify their vocations in their everyday living, especially in light of their baptism. Dr. Kathy Staudt offers this workshop via Zoom with time away from the screen for reflection, prayer, and journaling (and, of course, a lunch break).

### Week of January 25 through early April | [Facilitating Conversations on Race and Faith: The Sacred Ground Curriculum](#)

*Monday afternoons (every other week) or Monday evenings (weekly) via Zoom.*

Are you interested in reading, watching, and learning about the history of race and racism in America and the impact it has on our world today – and engaging in meaningful conversation about change? Join this online cohort and explore a rich curriculum focused on Indigenous, Black, Latino, and Asian Pacific Americans as their histories intersect with European American history. For each session we will gather online for conversation to help us peel away the layers

that have contributed to the challenges and divides of the present day – all while grounded in our call to faith, hope, and love. This Sacred Ground curriculum has been especially designed to help white people engage in conversation about the history of race in America.

**February 2-23 | [Seeing and Believing: The Visual Arts in Christian Life and Ministry](#)**

*Tuesday afternoon class 3:30-4:30 p.m. (Eastern) via Zoom.*

While the visual arts have served as a powerful resource for the church in past centuries, today they are often overlooked. Peggy (Margaret Adams) Parker, a long-time VTS adjunct instructor and a professional artist, will teach us how to “speak” this ancient language, exploring the ways that images can serve as companion and guide in our lives and ministries. We will discuss art from across centuries and cultures as we learn to integrate the visual arts into our journeys as Christians. Each week involves a pre-recorded 30-minute lecture and an hour-long class discussion, exploring the rich possibilities of using images in our lives as Christian in interpreting Scripture, prayer, and worship.

**February 3-March 10 | [eFormation Cohort: Taking Your Online Ministry to the Next Level](#)**

*Wednesday afternoon class, 3:00-4:30 p.m. (Eastern) via Zoom*

The eFormation learning community is offering a five-week online cohort for those digital leaders who seek a deeper understanding of the technologies frequently used for online ministry. The weekly sessions will be 90 minutes, with focus on reflection, presenting new information, then time for questions and processing. The Rev. Jim Keat and Sarah Stonesifer Boylan will lead this experience, creating a community of openness, experimentation, and learning.

**February 20 | [Mission Possible: Finding Your Congregation’s WHY](#)**

*Saturday workshop, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. via Zoom.*

At the core of what we do as a church is why we do it. Yes, it should all be centered on God, but how each congregation lives into that centeredness has to do with our stories. Stories as a people of God and stories as a congregation serving our community. This workshop is a step-by-step guide to help your congregation find that mission clarity. It will involve examples, exercises, and action steps to help you reach the point where you gain clarity and make your mission possible! A month after the workshop, we will have a check in point where you can talk with the presenters about your work and how to move it forward. Registration is by congregation and is limited to 15 churches. A minimum of 2 and maximum of 8 church leaders from each congregation are welcome to participate. The registration fee is per congregation

**February 25-March 25 | [Writing as a Spiritual Practice](#)**

*Thursday evening class, 7:00-8:00 p.m. (Eastern) via Zoom*

What would it be like to write just for you and God? Deepen your awareness of the holy in everyday life and explore new ways that writing can enhance the life of the spirit. Through weekly prompts, workshops and invitations to write both in and outside of class, participants will be invited to explore ways that words can become a way into contemplative prayer – the way of prayer that makes us open and available to God’s love and work in our lives. Sample topics: Writing in Places; People and Encounters; Writing in Nature; White Spaces and Silence. Kathy Staudt, Adjunct Professor in Theological Studies at VTS, leads this five-week course.