

# Ministry Leadership Certificate

Program & Syllabus  
2024-25

A ministry of:



**VENTURE**  
CHURCH NETWORK

N. California & Nevada

# A TRAINING AND EQUIPPING **PARTNERSHIP** WITH **VENTURE CHURCH NETWORK** N. CALIFORNIA/NEVADA & **WESTERN SEMINARY**

## **From Western Seminary:**

We are delighted to offer the Ministry Leadership Certificate (MLC), which is a set of high-impact courses offered through Western Seminary's Center for Leadership Development. This unique program is curated by the leaders of VCN with a specific view toward "equipping the saints for the work of ministry" (Ephesians 4:12).

Together with our partners at VCN, we pray that this course of study proves to be a catalyst and resource for spiritual transformation in your life personally, and through your life as you love others and extend the good news of Jesus Christ in both word and action.



Dr. Charles J. Conniry, Jr.  
President  
Western Seminary



## **From VCN NCal/NV:**

There is power in the Word of God! As a pastor my desire is to be faithful to the biblical charge to equip the saints for the work of ministry. The Ministry Leadership Program is an amazing tool that helps pastors train their people for the work of ministry. Over the years, I have sent several people from my church through this program and I have seen how it helps to deepen their knowledge of God's word and strengthen their confidence in sharing God's truth. I am thrilled to be leading this program!



Dr. Andy Flowers  
Director of Leadership Education  
Venture Church Network N. Cal/NV



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# Program Overview

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*“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,”  
~ Ephesians 4:11–12 (ESV)*

The Ministry Leadership Certificate program is designed to help pastors and churches prepare their saints for the work of ministry for the building up of the body of Christ.

## **1. Bible Overview**

In the first semester the reading and video courses will provide a clear understanding of the scope and structure of the whole Bible. The goal is that every student has a better grasp of the genres, themes, and historical development of the Bible.

## **2. Bible Study Methods**

Also in the first semester, there will be an emphasis on learning the basic steps required in a responsible study of a passage of scripture. Including word studies, contextual analysis, literary analysis, and application.

## **3. Theological Formation**

During the second semester, the video courses and the reading will focus on understanding the core doctrines of the Christian faith. The goal is for students to understand the theological themes found in the Bible.

## **4. Sharing the Word**

Finally, students will learn to create Bible study lessons or sermons. They will apply their understanding of the overview of scripture, Bible study methods, and theological knowledge to develop lesson plans that can be used to help communicate the word of God to others.

## Western Seminary Credit

Students who complete the MLC and later enroll in a Western Seminary graduate certificate or degree program will receive up to two elective credits applied toward their selected program. This student benefit applies only to enrollment in Western graduate programs. MLC graduates desiring to utilize this benefit should contact the Center for Leadership Development at [cld@westernseminary.edu](mailto:cld@westernseminary.edu).

## What else do I need to know?

- **Cost:** \$300 plus the cost of books
- **Start Date:** Friday, August 30, 2024
- **End Date:** Friday, June 6, 2025
- **Orientation Meetings:**
  - Friday, August 30, 2024  
Calvary Baptist Church | 506 Cottonwood Street, Woodland, CA 95695  
10AM - 1PM (lunch will ne provided)
  
  - Saturday, September 7, 2024  
Campus Bible Church | 4710 N Maple Avenue, Fresno, CA 93726  
9:00AM - 12:00PM
- **Register Online:** <https://www.venturechurches-ncnv.com/mlc/>
- **Questions?** Email - [andy@venturechurches-ncnv.com](mailto:andy@venturechurches-ncnv.com)

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## Program Overview

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1. **Online Classes:** Each semester, you will watch about 40 hours of class instruction; 31 hours in core classes and nine hours of elective classes. A viewing log will be handed out during the orientation.
2. **Reading:** You will be responsible for reading the assigned textbooks each semester. A reading log will be handed out during the orientation.
3. **Written Assignments:** Each semester, two written assignments are due. These assignments will be an application of the reading and the classes.
4. **Mentor:** Because this is largely a self-guided course of study, you are asked to select a mentor. Your mentor should be someone on the pastoral staff or in a ministry leadership role at your church. Online classes, reading, and written assignments are all good, but the best ministry training comes from those currently serving in ministry.

# First Semester

August 30 - November 22, 2024

Course	Instructor	Hours	Format
VCN/MLC Orientation	Andy Flowers	5	Live
Whole Bible Overview	Bert Downs	5	Online
Introduction to Biblical Theology	Todd Miles	2.5	Online
Old Testament Survey	Carl Laney	10	Online
New Testament Overview	Todd Chipman	6	Online
How to Study Your Bible	Todd Miles	4	Online
VCN Seminar	TBD	5	Live

Track Courses (pick one track)	Instructor	Hours	Format
<b>Staff Track</b>			
Training Future Leaders	John Johnson	9	Online
<b>Women's Track</b>			
Women in Leadership	Beverly Hislop	7	Online
Shepherding Women in Pain	Beverly Hislop	2	Online
<b>Lay Leader Track</b>			
Theology of Work	Gerry Breshears	4	Online
Implementing a Theology of Work	Kent Humphries	5	Online

Books	Author(s)
30 Days to Understand the Bible (Pages 1 - 180)	Max Anders
Journey Into God's Word	Duvall & Hays

Projects	Due Date
<p>First Assignment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using the information from the classes and the book "30 Days to Understand the Bible", explain how you would describe the big picture and broad themes of the Bible to someone who was unfamiliar with Scripture. Feel free to use drawings, bullet points, pictures, or anything else that will help make it memorable. (Use the "Arc of Bible History" found on page 384 of the 30 Days book as an example).</li> </ul>	10/18/24
<p>Second Assignment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select a passage of Scripture from the New Testament and apply the Bible study steps found in "Journey into God's Word." Make sure to use study tools and commentaries and cite your sources.</li> </ul>	11/22/24

# Second Semester

January 10 - June 6, 2025

Course	Instructor	Hours	Format
VCN/MLC Orientation	Andy Flowers	5	Live
What is the Gospel?	Gerry Breshears	5	Online
Spiritual Formation	Gary Thomas	5	Online
Systematic Theology	Gerry Breshears	15	Online
VCN Seminar	TBD	5	Live

Track Courses (pick one track)	Instructor	Hours	Format
<b>Staff Track</b>			
Ministering for Maturity	Bert Downs	5	Online
Developing a Leadership Culture	Mark Olmos	1.5	Online
12 Marks of a Healthy Board	Panel Discussions	1.5	Online
<b>Women's Track</b>			
Shepherding a Woman's Heart	Beverly Hislop	3.5	Online
Transitions: Lessons from Naomi	Beverly Hislop	3	Online
Shepherding Women Seminar	Beverly Hislop	1.5	Online
<b>Lay Leader Track</b>			
Job Shadowing Daniel	Larry Peabody	6	Online
Marketplace Mentoring	Panel Discussion	2	Online

Books	Author(s)
Why Believe?: A Reasoned Approach to Christianity	Neil Shenvi
30 Days to Understanding the Bible (Pages 183-381)	Max Anders

Projects	Due Date
First Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using the book "Why Believe" as a guide, select one area of apologetics to write about. Supplement your research with at least three other sources.</li> </ul>	04/11/25
Second Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using the book "30 Days to Understanding the Bible" (Pages 181-269) select one doctrinal area and create a 4-week lesson plan or sermon series. The lesson plans can be in bullet point or outline format, they don't have to be full manuscripts. Make sure that your lessons clearly explain the orthodox doctrinal position and include a clear gospel message.</li> </ul>	06/06/25