



## Formation for Ministry Handbook (Residential) 20011/12



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# Welcome to St Michael's

Welcome to St Michael's College. We very much look forward to working with you as you begin your preparation for new forms of Christian ministry. This is undoubtedly an exciting time for you. During the next two or three years you will grow in faith and discover in more depth what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. You will discover new things about yourself, about the Church and about God's mission in Christ for the world. You will discover these things through prayer and worship; through placement, practical experience and training; through academic study; and through participation in Christian community that seeks to embody the love of Christ. All of these elements will be experienced differently by different students, but all are important in formation.

We expect that in many ways this will be a demanding time. It is likely that you will face some challenges along the way. This is good and it will serve you well in your future ministry; but it can also be hard. For this reason you should know that you are never alone as a student at St Michael's. The tutorial staff and chaplains are here to offer and provide you with help and support. You should always feel that you can contact anyone of us as and when required. We are here to help you as you develop into this new phase of your ministry and discipleship.

We wish you all the best in your future studies and training. This handbook will give you much of the information you need both now and in the years ahead. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask. We will do our best to help you.

The Rev'd Dr Stephen Roberts  
Vice Principal and Dean of Residential Training

# Formation for Ministry

At St Michael's we commonly say that you are being 'trained' for your future ministry. This is because you have not begun a course which is only academic study. However the word 'training' is not really adequate to describe the process on which you have embarked. Training can all too easily suggest that you are being prepared to perform a certain set of tasks, or to do a clearly defined job. But this is not the case. All forms of ministry are diverse and varied. The only thing you can predict is that you will face the unpredictable! This means it would be impossible for St Michael's to train you for every eventuality that could confront you as a deacon, presbyter, reader or priest in the Church of today, let alone the Church as it will be in 20 years time. You will be pleased to know we do not try – the course would last many years if we did!

Rather our aim is to give you the resources you need so that you can prepare to meet the challenges of ministry. We describe this process of study, training and preparation as 'ministerial formation'. Like any term, this one isn't perfect either: you will not leave St Michael's 'perfectly formed' and you will certainly not be squeezed into a ready-made mould. Instead, ministerial formation is a life-long journey. It began before you arrived at St Michael's and will continue long after you have left. It captures the sense in which we all continue to grow in knowledge and understanding, in personal maturity, in spirituality, and in wisdom as we deepen our life of service to Christ and his Church in a new way. Each formational journey is unique to the individual, yet common factors can be discerned in all our journeys. Only you can make the changes necessary to move along the journey – our role is to help you as much as possible.

## The importance of community

When you begin training at St Michael's you join a Christian community and this is reflected in the core values of the College (see separate document), two of which are:

- Community, which is built on respect for people and a valuing of diversity;
- Generous inclusivity, extended ecumenically, in inter-faith dialogue and more widely.

And part of the College vision is to be:

- Hospitable and welcoming, inviting people to share a holistic and balanced approach to life.

This vision, underpinned by these core values, is central to the process of ministerial formation. You will learn a lot by being part of the College community, developing through the friendships you make and the conversations you have. Some will share your perspective and some will challenge your deeply held beliefs. You may have

conversations at meal times, before or after worship, preparing for worship and in the classroom. All these conversations and exchanges are part of the formation process. Their effect is sometimes very apparent, for example when you change your mind or enjoy something new in worship, and sometimes very subtle and almost imperceptible. Either way, over the years of your training you are formed by your encounters with other students and staff.

### **Tutorial groups**

Some of these conversations will take place in tutorial groups which meet for an hour on Tuesdays, starting with worship at 5pm. These groups provide an environment in which you can give one another space to grow and develop as persons and ministers as we learn from the different experiences and perspectives which each person brings to the group, practicing reflection together.

### **Cell groups**

It is worth noting that this shared dimension of ministerial formation is not just something that happens in College. It should continue throughout your ministry. Cell groups can be a very valuable part of this ongoing process and students are encouraged to consider the value of setting up such a mutual support group drawn from their colleagues in training to continue meeting at regular intervals after ordination. Cell groups can provide:

- A safe group in which to worship and with whom to go on retreat or seek recreation.
- A place to share the ups and downs of training and ministry.
- A group which will enable students to feel supported.
- A group who will challenge and encourage other members to continue to reflect and develop self-awareness.

The College does not organise the setting up of Cell groups but encourages you to think about doing so.

### **Families and Friends**

You are already part of a wider Church community as well as your community of immediate and extended family and friends. We recognize that you probably would not have got to this stage of your vocational journey without the encouragement of family, friends and sending church. Their love and support will remain vital throughout your ministry. It is important therefore that, where possible and appropriate, they have the opportunity to be involved in your training and formation.

Partners and families are warmly invited to share in the life of the College. They are welcome to attend worship and share in the College's social events. Immediate families are welcome to join the community for meals free of charge on two occasions each week, particularly on the weekly 'family night' (most likely to be Monday in 2011-12). They and other family and friends are welcome on other occasions too for a small charge.

Spouses are encouraged to become active members of the Spouses Group which can provide the opportunity to share mutual concerns and support as well as companionship and social occasions.

## The three dimensions of formation

You will probably find your participation in the life of a formational community to be both exciting and challenging. This shared journey informs and complements the more formal training which is part of student life at St Michael's. The training we offer for your ministerial formation can be divided into three areas. When the process is working well, all three areas should be overlapping and influencing one another rather than being discrete and unconnected. The areas are:

- Practical preparation for ministry: this includes Church and/or other placements, collaborative ministry projects and the Core Skills for Ministry programme.
- The academic study of theology: usually some form of undergraduate or postgraduate study through the School of Religious and Theological Studies of Cardiff University.
- Personal and spiritual development: this runs through everything, but particularly comes to the fore in sharing the life of a worshipping community which is geared towards ministerial formation and is supported by the personal tutor system.

## Holding it all together – the portfolio

These three elements should be woven together in your experience of College in a way that begins to form you for the ministry to which you have been called. But how do you and the College staff know that this process is effectively underway? This is where the ministerial training portfolio comes in. It is based round a set of learning outcomes developed by a Church commission which produced a report under the chairmanship of Bishop John Hind – they are known as the Hind learning outcomes. These have subsequently also been adopted by the Methodist Church, although in a slightly different format which is reflected in the Methodist version of the portfolio. Working together with your tutor you are asked to build a portfolio over your time in College which demonstrates your growth and development in relation to each of these outcomes. This is an important tool for self-evaluation which should be useful in your formation, and something that is shared with your tutor during the course of the year as it develops, and particularly towards the end of each year as the basis of noting areas for development in the coming year, and for writing a report for the sponsoring Diocese. There is more information about this in the separate portfolio documentation.

# Practical Preparation for Ministry

The practical component of ministerial formation consists of two main elements:

**placements** and the **core skills for ministry programme**.

## Placements

There are four types of placement experience within the full-time programme: the regular weekly placement, the school placement, the long summer placement and the collaborative ministry project. In addition to these, some students may (for various reasons) have a lighter academic load and complement their studies with another weekly placement in a non-Church context.

### **Weekly placement**

Anglican ordinands and Methodist student ministers (unless otherwise agreed) spend 15 Sundays and 15 corresponding half days over the first two terms in their placement Church, Chaplaincy or project. The half days can be spread out over the placement, or concentrated into a reading week or vacation period, as negotiated with the supervisor.

The placement Church will give you opportunities to preach and lead worship. It will also provide you with experience of other aspects of ministry. Whilst on placement you may be asked to undertake tasks which relate to the core skills programme. These are clearly explained in the relevant core skills handbook and also in the placement handbook. Your experience on placement will also inform some of the academic modules you study.

An assessor, usually your personal tutor, will listen to and comment upon two sermons each year, one in the autumn term and one in the spring term. Your placement supervisor will also comment on two sermons, one each term. Further details of the expectations of the placement are given in the relevant placement handbook.

### **School placement**

In the June of the first year you will have a week long placement in a Church School. These placements are arranged in collaboration with the Llandaff Diocesan Director of Education (who is also the Director of Education for the Province) and further information is available in the separate handbook.

### **Long summer placement**

This is a four week placement which gives opportunity for a more intensive experience of the day to day business of Christian ministry. It usually takes place between your first

and second years, but for three year students may be deferred to the second summer. Further details of the expectations of the placement are given in the relevant placement handbook.

### **Collaborative Ministry Project**

You will do a collaborative ministry project in the January of your second year. Each year a number of different projects are arranged. These projects, usually a week long, are designed to give full-time students practical experience in working collaboratively with colleagues and with leaders and members of a particular community. Preparation for the project, the work of the project itself and reflection on it, provide significant learning opportunities - some predictable, some not - particularly in the area of working collaboratively. Projects also offer experience in a wider variety of ministerial situations.

### **Third year placement**

Ordinands who are in training for three years will negotiate a week-long placement at some point in their third year – this provides an opportunity to address gaps in experience of training so far.

### **Welsh language placements**

Placements can be arranged in Welsh-speaking contexts and those expected to be proficient in Welsh in preparation for curacy are encouraged seek out such opportunities. For those who are learning Welsh a four week intensive Welsh course in the Summer followed by a Welsh language placement can be very useful.

### **Overseas placements**

It can be possible for a collaborative ministry project or long summer placement to be overseas. Sometimes the College is aware of possibilities and makes these available to students, but often they are arranged through a student's personal contacts with the agreement and support of the College.

## Core Skills for Ministry Programme

The practical experience of the placement is complemented by the in-house Core Skills for Ministry programme. The programme develops the practical skills you need for your future ministry as well as skills of reflective practice. We know that most students have experience in one or more of the areas studied and so the programme aims to build upon and improve your current skills. For full-time ordinands and Methodist student ministers it is a two-year programme. The programme is mostly taught on Wednesday afternoons in college and each module is approximately 5 weeks long.

### **The topics covered in the Core Skills programme are:**

- Leading Worship
- Preaching
- Diversity
- Mission
- Pastoral Care
- Leadership
- Building Community

### **Leading Worship & Preaching**

Leading worship and preaching are central aspects of Christian ministry and a lot of time is spent preparing for these activities. Undoubtedly the best way to develop expertise in worship and preaching is through experience: this you will get in placements as well as in College. But for that experience to have the desired effect it must be resourced by such conceptual tools as will enable you to reflect critically on your practice of leading worship and preaching. These core skills modules aim to give you some of these tools as well as giving you a basic introduction to the practices of preaching and leading worship. The resources offered in these modules should enable those new to these aspects of ministry to gain confidence in beginning to lead worship and preach. For those who are more experienced, these modules should help you build on existing experience and develop as a reflective practitioner.

### **Diversity**

Issues relating to diversity are key issues in contemporary society as well as in the life of the Church. This core skills module explores these issues as well as developing resources for living together in a diverse Christian community.

### **Mission**

Students reflect together on the contemporary mission context facing the churches. The emphasis of the course is on strategies for church growth. Students explore what constitutes good practice to enable growth, what ideas and strategies have been employed by growing churches, and how such growth can be implemented in local churches. They relate different mission theologies to church life and think about issues

of inculturation and secularization. Where appropriate church reports on mission will be used to facilitate discussion as will visits to examples of good practice. Students are asked to undertake a 'mission audit' of their placement church.

### **Pastoral Skills**

Students will learn the practical skills necessary for successful pastoral work. This includes visiting, listening skills, emotional intelligence and ministering in difficult situations. This aims to provide a basic introduction to key pastoral skills, whilst complementing the University module on Pastoral Care and Counselling Skills that develops the understanding of this area in more depth.

### **Leadership**

Leadership is, in part, a way of thinking about how communities can be served, nurtured and developed. It is a tool for developing the diverse skills found within communities and bringing those skills together for the good of all. A well led church will thrive and within it individuals will develop. It is therefore partly about how skills and tools from management and organisational theory can be employed for the good of churches. This does not mean abandoning any notion of ordained ministry but rather examining how skills found in organisations other than Church may be of use to the Church. In this sense it has no greater or lesser status than book-keeping.

The leadership aspect of the course will reflect on theological engagement with ideas of leadership. In close co-operation with the dioceses it will examine and analyse good examples of well led churches. The course will combine reflective work with practical experience. By the end ordinands and candidates should have a good sense of how they will seek to lead thriving churches in their future ministry.

### **Building community**

Students will look at ways of building and developing community both in the life of the church and the local community. A number of visits to examples of good practice are at the heart of this course.

# The Academic Study of Theology

The university imparts information, but it imparts it imaginatively ... A university which fails in this respect has no reason for existence. This atmosphere of excitement, arising from imaginative consideration, transforms knowledge. A fact is no longer a bare fact: it is invested with all its possibilities. It is no longer a burden on the memory: it is energising as the poet of our dreams, and as the architect of our purposes. ... Thus the proper function of a university is the imaginative acquisition of knowledge. *A.N. Whitehead, 1929*

A central part of the formation process is the study of Christian theology. The course of study you are following depends on a variety of factors, such as previous education, length of training, and previous experience of studying theology. What follows gives an overview of the 3-yr BTh course which forms the foundation on which most courses of study are based. It was a programme of study designed with those training for ministry in mind.

Your individual course of study will have been discussed with you before you arrived at College. It will be reviewed in dialogue with your personal tutor and the Dean of Residential Training.

As you engage in study you will grow in knowledge and understanding of the history of the Church, its scriptures, teachings, worship, spirituality and service in the world. You will be educated, in the best sense, as a Christian theologian. You will learn to ask questions about all aspects of the Church's life - and you will be equipped to research answers. You will ponder old questions afresh and be challenged by new problems previously unimagined. You will learn to inhabit a world of Christian wisdom. And, most importantly, you will be a resource at a local level for others who seek to grow in knowledge and understanding. Your knowledge of Christianity and your understanding of the ministry and mission of the Church will make you a wise disciple in a local community. When the unexpected and unpredictable happens this wisdom will be your main resource.

These words of Henri Nouwen help to set the academic study of theology in the wider context of ministerial formation:

'Poverty of mind as a spiritual attitude is a growing willingness to recognize the incomprehensibility of the mystery of life. The more mature we become the more we will be able to give up our inclination to grasp, catch, and comprehend the fullness of life, and the more we will be ready to let life enter into us.

The preparation for the ministry can offer a good example. To prepare ourselves for service we have to prepare ourselves for an articulate not knowing, a *docta ignorantia*, a learned ignorance. This is very difficult to accept for people whose whole attitude is towards mastering and controlling the world. We all want to be educated so that we can be in control of the situation and make things work according to our own need. But education to ministry is an education not to master God but to be mastered by God.' *Henri Nouwen Reaching Out, pp.75-6 The Poverty of Mind in Chapter 6: Hospitality and the Host.*

A wise, insightful, not-knowing can only come after a life-time of disciplined prayer and study. It is the product of a venturing into the knowledge of the ages. You begin that process now, if you have not done so already, and you should expect it to remain with you throughout your ministry. Our ministry and discipleship is a testimony to the depth of our spiritual wisdom.

Such an expectation could become a burden and oppressive. However it is at this point that we trust to the grace of God and the wisdom of the Church. The Church has discerned in you the potential to serve God's reign. It will be through the grace and love of God that this potential is realized in your training and in your future ministry.

## Curriculum

The BTh curriculum (with some options) is set out on the next page. The modules listed all carry 20 credits, and full-time students usually study 6 x 20 credit modules in each year of study:

- 120 credits at Level 1 leads to a Certificate.
- A further 120 credits at Level 2 leads to a Diploma.
- A further 120 credits at Level 3 leads to an Honours Degree.

Two year residential students following the BTh programme to Diploma level will usually do the full year 1 programme followed by a mixture of Level 2 and 3 modules agreed with the Dean of Residential Training. If modules are chosen carefully, it can be possible to complete to degree level part-time after ordination.

## **Bachelor of Theology**

### Yr 1

Theology and Practice  
The Story of Christianity  
Introduction to Christian Spirituality  
Believing and Belonging  
Introduction to Christian Beliefs  
The Bible in Today's World

### Yr 2

Working with the Bible  
Denomination, Dialogue, and Distinctiveness  
Christian Social Ethics  
Beliefs in the Crucible  
Christian Church Today  
Communicating the Old Testament in Contemporary Culture  
Pastoral Care and Hospital Chaplaincy

### Yr 3

Listening to the Bible  
Theology on the Edge  
Understanding Christian Worship  
Pastoral Care and Counselling Skills  
Practical Christian Theology  
Dissertation in Practical Theology  
Spiritual Nurture and Guidance in Christian Community  
Christianity and Inter-religious Dialogue

Descriptions of these modules can be found in appendix one at the end of this handbook. It is also possible to choose modules from the BA course.

## **Language study within the BTh**

Some study of Biblical languages – Hebrew, Greek, or both – is possible and encouraged within the BTh programme. The full introduction to a Biblical language consists of 2 x 20 credit modules which can be taken at Level 1 or 2. There are then single Level 2 or 3 text-based modules available to consolidate your knowledge and understanding of the language in practice. There are 2 ways of approaching the study of languages within the BTh:

1. You can enroll for the language modules in place of one or two of the year 1 or 2 BTh modules. This requires a commitment to complete the modules in that language in order to proceed on the degree programme.
2. You can enroll on the two language modules as extra modules and then do one of three things:
  - a. withdraw from one or two of the other modules if you are engaging well with the language study;
  - b. withdraw from one or both of the language modules;
  - c. (unusually) continue with all modules, so completing 160 credits in a year.This approach (2) is particularly valuable for those who are interested but not confident in language study, or who are interested but want to maintain a broader curriculum focus, especially if only training for two years.

## Study Skills

We recognise that some students come to College with little background in academic study and approach this part of the training with some apprehension.

If you are one such student then don't worry – you are certainly not alone. At St Michael's we offer support in a number of ways.

- Time is set aside for study skills training during your induction.
- We produce a study handbook with lots of practical guidance on how to study and write assignments effectively. Look through this and then consult it regularly.
- Module tutors will give you guidance on which books to consult and how to write assignments.
- Anna Williams, the College Information Officer, is available to help not only in finding books but also with general study skills information, such as referencing, on-line research, and who to contact with various questions.
- Your personal tutor will also be able to offer help and guidance if you need support.
- You can also approach the Dean of Residential Training if you are stuck or worried or just need pointing in the right direction.
- There is also provision within Cardiff University for study skills training. Details of this can be found in the study skills handbook.

We make sure every effort is made to support students in their learning. What we ask from you is that you let us know if there is a problem, **AND LET US KNOW EARLY**. Perhaps the worst thing you can do is not ask for help. Those who do well know to ask early when they need support – it is a good example to follow.

## Plagiarism

If you are struggling with the academic work it can be tempting to resort to plagiarism, which is the presentation of someone else's work as your own. More information about this will be given as part of the study skills training and can be found in the study handbook. The important thing to note here is that, even though the College is understanding of the pressures that make people resort to plagiarism, it is considered as an act of deception and as such raises questions about suitability for Christian ministry. **SO IT IS ALWAYS BETTER NOT TO SUBMIT A PIECE OF WORK THAN TO SUBMIT A PIECE OF WORK THAT INCLUDES PLAGIARISED MATERIAL.**

# Personal and Spiritual Development

The wisdom learned through academic study is a wisdom that must be informed and shaped by prayer. The life of a worshipping community offers the context in which personal and spiritual formation can take place. This is why our collective commitment to shared Worship is so important, and there is a separate handbook which covers College Worship. For those training full-time for Anglican ministry the participation involved in this commitment usually means attending chapel each morning and evening during the week. Regular chapel attendance is also expected of Methodist student ministers following a pattern agreed individually with the Methodist tutor. The importance of a regular, shared prayer life cannot be over-emphasized. Henri Nouwen expresses very well the fundamental importance of prayer for the life of the Christian Community:

Prayer is the language of the Christian community. In prayer the nature of the community becomes visible because in prayer we direct ourselves to the one who forms the community. .... Sometimes it seems as if the Christian community is so busy' with its projects and plans that there is neither the time nor the mood to pray. But when prayer is no longer its primary concern, and when its many activities are no longer seen and experienced as part of prayer itself, the community quickly degenerates into a club with a common cause but no common vocation.

By prayer, community is created as well as expressed. Prayer is first of all the realization of God's presence in the midst of his people and, therefore, the realization of the community itself. Most clear and most noticeable are the words, the gestures and the silence through which the community is formed. When we listen to the word, we not only receive insight into God's saving work, but we also experience a new mutual bond. When we stand around the altar, eat bread and drink wine, kneel in meditation, or walk in procession we not only remember God's work in human history, but we also become aware of his creative presence here and now. When we sit together in silent prayer, we create a space where we sense that the one we are waiting for is already touching us, as he touched Elijah standing in front of the cave (i Kings 19:13).

*Henri Nouwen Reaching Out, pp.122-123 The Language of the Community in Chapter 9: Community and Prayer*

The process of ministerial formation is working at its best when students find themselves bringing all the different strands together in the living of their lives and the exercising of their ministries, and doing all in a spirit of prayerful reflection. This process is one which should not come to an end at ordination or at the end of the course, but should continue throughout life and ministry. Arguably, the ability to engage in this process is the single most important outcome of your time at College. College can't give you everything you need for ministry, but what College can do is give you a safe but challenging environment in which to engage reflectively and prayerfully with the rich resources of Christian theology, gaining experience of the practice of ministry in its diversity, devoting time to spiritual formation and personal development, whilst sharing in the life of a worshipping community, so that you become a prayerfully and

theologically reflective practitioner, able to draw on Christian wisdom in the exercise of Christian ministry in the Church of the future.

## Retreats

Ordinands and student ministers are strongly encouraged to undertake an annual retreat at a recognised retreat venue, such as those advertised in Retreats magazine (copy in the Library), with the agreement of their tutor who must countersign the expenses claim. There is a contribution of £50 (inclusive of travel costs) per student available to assist in taking a 48 hour retreat payable on production of receipt from the retreat house. Students may seek additional funds from sponsoring churches.

The following two relatively local resources are particularly worth knowing about.

### **Tymawr Convent**



Tymawr is a Christian contemplative community in the Church in Wales living under monastic vows in the beautiful Welsh border country near Monmouth in Gwent. The community's purpose is to offer an environment of prayer and hospitality to guests, visitors, those on retreat, parishes and clergy. For further information please contact:

The Society of the Sacred Cross

Tymawr Convent

Lydart

Nr Monmouth

NP25 4RN

Tel: 01600 860244

Email: [tymawrconvent@btinternet.com](mailto:tymawrconvent@btinternet.com)

### **Llangasty Retreat House**

Llangasty is a place of Christian worship and prayer for individuals and groups set in spectacular scenery, providing peace, tranquility and beauty. Llangasty House has 16 bedrooms and 2 disabled units. For further information please contact:



Llangasty Retreat House

Llangasty

Brecon

Powys

LD3 7PX

Tel: 01874 658250

Email: [Llangasty.rh@btconnect.com](mailto:Llangasty.rh@btconnect.com)

## Spiritual Direction

Another very significant figure in the process of personal and spiritual development is the spiritual director. Many people begin training with such a relationship already established and it may well be appropriate to continue this as long as regular meetings will still be possible (four times a year is often thought to be a minimum). It is important to find a spiritual direction relationship that works well for you – there are different styles and approaches – and the College can help to point you in the direction of people you might approach.

Time taken to see your spiritual director is seen as legitimate time away from College and as an intrinsic and essential part of personal vocational development. However time taken to see spiritual directors should not result in missing lectures, in-house training or other important College commitments. If students need to talk to someone in total confidence in between appointments for spiritual direction, they are encouraged to talk with College Chaplains.

**The Revd Moira Spence** has compiled a list of experienced spiritual directors. For those seeking a spiritual director she can be contacted on Tel: 01656881960, Email: [tybara@btinternet.com](mailto:tybara@btinternet.com).

## Chaplains

A valuable form of support for the process of ministerial formation is provided by the Chaplains. The College invites lay and ordained members of the community outside the College to act as Chaplains to students and staff. The Chaplains' role is to be available to any members of the College community. Chaplains are not expected to offer spiritual direction, as it is an expectation of the College that all students seek a spiritual director outside the College as part of their own on-going formation. Equally, Chaplains do not enter into one to one counselling or long-term support. What they can offer is complete confidentiality together with support and encouragement.

# Personal Tutors

The College cannot force the process of spiritual and vocational formation – we would not want to. But we can provide the environment, resources and support for it to happen. So how do we help you bring all the strands together in the process of ministerial formation? Primarily through the tutorial system which is discussed below.

The main support comes from your personal tutor. There are certain points during the year when you should have formal meetings with your tutor and these are listed below. As well as these meetings, you will see your tutor informally in College on a regular basis, and you can always arrange to see your tutor at other points during the term. You should make an appointment to see your tutor about any matter which needs attention or is causing you concern in relation to any aspect of your preparation for ministry or personal circumstances. Your tutor is the person with whom you work out and commit to your daily and weekly pattern of worship and whom you keep up to date with your development in the different areas of the process of formation. You work with your tutor in building your ministerial training portfolio. You are encouraged to share as much as you can with your personal tutor so that he or she is always fully aware of your circumstances. As well as being a college tutor, your tutor is also responsible for your pastoral oversight and provides the nearest equivalent, during your training, to the role of the priest or minister in a local church. Your tutor cannot take on the role of a spiritual director or therapeutic counsellor for you, but will gladly help you find one at your request.

## Formal tutorial meetings

You should meet with your tutor at the following points during the year:

### Autumn term

1. Within the first three weeks of term. Tutors will aim to meet new students informally in the first week of term (induction week) and arrange a formal meeting in week two or three (i.e. the first two teaching weeks). Returning students should meet with their tutor during the first two weeks of term.
2. In the week before or after reading week. This meeting is specifically to look at the portfolio and provide tutorial support in beginning or developing the work on the portfolio.
3. In the last week of term. This meeting is to review the term and consider any issues that need to be addressed before the start of the spring term.

### Spring term

1. Within the first two weeks of term.
2. In the week before or after reading week. This is a portfolio support meeting.
3. In the last week of term.

### Summer term

1. Leavers meet their tutor to discuss their final report, usually within the first two weeks of term. Returners should have a regular tutorial meeting during the first two weeks of term.
2. Returners meet their tutor to discuss their end of year report, usually in week four or five. Leavers have a final tutorial in the last two weeks of term.

As indicated, some of these meetings have a primary focus, i.e. portfolio development and discussion of reports. The portfolio meetings will help you engage with the portfolio process and identify particular areas on which to focus. The other meetings will cover a variety of topics, including:

- Engagement with academic study and practical training
- Placement experience – what you are learning
- College life and worship and what you are learning through your participation
- Pastoral issues that need addressing and any particular support that you need
- Discussion of issues arising from reflections

### **Reflections**

At the beginning of the year your tutor will ask you to agree to either weekly or fortnightly reflections, usually sent by e-mail. These reflections can take a variety of forms, but may include a journal-like element, reflecting on your experiences and how they are influencing your personal, spiritual and ministerial formation, and an element of theological reflection, using the theological resources you are gaining through your study and bringing these to bear on your own experiences and development. If you are wondering about length, 500-1000 words is a good guide. You may find the process easier if you get into the habit of keeping a journal. Such reflections can provide important material for building your portfolio – they show evidence of your engagement with significant events and issues as they arise.

## Personal Tutor policy

### **Methodist students**

For all Methodist Students, residential and non-residential, the normal practice is that the Oversight Tutor appointed by the Conference for the Wales Training Network is their personal tutor throughout training. This enables the appropriate exercise of pastoral responsibility by the tutor but also, for students who come from and who will serve within Wales, a high degree of continuity of support and oversight as in varying roles the tutor is likely to be engaged with a student in EDEV, candidating, college and on into probationer studies and CDIM.

### **Residential Anglicans**

For those Anglicans in full-time residential training our normal practice is for students to change tutor each year. The reasons for this – which is different to the pattern for non-residential Anglican and all Methodist students - are as follows:

- Because of the daily interaction between tutorial staff and students, worshipping and eating together, together with the greater opportunities for extra tutorial meetings, it

is likely that more can be achieved in a year than in a less intense context for the relationship.

- Having different people as tutors and tutees contributes to the sense of community.
- When considering a student's progress and writing reports, the tutorial staff team seek to form a collective judgement which can be enhanced when more than one staff member has had been tutor to the student.
- Tutors are different and are likely to bring different approaches, emphases, experience and expertise to the exercise of their tutorial role: it is good for students to benefit from this variety.
- Sometimes a particular pairing of student and tutor may not work terribly well whilst not being so bad as to warrant ending the tutorial relationship in the middle of a year. In such cases it is good for both tutor and student to know that the relationship comes to a natural end with the end of the year.

Sometimes, however, a student and tutor may feel that the potential of their existing tutorial relationship is considerable but is a work in progress that would benefit from continuing for a further year. In such cases a student may stay with the same tutor under the following conditions:

- Both the tutor and the student are agreed that a further year would be beneficial and make independent requests of the Dean of Residential Training for the arrangement to continue.
- The other tutorial staff agree to the continuation, such agreement normally to be obtained at the residential review of the year meetings in June. In coming to such agreement staff should take into account the following:
- They should be confident that the relationship is neither too comfortable nor becoming inappropriately therapeutic (in the particular rather than general sense of that word).
- To this end, they should be satisfied that good reasons have been given for the exception to the normal pattern of changing each year.
- The role of the collective staff judgment in such situations is, thus, one of professional supervision.

### **Corporate confidentiality**

Tutors abide by a code of corporate confidentiality. All ordained and lay members of the tutorial staff are bound by this. In exceptional circumstances, the Principal may negotiate strict confidentiality as requested. If a matter is brought to the attention of a member of staff and the student requests that it be kept confidential, students should understand that the confidentiality is kept corporately within the staff group. Other staff are expected to observe usual professionalism. Students should also understand that reports have to take into account all aspects of students work and development. In the event of allegations relating to child protection issues, or illegal practices, the staff member may pass this information on to others and take further appropriate action.

### **Open door policy: staff - student tutorials**

In common with Cardiff University, staff operate an open door policy when conducting tutorials or interviewing. The door to the room should be ajar and if confidential information is being communicated the door should never be completely closed, but a notice placed on the door to indicate that a tutorial is in progress.

Staff operate a lone worker policy and staff will at all times endeavour not to be alone in a building with a student. If this is unavoidable the member of staff will ensure that another colleague is aware of the presence of the student with them.

Students are encouraged to respect staff working in College on their study mornings or afternoons and not disturb them during these times. Appointments should be made wherever possible.

## **Self-assessment and reports**

Towards the end of the second term you are asked to write a self-reflection on how you are engaging with the process of ministerial formation. There is a form to help you do this, but the primary purpose of the form is to help you summarise the story of your formation during the year as told by your portfolio. This will be given to your personal tutor who, on the basis of the reflection and the supporting evidence in the portfolio - such as placement supervisor reports, sermon assessments, reflections and academic work - will write a draft end of year report. This draft report will be discussed by the wider tutorial staff team and then, following any changes suggested by those discussions, discussed and, hopefully, agreed with you and. You will then be asked to sign the final version after any changes that may have been agreed. You may comment on the final draft of the report if you wish. The final report is then sent to your sponsoring Bishop or, for Methodist students, the Wales Training Network Oversight Committee and MCPOC.

This process takes some time, which means that for final year students the self-assessment forms will be sent out quite early, usually in the second half of the Spring term, to be completed and returned with the portfolio before the Easter vacation. Other students will receive their forms shortly before the Easter vacation, to be completed by the start of the summer term.

Anglican reports must contain detailed commentary on each student in four areas based on the learning outcomes used in the portfolio:

- Personality, character and relationships
- Faith, vocation and spirituality

- Quality of mind and theological learning
- Ministry within the Church in Wales / Church of England, mission and evangelism, leadership and collaboration

Methodist reports must contain detailed commentary on each student in six areas based on the learning outcomes used in the portfolio:

- Vocation (call and commitment)
- Being in relationship (with God, self and others)
- The Church's ministry in God's world
- Leadership and collaboration
- Learning and understanding
- Communication

In addition, answers have to be given to questions concerning health, particular issues that need to be addressed, and any other concerns that the Sponsoring Church / Bishop may need to know about the candidate's personal circumstances.

For English Anglican ordinands the penultimate report is accompanied by a personal profile completed by the student and a statement of the student's financial position.

Some important principles govern the report writing process:

- A report should affirm truthfully all that is best about a student, and also report truthfully all matters that are relevant to fittingness for ordination where progress is required. (Note: the Bishops' report is insistent that colleges must report the bad news as well as the good.)
- To the extent that it is possible given a student's situation, report-writing and receiving should be a positive experience for the student, even in areas in which progress is being asked for. (For the vast majority of students, this is the case.)
- The report should reflect as accurately as possible, and differentiate between, the view of the student and the view of the college. Ideally, a student should be able to recognise and own the entire report, including any passages that the student wishes were not true.
- Claims to matters of fact must be evidence based.
- Saving in very exceptional circumstances, no student should learn of a criticism that the college has of them for the first time from their report.
- For Anglican students it is the College's report. The Principal signs it, and must answer to the Trustees and the sponsoring churches for what it contains.
- For Methodist students it is the report of the Wales Training Network written in association with the college. The Oversight tutor and principal sign it and the oversight tutor is answerable ultimately to the Conference for what it contains.

## Formation Review

If there are concerns about the process of a student's formation for ministry, then a formation review can be initiated by the student or a member of staff.

If a student is concerned about his/her own progress in terms of ministerial formation and preparation, or if staff have concerns about a particular student, a formation review is arranged. This may be for any or all of the following reasons:

- It is felt that the student needs special or structured guidance;
- There is concern about the standard of the student's academic work;
- There is concern about the student's full engagement with the programme for formation and training;
- There is concern about the student's development and formation as a minister;
- Circumstances arise which suggest that without substantial change it is unlikely that staff will be able to recommend the student for ordination.

The formation review group is set up by the staff and consists of: the student, the student's tutor, the Principal or Dean of Residential Training and, if considered appropriate, another member of staff. The student may also bring a friend.

The formation review's task is threefold. It is to identify clearly what the problems are, to determine what additional resources need to be allocated to the student, and to agree on changes the student needs to make to overcome the problems that have been identified.

A written statement describing the outcome of the group is agreed on by the staff group and shared with the student who may add his/her own comments. This document is placed in the student's file. There are regular meetings thereafter between student and tutor to assess progress, which is reported on at each subsequent staff meeting focusing on pastoral concerns. The staff group may decide that an interim report should be sent to the student's sponsor. Such a report would be shared with the student concerned.

On the tutor's advice the full review group may be reconvened for one or more of the following purposes:

- To review progress in more detail. (This may include gathering information from placement supervisors, University and other tutorial staff)
- To adjust or renegotiate the terms of the statement.
- To determine whether the student has fulfilled the conditions and may be signed off from the review process.
- To determine whether the prospect of progress has become so unlikely that the staff should recommend that the Principal advises the student's sponsor that she or he should be removed from training.

At each stage, the fullest participation in the process by the student is encouraged. Being subject to this process does not, of itself, carry any negative implications about a

student's character, ability, or overall fitness for ordination. Most students who are subject to the formation review process go on to ordination as planned.

### **Professional Conduct**

It is envisaged that all ordinands and sponsored candidates should conduct themselves in a manner becoming those training for Ministry. Students are expected to abide by the appropriate code of conduct in keeping with their vocation. The relevant codes of conduct for varying denominations include matters such as language and appropriate behaviour. The codes of conduct are available in the College Library. The Principal reserves the right to implement disciplinary procedures (see disciplinary policy in policies and procedures document) when he believes that conduct is unbecoming of an ordinand/sponsored candidate.

# Other Information

## Expenses

Whilst the College does not expect students to bear the cost of any legitimate part of their training, students are asked to remember that the College has to operate from a very restricted budget, and that expenses must always be kept to a minimum. There are three different claim forms for travelling expenses. All claim forms must be authorised and signed by the tutor responsible for the arrangements or by a College Dean, before being submitted to the Bursar for payment. Any other claims for expenses must be authorised by a College Dean before money is spent. The full details of placement expenses can be found in the placement handbook.

Students are not entitled to claim for travel to and from classes. If help is required then in the first instance students should speak to their diocesan officials or for Methodist students, the Methodist tutor.

## Accommodation Room Occupancy

Study bedrooms are used for conferences and courses during vacations. Students, unless funded for all-year round accommodation, are requested to vacate their rooms on the last day of each term. Subject to availability, students may book a room for vacations charged on a per night basis. If for any reason, eg exams or placements, students wish to stay in College outside the College term dates, they need to book their rooms as soon as they are aware of their dates.

If belongings are left in the room they must be left in lockable cupboards. Please make a request to the Housekeeper if further storage space is required and make every effort to leave the rooms in a suitable condition for guests.

There are a small number of bedsits available that can be rented by students. Rent is payable for both term and vacation use.

## Child Protection

The safety of children in College, both resident and visiting, is of paramount concern in the life and work of the College. It is expected that children will be adequately supervised by parents/guardians. There is a Families' Room where children can watch

TV or Videos and play with the toys which are supplied. The room should be left clean and tidy, with all toys put away. It is important that parents realise that the College is an open environment where individuals attend conferences in the College who have not been subject to CRB checks. This also applies to tenants. The College is committed to the maximum security of children, but this must be done in co-operation with parents who need to take responsibility for their children.

All students and residents are expected to abide by St Michael's child protection policy which is set out in the policies and procedures handbook.

## College Visitors

### **College as a Conference Facility**

The College is used all year round as a conference facility. When this occurs the Reception Lounge and other public rooms in the College will be made available to guests. All conference visitors are College guests and should be treated with due courtesy.

### **Library Computers**

Students and residents are permitted to use the library and Talbot Room computers outside of term time, however, when courses are in residence, priority access to **all** computers must be given to the students attending these courses throughout their stay.

### **Student Common Room**

The Student Common Room is a recreation area for students and staff. Children may use the common room only when supervised by their parents or guardians.

## Media

No person shall write to the press using the address of St Michael's College without express permission from the Principal.

No person shall communicate publicly in any way that denigrates or causes damage to the Church in Wales or any other Church.

## Leave Policy

Preparation for ministry is not like 'doing a course'. It is something which affects the whole of your life and is, inevitably, demanding. You are strongly encouraged to establish the kind of pattern of time off that you will maintain in ministry. You should keep evenings clear when you can and have quality time off each week, including time with family or friends.

However you will need to be flexible. You will be attached to a placement church or chaplaincy for 15 Sundays and 15 half days during the first two terms each year. The half days (or equivalent) are arranged between you and your placement supervisor so that these can fit in with other arrangements. The half day can be a regular day each week; or they can be arranged when there are particular things happening in the placement parish. It can also work well if some more intensive time is spent on the placement either in reading week or outside college term time. It is possible to cover the full 15 half day commitment in this fashion.

In addition you will have at least two full weeks off in the Christmas Vacation (often more); and at least eight weeks in the summer – a total of at least 10 weeks. All full-time Anglican students are required to undertake a four-week placement (normally residential) between their first and second (or second and third) year in training, during the Summer vacation. First year ordinands have a School Placement week in June. Second year ordinands also undertake a Collaborative Ministry Week in January. This still leaves you with far more holiday than most people have in secular employment. Please check carefully with College requirements for the coming academic year (a list is provided in August) before making any family or holiday arrangements so you can ensure that dates do not conflict with College requirements. Please do not ask for additional time off for holidays.

Each term, one weekend is designated as 'half-term' when you are free after your last Friday commitment until Monday morning. You should not go to your placement that week, so you can have a proper break.

### **Maternity / Paternity Leave**

Should a student or student's partner become pregnant during their training, negotiations will need to be made between the family, the College and the student's sponsor to enable the management of his or her study programme in the best way possible to allow proper time for maternity/paternity leave while still ensuring the completion of the student's training.

### **Sick Leave**

The College should be advised of any absence as early as possible on the first day of sickness. The message should be given directly to a member of staff and not passed via another student. In the call the nature of the sickness should be given and some indication of the seriousness of the condition in order to determine the likely length of absence. The absence will be recorded on the student's record. If your sickness is likely to affect your University commitments and performance, then you should notify the University Student Support Officer.

In the event of the sickness extending beyond four days, on the fourth day the College and the University should be contacted once again giving further details of the absence and anticipated date of return. This call should be made directly to relevant College Dean and the University Student Support Officer where possible. The student is also at this time required to submit a self-certification notice which is obtainable from the doctor. If the absence is likely to exceed seven days then a full doctor's certificate is required.

In the event of an absence of more than 14 days, the student must continue to remain in regular contact with the College and the University to keep both informed of progress and then before returning to College and University, obtain a certificate from their doctor indicating that they are fit to return. In the event of long term illness, the student should contact his/her sponsoring body.

On returning to College after a period of sickness a student should immediately contact their personal tutor and the relevant College Dean. If the absence has been for longer than a week, the interview with the tutor or Dean may contain the following elements:

- A need to confirm that the person has fully recovered.
- To identify the reasons for the period of absence.
- To ascertain the likelihood of any re-occurrence.
- To establish what needs to be done to catch up on work missed

Extensions for assignments can only be granted by the University. Written application should be made to the Head of School via the Student Support Officer. All applications for extensions need to include relevant evidence, usually a doctor's certificate.

### **Compassionate Leave**

Compassionate leave is granted for the death of a close family member, and, if it is a next of kin, may extend to allowing time to sort out family affairs, as well as the funeral. Students should keep closely in touch with the College through their personal tutor and relevant College Dean.

For the death of a more distant relative or friend a day or half-day is normally allowed for the funeral with additional time at the discretion of the student's personal tutor. Similarly, in the event of serious illness or other family or personal difficulties for which time off is necessary, the student should begin by talking things over with his/her personal tutor. The College is committed to responding with compassion to such requests, while holding students to the task of their personal and professional accountability. This parallels closely an equivalent situation in ministry.

In all cases when compassionate leave is requested, the student must make a separate personal approach to the student support officer at the University. This is an essential pre-requisite to the granting of extension for the completion of assignments, essays or exams, should this prove to be necessary. (Requests for last-minute extensions because of problems that occurred several months ago, about which no mention was made at the time, are less likely to be granted)

# Procedures and Policies

It is right that in our common life together we live by the highest possible standards. This is a sign of our respect and care for each other. It is also part of our witness to society.

To guide and shape our College life we have in place a number of policies and procedures. These must be read carefully and you are required to adhere to their provisions.

The policies concern:

- Child Protection
- Data Protection
- Disciplinary Procedures
- Discrimination
- Equal Opportunities
- Fire procedures
- Grievances
- Health and Safety
- E-mail and Internet
- Computer Security and misuse

These can be found in a separate document on the CD and you should familiarise yourself with their contents.

# Appendix One: Descriptions of Modules

## Level 1

### **Believing and Belonging**

This student-centred, experience-based module begins the process of helping students to become critical reflective practitioners within the fields of ministry and practical theology. Starting with the personal experience and assumptions of students derived from their own faith journeys and the religious congregations of which they have been a part, the module then moves on to the analysis of a number of other religious and faith communities using a variety of appropriate methods in the context of groupwork. The aim is to identify and examine personal and institutional assumptions that may underpin religious life and involvement, distinguishing between unexamined presuppositions and chauvinism on the one hand and genuine wisdom and insight on the other. This begins the process of developing the skills of analysis and critical insight and the in-depth understanding of one's own and others' traditions that are essential for mature theological reflection.

### **Introduction to Christian Beliefs**

This module will provide students with an introduction to a full variety of methods and approaches in the formulation of Christian theology with an historical overview of some of those elements. It will also provide an introduction to the main themes in the history of Christian thought and the skills necessary for students to be able to present a competently written and adequately structured and argued essay that is accurate and apposite in its use of references and bibliography.

### **The Bible in the Contemporary / Today's World**

This module serves as an introduction to applied Biblical studies. Students are familiarized with the milieu and genres of the Christian Bible and introduced to Biblical criticism and some hermeneutical perspectives. The origins of the canon and some modern language versions of the same are investigated. The use of the Bible in the modern Church is explored.

### **Theology and Practice**

This level 1 module introduces students to critical reflective practice within the context of Christian ministry. Beginning with a recognition of the student's own experiences and influences the module explores the nature of practical theology through pastoral case studies and local, national and world events. The application of the Bible and the context of the church community are central elements throughout all discussions.

### **The Christian Story / Story of Christianity**

This module will provide students with an introduction to traditional methods in historical Christian theology and an historical overview of major movements in the history of the church. It will also provide an introduction to the main themes in the history of Christian

thought and the skills necessary for students to be able to present a competently written and adequately structured and argued essay that is accurate and apposite in its use of references and bibliography.

### **Introduction to Christian Spirituality**

A general introduction to Christian spirituality including an examination of some important themes and an opportunity to explore the way personality, tradition and views of Scripture shape one's approach to spirituality.

## **Level 2**

### **Working with the Bible / Employing the Bible**

The aims and outcomes of this module are directly related to and build upon those of The Level One The Bible in the Contemporary World. Modern Bible critical methods are considered in detail as well as a number of modern hermeneutical perspectives. The process of Biblical exegesis is taught and Biblical critical skills and hermeneutical perspectives are integrated into the end product of exegesis – exposition. The knowledge and skills acquired on this module are applied to set Biblical texts in the expectation that students will complete the module equipped to apply such skills to any kind of Biblical literature.

### **Pastoral Ministry Placement**

This is a placement based module in which students have the opportunity to explore the practice of Christian pastoral ministry through observation, participation and theological reflection.

### **Denomination, Dialogue and Distinctiveness**

This module provides an introduction to denominational history. The syllabus investigates the development of significant Christian denominations from the Reformation period to the present day.

### **Christian Social Ethics**

A study of the bases for Christian Ethics in relation (e.g.) to the Bible, tradition, Natural Law or context, together with a consideration of Christian responses to selected contemporary issues such as abortion, euthanasia, marriage, work, war, ecology.

### **Beliefs in the Crucible**

This module will explore the origins, development and contemporary relevance of the core Christian beliefs concerning God as Trinity, Christ, Holy Spirit, salvation and the last things, from Biblical through to Reformation times, highlighting critical periods of doctrinal renewal, and issues affecting the life of 'church' today and its relation to culture and society.

### **Christian Church Today**

The module will introduce biblical, traditional and various modern conceptions of Christian 'church', its nature, identity and meaning, as a background for critical analysis in the concepts of 'ministry' and 'mission'. In addition it will introduce biblical, traditional and modern theologies of ministry and sacraments associated with 'church'. The module will also provide a historical background for study of the theology of mission and explore some important modern debates in the field.

### **Communicating the Old Testament in Contemporary Culture**

This module explores the challenges and opportunities of Christian communication through an engagement with both the text of the Old Testament and a range of important issues in contemporary culture. The module seeks to deepen students' understanding of and facility with the Old Testament and their understanding and practice of Christian communication in the contemporary context.

### **Pastoral Care and Hospital Chaplaincy**

This highly specialised module is designed to be of particular interest to students studying theology in order to enter ordained ministry who have already adequately covered a general theological syllabus and have a particular interest in chaplaincy and students already in possession of a theology degree and engaged in Christian ministry who are about to embark upon a ministry in professional health care chaplaincy.

## **Level 3**

### **Listening to the Bible**

This module is designed to involve the student in a sophisticated appraisal of Biblical hermeneutics. The hermeneutic of the Bible author and of the Bible interpreter will be examined in close detail. The Social Scientific critical method will be discussed and applied. The use of the Bible in the contemporary Church will be addressed via a consideration of the pastoral possibilities of the Bible and the role that the Bible plays in modern worship. The module will also survey and appraise the use of Biblical motifs / genres in contemporary culture.

### **Theology on the Edge: Christian Thought in a Changing world**

Has Christian theology been left behind in the 20th & 21st centuries? Or has it shown itself well attuned to the world today & capable of engaging with issues of concern? The module evaluates key restatements of Christian belief as they emerge from the ferment of wider debates & agendas in the world today. It tracks the emergence of theologies with a concern for justice & freedom (e.g. in liberation & political theology, feminist theologies, black & 'womanist' responses etc.) as well as fresh approaches of theologies in Africa & Asia. It also measures how more conservative theologies have fared (such as Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, 'neo-orthodox' & Evangelical) & looks at the work of such influential figures as the World War II 'martyr' Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The syllabus follows Christian writers as they wrestle first with the modern world & then with 'post-modern' culture. It also takes account of the 19th & 20th liberal revolution in theology & problems such as divine power, the relation of God to the world, the idea of a suffering God & the place of a 'theology of hope'. Some familiarity with Christian thought will normally be essential for engaging with this module's material.

### **Understanding Christian Worship**

This module explores Christian worship from a variety of perspectives, such as theological, historical, social scientific and pastoral. By focusing this exploration on a number of significant issues relating to Christian worship in the contemporary context, the module seeks to deepen students' understanding of the lived and experienced reality of Christian worship today. Such understanding, it is hoped, will be a significant resource for those leading and preparing to lead worship in the course of Christian ministry.

### **Pastoral Care and Counselling Skills**

An introduction to the main approaches to pastoral care and counselling, and the development of the relevant skills, pastoral knowledge, understanding and awareness necessary for the appropriate use of counselling skills in pastoral practice.

### **Practical Christian Theology**

This module explores the understanding of practical theology and the relationship of critical thinking and academic understanding to pastoral practice. The largest part of the module is devoted to developing and understanding skills of theological reflection. In addition students will explore the use of the Bible in practical theology and the nature and relationship of ethics to pastoral practice. Students who complete the module should have a good grounding in seeing the possibilities of critically relating theory and practice in the outworking of the Christian faith.

### **Dissertation in Practical Theology**

This module provides students with the opportunity for independent study in a particular area of interest or concern in the field of practical theology, relating it to their overall learning on the BTh. Both group and individual guidance and supervision are provided but students are expected to work independently for a significant part of the study for this module. Students should collect a registration form via the School Office. The form requires the signature of a supervisor, with whom you should negotiate a topic for investigation. You should then bring the completed form, signed by yourself and your supervisor, to pre-enrolment. Any queries regarding potential topics and/or appropriate supervisors may be addressed to Stephen Roberts.

### **Spiritual Nurture and Guidance in Christian Community**

The course includes an exploration of the biblical, historical and theological foundation for community and a critical exploration of a variety of ways to nurture spirituality within community.

### **Christianity and Inter-religious Dialogue**

Inter-religious encounter, sometimes leading to dialogue, is a significant feature of contemporary religious life in many parts of the world. Although there are distinctive features of the contemporary experience, related to globalization and the mass migration of peoples, the fact of inter-religious encounter and dialogue is nothing new. This module begins by setting the contemporary experience in historical perspective. The encounter with the religious 'other' is then considered from a broadly theological perspective by considering Christian theological approaches alongside approaches of other religious traditions. The third and final section of the module looks at a small number of particular dialogues in some depth.