



**Acadia Divinity College  
Mentored Ministry Handbook  
July 2019**

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## 1. Welcome as Partners in Mentored Ministry (MM)

Thank you for your interest in becoming partners in the Mentored Ministry (MM) program of Acadia Divinity College (ADC), so that pastors-in-training can have an experience as apprentices or pastoral students with mentoring support by an ordained, seasoned Pastoral Mentor (PM) and by team input from church members or representatives from the ministry placement site (called Congregational or Contextual Mentors or CM for short). The purpose of this relationship is to encourage Pastoral and Congregational Mentors to share their lives, skills, and wisdom in Gospel ministry (1 Thessalonians 2:8), so that students develop personhood, skills, and knowledge as ones called to join God's Kingdom mission.

My name is John McNally. As the Director of the Mentored Ministry Program at ADC, I'm pleased to greet you and work with you as described in this document. Along with future orientation and training, you can contact me with any remaining questions or suggestions.

The Bible reflects the role of mentoring in molding effective leaders. Consider Moses and Joshua, (Deut. 31:14, Joshua 1); Ruth and Naomi as mutual mentors (Book of Ruth); Deborah and Barak, (Judges 4); Timothy as his family and Paul facilitated the process (2 Tim. 1:2-14), etc. These people of faith learned to live in the presence of God, who promises: "I will be with you." (Ex. 33:14; Isaiah 41:10). Our Lord Jesus modeled the mentoring way by calling his disciples to "be with Him" (Mark. 3:14) as He shared life and ministry with them. Christ's commission for formation and mission is empowered by His promise to be with us (Mat. 28:18-20). Such mentoring continues to shape leaders today as we minister with Christ, empowered by the Spirit, for the glory of the Father.

### 1.1 Invitation to Integration

In my own personal and pastoral formation through seminary and twenty years of pastoral experience, I was blessed by a range of mentoring experiences, some of whom are noted in the acknowledgements. I am excited to facilitate mentoring among emerging and existing pastoral leaders as ADC students connect other areas of seminary study with mentored ministry activity. Matthew Floding describes this process like an invitation to integration:

Field education invites you to bring the lectures in theology and biblical studies and the best of preaching and pastoral care textbooks into the pulpit and the hospital room and give them life in *your* practice of ministry. Then you reflect on your practice theologically with the help of veteran clergy and laypersons who are passionately committed to your formation. Repeat!<sup>1</sup>

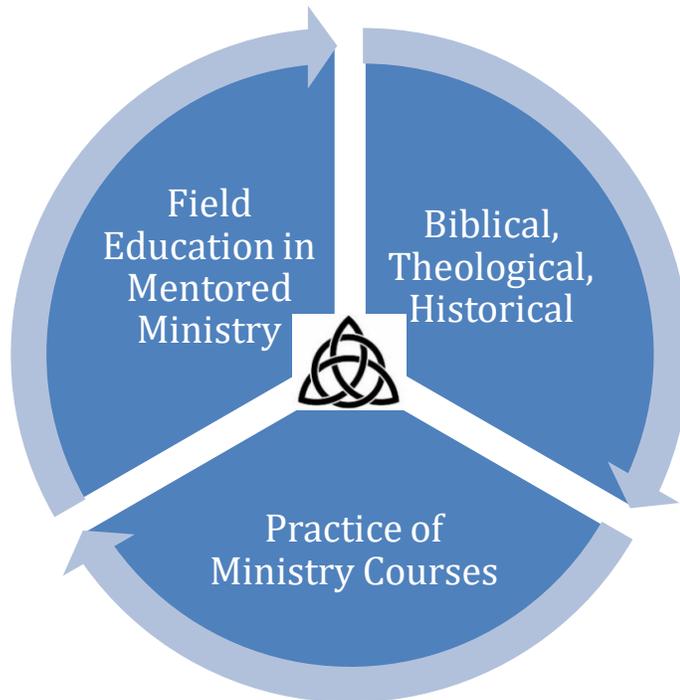
I picture this integration as a repeated process of taking lessons learned about biblical, theological, and historical foundations in dialogue with ADC courses in the practice of ministry by putting these principles into practice in a unique field education context or mentored ministry placement. Ideally, students participate in a continuous cycle of critical

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew Floding, ed., *Engage: A Theological Field Education Toolkit*. (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), 1. Floding is the Director of Ministerial Formation at Duke Divinity School.

engagement as course content intersects with ministry praxis, all as part of giving glory to our God and Father as Christ is formed in us as the fruit of the Spirit grows in us (Galatians 1:3-5, 4:19, 5:22-25). As pictured below, the questions and implications of areas of study inspire and inform other areas of study and ministry on the journey to maturity.

**Figure 1: Cycle of Engagement**



Thank you for your partnership in the Gospel ministry. As Paul writes, “being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 1:6) What a privilege to share in God’s good work, confident that God has already been working and will continue his good work within each one of us who participates in the mentoring process and in the Gospel ministry. Please read the rest of this document for an overview of our mentoring process and consult the Mentored Ministry pages on ADC’s website, with the password protected [amazinggrace] documents like this and other resources. Please contact me for any additional information.

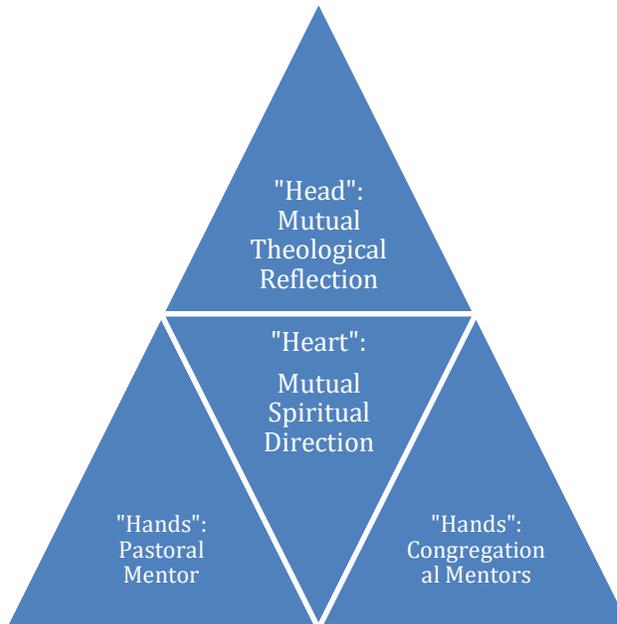
I look forward to sharing this ministry with you as part of ADC’s vision of equipping Christians to serve. I pray for the depth of insight, discernment, and fruitfulness that we need as we are more fully formed in our identity in Christ and in his ministry. I pray with Paul for all of us: “And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.” (Philippians 1:9-11)

### **1.2 Partnership in the Process of Mentoring**

There are several players on the mentored ministry team, whose roles are clarified by their function in formation. This mentoring mix invites deeper integration of the head, hands,

and heart or develops and connects beliefs, practices, and virtues.<sup>2</sup> While there may be overlap at times, I picture this mix below in light of Psalm 78. After reflection on the people's experiences with God, verse 72 describes David at his best: "And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them."

**Figure 2: Partnership in Mentoring**



**First, the Pastoral Mentor** brings extensive experience (normally at least five years of ordained experience), past training, continuing education, personality, strengths, limitations, etc., to the mentoring relationship for helping the student flourish. Paul's letters to Timothy exemplify such a relationship with the mentoring processes of fanning into flame the gifts of emerging leaders (2 Timothy 1:1-14). Floding notes the key role of the mentor as "your work with the student, doing and reflecting on ministry practice together, paves the crosswalk between classroom and the world of ministry."<sup>3</sup> For such shared action and reflection, Pastoral Mentors come alongside students on the journey to maturity in ministry. To focus action and reflection, Mentors can use the GROW and REFLECT tools: <https://acadiadiv.ca/mentored-ministry/>. **Pastoral Mentors meet with students at least two times per month for focused feedback about "hands-on" ministry.**

**Second, Congregational Mentors** are a small group of three to five committed members from the church or ministry agency (in parachurch ministries, such people are Contextual Mentors) intended to provide encouragement and support to the student and evaluation of the student's progress. Floding notes how congregational input can help form students:

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<sup>2</sup> One tool looks at ten core beliefs, practices, and virtues: Randy Frazee, *The Christian Life Profile Assessment Workbook: Developing Your Personal Plan to Think, Act, and Be Like Jesus*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, updated edition, 2015). See a Trinitarian view of head, hands, heart in Christian Schwarz, *The All By Itself Pathway: An Introduction to Natural Church Development*. (2015), 69. Christ invites integration in following him fully as "the way and the truth and the life" (John 14:6).

<sup>3</sup> Floding, *Engage*, 21.

Most field education programs will invite you to share the responsibility for mentoring your student with a lay mentoring team or committee. This affirms the people of God's active role in mentoring for ministry. Besides, laypersons have gifts and strengths to share that we don't have. This affirms Paul's use of the body metaphor.<sup>4</sup>

This "lay" mentoring team or Congregational Mentors affirm the biblical body metaphor and connect with the Baptist emphasis on the priesthood of all believers. While these groups fulfill various functions and fill out a few forms, their primary roles are encouragement and assessment that help students grow in what matters most in ministry, "so that everyone may see your progress" (1 Timothy 4:15). The focused feedback of congregational mentors about "hands-on" ministry by the student can help broaden and deepen the student's perspective on how his/her ministry is being received in the church or other context. To focus such feedback, Congregational Mentors can use the feedback forms and the GROW tool available online (<https://acadiadiv.ca/mentored-ministry/>) or by request. **To make this manageable for both students and congregational mentors, this group will meet at least four times per year, normally in late September or early October, November, February and March.** This timing fits in the rhythm of the church year and school term, but can be adapted. For example, the summer placement CM will meet from two to four times or monthly during this more intensive season of ministry.

**Third, we will strengthen mutual theological reflection through peer mentoring groups.** Floding summarizes how such reflection is crucial to any mentored ministry:

Formation in ministry has to do with developing competencies, to be sure, but it also has to do with meaning-making. Students in field education learn to minister authentically and faithfully by learning to make sense of themselves and their experiences. This work takes space and time and a community of practice that invites accountability. The practice of theological reflection, however it is done, creates the space for communal meaning-making that forms thoughtful and competent ministers who minister with integrity and faithfulness.<sup>5</sup>

Multi-faceted, intentional theological reflection cultivates both ministry competency and integrity in theology. Such reflection seeks to help students integrate insights from various areas of seminary study, so that various parts are connected as an interrelated whole in ministry.<sup>6</sup> While this happens in class discussions and course assignments at ADC, we are developing this in peer mentoring groups<sup>7</sup> as a form of mutual ministry for greater collegiality within seminary and beyond. Floding summarizes a key insight from recent research on thriving pastors with these words, "Working pastors know the richness of

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<sup>4</sup> Floding, *Engage*, 155.

<sup>5</sup> Barbara Blodgett and Matthew Floding, ed., *Brimming with God: Reflecting Theologically on Cases in Ministry*. (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2015), 1. This textbook provides "cases" for such mutual theological reflection during the first term of Mentored Ministry 1.

<sup>6</sup> Some authors in the field use other terms like ministerial reflection to convey that many areas of seminary study combine within a reflection process. Emily Click, "Ministerial Reflection," in Matthew Floding, ed., *Welcome to Theological Education!* (Herndon: Alban Institute, 2011), 31.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 37-40. In the same book, Donna Duensing describes "The Power of Reflecting with Peers," 65-74.

reflecting with a colleague or a regular peer reflection group on ministry experiences.”<sup>8</sup> We will build mutual theological reflection into the seminary experience as a way to encourage future resilience as pastoral clusters or peer cohorts<sup>9</sup> continue such practices together. Figuratively speaking, we’ll integrate the “head” with “hands-on” ministry. To focus theological reflection, we can use the REFLECT tool available online. **To make this manageable for student schedules, such peer group reflection will occur once a month.**

**Fourth, we will integrate mutual spiritual direction into field education through these same peer mentoring groups.** My involvement in the Selah<sup>10</sup> Certificate Program in Spiritual Direction has strengthened my conviction about the many benefits of some form of spiritual direction for students. Patricia Hendricks, who has worked in cultivating spiritual formation and direction among emerging leaders, comments on seminarians:

Since ministry is to be their occupation, it’s essential that they have a spiritual director or participate in group spiritual direction for their self-care and for their spiritual growth...Being in Christian ministry in any capacity is challenging and exhausting. It’s easy to lose ourselves in the lives of others and in the administrative tasks, and it’s even easier to forget our own self-care and to ignore our spiritual hunger. A spiritual companion can remind us to pay attention to our longings and to our questions. A spiritual mentor can remind us to notice God in all of the activities of life and to rely on the guidance of the Spirit. Those in seminary must be prepared for the work of ministry by being enabled to practice the art of listening to God.<sup>11</sup>

As ADC’s training includes group spiritual direction and inspires individual direction, we can strengthen self-care, spiritual growth, attentiveness to the Spirit stirring within us and around us, and deeper reliance on God’s guidance through the voice of the risen Christ and the voices of those in our families, ministries, and communities. Figuratively speaking, the “head” work of theological reflection and “hands-on” work of ministry activity integrates with the “heart”<sup>12</sup> work of spiritual formation. **To make this manageable, such mutual spiritual direction will occur once a month, guided by the SELAH tool available online.**

## **2. The Goals of Mentored Ministry**

Mentored Ministry at Acadia Divinity College is a required component of study for persons in the Master of Divinity (MDiv) or Bachelor of Theology (BTh) programs who are on track for ordination. MM is a two-year program and is normally taken in the second and third years of a three-year MDiv or BTh program or after completing 30 credit hours of study.

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<sup>8</sup> Floding, *Engage*, 36. The Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Peer Learning Project is the name of this study.

<sup>9</sup> Bob Burns, Tasha Chapman, Donald Guthrie, *Resilient Ministry: What Pastors Told Us About Surviving and Thriving*. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2013), 283-295. In my research, I found that Calvin seminary has weekly peer formation groups (See <http://www.calvinseminary.edu/academics/mentored-ministries-lp/>).

<sup>10</sup> See <http://www.leadershiptransformations.org/selah.htm> .

<sup>11</sup> Patricia Hendricks, *Hungry Souls, Holy Companions: Mentoring a New Generation of Christians*. (Harrisburg: Morehouse, 2006), 107, 109.

<sup>12</sup> Nouwen portrays spiritual formation as “the movements from the mind to the heart through prayer in its many forms that reunite us with God, each other, and our truest selves.” Henri Nouwen, *Spiritual Formation: Following the Movements of the Spirit*. (New York: HarperOne, 2010), xvi.

When students already have extensive prior ministry experiences and at least five ADC courses, an exceptional request may be made by the student to the Director of Mentored Ministry and through the Director to the Academic Dean with a clear rationale for starting MM earlier. MM provides nurturing in personal and pastoral identity formation based on the relational journey with Pastoral Mentors, Congregational Mentors, mutual mentors in peer groups, and interaction with people in the church or ministry organization.

## **2.1. Pastoral Identity and Competency**

MM is designed to facilitate the intentional shaping of personal pastoral identity and competency. This process is a dynamic, life-long activity beginning with the student's experience of ministry and the integration of that experience with theory and theology. Subsequently, ministerial identity and competency continues to develop alongside one's peers in a variety of ministry settings engaging such principles as the following:

1. Deeper Spirituality: Personal spiritual growth and discipleship results from involvement in a transforming process that reinforces the value of personal change
2. Deeper Theology: Theological astuteness is enhanced by the continuous practice of biblical and theological thinking and acting, by a process of dialogue and challenge to become practicing theologians applying their craft in acts of ministry
3. Broader Diversity: Intellectual empowerment is facilitated by exposure to multiple learning sites and ministry settings (church, hospital, prison, home, college, etc.)
4. Stronger Competency: Learning pastoral skills, abilities and attitudes is facilitated by guidance from Pastoral Mentors and Congregational or Contextual Mentors

Through such means as ministry experiences in a placement, various levels of mentoring, class equipping and assignments, etc., students will be involved in a multi-faceted ministry formation process around pastoral identity and competency. Students will develop a cumulative ministry "portfolio" to gather and present evidence of progress or readiness.

## **2.2. Qualities and Competencies for Ministry Students and Mentors**

MM is designed to facilitate the development of ministerial qualities, recognizing that competency comes from God (2 Cor. 3:5). While a leading author affirms how helpful training is in essential areas of pastoral ministry, he notes: "...it is not by self-effort or dependence on our own skills, giftings, methods, or competence that we serve the Lord. It is in dependence on the Lord, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, that we become like Jesus and do the works of Jesus in our pastoral and church ministries."<sup>13</sup> The exposure of the students to various models of ministry provides opportunity to study and adopt a ministry pattern unique to his/her particular style as they tailor core competencies to their context. Mentors will be supported and trained in facilitating this journey to maturity in ministry as they share wisdom with emerging leaders and continue their life-long learning.

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<sup>13</sup> Siang-Yang Tan, *Shepherding God's People: A Guide to Faithful and Fruitful Pastoral Ministry*. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2019), 18. In combination with internal and denominational consultations around core competencies and required and recommended resources, Mentored Ministry students will use this textbook.

### **3. Student Placement**

The primary question, which is fundamental to the success of the MM program, when making an MM placement is this: *“What is the best possible learning experience for this student?”* The dynamics in considering a suitable placement includes several factors.

**First**, the MM program attempts to broaden the student’s experience in ministry, thus opening his/her understanding of different models of ministry. Therefore, field placements are usually made in other than the home church or a ministry setting familiar to the student. For greater breadth, some students change placements in the second year.

**Second**, it is important that the student be placed in a situation in which she/he can function effectively. Although not all placements will be “comfortable” for the student, every placement should include a mutual trust and respect between the Pastoral Mentor and the student, and the Congregational Mentors and the student (see subsequent sections for further clarification of expectations). The student’s placement must provide opportunity for the fulfilment of the three primary goals of MM:

1. The integration of theology, theoretical learning, and practical experience
2. The development of pastoral skills or competency
3. The clarification of one’s ministry identity and calling.

**Third**, the placement must provide a ministry base appropriate to the needs of the student in such areas as youth, discipling, etc. Therefore, a match between the strength and focus of a specific church and the requirements of the student must be carefully considered.

If problems or tensions arise in the relationships between students and Mentors, or in the work of the student, both are required to work towards resolution. This is a shared responsibility and should be seen as an opportunity for a good experience in problem-solving. The Director of MM should be engaged and informed of the problem, and work with student and Mentors as needed. In the event of unresolved issues, the student may be re-assigned by the Director in order to complete the requirements of the course.

#### **Steps**

Placement results in a co-operative venture between the Director of MM in consultation with the student, the Mentor, and the local church (or other ministry placement). Since a good match between student and Mentor/church is so important, sufficient time is needed for the placement process. Normally, the steps above will begin during **the second term** of the student’s **first year** of theological study or after completion of 30 credit hours of courses. If students have extensive prior experience and training and have completed at least five courses (15 credit hours with ADC), then they may make a request to the Director of MM and the Academic Dean to be considered for earlier entrance into the MM courses and program. Every attempt will be made to have placements **finalized by the end of the first academic year, or equivalent**. All placements will begin on the **first weekend of classes in September of the student’s second year**. Normally, the following steps are followed:

1. The student completes an application form for placement in February of the first year of study (or after completion of 30 credit hours of study). **Please Note:** The student **must** undertake Criminal Record, Vulnerable Populations, and Child Abuse Register (this last one for placements in Nova Scotia only) checks, current as of May 1<sup>st</sup> **each year** of the program. Copies of official checks must be given to the College and to the Mentor. (The Church can either accept or turn down the student based on the results of the checks.) For adequate time of processing, this is part of step one.
2. Following the completion of the application for MM, the student and the Director of MM discuss the information in the application, the program, possible placements, and some of the student's spiritual journey and call to ministry. They will then discuss the dynamics of specific placement situations that are mutually acceptable.
3. The Director contacts the proposed Mentor to assess the availability of the placement and the support of the church or organization. Some churches and ministries require some form of formal approval about the investment of time and resources to support the mentoring process and cultivate an appropriate learning environment. Other churches and ministries see mentoring as a core part of their equipping and have had long-standing involvement with ADC in such areas. Upon agreement, the student is informed and directed to contact the Mentor directly and arrange to meet. In some situations, prior exploratory conversations may be helpful.
4. The student connects with the Pastoral Mentor to discuss the specifics of the placement. This discussion should include both the Church's expectations of the student and the student's expectations of the placement, which will be articulated in the Serving-Learning Covenant available online and through the student.
5. The Director is advised by the Pastoral Mentor and the student (normally separately) about the clarification conversation around the placement "fit."
6. Once an agreement has been made between the student and the Pastoral Mentor, and the appropriate church process is finalized, confirmation is given to the Director of the Program with an endorsed or signed copy of the Serving-Learning Covenant.

#### **4. Placement Expectations**

There are **two primary expectations** required of the student in Mentored Ministry. On one hand, there needs to be clarity around what the student expects to receive or gain from his/her involvement in MM. On the other hand, there needs to be clarity around what is expected of the student both by those in field placement and at the College. Although there is some room for negotiation on the specifics of these expectations, there are some core dynamics that shall be listed here. The specifics of these expectations will be more clearly outlined in the Serving-Learning Covenant.

For many students in the MM program, this will be their first opportunity to function in a pastoral role within the local church or a parachurch setting. There is a need for the church, Mentors, and College to be sensitive to their fears and anxieties, while at the same time recognizing that they have some expectations for this exciting part of theological training. Many of their expectations can be summed up in the next few pages.

#### **4.1. The Student's Expectations of the MM Placement**

1. The opportunity to do "hands-on" ministry and to experience a wide variety of ministry situations
2. The opportunity to experience "church/ministry" from the pastor's perspective or the opportunity to experience institutional ministry from the chaplain's perspective
3. The opportunity to test theology/theory and models of ministry as taught in the course of studies
4. The opportunity to participate in leading worship on a regular basis. The student shall preach within the worship context **at least twice per school year**, normally once before the Christmas break and once after the Christmas break
5. The opportunity to be involved in the pastoral care ministry of the church (visitation, counselling or crisis care, and other forms of pastoral connections)
6. The opportunity for times of direct interaction and feedback from a Pastoral Mentor
7. The opportunity to develop a personal pastoral identity (By pastoral identity, we mean that identity which comes from being viewed by the church as their "pastor" or "minister" and the subsequent response of the student in assuming that role and identifying with it.)
8. The opportunity for fellowship and to experience the support of the local church
9. The opportunity for personal and professional growth

#### **4.2. Expectations of Others in Program**

Certain things are expected of the student by the College for the successful completion of the MM program. There also will be expectations of the church and the Mentors, the specifics of which will be negotiated and specified in the Serving-Learning Covenant. The expectations will have some variation depending on the student's ministry goals, giftedness and experience.

Students will normally be placed in one setting for the full two years of MM and should consider the placement in this light. While the normal setting will be a church, other sites including summer placement may be used at times for required ministry experience. Students who are considering a change in placement to accept a paid staff position or for some other reason, are required to meet immediately with the Director of MM. The possible change will be kept in confidence. The Director of MM, in consultation with the faculty, reserves the right not to allow a change in placement. The final decision on any change will be the result of consultation between the student, the Director of MM, the Pastoral Mentor and, if necessary, ADC faculty.

#### **4.3. Specializations**

Within the context of the Master of Divinity program, students may specialize in these areas: 1) Pastoral Ministry, 2) Evangelism and Mission, 3) Next Generation Ministry (may

include youth ministry, campus or camping ministry focus), 4) Pastoral Care and Counselling, or 5) Leadership and Spiritual Formation. Each of these areas of specialization are included in the MM program. Regardless of the area of specialization, the student in the MM program is expected to participate in a full range of pastoral activities. In addition, opportunity will be provided within the program for the student to participate in activities specifically connected with their area of specialization. The Mentor and Director of MM will work with the student to ensure a proper balance in the development of a ministry experience for the student.

#### 4.4. Requirements in the Placement

1. Students are **actively engaged** in the ministry of the church or alternate site for **10 hours** per week for 12 weeks per term throughout the academic year (September – April). In total, this covers 120 hours per term or 240 hours per academic year. **The pastoral, congregational and mutual mentoring sessions are included in this time.**
2. Students meet with their Pastoral Mentors for a **Mentoring Session for a minimum of one-hour biweekly or every other week.** The time for these sessions should be established at the beginning of each term for a regular rhythm of meeting.
3. Students engage in all aspects of the pastoral ministry on and off site as opportunity and practice allow. Feedback forms for several areas of practice are completed and submitted according to instructions given online and to students.
4. Students submit **monthly ministry formation journal entries** to the MM Director.
5. Students submit course assignments as outlined in the course syllabus with due dates.
6. Students **must** participate fully in the weekend classes at sites designated in the syllabi.
7. Students are **entitled to one weekend off per term**, within the academic term, the specific weekend to be negotiated with the Pastoral Mentor.
8. Students shall work co-operatively with their Pastoral Mentors, Congregational Mentors, and other church leadership.
9. Students shall inform their Pastoral Mentor in advance when they are not available because of illness or other justifiable reasons.
10. Students **work within the given structures and ethos of the local church or placement setting** under the guidance of their Pastoral Mentors.
11. Students **are supportive of their Pastoral Mentors and respect their leadership.** The students must **never**, in any way, **undermine the ministry of their Pastoral Mentors or the church** where they serve.
12. Students **seek guidance from the Director of MM when they have reason to believe that a placement is not working satisfactorily.** The Director will evaluate the situation and only make a change after consultation with the Pastoral Mentor.
13. Students **fulfil all of their commitments in their placement, attend every class seminar**, and submit all assignments on time. All work components of the course must be submitted to the Director as outlined in the course syllabus.

## **5. The Church or Ministry Organization in Mentored Ministry**

### **5.1 Criteria for Church Selection or Alternate Site**

As well as specific criteria that may be sought to meet the particular needs of some students, general standards normally essential within a church placement are:

1. The presence of a Pastoral Mentor or appropriate alternate adequately suited to serve as a Pastoral Mentor in the MM program. While it is preferable that the Pastoral Mentor is present in the same setting as the student, an external Pastoral Mentor may be necessary for some students.
2. A church site which is interested in and prepared to participate in the training and development of personal pastoral identity, ministry competency and spiritual formation of Christian leadership for the church or other ministry
3. A broad basis of ministry which will allow the student to have exposure to a full range of ministry opportunities within and outside a church setting (e.g., prisons, hospitals, youth camps, mission settings, shelters, other facilities)
4. A willingness, when necessary, to provide hospitality for the student while serving within the church or other setting.

### **5.2 Expectations of the Church or Alternative Site**

The church or alternate site is expected to accept some specific responsibilities in assisting with the training of students for pastoral leadership. These generally are:

1. To provide the opportunity for participation in ministry leadership such as preaching, conducting of worship, and other pastoral ministries within and outside the context of the church.
2. Allow the student to observe, or participate in, all pastoral functions such as presentation of children and dedication of parents, believer's baptism, the Lord's Supper, weddings and funerals, pastoral care connections, community outreach, etc. **In the event that such ministry practices are not available to the student in the primary placement, arrangements should be made to provide the student with such opportunities in alternate locations.**
3. To provide opportunity for the student to observe the major administrative or organizational functions of the church at work (i.e., Deacons, Christian Education, Trustees, Finance).
4. To assist the student financially, as outlined below.
5. Where the church is a considerable distance from Acadia, assist by providing hospitality in the nature of accommodation and meals.
6. Establish a team of Congregational Mentors to help encourage, support and evaluate the student's progress (see below for further details).
7. **Financial Obligations of the Church:** Churches are expected to contribute to the support of the student who is working in the church under the Mentored

Ministry Program. **Churches are asked to make payments directly to the student**, preferably in two instalments made in September and January. It is very helpful to the students if the churches are prompt in making such payments. In addition, we recommend that the church cover the student’s travel costs. The church may choose to negotiate a per kilometre rate or pay a fixed amount as a travel subsidy for the student.

**The contribution from the church for each student in the MM Program is as follows:**

| <b>Mentored Ministry 1</b> |          | <b>Mentored Ministry 2</b> |          |
|----------------------------|----------|----------------------------|----------|
| September .....            | \$500.00 | September .....            | \$500.00 |
| January .....              | \$500.00 | January .....              | \$500.00 |

**NOTE:** *Arrangements for student employment for the months May through August, and for extended employment during the academic year beyond the parameters of the MM Program, are negotiated between the church and the student. MM plays no role in general summer employment or extended church involvement. However, special summer placements may be arranged with the Director to fulfil MM requirements.*

## **6. The Congregational or Contextual Mentors (CM)**

### **6.1 The Purpose of the Congregational or Contextual Mentors**

1. Congregational or Contextual Mentors (CM) are a small group of committed members within the church or ministry agency intended to provide encouragement and support to the student and evaluation of the student’s progress.
2. The primary purpose of the CM is to provide every student with the unique perspective of the congregation or ministry context. The breadth of perspective provided by the CM will enable the student to better see himself/herself from the perspective of the broader church or ministry body.
3. The CM team will assist the student in meeting her/his learning goals as laid down in the Serving-Learning Covenant and presented to the Team at its first meeting; the Serving-Learning Covenant will have been previously prepared by the student, Pastoral Mentor, and CM Chair.
4. The Congregational Mentors will provide frank feedback and constructive evaluation of the student to enable the student to understand how his/her ministry is perceived by the wider community.
5. The work of the team will be most effective when the members of the CM bring their own personal responses to the student rather than getting a reaction from others in the congregation (the “they say” approach allows no informative interaction between the student and the evaluator).

## **6.2 Selection of the Congregational or Contextual Mentors**

The CM should be appointed by the church or organizational leadership (not the student) by the beginning of the first Term of the MM 1, by the end of the first week of September or soon after. Summer placements adapt these timelines for their context.

The CM team should reflect the breadth of the church or organizational membership. A group of **three to five people (normally dependent upon the size of the church or organization)** may be selected to include the following interests and ministry within the church: 1) a deacon/elder, 2) a person involved in Christian Education or Discipleship Ministries, 3) a parent, 4) a senior, and 5) a youth. These are examples, but not required.

Our general practice is that the Pastoral Mentor and Congregational Mentors are requested to avoid collaboration in each other's work in order to preserve the unique perspectives of each. **The Pastoral Mentor's or the church pastor's family members are ineligible for appointment to the team.** This Team best provides the student and the College with feedback when it functions primarily in an independent role as an expression of the ministry of the church. In some cases, the Pastoral Mentor may help facilitate a meeting of Congregational Mentors, but guard against inappropriately influencing either the content or the process for sharing congregational feedback.

## **6.3 Meetings of Congregational or Contextual Mentors**

The CM meetings with the student will take place at least four times during the academic year, normally in late September or early October, November, February and March. While this timing fits in the rhythm of the church year and school term, it can be adapted by mutual agreement. For example, the summer placement CM will meet from two to four times or monthly during this more intensive season of ministry. The following may be helpful as the team considers its task:

1. At the first meeting, the student should elaborate upon her/his learning goals as stated in the Serving-Learning Covenant. It is advised that the student should put this in writing and provide each team member with a copy. The Serving-Learning Covenant is an agreement between the student, the Pastoral Mentor, the church or ministry organization, and the College.
2. The student should, at this initial meeting, share with the Team those areas in which the student specifically would like input and help to grow.
3. Subsequent meetings of the CM should reflect upon the above specific goals and other concerns as they arise within the context of the student's ministry within the church.
4. The last meeting of the Team within each term should be a sharing of the Team's evaluation of the student (as outlined in the forms to be submitted to the Director of MM). This allows opportunity for continued understanding and growth on the part of the student.
5. Every meeting should demonstrate a specific concern for the student's spiritual and ministry development and include times for both relational and prayer support for the student and the shared ministry of the church.

## **6.4 Roles of the Congregational or Contextual Mentors**

1. The first task of the CM is to build trust to facilitate a spirit of acceptance, respect and understanding which must permeate all conversations between the CM and the student.
2. The CM has an important role in helping the student clarify ideas, receive focused feedback through the MM forms, and consider growth steps through the GROW tool available online. Learning to think clearly and express oneself clearly is a growing edge for every seminarian. The CM can be an invaluable aid in showing the student how messages are being understood.
3. A pastoral leader cannot be effective unless he/she loves the people God has placed in his/her care. The CM can assist the student in learning how to give and receive appropriate expressions of love. Help the student to understand how his/her expressions of warmth and caring are being received, especially in serving people at their point of need.
4. Issues of conflict are among the most intimidating for a student. The CM can help the student to understand that conflict is a normal part of all relationships and, if approached with integrity and respect, may lead to a deeper level of ministry and community. If the members of the team have a healthy approach to conflict resolution they will contribute greatly to the future effectiveness of their student.

## **6.5 Congregational or Contextual Mentors – Responsibility for Reporting**

The Congregational or Contextual Mentors are responsible for the following reporting:

1. The CM provide the Director of MM with the feedback forms as required reports on the student's progress in preaching and worship and also on overall character attributes and competency areas during both the MM 1 Year and the MM 2 Year. **Each report must first be shared with the student.** These reports are due in mid-December and in early April.
2. The CM review the Serving-Learning Covenant to determine the extent to which the objectives have been achieved.
3. The CM identify the strengths of the student and areas where the student still needs growth as the students considers next steps and the team may make suggestions as to ways in which this growth may be achieved. The CM give time during the last meeting of the team with the student to discuss the achievements of the year.
4. If the CM team has concerns about the suitability of the student for pastoral leadership, share this concern with the Director of the Mentored Ministry program.
5. If the CM team has serious concerns about the mentoring process, contact the MM Director.

## **7. Serving-Learning Covenant**

### **Basic Terms of the Serving-Learning Covenant**

The Church and student agree to fulfil the following requirements of Mentored Ministry, except in exceptional circumstances agreed upon with the Director of the Program:

1. Establish biweekly Pastoral Mentor meetings and quarterly CM meetings
2. Fulfill 10 hours a week in pastoral ministry (both Master of Divinity and Bachelor of Theology), with this time including one hour per week in mentoring relationships as described earlier.
3. Conduct worship services (if possible, once a month)
4. Preach occasionally (at least once each semester)
5. Participate in pastoral care (pastoral care connections, counselling)
6. Attend church leadership and administrative meetings (Deacons Board, etc.)
7. Participate in pastoral ministries such as weddings, funerals, baptisms, dedications, etc.
8. Serve in the student's chosen area of specialization
9. Serve in any other ways, mutually agreed by church and student, within the time limits available.

**This Serving-Learning Covenant must be passed in to the Director of MM not later than the end of September. It is available online under the material and forms section of the main mentored ministry page: <https://acadiadiv.ca/mentored-ministry/>.**

A signed copy of the Serving-Learning Covenant must be retained by each of the following: 1) The Student, 2) The Pastoral Mentor, 3) The Chair of the Congregational Mentors, and 4) The Director of the Mentored Ministry Program.

## **8. Mentoring Responsibilities and Processes**

### **8.1. The Responsibilities of the Pastoral Mentor**

The responsibilities of the Mentor are to:

1. Be discerning enough to determine the nature of the reflection and the aspects of the reflection most relevant to a given situation
2. Provide the opportunity and setting for formational and remedial learning
3. Encourage speaking the truth in love with honest mutual reflection and caring, focused feedback
4. Agree on the primary goal whereby the PM reflects the image of the student to attain a realistic perspective of self in ministry
5. Establish a milieu of growth and learning based on trust and collaboration for the student's faithful portrayal of personhood and actions
6. Provide opportunity for the student to be involved in a diversity of ministry experiences within or outside of church
7. Engage the student in all aspects of ministry
8. Meet with the student on a biweekly basis for a period of at least one hour for direct interaction and reflection on pastoral identity and ministry maturity

9. Assist the student in the task of theological reflection on ministry
10. Provide the student with a regular assessment of his/her ministry in order that the student may respond appropriately
11. Provide reflections of the placement to the Director of MM along with any other information considered crucial to the student's ministry formation
12. Encourage the CM to finish and provide their feedback at the appropriate intervals
13. Attend initial Mentoring orientation and periodic ongoing training.

## **8.2. The Mentor-Student Relationship**

The Mentor must aim at developing a collegial, trusting relationship in working with the student, in areas such as mutual trust and confidentiality; clarification of expectations; constructive feedback in growth areas; challenging students to be and do his/her best; encouraging him/her with affirmation of accomplishments and compassion with struggles; and, modeling best practices in ministry under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. More equipping on mentoring is offered in initial orientation and ongoing training.

## **8.3. The Mentoring Session**

Establish a time and place for a biweekly meeting for genuine reflection and sharing, with at least an hour of uninterrupted conversation. Agenda items should be based on the Serving-Learning Covenant and include items or issues raised by the Mentor or student as described in the next heading. After clarifying the agenda, share in prayer.

The Mentored process should be regarded as a two-way street. Both Mentor and student should feel free to share hopes, disappointments, joys, frustrations, goals, and concerns regarding the practice of ministry. Since the personal learning experiences of the PM are very important to the student's growth, mutual transparency is encouraged.

Enjoy these sessions together. The relationship that develops between Pastoral Mentor and student may become a lasting friendship. Realize the importance of these times together for the development of future church leaders. These sessions should be mutually beneficial. Do not allow them to get pushed aside in busy schedules.

## **8.4. Topics for Mentoring Sessions**

The Pastoral Mentor and student can feel free to select any topics for discussion in Mentoring sessions according to the student's serving-learning needs and ministry goals, related to the syllabus with the list of required texts, raised by the Mentor or student, connected to the MM feedback forms or process tools, or linked to the latest version of the ministry competency list available online. For example, one conversation could cover one competency. Remember, the emphasis is on learning. Shared experiences on the part of both the Mentor and the student will enhance the learning process. Vulnerability, openness, discretion, and sensitivity are required. The use of reflection tools, recording of messages, debriefing feedback forms from others and from the student's self-reflection, and other forms of intentional interaction should be integral to the Mentoring process.

## **9. Theological Reflection in Mentoring**

Theological Reflection is the process of practically applying the foundational resources of the Christian faith (biblical studies, theology, practical theology, etc.) to the day-to-day issues of ministry. The Pastoral Mentor can help the student reflect on the period under review as a whole; on the pastoral areas being considered (preaching, worship leadership, public prayer, public reading of Scripture, teaching, connecting, etc.); on the value of the work done; on the lessons to be learned for the future; on attitudes revealed on the part of the student; on the student's joy and fulfilment in ministry; on the unfolding sense of a student's call to ministry; etc. This process can be guided by the REFLECT group theological reflection tool available on the mentoring pages: <https://acadiadiv.ca/mentored-ministry/>.

### **9.1. Pastoral Care Connections and Theological Reflection in the Mentoring Process**

Pastoral care connections allow both the student and the Pastoral Mentor to engage in meaningful theological reflection, resulting in mutual strengthening of ministry practice. Team visits or care connections provide the congregation with pastoral care and the student with a pastoral learning experience. For decades, pastoral care mostly occurred in visitation at homes, hospitals, and long-term care facilities. In recent years, pastoral care connections expanded with conversations in coffee shops, interactions outside like a walk on a trail, online communication by video-conferencing or social media, connection in a scheduled appointment at a church or neutral location, etc. It would be valuable for students and Pastoral Mentors to discuss potential strengths and weaknesses of such a variety of pastoral care ministry, including ways to cultivate caring congregations with others mobilized for such ministries. The section below provides further information on preparation, the connection, and post-connection follow-up. This section also illustrates how a particular area of ministry can be a focus for intentional, deeper development. Similar types of preparation and questions could be used for other pastoral competencies.

#### **Preparation**

The pastor-Mentor and the student should spend sufficient time before the pastoral care connection to become familiar with the circumstances that may be encountered in the interaction. Basic background about the person and the family gives context for the contact:

1. What is the purpose of the connection?
2. What goals do the pastor and/or student have?
3. What is the relationship of the family to the church?
4. What difficulties can be anticipated?
5. What issues may be raised?

#### **Connection**

In the initial connections, the pastor becomes a model for the student. The Pastoral Mentor takes the lead while the student serves primarily as an observer. The student is responsive and communicative, but for the most part watches the pastor function during the

connection. The student takes mental notes of the process, formulating questions and observations that he/she can use during the debriefing period.

### **Post-connection Reflection**

After a few pastoral care connections have been made, the Mentor chooses a caring connection in which the student takes the lead. The pastor has the dual responsibility of providing a meaningful experience for the student while also demonstrating appropriate pastoral care for the congregational members or parishioners. The student must have a measure of freedom, so that she/he can learn from both successes and failures. While the parishioner must be protected from inept or inappropriate pastoral care, the risk must be taken in order to meet the need for experience that will provide growth for the student.

If the student or parishioner is overprotected, little benefit will be gained from the experience. Skill and sensitivity on the part of the Pastoral Mentor are important through this encounter. The PM should be open to recognize his/her mistakes and the student should be sensitive to the pastor's need for support throughout the care connection. Following the pastoral care connection, time should be spent in debriefing the interaction:

1. Were the goals met?
2. What significant biblical, spiritual and theological issues were raised during this time?
3. How can the individual or family be helped in subsequent care connections?
4. Is there any immediate action that needs to be taken?

This reflective process can be a valuable learning experience for both PM and student. Students may decide to deepen their reflection by using a pastoral care situation for their second-term assignment for using the REFLECT tool to carefully consider a local "case" from their ministry context and be enriched by discussing the situation with the PM and peer mentors. Other reflective questions may include the following thoughts for discussion:

1. What were your feelings during the process? How do you feel now?
2. What key lessons about ministry and yourself did you learn from this experience?
3. How does the experience contribute to your sense of personal pastoral identity?
4. What changes would you make or different approaches would you take in the future?

## **10. Forms and Schedules**

A few feedback forms are used to help evaluate students in their Mentored Ministry placement. Designated forms are to be completed both by the Pastoral Mentor and by the Congregational Mentors, along with the student's self-reflection on the same forms, with appropriate debriefing on both levels of mentoring before the forms are submitting to the Director of Mentored Ministry. Please complete these forms with thoroughness and with integrity. They are an important part of the student's grade for the course and very valuable in assessing the student's growth in ministry. In sharing feedback with the student, you assist in that growth and readiness for future pastoral care and leadership.

### **Forms for Congregational and Pastoral Mentors & Additional Information:**

The individual Congregational Mentors and the Pastoral Mentor fill out feedback forms for Preaching and submit them separately and anonymously or they have the option to put in their name as an invitation to further conversation. Receiving a range of feedback gives the student an opportunity to reflect on various ways that different people experience or perceive their ministry activity. The Overall Feedback Form is completed by everyone on the team in a similar manner and debriefed together. Please do not feel confined by these forms. If you identify areas not covered by the forms, please comment on those areas within the additional comment sections. Be clear, honest, and frank with focused feedback. Ephesians 4:15 describes how “speaking the truth in love” helps people grow in Christ.

### **Availability of Forms and Additional Resources:**

The necessary forms will be available electronically through the ADC website or can be photocopied by students. For the latest version of the MM forms required to be submitted by everyone involved, see the materials section of mentored ministry pages on the ADC website : <https://acadiadiv.ca/mentored-ministry/> . If you cannot access this information, then contact the Director: [john.mcnally@acadiadiv.ca](mailto:john.mcnally@acadiadiv.ca) . Check the website for the latest list of recommended resources to make the most of the mentoring process and ongoing learning.

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