

## E.A. Company of Pastors

### The Pastoral Covenant

**What:** A community of Pastor's in the Evangelical Association committed to the gospel message of *salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone*, the historic Evangelical & Reformed, or Congregational Christian Church Confessions of faith\* (*as subordinate faithful expositions of scripture*), who covenant with one another for mutual support in ministry in order to live a more Christ centered life.

**Who:** The 'Company of Pastor's' is open to all Pastors affiliated with the Evangelical Association who agree with the purpose of this community and sign this covenant.

**Why:** Pastoral leadership is both life-giving and highly demanding. All pastoral leaders need to feed their faith in order to thrive amid the challenges and demands of leading congregations in reflecting on the faith. Regular and sustained theological reflection, prayer and scripture reading as individuals and in community can feed the faith of pastoral leaders.

Feeding our faith is not complicated, it boils down to a commitment to Christian spiritual disciplines. The practices listed here create a daily and weekly rhythm in our spiritual life. They help pastoral leaders to adopt a steady pattern of taking time each day to turn toward God.

These practices are:

- Daily Scripture readings
- Daily Prayer
- Regular reflection on the aforementioned Confessions of faith
- Weekly Sabbath

While these practices aren't complicated, committing to them daily is a challenge. Far too often these practices are left out of our daily life, and we see them as something we will do when we have the time rather than being something integral to pastoral ministry and leadership. Engaging in these practices regularly is also difficult when done in isolation. This is where the E.A. Company of Pastors is helpful. This community offers each of us the opportunity to engage in these practices, knowing that others are reading and reflecting upon the same passages you are, and are in prayer for you as you are for them.

The community aspects of the company of pastors will be facilitated through a closed Facebook group as well as possible regional gatherings and hopefully an annual gathering at the EA National Convocation.

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When you join The E.A. Company of Pastors, you will become part of a covenant community of colleagues who will practice common spiritual, intellectual, and vocational disciplines:

- Adhering to the Pastoral Rule of life which includes,
- Daily reading of Scripture using the *lectio continua* method (*book will be posted to Facebook group*)
- Daily prayer using the Psalter (*schedule of Daily Psalms provided in Facebook group*). Prayer for the congregation you serve, your colleagues, the Evangelical Association (*its executive board, National Minister, Regional Ministers, Mission Network, member congregations*), and the church 'catholic'.
- Daily reflection of an assigned portion of one of the Confessions. (*These readings also include a question for reflection which will be posted to the Facebook group each week.*)
- Regular engagement and/or gatherings with your colleagues for prayer, discussion of readings, and reflection on theological and pastoral issues. (*On Facebook primarily & in person whenever possible*)

The formation of local or regional groups of the E.A. Company of Pastors is encouraged. It is our intent to hold a national meeting at the Convocation of the Evangelical Association each year.

*\*The historic Confessions referenced are those statements of faith which were recognized by the predecessor denominations of the E.A. including but not necessarily limited to: The Savoy Declaration, The Evangelical Catechism, Luther's Small Catechism, The German Congregational Catechism, The Heidelberg Catechism and the Augsburg Confession.*

*\*\*While the "Christian Church" side of the E.A.'s history was non-creedal there were the "Six Principles" on which they agreed.*

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*Signature of Pastor*

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*Date signed*