

# Family Ministries Leadership Training (FMLT)

Understanding, supporting, and reaching families

A joint TED/EUD training programme





## What is the Family Ministries Leadership Training (FMLT) programme?

The FMLT is a short introductory course for family ministries leaders, pastors and lay people who are interested in furthering their knowledge about families and relationships. It will also provide them with information and materials to help them deliver family ministry seminars, to minister more effectively to the families in their area, and to do family-based outreach in their communities.



### Who can benefit from the FMLT programme?

- This is a TED/EUD training programme for family ministry leaders, pastors and lay-people with a passion for family ministries.
- Many married trainees have found it helpful to attend FMLT as a couple so that they are better equipped to work as a team in family ministries. Experience has shown that it is far more effective for them to learn together, than for one person to share what they have learned with their spouse after the training event.
- It can be helpful for local fields to train small teams of people to work in family ministries so that they can support each other, blend their complementary skills, develop specialty areas (such as parenting, marriage, or family-based outreach) and mentor experienced family ministry leaders for the future.
- The FMLT programme may also inspire trainees to seek further training in the areas of understanding families, ministering to families, and possibly even family counselling and therapy. This training may be provided by SDA colleges and seminaries, or by other training institutions in their own countries.



## **The FMLT programme is designed to:**

- Provide Biblical, social, and relational foundations on which to build and grow effective family ministries.
- Provide a rich understanding of contemporary families and their needs.
- Train leaders in planning and creating seminars and ministries for families.
- Train leaders in various approaches and opportunities for family-based evangelism.
- Provide training and experience in seminars and workshops that busy leaders can adapt quickly for their own contexts.
- Create opportunities for spiritual reflection, growth and creativity amongst the trainees by including a special Sabbath together during each training event.
- Provide networking opportunities for those interested in family ministries.
- Enrich the range of resources available to all family ministries leaders through homework assignments, which include creating seminars and other materials that can be shared throughout the Division.

## **Why has the training been changed from CFLE to FMLT?**

- The Trans-European Division Family Ministries department has initiated the Family Ministries Leadership Training (FMLT) programme.
- It is based on the previous Certificate of Family Life Education (CFLE), which ran for about 15 years and provided excellent training for many of the current Family Ministry Directors across the TED.
- FMLT has been adapted slightly to suit the current needs of leaders in the TED, and in response to several practical considerations.
- The CFLE title is a specific qualification offered by the US National Council on Family Relations and we are no longer free to use this title.



- CFLE was a 5-year programme and provided a very sound theoretical understanding of families and family ministries.
- FMLT is now a 3-year programme. It includes foundational theories, but it has a higher percentage of practical content to help busy leaders apply the current ideas and research to their ministry.
- By offering a 3-year programme we can save finances and time, and make the course more accessible to people who may not be in a family ministries position for 5 years, or who cannot guarantee availability for 5 years.
- By creating our own programme we can adapt the teaching to our European context, and address the challenges many families face in a multi-ethnic, post-Christian, highly sexualized, secular, and internet-focussed culture.
- Each FMLT includes a Sabbath day together to allow space for spiritual connection and development. This is an important and integral part of the training.



### **Special features of FMLT**

- The FMLT programme is shared between the TED and the EUD, with each Division taking it in turns to organize the event and take overall responsibility for the planning and preparation.
- By creating a European training, we can access more professionals who are skilled presenters and have a rich understanding of the European context.
- The topics listed below may be adjusted from time to time to accommodate local specialist presenters and emerging needs. It is more important to have a dynamic and relevant training programme, which accommodates local needs and makes the best use of presenters, than to have a rigid curriculum.



## Frequency and dates

- The FMLT programme takes place over 5-6 days each year for 3 years.
- The dates vary depending on availability of speakers and venues. We aim to publish future dates at least 6 months in advance of the training.

## The cost of FMLT training

- The TED and EUD sponsor the training by covering the costs of the presenters, the course materials, and the training venue.
- The travel and accommodation expenses of the trainees are usually provided by their employing organisation/field. The cost of the accommodation has been about 80-90 Euros per day for 5-6 days.
- Lay members may be sponsored by their local fields, or they may pay for their own expenses.
- There are a small number of bursaries available each year to cover the accommodation expenses where local fields might struggle to provide this. Please contact your Division Family Ministries director if you would like to apply for this financial support.

## Certification

- Currently this training is not accredited by any external body, but it is recognised within our fields, and several lay 'graduates' from the programme, such as spouses, have benefitted from including this training in their CVs and job applications, when appropriate.
- Each topic is 8 hours of CEU/CPD for attendance only, and 14 hours including assignments. Certificates of attendance are presented at the end of the face-to-face teaching, with full certificates presented on satisfactory completion of assignments.



# FMLT Curriculum Overview

## Year A (2023/2026)

Family ethics  
Christian parenting  
Human sexuality  
Sabbath – Intergenerational Worship

## Year B (2024/2027)

Families in Society  
Family evangelism  
Human development  
Sabbath – Making Sabbaths special

## Year C (2022/2025)

Interpersonal communication  
Strengthening marriages  
Biblical foundations of family ministries  
Sabbath – Family spirituality



# Year A (2023/2026)

## Family ethics

- Philosophy and ethics
- Biblical ethics
- Virtue ethics and values
- Ethics matrix
- Human rights
- What it means to be a virtuous person
- Applying ethics to family challenges
- Empowering families to make their own ethical choices



### Assignment:

- Describe a family challenge that you have encountered in your ministry.
- Write it in anonymous format to preserve confidentiality.
- Describe how you could apply various ethical perspectives to this situation.
- 500-1000 words

### Resource book:

- *Virtue Reborn*, Tom Wright, SPCK Publishing, 2010

## Christian parenting

- Human attachment and early bonding
- Meeting children's physical, psychological, emotional and relational needs
- Loving limits – positive discipline
- Growing children's character
- Spiritual nurture of children/family spirituality
- Helping children to balance their emotions
- Evaluating parenting seminars

### Assignment:

- Create a seminar to inspire and support Christian parents.



- Include teaching notes, PowerPoint with copyright free pictures, activities, handouts, etc.
- Present the seminar in a format that could be shared and used by other family ministry leaders.

### Resources and books:

- *52 Ways to Parent Happy Children*, Karen Holford, Stanborough Press, 2016
- [www.handsonscotland.co.uk](http://www.handsonscotland.co.uk) – website for parents to help them manage their children's troubling behaviours and also help their children to flourish.
- *Celebrating Strengths, Creating Strengths-based Schools*, Jennifer Fox Eades, CAPP Press, 2008 (developing character)
- *100 Ideas* series - Karen Holford, Pacific Press (prayer, worship, memory verses, Sabbath, etc.)

### Human sexuality

- Understanding human sexuality
- Teaching our children about sexuality
- Helping couples with their sexual intimacy
- Helping couples to protect their relationship from infidelity



### Assignment:

- Read a Christian book about one aspect of sexuality and write a book review of 500-600 words that can be posted on the TED Family Ministries web pages.

### Resource book:

- *Human Sexuality*, Ron and Karen Flowers, Advent Source (Christian Curriculum for Sexuality)

### Sabbath topic - Intergenerational Worship

- Revisiting ideas about church worship services
- The importance of considering the needs of children and families in our worship services
- How to create an intergenerational worship service



- Group work: choose a parable from the Bible and use it to inspire every aspect of an intergenerational worship service – prayer, offering, Scripture reading, songs, 'sermon' time, etc. Present your ideas to the whole group.

**Resource book:**

- *Altogether Wonderful*, Karen Holford, Advent Source, 2017





## Year B (2024/2027)

### Families in Society

- Understanding family systems theory
- Challenges facing families today
- Understanding family violence
- Protecting vulnerable people
- Understanding the effects of pornography and living in a highly sexualised culture
- Mental wellbeing and suicide prevention



#### Resource book:

- *Left to Their Own Devices? Confident Parenting in a World of Screens*, Katherine Hill, Care for the Family, 2017

#### Assignment:

- Write a short practical guide for families, helping them to manage screen time, Internet access, mobile phone usage and social media within their family. This can be a leaflet, web page, or article.

### Family evangelism

- How can we reach families in today's society?
- Families reaching families – Salt and Light
- Families reaching families – The Kindness Project
- Reaching young families – Toddler group projects
- Reaching families throughout their life-cycle

#### Resource books:

- *Families Reaching Families Plan Books*, Karen and Ron Flowers, digital files shared through DropBox

#### Assignment:

- Design an event, programme or ministry that could help a local church in your field to build relationships with families in their community.

## Human development

- Understanding how families develop and grow together through their lifespan
- Helping families through expected and unexpected transitions
- Understanding teenagers
- How we learn
- Family ministries opportunities throughout the life-span

### Resource book:

- *Human Growth and Development 3rd Edition*, Chris Beckett and Hilary Taylor, Sage Publications, 2016

### Assignment:

- Create a seminar to help families manage a significant life transition: the birth of their first child; preparing to parent teenagers; preparing for the children to leave home; becoming positive parents-in-law; becoming grandparents; preparing for retirement together; etc.
- Include teaching outline, handouts, PowerPoint with copyright free pictures, and any other support materials.



## Sabbath topic - Making Sabbath Special

- Biblical exploration of the purpose of Sabbath
- Making Sabbath special for the families of leaders and pastors
- Understanding Sabbath as a gift full of gifts
- Creating delight together
- Practical and interactive exploration of Sabbath activities, ideas, and family rituals

### Resource book:

- *100 Creative Activities for Sabbath*, Karen Holford, Pacific Press, 2010

## Year C (2022/2025)

### Interpersonal communication

- Understanding communication
- Speaking so others listen and listening so others speak
- Creative ways to manage conflict
- A relational toolbox for pastors and leaders

#### Resource book:

- *Authentic: Relationships from the Inside Out*, Sarah Abell, Hodder and Stoughton, 2009

#### Assignment:

- Create an hour-long seminar or activity that encourages couples and/or families to develop their communication skills. Include teaching outline, handouts, PowerPoint with copyright free pictures, and any other support materials.

### Ministering to marriages

- Premarital counseling
- Growing a healthy marriage
- Stages of marriage
- Mentoring marriages
- Helping a hurting marriage
- Other topics to be confirmed



#### Resource books:

- *Created for Connection*, Sue Johnson and Kenneth Sanderfer, Little Brown, 2016 (text book)
- *Hope for the Separated*, Gary Chapman, Moody Press, 2005
- *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*, John Gottman and Nan Silver, Orion, 2007
- *Fighting For Your Marriage*, Scott Stanley et al., Jossey Bass, 2001
- *I Do: How to Build a Great Marriage*, Gabor Mihalec, Review & Herald, 2014



### **Assignment:**

- Create a seminar or event for couples in your church or community to enrich their relationships. Include an event plan, teaching outline, handouts, PowerPoint with copyright free pictures, and any other support materials.

## **Biblical foundations of family ministries**

- Our relational God
- Theology of marriage
- Marriage in the context of the Great Controversy
- The Biblical model of marriage and contemporary reality
- God's plan for marriages, families and communities
- Biblical principles for healthy relationships

### **Assignment:**

- Write the outline for a sermon about families/healthy relationships.

### **Resource book:**

- *The Bible*
- *Families Where Grace is in Place*, Jeff VanVonderen, Bethany House, 2010 (German edition 2017)
- *Tired of Trying to Measure Up*, Jeff VanVonderen, Bethany House, 2008
- *Boundaries*, Henry Cloud & John Townsend, Zondervan 2nd edition 2017

## **Sabbath topic - Family spirituality**

- Exploring approaches to family spirituality
- Experiencing Godly Play as an approach to nurturing spirituality
- Interactive sessions - creative ways to learn memory verses; creative ways to pray; creative ways to explore Bible stories

### **Resource book:**

- *100 Creative Worship Ideas for Busy Families* - Karen Holford, Pacific Press, 2014

For further information, enquiries, or applications please contact:

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