

## Seminary Students Summits

The vows we take at the font compel us to partner with congregations and parents to become a more welcoming worshiping community and to nurture the faith of children through worship and prayer. The Font & Faith Initiative is committed to helping the church live into the promises made in baptism by

- providing occasions for critical and sustaining conversations,
- creating supporting communities on a common journey,
- researching, developing, and offering resources to strengthen family and congregational ministries that nurture children in worship and prayer,

so that children's faith and congregations' worship and prayer life are engaged, enriched, and enlivened.

### Summits

Summits are in-person gatherings that convene teams of congregational leaders committed to becoming a more welcoming worshiping community and to nurturing the faith of children through worship and prayer. Our time together will be marked by engaging in

- biblical and theological exploration,
- deep listening and critical conversations,
- examining cultural and contextual realities that present both challenges and possibilities, and
- discovering best practices and emerging ideas.

These summits will shape how we foster leadership, discern what resources need to be developed, and what experiences need to be offered, as we support families and congregations nurturing children through baptismal living.

### Seminary Students

Faith formation, in families and congregations, is communal work. As such, we are inviting teams of leaders from communities of faith to participate in Summits. Summits will take place in various formats: multi-staff congregational teams, solo-staff congregational teams, regional intergenerational gatherings, and individual church leaders. Our hope is that these teams will include at least one paid staff member and congregational leaders who serve in worship, Christian education, and/or family ministries.

Seminary Students whose vocational call is to congregational ministry are invited to participate in Summits as they learn and lead together with those who bring wisdom from their congregational experience. Students do not have to form a team but will be invited to participate with the teams who comprise a Summit.

## **Dates and Arrangements**

There are three configurations of Summits: Congregational Summits, Intergenerational Family Summits, and a Summit for Seminary Professors. Seminary students may apply to participate in any one of these.

The three Congregational Summits and the Summit for seminary professors, each encompassing two days, begin at 10:00 a.m. on a Monday and conclude at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday. All these Summits will be held on Union Presbyterian Seminary's Charlotte Campus, 5141 Sharon Road, Charlotte, NC 28210. Since full participation in both days of the event is expected, travel should be arranged for Sunday and Wednesday.

Regional Intergenerational Family Summits will take place on one Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the following cities: Atlanta, GA, Charlotte, NC, Richmond, VA, Greenville, SC, and Dallas/Fort Worth, TX.

For all Summit dates, scroll to the bottom of the Summits page on the Font & Faith website (<https://fontandfaith.cece.upsem.edu/summits/>).

Travel, lodging, food, and materials related to participating in the Summits are covered by a generous grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc. Our Center staff will assist you with all arrangements.

## **After The Summits**

Ministries that nurture faith in children and families through worship and prayer continue after the Summits. We are committed to supporting you in these ministries. Journey Groups will be established after the Summits to facilitate community, sustain your continued commitment, and strengthen your engagement in baptismal living. All Summit participants are expected to participate in Journey Groups where we will provide space for

- sharing intentional Christian practices of worship and prayer with children and families,
- supporting one another along the journey,
- giving voice to celebrations and challenges,
- exploring questions, and
- exchanging ideas.

All interactions will take place through a secure online portal on the Font & Faith website. New resources will also be available to Journey Groups to continue to engage and empower their work.

At the end of the three-year Journey Groups, all Summits will reconvene in their original configuration for a time of celebration and evaluation. These final Summits will dream and plan for future ministry.

## **Application Process**

Summit participants will be selected through an application process. Applications are available on the Font & Faith website:

<https://fontandfaith.cece.upsem.edu/>