# Learning about The United Church of Canada Theological Schools

## The United Church Studies Program at Dio

### School

United Church Studies/Études de l'Église Unie  
Montreal Diocesan Theological College/Le Séminaire diocésain de Montréal  
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### Recruiter or Admissions contact person

Rev. Dr. Jesse Zink, Principal

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### Open houses or events people can attend in the coming year

Guests and visitors are encouraged to visit anytime during the week—just let us know when you would like to come. During the semester, you can also join college staff, students, and friends for worship and lunch on Wednesdays during the semester at 11:40 a.m., or for our Community Evening on the third Tuesday of the month.

### What programs do you offer?

* Bachelor of Theology. A wide-ranging and comprehensive introduction to the Christian tradition.
* Master of Divinity. A three-year master’s degree that combines academic learning and field education to prepare students for ordained ministry. This program meets the requirements for testamur for United Church ordination.
* Master of Sacred Theology. An advanced degree permitting in-depth study of particular aspects of the Christian tradition.
* Diploma in Ministry. One-year of hands-on ministry formation for students with a prior theological degree from an accredited institution. This program meets the requirements for testamur for United Church ordination.
* Licentiate in Ministry. Preparation for ministry in congregational and community contexts. This program does not require a previous degree and meets the requirements for testamur for United Church ordination.
* Studies for United Church testamur. A highly customizable one-year program for students with prior theological education seeking to fill the gaps in their credentials for testamur for United Church ordination.
* Certificate in Bilingual Ministry. This certificate attests to a student’s ability to minister pastorally in both English and in French. It can be completed as part of any of our testamur-granting programs but is also available for general registration for those already working in ministry and spiritual care settings.
* Exploration de la foi et du leadership, un programme à plusieurs modules d’intérêt général et possibilité de formation pour célébrants et célébrantes laïques.
* Open enrolment courses and continuing education, offered in French and in English. Recent course topics include: Perspectives on Medical Assistance in Dying, God’s Spokespeople: Introducing the Prophets of the Old Testament, Meeting the Messiah: Reading the Gospel of Mark, Rekindling the Fire: A Preaching Workshop/ *Cours d’intérêt général, ouvert à un large public, et cours de formation continue, offerts en français et anglais. Voici quelques cours que nous avons offert récemment: Les célébrations liturgiques de l’Église Unie du Canada – les vivre et les animer, Le Nouveau Testament, Parler Bible avec Pierre, Jean, Jacques, et Théologie et histoire de l’Église Unie et du protestantisme francophone au Canada.*

### Can people study by distance?

Studies for United Church testamur and the Licentiate in Ministry can be done almost entirely remotely. The Diploma in Ministry and the final year of the Master of Divinity program offer options for distance education as well; students who do their field placement in their home community come to campus in Montreal only three times per semester. Open enrolment courses are offered online. *Le programme Exploration de la foi et du leadership* *et les cours pour intérêt général en français sont offerts en ligne.*

### What financial support does your school offer students?

We offer generous bursaries and scholarships for qualified applicants, up to the full cost of tuition over three years. *Du soutien financier est également disponible pour le programme Exploration de la foi et du leadership.*

### Can people take Centre for Christian Studies or Designated Lay Ministry externals with you?

We welcome and strongly encourage CCS or DLM students to take our online courses.

### What is your approach to equipping people preparing for ministry leadership?

We are aware that people following a call to ministry come from many backgrounds and stages of life. Our programs are designed to be uniquely flexible so that we can meet our students where they are to get them where they need to go. We offer several programs that can lead to ordination in the United Church, some residential and some which can be completed almost entirely remotely, some for those with previous theological degrees and others for those with no previous degree.

Many of our programs are offered in conjunction with McGill University and all are taught ecumenically through the Montreal School of Theology, the consortium of theological colleges of which we are a part. In all of our programs, we combine academic study with hands-on learning, and ecumenical and intercultural formation. This structure allows us to balance strong academic performance with an action-reflection model of learning.

Our vision for educating leaders in the United Church stresses innovation, resilience, and adaptability, and an openness to new forms of being church. We place a high value on mission and justice in ministry. We are especially attentive to the distinctive context of Quebec and support our students in advancing their competency in bilingual ministry.

Our approach includes teaching and learning intercultural skills, embracing what it means to be an Affirming Ministry, and working ecumenically whenever possible. Our students come from all over the globe, originating from places as diverse as Africa, the Caribbean, and East Asia. They are anglophone, francophone, allophone. They support and participate in all aspects of the LGBTQ2S+ community. Together we are learning to cultivate a community that is welcoming and respectful of one another across diverse contexts, cultures, theological perspectives, and life experiences.

### Do you have an affiliation with an undergraduate school?

We are affiliated with McGill University’s School of Religious Studies. During the first two years of our M. Div. program, students take courses at the McGill School of Religious Studies. In addition, students can apply for a Bachelor of Theology, a Master of Arts in Religious Studies or a Ph.D. in Theology through Montreal Dio and take courses at McGill while being a part of a supportive worshipping community. The programs combine courses from the McGill Faculty of Arts with courses in theology, Christian and Hebrew Scriptures, as well as interfaith and religious studies. We also offer a Master of Sacred Theology in partnership with McGill, an advanced theology degree permitting more in-depth study of a particular aspect of the Christian tradition.

### What makes your school unique?

Our Licentiate in Ministry and Studies for United Church testamur programs are the only programs of their kind in the country. Both are uniquely flexible, can be completed almost entirely remotely, are taught in both English and in French, and meet the requirements for testamur for United Church ordination. Students in the Studies for United Church testamur program design a course of study unique to their specific needs and typically complete the program within a year. The Licentiate program is a three-year program (if taken full-time) of hands-on learning for students with no previous degree.

The unique structure or our Master of Divinity program (two years of academic study at McGill plus one year of field education) makes it possible for students with a prior degree in theology from an accredited institution to earn a Diploma in Ministry and qualify for ordination by taking only the final year of the M. Div., known as the In Ministry Year. In the In Ministry Year, you will learn practical skills in congregational leadership and intercultural ministry, be supervised in a local field placement (in your home setting if desired), and take courses on the specifics of United Church polity, worship, history, and theology.

It is our distinctive mission to prepare students from across the country for lay and ordained ministry in the pluralistic and secular context of Quebec. This is the place for you if you want to study for ministry in The United Church of Canada in a diverse and dynamic context, if you speak French or want to learn to minister in French, if you care about intercultural ministry, if you love diversity, and if you value community.

### Anything else people should know?

Our primary goal is to advance our core mission: to educate leaders “for service and ministry in the church and world of tomorrow.” We believe that as our college transforms, we are also equipping our students to become agents of transformation. As a newly ecumenical college, we are creating new directions for the future and welcoming new students to join us in this adventure.

Montreal Dio is part of the Montreal School of Theology, a consortium that is accredited by the Association of Theological Schools.