



Dear Meadville Lombard Learning Community,

Since 2011, when Meadville Lombard refashioned its educational model from a residential to a hybrid model and following a migration from Hyde Park to 610 S. Michigan Avenue, Intensives have been a staple of our Learning Community. For close to a decade now, these weeks of communal gathering afforded us opportunities to build community, encourage each other, and played a special place in ministerial formation.

On Monday morning, we will be starting our Spring Intensives, but we will not be gathered at 610 S. Michigan Ave. We will not be overlooking the lake as we worship together, transforming the Atherton Lounge into a sacred space. Yet, we will still come together in a community of learning. Through the mediation of technology, we will continue to engage in our ministerial formation and preparing to be of service to the world.

During the weeks of Intensives, we will find ways to create community virtually. We will worship together and even have our BYOLs by other means. Yes, it will be different as we navigate these times of social distancing and pray for the health and healing of the world.

We ask that you approach this new learning situation with curiosity, grace, and understanding. Our faculty have been hard at work reformatting the Intensive aspect of their courses. We believe that this experience will allow all of us to reflect on the possible shapes of digital ministry.

Also, as you know several things have changed in our community and programming. Here are a few:

- **March Intensives** have been moved to an online format. Faculty have been proactive in their conversations around how to teach our course content online. They are also being mindful of potential disruptions that may occur, whether through the use of technology or ~~for~~ due to things happening in the lives of each and every one of us. We have also created spaces for worship and conversation for our community. Our chaplain, Rev. Teri Schwartz, will be available to students during Intensives.
- **Commencement Activities** have been postponed. This decision was hard to make, but we felt a responsible one to make at this time. Please know that, as we work in identifying a future date, we are thinking creatively about how to mark this day for the graduating members of our community.
- **All faculty and staff** are able to work remotely to protect their and their loved ones' health and safety.
- **The business office** continues to process payments, including student payments; however, please understand that there may be delays processing vouchers. If you are experiencing any delays in receipt of a check from MLTS, please do not hesitate to let Bradley Sterrenberg know.

We will be updating each of you with our future plans as they are finalized. All of our COVID-19 related updates can be found on our website: <https://www.meadville.edu/covid-19-coronavirus-information/>

Dr. Elías Ortega
President