



Ministry
Training Institute

MTI Student Handbook

Ministry Training Institute

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Welcome Student

We are excited that you have chosen to begin the journey of ministry preparation with us. The Ministry Training Institute (MTI) is designed to serve those who sense a calling to church leadership for the Lord and his church. Our goal is simple - to see students become fully-qualified Christian leaders; equipping them in all aspects of Christian growth and development.

With this in mind, you may notice that our training approach is a little different than you may have experienced in your previous academic pursuits. You will work through college level courses, but you will also be mentored in ministry and in the development of your Christian character. Our goal is to develop the whole person and our program reflects that every step of the way. Again, we're excited you're joining us in this new endeavor and we look forward to serving you over these next three and a half years and beyond.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Alix". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev. Mike Alix, ACGC Leadership Development Director

The MTI Mission

Empowering God's Church to Fulfill God's Mission.

Empowering

The church has already been commanded, commissioned, and sent by Christ to make disciples (Matt.28:16-20) and energized by his Spirit to wrestle dark hearts free from the grip of satanic schemes and bring them into the light of his love. Therefore MTI's role is simply to remove modern roadblocks slowing down that process by implementing a leadership development program that will empower the local church and be of greatest benefit to the work of God's kingdom in and through the local church.

God's Church

The church is the body of Christ, the household of faith, the bride of Jesus, the apple of his eye, and God's plan to carry the torch of the gospel to every tribe, language, and nation. Each church planted is meant to be a flourishing edenic community seeking to regain spiritual dominion in the lost wilderness of the world. Charles Spurgeon said, "The church is the world's hope. As Christ is the hope of the church, so the church is the hope of the world." Because of this MTI does not see itself as a para-church ministry

so much as part of church ministry, based in the local church, serving the local church, and gathering resources from the local church to re-invest in the larger network of churches so that all benefit.

To Fulfill God's Mission

MTI does not believe the church has a mission, but that God's mission has a church. Theory and praxis meet when we join the Missio Dei (Mission of God) with equipping the saints to chase after God's mission of making, maturing, and multiplying discipleship communities to the ends of the earth. God uses us and invites us to join him, his work, his ambition, his dream, of a world at peace under the authority of Jesus Christ.

The MTI Vision

To equip and send out wise and theologically formed Christian leaders who serve their families, ministries and communities in obedience to the mission of God.

MTI's three-and-a-half-year, college level, Leadership in Ministry program is framed by seven core goals describing the kind of delight driven, glory to God honoring student that MTI prays the Holy Spirit will form as they struggle with all of God's grace to surrender to his will (Col. 1:29). These learning outcomes are integrated into the individual years and courses outlined in the Scope and Sequence to insure a strong connection between the micro and macro levels of the program.

MTI patterns itself after the Jerusalem Model. Jerusalem was the main hub church in the book of Acts providing training through the local church communities (Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-37) that resulted in the very first church planters going out. It is vital to note that this first wave of transforming leaders were not apostles but "laymen" who were filled with the zeal and Spirit of Jesus (Acts 8:1; 4:11:19-21). As this new church plant in the bustling city of Antioch took root, the Jerusalem church sent other leaders like Barnabas and Silas to encourage them in their faith.

Barnabas in turn found other leaders to bring into the church to strengthen it and love it (namely the apostle Paul; Acts 11:22-26) and later even more leaders flooded in from Jerusalem to provide spiritual nourishment (Acts 11:27; 13:1; 15:22; 32). Similarly, when a new gospel work began in Samaria the church of Jerusalem sent notable leaders (Peter and John) to pray, preach, teach, and encourage the saints in the work of ministry (Acts 8:14-17). Paul himself functioned as a one-man resource hub by taking Timothy, Titus, likely Luke, possibly Onesimus and others out of their own local church context, training them under his tutelage, and then placing them where they were needed most for the strengthening of the church (Ephesus, Crete, Philippi, and Ephesus respectively).

While MTI is not a perfect parallel to the Jerusalem church (it is neither apostolic, nor authoritative, nor a church), it does seek to bring the same level of nurture, care, and biblical aid to all local churches by helping them to raise up their own leaders from within and to seek out qualified leaders to train and strengthen. It does this by partnering with a local church and providing a year coordinator to oversee the program. The chosen church becomes the center of the hub, gathering, training, and sending leaders as it networks with other local churches.

The Seven Program Goals

Goal 1: An Increased Knowledge of the Holy

This goal defines all academic acumen and ministry experience gained through the breadth and depth of the MTI program as distinctively intentional and purposeful. In short, the end goal is not what you know but who you know and better still, who knows you. We hope participation results in an awareness of one's own insufficiency and dependence upon God, habitual practices of spiritual disciplines, humility expressed in rapid repentance, and a confident conviction in the Way of Christ.

Scripture: Prov. 1:7; 2:1-22; Jer. 9:23-24; Hosea 6:6; Ex. 33:18-23; John 17:3; Phil 3:7-10; Rom. 8:36; Acts 20:24; 2 Cor. 3:18.

Goal 2: Commitment to and passion for God's Mission in the World (Missio Dei)

This goal places all theology on a trajectory and defines the right and proper context of the church which is not called to pursue her own agenda but to follow hard after God so that in the end analysis it is not that the church has a mission but that the mission has a church.

Scripture: Gen. 1:28; 3:16; 18:18; 22:18; Lk. 19:10; Is. 49:6; Matt. 16:18; 24:14; 28:18-20; Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35; 6:7; 12:24; 13:47; 19:20; Rom. 10:11-15; 15:20; 2 Tim. 2:10; Rev. 7:9-10.

Goal 3: Growth in character/virtue

This goal identifies the transformative nature of discipleship rather than merely cognitive accumulation. MTI expects students to get to spiritual maturity as fast as they can and grow in maturity as long as they can. It uses the seven virtues especially as understood by St. Augustine as a representative standard for the concrete expression of character. These areas include the classical virtues, the three heavenly virtues of love, hope, faith, and the four cardinal virtues of wisdom, temperance, courage, and justice. It is our prayer MTI graduates show progress in all pastoral and community character evaluations, demonstrate deep reflection and self-analysis in all personal character assessments, and are able to evaluate character flaws and weaknesses in order to prayerfully mitigate against them in their lives.

Scripture: Prov. 11:3; 17:3; Rom 5:3-4; 2 Pet. 1:5-8; Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 1:9-12; 1 Tim. 3:14-15; Titus 2:7-8.

Goal 4: A wise steward-leader of all God's resources

C. S. Lewis began his A Preface to Paradise Lost with the words: "The first qualification for judging any piece of workmanship from a corkscrew to a cathedral is to know what it is—what it was intended to be and do and how it is meant to be used." Ministry is challenging and leaders must know what they have not what they wish they had in order to get the job done. They must be solution oriented people in order to face and overcome the challenges that will come their way. MTI graduates will be able to identify tangible resources (e.g. finances, skills, talents) and intangible resources (experiences, personality, motivations) both personally and corporately in order to design an effective ministry

model around them. With wisdom from the Holy Spirit, they will also be capable of identifying leadership and ministry deficiencies and actively seek counsel to address them.

Scripture: Prov 22:29; Matthew 25:14–30; Lk. 16:9-10; Rom. 12:3-8; Eph. 2:10; 1 Cor. 12:4-31; James 1:17; 1 Peter 4:10-11.

Goal 5: Develop a holistic biblical worldview that receives, reflects, and responds to the world around it with discernment

In a fast paced, sometimes volatile world with intense demands, MTI seeks to create students who slow down to reflect, contemplate, and offer a reasoned response to their environment. More than that, the true cultivation of a biblical worldview is more than what we think but also includes how we think as well. In other words, the means as well as the ends matter. Students will be able to identify and defend the specifics of the theological content that makes up a biblical worldview. They will be able to work with others to evaluate themselves and the ministries they serve using the ortho-triad to determine where their ministries are in and out of balance. MTI graduates will be able to communicate one's belief and convictions clearly in speech and writing.

Scripture: Prov. 15:28; 16:32; 17:27; 18:17; Jn. 7:24; Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:29; Col. 4:5-6; 2 Tim. 2:25; 1 Pet. 3:15-16; Jam 1:19

Goal 6: Master Core Content

This goal relates to the standard of academic attentiveness maintained throughout the MTI program for all course work, seminars, and independent research in the track emphasis. As part of this goal, students will create a three year indexed Ministry

MTI STUDENT HANDBOOK 2024: GOALS

Resource Binder (MRB) that exemplifies the six facets of understanding for each year. They will also be expected to verbally defend the quality and articulation of the work contained within the MRB. MTI graduates will be able to teach portions of the MRB material to others.

Scripture: Prov. 18:15; Ezra 7:10; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Col. 3:17; 1 Cor. 10:31.

Goal 7: A love for lifelong learning of the Word of God

By the end of the MTI program a graduate may be competent to lead but that does not mean their journey has come to an end. Graduates must continue to be tested and approved by their church plying their trade in the trenches of ministry for many years in the Lord's school of discipleship. Along with implementing healthy habits of continued education, we also hope MTI graduates will be willing to return to MTI, upon invitation, to participate in, host and even facilitate seminars and courses.

Scripture: Prov. 15:14; Ps. 119:89-176; Col. 1:9-11; 2 Pet. 1:5-8.

Program History

This training program was birthed through the vision of denominational leadership and emerged from ACGC's Strategic Plan. The need for more capable and called leaders that can take the baton and lead our churches into the future is the driving force behind this effort to identify and cultivate emerging pastors, church planters, missionaries and chaplains to benefit the local church in partnership with our regions, conferences and educational institutions.

Doctrinal Statement

We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God.

2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21

We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19

We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in his virgin birth, in his sinless life, in his miracles, in his vicarious and atoning death through his shed blood, in his bodily resurrection, in his ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in his personal return in power and glory.

Philippians 2:6-11; 1 Peter 3:18; Romans 5:9; Matthew 26:64

We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful people, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.

Titus 3:4-7

We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.

John 14:15-18; John 16:13; John 16:7-11

MTI STUDENT HANDBOOK 2024: DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.

1 Corinthians 15:10-23; John 5:28-29

We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:22-23; Acts 2:41-47

Accreditation & Commendation

MTI does not currently hold accreditation status and therefore is not recognized by either the United States Department of Education or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. ACGC and MTI are working toward developing relationships and partnerships with institutions of higher learning. The goal in these relationships and partnerships is to help facilitate the continued growth of MTI Students. MTI is commended by the Advent Christian General Conference and is a recommended program of study for ministry preparation in the Advent Christian church. Individuals pursuing the Leadership in Ministry Certificate will be recommended to Advent Christian conferences for ministry credentials required to serve in local Advent Christian churches.

Program Administration

MTI is a distance learning, cohort based theological training program. Traditional colleges and seminaries have required that students move away from home to obtain their education. MTI prepares students for ministry while keeping them in their local church. Courses range from eight to 12 weeks, which include coursework on our online learning platform, regular Zoom meetings and bi-annual training sessions called seminars.

Rev. Michael Alix is the Director of Leadership Development for the Advent Christian General Conference of America headquartered in Charlotte, NC. Mike oversees MTI as well as other leadership recruitment and development within the Advent Christian denomination. He served as pastor in central Maine for 13 years and has held varying positions within Advent Christian ministries. He holds a B.S. in Youth Ministry from Nyack College and an M.Div. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

Rev. Jesse Stevens is the first year coordinator. He is responsible for first year success and coordinating between first year students and their facilitators while providing student mentorship. Jesse has over two decades of ministry experience along with an M.Div. from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Rev. Matt Rice is the second year coordinator. He is responsible for second year success and coordinating between second year students and their facilitators while providing student mentorship. Matt has spent most of his life serving the church. He has held positions as associate pastor, interim pastor, worship leader, youth leader and is now a senior pastor in Charlotte, NC. He's achieved Masters degrees at Clark University and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

Rev. Dr. Erik Reynolds is the third year coordinator. He is responsible for third year success and coordinating between students and facilitators while providing student mentorship. He is a United States military veteran and has served as a pastor, interim pastor and as a teacher for Berkshire Institute for Christian Studies. He's holds a B.A. from Liberty University, M.T.S from Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary and a D.Min from Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary.

In the first year students will take courses including: Missio Dei, The Story of God's People, and Scripture: Authority and Canon. In the second year students will take courses including: Biblical Theology, Systematic Theology and The Theology of the Gospel of John. In the third year students move from their cohort to individual tracts. While taking ministry courses third year students will also take courses that relate to their specific chosen tract: pastoral ministry, missions or church planting.

Grades & Transfer Credits

Character development and competency for ministry is at the core of the MTI program. It is also the goal of MTI to maintain the highest academic standards in a wide range of areas. MTI uses traditional transcripts along with a Ministry Portfolio to provide a more detailed and accurate description of competencies.

Transfer Credit

Transfer of Ministry Training Institute credits into other academic institutions and recognition of the MTI Certificate for admission into advanced programs of other institutions is always at the discretion of the other institution. MTI may develop agreements with various academic institutions (Bible colleges, seminaries, etc.) regarding the acceptance of its transfer credit and for admission to advanced degree programs. Transfer of credit from other institutions will be assessed at the discretion of MTI administration. Credits will be assessed upon the student's provision of appropriate transcripts and course work samples. It should be understood, however, that because of the unique approach of MTI, the student may still need to complete the associated mentored ministry requirements for each course to receive full credit.

Program Graduation

Certificates of completion will be conferred when earned.

Commencement ceremonies will be held at each MTI Student's local church in consultation with the student, local church, year coordinator and director of leadership development. Tuition and fees must be paid in full in order to graduate.

The MTI program is closely linked to the credentialing process for ministry in the Advent Christian church. However, completion of this program does not automatically ensure licensure and/or ordination. For those who take the first two years of MTI, they will be given an "MTI endorsement."

Financial Information

Tuition

MTI is intentionally a low-cost alternative to traditional Bible college and seminary tuition. The three-and-a-half-year Leadership in Ministry + track cost is \$4,200 for all courses, symposiums, seminars, apprenticeships, and ministry resource binders in total. The three-year Leadership in Ministry track cost is \$3,600 for all courses, symposiums, seminars, apprenticeships, and ministry resource binders in total. The two-year Ministry Endorsement track cost is \$2,400 for all courses, symposiums, seminars, apprenticeships, and ministry resource binders in total. Additional fees above and beyond this cost are for related books and materials.

Materials

The cost of related books and materials for courses is borne by the student. These costs are based on the reading requirements of each course and are in addition to the monthly tuition costs.

Payment Schedule

Tuition is paid on a yearly or monthly basis, based on the balance

after the initial deposit. Tuition may be paid in full with a 5% discount provided for those who choose this option. Tuition is due by the 30th of each month. No more than one month's payment may be carried over to the next month without affecting the student's continuation in the program.

Financial Agreement

Upon admission, students will be expected to fill out and sign a financial agreement and submit first payment before their first class begins. The financial agreement will be given with the enrollment checklist.

Financial Aid

MTI's low tuition is made possible by partnership with the Advent Christian General Conference and local churches. In addition, MTI does not maintain a campus, facilities, or other related infrastructure, keeping expenses very low. Scholarship assistance may be secured through local churches, church networks and ministry organizations that want to invest in students.

Courses & Competencies

Mentoring and Action Plan

As part of participating in this program with a mentor, students will enter into a Mentoring Agreement and Action Plan (MAAP). This is a written agreement between a mentor and the student as a way of outlining intentional time together. This document is used to help establish expectations, focus, and structure of the learning experience. A MAAP is clear and brief. It contains a short statement on the goals of the student, outlines learning objectives, and breaks down tasks to achieve those objectives. This document is used by the mentor and the student for evaluating progress, giving feedback, and topics of conversation during mentorship sessions. It is a way of providing accountability for the student, mentor, and MTI faculty. A MAAP is a “living document” that changes with the agreement of all parties involved.

Library

MTI provides students access to the Digital Theological Library. Each student will be assigned an access code and instructions from their year coordinator. In addition, MTI also encourages use of the following online resources for its students.

Logos Bible Software

Basic version - Free

<https://www.logos.com/free-edition>

Tyndale Seminary's Reading Room

Accordance Bible Software (for Mac users):

<https://www.accordancebible.com>

For Old Testament Study

<https://reading-rooms.tyndale.ca/old-testament/>

For New Testament study

<https://reading-rooms.tyndale.ca/new-testament/>

Ministry Training Institute Library Page

<https://mti.libguides.com/Library>

Scope & Sequence

YEAR 1: BIBLE & HISTORY

36 Academic Weeks

Scripture, Authority, & Canon (3 cr.)

Missio Dei (3 cr.)

Story of God's People (3 cr.)

Independent Study (2 cr.)

YEAR 2: THEOLOGY

36 Academic Weeks

Biblical Theology (3 cr.)

Systematic Theology (3 cr.)

Theology of John's Gospel (3 cr.)

Independent Study (2 cr.)

YEAR 3: MINISTRY

36 Academic Weeks

Biblical Interpretation (2 cr.)

Ethics, Faith & Culture (2 cr.)

Apologetics & Evangelism (2 cr.)

Ministry Elective I (2 cr.)

Independent Study (2 cr.)

Ongoing Apprenticeship (6 cr.)*

**Includes mentored ministry, character development, course guidance (6 cr. per year)*

YEAR 3.5: MINISTRY FOCUS

Pastoral/Church Planting/Missions

18 Academic Weeks

Ministry Elective II (2 cr.)

Ministry Elective III (2 cr.)

Ministry Resource Binder (3 cr.)

ELECTIVES (Partial Listing)

Cross-Cultural Ministry

Leadership & Administration

Homiletics

Biblical Worldview

Worship in the Church

Practical Shepherding

Student Mentorship

Ministry Apprenticeship

The apprenticeship is an opportunity to serve the local church for at least 150 hours a year in various ministries and under the leadership, direction, and authority of an appointed mentor and local church leadership team. It is desired that all students be commended to MTI with a letter of affirmation by their church's leadership, stating the students quality of character, level of fitness for ministry, and goals/aspirations/outcomes they hope to see. MTI will work with the pastors/elders/board in the local church to perform regular character and competency evaluations during this time. Students will write reflection papers on their apprenticeship each year, detailing their duties, challenges, and thoughts. This aspect helps to provide training in ministry not simply preparation for ministry, keeping the student on the ground, in the trenches, learning by doing, instead of in an academic situation where they are far away from real-life, "in the trenches" experience.

Student Assessments

Character Formation

Character is the moral foundation of who we are in the image of God (we recognize right from wrong, good from evil only in relation to who God is and the Law he has given) and the continued moral formation of who we ought to be in Christ Jesus (we grow in spiritual maturity). Character is both the beginning requirement of all Christian leadership training (e.g. Acts 6:1-6; 16:1-2; 1 Tim. 3:1-13 also Ex. 18:21-22) and something that needs continued development (Eph. 4:11-16). But how is character formed? It is our contention that character is formed by traveling on the road to virtue. Our final destination as Christians is to behold the virtuous Son of God in all his glory at the resurrection of the dead (1 Jn. 3:2; 2 Cor. 3:18) and thus character is what we build each day as we press along the virtuous path in the interim (2 Pet. 1:3-11). While many models for character formation may be used, we believe St. Augustine's analysis of the four cardinal virtues and three heavenly virtues ranks supreme among them as a guide. There are dozens upon dozens of character traits that are naturally developed in the pursuit of his explication of the classic seven virtues (wisdom, courage, temperance, justice, faith, hope, love). Every course, seminar, and the overall apprenticeship take

this into account through personal reflection and evaluations of spiritual growth in these areas in order to prayerfully and powerfully bring about spiritual maturity.

Ministry Competency

Competency is a developed sufficiency to meet the demands of a particular task, job, or career. Competency is developed over time, through practice, and always with dependency on the Lord (e.g. Rom. 12:2, 6-8; Col. 1:29). A competent preacher for example, is not someone who is necessarily popular but one who rightly divides the Word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15). A competent leader is not determined by position, rank, or expertise, but whether they have influence and wisdom such that people follow them. MTI's emphasis on competency for ministry means that papers and projects are not simply turned back to the student with a poor grade and everyone moves on, but that they are turned back as insufficient with advice on how to improve. Only when competencies are completed at a satisfactory level can students graduate from the three-year program. Each year the competencies increase in difficulty keeping step with the students expected learning outcomes. Those seeking to transfer credits from another institution into the program may submit a transcript for review, however, in those cases, students will be evaluated in regard to their competency in those course.

Ministry Credentials

During the program opportunity will be provided and students encouraged to pursue credentials for ministry within the Advent

Christian church (or their particular denomination or network of churches). Participation in the MTI program does not constitute an automatic award of ministry credentials.

Writing Requirements

Each student must use Turabian/Chicago Manual of Style (8th Edition/15th Edition) for all papers and writing assignments. An introduction to writing course will be used at the start of each cohort and all students will be required to participate. This course will focus on the essentials of an essay (thesis, topic, signposts, body, conclusion, argumentation, resources, logic, etc.), some grammar and punctuation rules (and common mistakes), and some formatting according to Chicago Turabian citations. This course concludes with a simple quiz student to take once they've familiarize themselves with the content.

Student Policy

Intellectual Property

Intellectual property rights are the rights given to persons over the creations of their minds. MTI retains the rights related to the creation of its programs, courses, and supporting resources. Students retain the rights for the unique work that they produce during their tenure at MTI.

Complaints

If students have good reason to believe that MTI is not providing what was promised or was reasonably expected with regard to curricular issues, assessment issues, financial issues, or administrative issues, they may file a complaint by communicating directly with MTI's leadership by letter, email, or phone. Official responses to complaints will be provided promptly once it is certain that all relevant parties have been able to respond to the complaints (up to a maximum of 30 days). Unresolved complaints may be taken to the appropriate agencies.

Student Privacy

Under the provisions of a federal law known as the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), students are

afforded certain rights pertaining to higher education records and personally-identifiable information on file with the institution. It is the policy of MTI to treat all student information, both personal and academic, as strictly confidential. Student information will only be released after appropriate written permission has been obtained. Including information on a student's application form is recognized as authorization to share academic information with the MTI leadership for the purpose of mentoring.

Academic Freedom

MTI embraces the following statement of academic freedom, adapted from the 1940 Statement by the American Association of University Professors. Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of the individual teacher, the student, or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition. Academic freedom is essential to these purposes and applies to teaching, research, and learning.

Student Identity

The application for admission requires students to establish their identities by means of government-issued identification. This identification will be tied to a student ID number which a student will need to reference when contacting the MTI office. Similarly, this student ID will be tied to a username and password assigned to the student for the Moodle platform in order to verify student identity when submitting work for assessment.

Controlled Substance

MTI prohibits unlawful possession, use, or distribution of controlled substances by students on property owned, leased, or used by MTI. Violation of this policy may result in dismissal from the MTI program.

Sexual Harassment

MTI is committed to providing a safe environment for its students and employees, free from harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment. MTI will operate a zero tolerance policy for any form of sexual harassment, treat all incidents seriously and promptly investigate all allegations of sexual harassment. Any person found to have sexually harassed another will face disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the program or dismissal from employment. All complaints of sexual harassment will be taken seriously and treated with respect and in confidence. No one will be victimized for making such a complaint.

Publicity

Students are our best form of advertisement. MTI requests that students grant permission to take and use photographs and video of students for promotional purposes. A consent form must be completed and signed granting MTI such permission.