So far we’ve covered some important territory in preparing to do theological reflection for ministry. We’ve seen how we’re operating within the realm of practical/pastoral theology. We’ve looked at a four-part process for theological reflection, in which we’ll draw on Experiences and Situations, Social Analysis, and Tradition, with the intention of shaping New Actions that will in turn lead to new experiences and situations. And we’ve begun to consider the importance of how formation and transformation operate within TR through God’s gracious presence. Most recently, we’ve seen the vital role that culture and context play in shaping our approach to TR. This awareness of cultural context helps us identify the “where” and “when” of our engagement.

In the current unit, we’ll look more deeply at goals, participants, and major elements for theological reflection in ministry. These are, in essence, our responses to “why,” “who,” and “what” questions. In the next unit, we’ll consider method and flow for TR, allowing us to address the question of “how.”

While it’s important to be aware of all these as distinct factors, actual participation in TR will inevitably show their close connections and effects on one another. In this unit, for example, I hope you’ll see in the materials how goals and participants influence each other.