Study Theology with SWMTC 2025-2026

SWMTC
THEOLOGY FOR LIVING

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A welcome from the Principal

Welcome to South West Ministry Training Course (SWMTC). In this brochure you will find information on the courses we offer. If you are looking to deepen your knowledge of God and the Bible, to be inspired and to join a vibrant learning community, you have come to the right place. We aim to provide stepping stones for your vocational journey and to equip you for discovery and service as you follow God's leading in your life.

SWMTC is a faithful community of rich learning and deep formation. We focus on training for practical, life-giving and hopeful ministry which is rooted in theology and in the real lives of communities, churches and organisations of the South West. We exist to bless society, the church and every disciple, in the present and for the future. We capture all this in the phrase 'Theology for Living'. We are passionate about what we do.

SWMTC provides a variety of part-time courses, and we meet together as a community, in person or online, to learn, worship, encourage, care for and support one another. Our students come from a variety of backgrounds with a variety of life experience and of formal study. Although our foundation is in the Church of England in Devon and Cornwall, we welcome students from other traditions and elsewhere. We do hope that you will come and join us!

Revd Dr Lucy Larkin
Principal

Our vision

Our vision is to equip people who are Christ-centred, world-engaging, rooted in the service of their local communities and excited about sharing the Gospel faithfully, creatively and courageously. We aim to be a community shaped and led by God's Spirit ever deeper into:

Adventurous faith – Our adventures of faith in church, work and world weave together with academic integrity. Growing together in the grace of God, we allow practical skills to interact with theology. Spiritual formation breathes life into our service.

Missional hope – sharing God's gift of a living hope in Jesus Christ, we prepare people to be creative in all dimensions of mission and to serve others with joy.

Grounded love – rooted in God's love, we support and encourage one another. Pastoral care is at the heart of what we do. We celebrate our unity in diversity and try not to take ourselves too seriously as we learn together and inspire one another. We are proud to know and serve the South West, its villages, towns and cities, and to love its hills, moors and coastal communities.

Studying with SWMTC

All of our courses are part-time and are delivered through a blend of online lectures and in-person study days. Students on most courses attend six in-person study days each year, on Saturdays at Plymouth Marjon University (Marjon). The day begins and ends with worship led by our students in the chapel. Break times give space to connect with classmates and with students on other courses.

Students training for ordination in the Church of England have additional classes on Sunday, a five-day study school in the spring and regular mid-week formation groups.

In person study dates for 2025-2026

Induction day for new students
Saturday 6th September 2025

Study days – all students attend on Saturday. Ordinands attend on Saturday and Sunday.
Saturday 13th – Sunday 14th September 2025
Saturday 25th – Sunday 26th October 2025
Saturday 6th – Sunday 7th December 2025
Saturday 17th – Sunday 18th January 2026
Saturday 7th – Sunday 8th March 2026
Saturday 9th – Sunday 10th May 2026 (online only)
Saturday 13th – Sunday14th June 2026

Easter School for Ordinands and Yr 2 Readers/LLMs only
Monday 13th – Friday 17th April 2026

Brilliant Basics – theology for everyone

New for 2025, we are starting a series of short courses offering an exciting opportunity for everyone to explore the theology behind the big questions about life and the Christian faith. Students can choose whether to write reflections and receive a certificate at the end, or to sit back and enjoy the learning without the pressure of submitting written work.

The first course will begin in October 2025, looking at the Old Testament. Future courses are likely to cover deep dives into sections of the Bible, theological explorations of aspects of faith (e.g. The Kingdom of God, The Lord's Prayer), topics in Christian spirituality, church history and aspects of contemporary faith such as ecotheology. Each course will run for 6 weeks. You can choose between an online course or an in-person taught course. Keep an eye on our website and social media for course details and how to sign up.

These courses are designed for anyone and everyone who wants to expand their thinking and experience of God through studying with others, led by our team of experienced teaching staff.

How to apply
Visit our website at swmtc.org.uk where course details will be published in due course.

Academic courses

Our academic courses are delivered by SWMTC under the Common Awards scheme and validated by Durham University.

Common Awards is the three-way partnership between a Theological Education Institution (TEI), in this case, SWMTC, the Church of England (and other participating churches) and Durham University.

Durham University

Certificate, Diploma and BA in Theology, Ministry & Mission

Explore the Christian faith in more depth through a range of different modules via our undergraduate level theology courses validated by Durham University. Subjects include biblical studies, doctrine, ministry and mission, pastoral care, and theological reflection. There is plenty of scope for writing about issues of particular interest to you as part of Independent Learning Projects. You'll study part-time alongside those training for licensed ministry in the Church of England. Our teachers are experienced theologians from the region, including SWMTC staff, visiting academics and church leaders.

Courses

Award	**Course length**	**Pre-course requirements**
Foundation Award	1 year (60 credits)	One A-level or equivalent
Certificate of Higher Education (CertHE)	2 years (120 credits)	One A-level or equivalent
Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE)	4 years (240 credits)	Two A-levels or equivalent
BA (Hons)	6 years (360 credits)	Three A-levels or equivalent

Please contact the Academic Registrar at academic@swmtc.org.uk if you do not meet the above formal academic requirements as alternative experiences or qualifications may be considered in lieu.

Sitting in

Interested in the theology but don't want to write essays? We also welcome people who wish to simply 'sit in' on lectures with no requirement to complete assignments.

Indicative fees for 2025-2026 academic year*

Year	Course	Level	Fee
Years 1 & 2	Certificate, Diploma and BA (Hons)	Level 4	£1320 per year*
Years 3 & 4	Diploma and BA (Hons)	Level 5	£1650 per year*
Year 5 & 6	BA (Hons)	Level 6	£1980 per year*
Sitting in (all years)	Certificate, Diploma & BA (Hons)	Levels 4 - 6	£75 per day

* For these courses, in addition, a one-time non-refundable registration fee of £100 applies to each new student (except for sitters-in for which there is no registration fee). Fees are indicative based on 60 credits at each level. Actual fees are based on the modules taken by an individual so may vary slightly. Fees for future academic years may be subject to inflation but are likely to be similar to Year 1. Anglican students in the process of discernment for ordination and recommended to study by the DDO may obtain a bursary toward these courses.

How to apply

Please contact our operations team, Liz Wallace and Lizzie Pridmore at admin@swmtc.org.uk, for further details and an application form.

MA in Theology, Ministry and Mission

An inspiring and informative three years of part-time study covering subjects including Biblical Studies, Doctrine, Christian Faith and the Environment, Hermeneutics, Research and Reflection, as well as the opportunity to choose your own research topics for Independent Learning Projects and a final Dissertation. Our manageable and affordable MA course is validated by Durham University through the Common Awards scheme. The MA runs part-time across 3 academic years (60 credits per year).

Pre-course requirements

Normally a **2:1 Honours degree** or equivalent in a subject relevant to the proposed course of study. Graduates in other disciplines with experience of Theology or Religious Studies to at least FHEQ Level 4 (overall mark of at least 60%) may also be admitted to the programme. Prior professional experience will also be considered.

Fees

£2,500 per year - £7,500 in total for three years. This includes £100 non-refundable booking fee. Fee may be subject to inflation.

How to apply

Please contact our Vice-Principal, Revd Dr Dominic Cyrus, for further details: viceprincipal@swmtc.org.uk.

Vocational courses

Chaplaincy courses

Introduction to Chaplaincy course

What is it?
It is an opportunity to explore chaplaincy in depth through in-person teaching and learning. The course involves no essay writing; instead we encourage you to keep a portfolio/journal of resources, reflections, and a record of your personal journey. We also ask you to find a placement in which to experience and observe chaplaincy in action.

Who is it for?
The course is for anyone, lay or ordained, who is considering chaplaincy and for those who have just taken their first chaplaincy position.

What will I study?
We will explore the diversity of chaplaincy and look at key topics such as being a visible and inclusive presence, listening, mental health, grief, bereavement and hope, self-care, working with others, creative solutions, resilience, and mission.

How much does it cost?
The course costs £900 per year which includes a non-refundable £100 registration fee, all teaching and access to resources.

Certificate in Theology, Ministry & Mission (Chaplaincy)

Plans are under way for a two-year Certificate in Theology, Ministry & Mission tailored specifically towards those working within or exploring chaplaincy, designed to provide you with a strong theological and practical foundation from which to enrich your ministry. To register an interest in our Chaplaincy courses, please contact our operations team, Liz Wallace and Lizzie Pridmore at admin@swmtc.org.uk.

Emmaus Spiritual Direction Course

Welcoming people from across the South West, this two-year, part-time course is for those sensing a call to listening ministry and a desire to deepen their own spiritual journey. The course runs for two years, and the next intake will start in September 2026.

Year 1 offers a foundational understanding of spiritual direction with a focus on listening skills, spiritual conversation and an introduction to Christian spirituality. Participants are supported in an ongoing discernment of their call to accompany others in faith. Year 2 is for those who have discerned a call to the ministry of spiritual direction. Participants develop advanced listening skills and good practice in supervision, whilst further deepening their own spiritual journey and awareness of the major Christian traditions.

Participants are supported in a final discernment process which may lead to an invitation to join the diocesan networks for spiritual directors in Truro and Exeter. The course is offered as a formational learning community led by the Revd Janette Mullett and the Revd Rachel Bennetts with a team of experienced Spiritual Directors.

To Apply: If you would like to register interest in advance for the September 2026 intake, please contact our operations team, Liz Wallace and Lizzie Pridmore at admin@swmtc.org.uk and we can put you in touch with the spiritual direction course leaders for a conversation.

Training for Ordinands and Licensed Lay Ministers (Readers)

SWMTC has been training people for ordained and licenced lay ministry for over 40 years. We understand the church in the South West and our training and formation prepares people for ministry in a variety of settings. Our part-time training means you'll be able to continue working and belonging to your local church and will recieve an accredited, high-quality theological education whilst being formed within a community of worship, prayer and learning.

You'll learn alongside students on our academic courses, with additional placements and accompaniment as you are prepared for your specific future ministry in the Church of England. The course normally leads to the award of a CertHE of Theology, Ministry & Mission validated by Durham University through Common Awards.

LLM & Reader training
If you feel that God may be calling you to LLM/Reader ministry, your home minister should be the first contact. If this is not possible, contact your diocesan Warden of Readers.

Ordination training
SWMTC training for ordained ministry is available only to those who have been selected for training by the Church of England. If you feel that God may be calling you towards ordination, your home minister should be the first contact. If this is not possible, you may contact your Diocesan Director of Ordinands.

Support our work

We have exciting plans for the future and would love to have your support as we move forwards! You can get involved by:

Making a donation to our student bursary fund and support others in developing their own faith and building knowledge through study with SWMTC.

Joining our alumni network of former students across the South West and further afield.

Signing up to our newsletter to keep in touch with our plans and hear how studying with SWMTC has made a difference to students past and present.

Please get in touch with our operations team, Liz Wallace and Lizzie Pridmore at admin@swmtc.org.uk for more details.

Contact us

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South West
Ministry
Training
Course

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South West Ministry Training Course is Registered Charity Number 1056606