



A network of faith communities
called to transformation
by engaging God's mission.

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For Immediate Release
November 19, 2014

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EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN MINNESOTA, BEXLEY SEABURY FORGE PARTNERSHIP
ECMN, seminary plans include collaboration on formation and management training

The Episcopal Church in Minnesota (ECMN) and the Bexley Seabury Theological Seminary Federation today announced a partnership that will bring the resources and expertise of the seminary to bear on Christian formation and leadership development ministries in numerous ECMN communities.

Through the partnership, Bexley Seabury will collaborate with ECMN's formation and leadership development initiatives among the Ojibwe and Dakota communities, and provide several scholarships to ECMN participants in the well-respected Bexley Seabury Leadership Institute, a three-day summer program offered in conjunction with the Center for Nonprofit Management, Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

The seminary will also collaborate with ECMN on an "incubator initiative" that will gather young adults and other stakeholders to visit emergent congregations in the Episcopal Church and bring back the best wisdom from those faith communities, to Minnesota.

"ECMN is committed to assisting every faith community to acquire the resources they need to engage God's mission in their context," said the Rt. Rev. Brian N. Prior, Bishop of Minnesota. "This emerging partnership with Bexley Seabury has the potential of offering significant faith formation opportunities."

The Rev. Roger Ferlo, president of Bexley Seabury, said ECMN and the seminary federation are well matched. "Episcopalians in Minnesota have understood since the days of Bishop Henry Whipple in the mid-19th century that it is essential to root theological education in the context and culture of local communities of faith," he said. "Bexley Seabury shares this historic willingness to work collaboratively, to try new approaches, and to find ways to ensure that the best in Christian formation and training are available to people and communities that are sometimes overlooked.

"My hope is that this joint commitment to excellence in contextual formation will become a model for the church at a time when such models are keenly needed."



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ECMN and Bexley Seabury share some history relevant to their new partnership. Seabury Divinity School, one of the forerunners of Bexley Seabury, was founded by Whipple in Faribault, Minnesota in 1858. Enmegahbowh, the first Native American ordained to the Episcopal priesthood, was closely associated with Seabury from the start. The new partnership between ECMN and Bexley Seabury will be made possible by income from an endowment, known as Bishop Seabury Mission Fund, begun in 1933 when Seabury Divinity School and Western Theological Seminary merged.

The Rev. Susan Daughtry, ECMN Missioner for Formation, said she hopes that “the development of a strong relationship between ECMN and Bexley Seabury will allow the experiments and learning that blossom from the partnership to be a gift to the wider church.”

She added, “As the Episcopal Church leans back toward local formation and innovative networks, this partnership can be an icon of good news -- that seminaries can work in partnership with the specific needs of local communities, and that the wisdom of those local communities can shape and inspire our seminaries.”

[The Episcopal Church in Minnesota](#) is a network of faith communities called to spiritual transformation by engaging in God's Mission.

As an Episcopal center for learning and discipleship at the crossroads of the nation, the [Bexley Hall Seabury Western Seminary Federation](#) forms lay and clergy leaders to proclaim God's mission in the world, creating new networks of Christian formation, entrepreneurial leadership and bold inquiry in the service of the Gospel. Learn more at [bexleyseabury.edu](#).

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