MINISTRY INTERNSHIP

TRAIN TO LEAD IN MINISTRY

RIVERLAKES COMMUNITY CHURCH

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FOR LYDIA, MY WIFE

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OVERVIEW

PART I

AS EACH HAS RECEIVED A GIFT, USE IT TO SERVE ONE ANOTHER, AS GOOD STEWARDS OF GOD'S VARIED GRACE

1 PETER 4:10

WHAT IS A MINISTRY INTERNSHIP?

Who does ministry?

The answer in Scripture comes from Paul:

> **EPHESIANS 4:11-12**
>
> **11** And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, **12** to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ...

Who has the responsibility to do the work of ministry? *All saints*. It is the responsibility of the evangelists, shepherds, and teachers to *equip* the saints to do ministry.[1]

It is this responsibility that has led us to create a Ministry Internship program, whereby we might *call* gifted young men and women, train them to be *competent* in the area of leadership where God has called them, and *commission* them to go and do effective ministry. That all sounds neat and alliterative, but it may not be a helpful description of the most important question: *What is* a Ministry Internship?

In short, a Ministry Internship is a **year-long cohort-based training program made up of young adult men and women who exhibit desire, capacity, and are qualified for leadership in ministry.** Let's talk more about that.

[1] Older Bible translations like the KJV place a comma after "equip the saints," creating three distinct tasks for the leaders listed in verse 11. Modern translations, however, continue the phrase: "to equip the saints *for the work of ministry...*" (ESV, NRSV, LSB, compare NIV, BSB, CSB, etc.). It was with the Reformation that we recovered the idea of the *priesthood of all believers* and the responsibility for all saints (all believers) to do ministry wherever God has placed them--whether in vocational ministry or bagging groceries, all saints are called to do ministry.

WHY A MINISTRY INTERNSHIP?

Saints (pronounced: “all KRIS-chuhns”) in the Body of Christ will do the majority of ministry where they are: **work and home**. Parents will raise their children in the Lord and all who work will do their labor unto the Lord, representing God wherever His people are. As we live, work, and play, “we are the aroma of Christ” (2 Corinthians 2:15) to a world that is dying. This is, at its core, our ministry to a world that is dying.

However, there are some who are able to give more of their time to the service of the saints in the local church. Some do this as a paid vocation (pastors) while others do this as laypeople (volunteer leadership).

Are you a young adult working part- or full-time while also serving in the local church? Are you thinking about a future in vocational ministry? This Ministry Internship is designed for you. *We want to train you to use God’s gifts in all your areas of ministry*. The saints of God have many needs, and, if solely the paid staff members of a local church were to attempt to meet them all, they would fall woefully short. So, while we preach the Word, we equip saints to do ministry.

The Ministry Internship program is an organized effort to equip a few so that they can equip many.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

This program is formed around three stages:

1. **Calling**
2. **Competency**
3. **Commission**

CALLING

The first of these steps, calling, is simple to explain: We, as shepherds of the church, select young men and women who are *qualified*, who have the *capacity* to take on a year-long commitment, and who have the *desire* to lead in ministry. This will be explained more later.

COMPETENCY

This is the biggest part of the Ministry Internship, and we divide it into four categories:

1. Study	*Becoming a Biblical Leader* from XL Ministries
2. Mentorship	Meeting monthly with a Ministry Mentor
3. Fellowship	Twice-monthly Cohort Fellowship gatherings
4. Practice	Practicing responsibility where you are gifted

The content that Ministry Interns study in *Becoming a Biblical Leader* will be discussed during monthly meetings with their Ministry Mentors, Cohort Fellowship, and put into practice in their regular ministry volunteering area.

COMMISSION

The final step of the Ministry Internship is to commission Interns to service and/or further training. Some Ministry Interns will go onto regular leadership in their areas, some to part-time or full-time work as ministry assistants, directors, or ministry leaders, and still some young men will be called into vocational ministry and pursue the **Pastoral Residency** program. *The next sections will explore each of these steps in depth.*

CALLING

PART II

FOR AN OVERSEER, AS GOD'S STEWARD, MUST BE ABOVE REPROACH.

TITUS 1:7A

QUALIFICATIONS, CAPACITY, DESIRE

All of the saints of God are called to ministry, but only some should become teachers. James speaks to this:

> **JAMES 3:1**
>
> Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.

The first step to calling is to examine a potential intern's qualifications.

SPIRITUAL & CHARACTER QUALIFICATIONS

- Not be a new convert (1 Timothy 3:6)
- Meet character qualifications for eldership as described in Scripture (Titus 1; 1 Timothy 3)
- Agree with RCC doctrinal beliefs (https://www.riverlakeschurch.org/beliefs)
- Have a consistent source of accountability and personal discipleship
- Not have consistent patterns of sin

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- Been an attendee/member of RiverLakes Community Church for at least 6 months
- Have demonstrated leadership ability that has been affirmed by a church leader
- If seeking training in teaching, demonstrated teaching ability affirmed by a church leader
- Competency in written communication skills (Microsoft Word/Google Docs or similar)
- Demonstrated ability and desire to relate to age group of desired ministry area (young adults, youth, children, etc.)

In addition to qualifications, we consider capacity.

Continued on next page.

CAPACITY

Do you have the *capacity* to take on a Ministry Internship?

This internship is not easy, but it is designed to be completed even by someone with a family and working a full-time job. You can expect to commit to:

- At least two mentor meetings per month
- At least two 2-hour cohort meetings per month
- 3-4 hours per week for study and writing in *Becoming a Biblical Leader*
- 3-4 hours per week for assigned Scripture reading

Becoming a Biblical Leader contains 10 chapters, each with three sections. You can expect to work through them in the following semester-based calendar

- August: Chapter 1
- September: Chapter 2
- October: Chapter 3
- November: Chapter 4
- December: *Break Month*
- January: Chapter 5
- February: Chapter 6
- March: Chapter 7
- April: *Break Month*
- May: Chapter 8
- June: Chapter 9
- July: Chapter 10

Break months will give you time to breathe in the busyness of the holiday season.

Take some time, as you consider a Ministry Internship, to consider this very important question: can you handle the workload? Can you commit to the time required? Can you commit to regularly scheduled cohort meetings? Can you commit to regular mentor meetings?

In addition to capacity, we consider desire.

Continued on next page.

In a homily (sermon) on 1 John 4:4-12, Augustine (354-430 A.D.), Augustine gave a short precept:

> Love, and do what you will... [2]

Many have paraphrased Augustine's writing to the following, slightly more famous rendition:

> **Love God and do whatever you please.**

In considering your desire, you should ask a few simple questions:

1. Am I currently growing in Christlikeness and in my love for God?
2. What area of ministry do I feel that the Lord is calling me to minister in?
3. Is this something that I truly want to do?

You will always have choices before you. You must decide, at times, between two very good options. Do you pursue a Ministry Internship, or do you work another part-time job to prepare for marriage? Should you pursue a Ministry Internship, or should you go away on a year-long international mission? Should you pursue a Ministry Internship, or should you go away to college/seminary?

We cannot make that decision for you, but we trust that God has put faithful men and/or women in your life to give you guidance and wisdom in life. Here's your first assignment as a potential Ministry Intern:

GO TALK TO A MENTOR AND ASK THEM FOR WISDOM

(And if your mentor is the person who is asking you to take on a Ministry Internship, ask them to try to give unbiased advice)

The next section, "Competency," dives into what the expectations and responsibilities are for this program.

[2] Augustine, *Homilies on the First Epistle of John*, on 1 John 4:4-12; online at https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/170207.htm

COMPETENCY

PART III

DO YOUR BEST TO PRESENT YOURSELF TO GOD AS ONE APPROVED, A WORKER WHO HAS NO NEED TO BE ASHAMED, RIGHTLY HANDLING THE WORD OF TRUTH.

2 TIMOTHY 2:15

STUDY: "BECOMING A BIBLICAL LEADER"

Why is it important to read God's Word? Well, God's Word has a *lot* to say about that. The longest psalm in the book of Psalms is about how awesome God's Word is. The *first* psalm defines what gives a righteous man life:

PSALM 1:2

1 Blessed is the man
who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
2 but his delight is in the law of the LORD,
and on his law he meditates day and night.

That's why the Ministry Internship has a lot of reading. The book *Becoming a Biblical Leader* will take interns through three sections each month, each with their own reading, writing, and discussion assignments:

- "Understanding Biblical Church Leadership"
- "Deepening Knowledge for Biblical Church Leadership"
- "Cultivating Character for Biblical Church Leadership"

But, honestly, the book itself will do a better job of explaining this than I could. Go check it out.

https://www.xlministries.org/pdfenglish

BECOMING A BIBLICAL LEADER

MENTORSHIP MEETINGS

Each month you will meet with an assigned Ministry Mentor. Your mentor will be someone who actively serves in the ministry area in which you are particularly interested--worship, teaching, youth, children's, outreach, missions, etc. You will meet with them *at least* once each month to discuss questions from *Becoming a Biblical Leader* and generally to glean wisdom from them as regards your journey with Christ.

Paul said,

1 CORINTHIANS 11:1

Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

Ministry Mentor will be just one of many men or women that you look to for guidance and wisdom as you pursue Christlikeness in both your personal sanctification and your journey to excellence in biblical leadership.

In addition to your monthly mentorship meetings, you will meet at least twice monthly with a cohort of other Ministry Interns.

COHORT FELLOWSHIP

You are not alone in going through a Ministry Internship! There are other young men and women just like you asking the same questions, struggling with the same problems, facing the same frustrations, and *busy* just like you. You are not alone, and you are not meant to walk through your journey to Christlikeness alone.

That's why, at least two times each month, you will meet with a cohort of other Ministry Interns for fellowship, theological discussion, sharing about your various ministry activities, and doing life together. These meetings will be on a day and at a time that your Cohort Leader works out with you and the cohort, and will probably last at least two hours.

BUILDING YOUR LIBRARY: LOGOS

When I first walked through Bible college, my homiletics (preaching) professor challenged us to do something that I loved: He challenged us to create some sort of organizational system for storing data, documents, and other helpful things.

Now, I recognize that not everybody has the same desire to collect knowledge and organize it that I do. However, I recognize that, with the wealth of content that you will be learning, collecting, writing, and receiving, it would be *very wise* for you to have a way to store that information. We want this Ministry Internship to be only the beginning of your ministry, and we want to start you out on a good footing.

That's why we provide every Ministry Intern with a Logos Bible software library license. Logos accounts are free, but content, libraries, and subscriptions cost money. What we will provide you with will give you a good starting point from which you can build your personal theology and ministry library. There are three ways you can do this using Logos:

1. ***Purchasing your own books and/or libraries***: You are obviously free to use your own Logos account as you see fit. After we provide you with a license, you will be able to do with your account as you see fit. It will be yours forever.

2. ***Uploading books using the Personal Books feature*:** You can upload your own digital books, articles, or even your own papers for use in Logos (must be in .docx format).

3. ***Bi-Monthly free books from logos.com:*** Free stuff!

In addition to providing you with a Logos library, you will be trained on how to use Logos. XL Ministries has a series of excellent videos explaining workspace customization, resources, study methods, and using the mobile app. Check it all out at the links below!

xlministries.org/logos app.logos.com

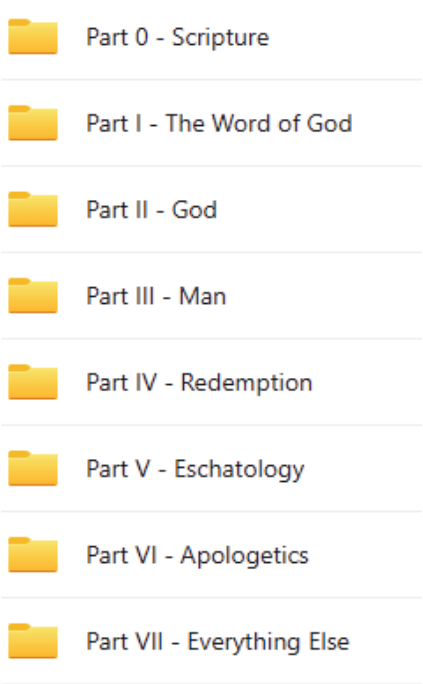
OTHER MINISTRY RESOURCES

As you go through this program, you will also accumulate plenty of other resources that you won't want to store using Logos. These will include RiverLakes Church documents, small group curricula, physical books.

You will also *create* a great deal of your own content and resource. These may include sermons and Bible lessons, theology notes, and sermon notes.

Finally, you will also, as you are walking through this program, have a lot of *ideas*.

This is why we recommend that you create a system of storing your digital resources. Assuming that you have a computer (you could even technically do this on your cell phone), you should begin by organizing what you have. As you build your library, you will have to spend time organizing and restructuring your storage. However, a little effort in this regard will go a *long* way. As an example, here is my (Zach Whitmore's) personal storage structure:



I really enjoy Systematic Theology, so I structure the bulk of my notes that way (Parts I-V). However, after working in that structure for a while, I realized that I needed a place to store my notes on each book of the Bible (Part 0--I know, it's not a Roman numeral, and it bothers me too). I also saw a need to store my apologetics notes somewhere (Part VI). And I put everything else--you guessed it--in Part VII.

You may not like the way that I have organized my theology notes and documents. *Awesome*! You may not want to be as structured, or you may want to be more detailed. We will spend time during the internship helping you organize your resources. Do it your way, and **steward the resources God gives you well.**

COMMISSION

PART IV

I CHARGE YOU IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD AND OF CHRIST JESUS, WHO IS TO JUDGE THE LIVING AND THE DEAD, AND BY HIS APPEARING AND HIS KINGDOM: PREACH THE WORD...

2 TIMOTHY 4:1-2A

EVALUATION PROCESS

As this document earlier described, throughout the year you will be meeting with a Ministry Mentor and with your Cohort of fellow Ministry Interns. This will all be managed by your Cohort Leader.

Throughout this process, you will undergo various *evaluations*. There are three types of evaluations:

1. Self-Evaluations
2. Mentor Evaluations
3. Commissioning

The first of these, the Self-Evaluations, will be done quarterly--once at the beginning of your internship, once in November, once in March, and a final time in July. While you will submit these to your Cohort Leader and Ministry Mentor, these will service primarily to help you think about where you are (the stone-cold reality), where you want to be (your vision for yourself), and the gap between those two places.

The second type, the Mentor Evaluations, will also be done quarterly, though only three of them will be completed (November, March, and July). These will be provided to you and your Cohort Leader for discussion, and will give you some outside constructive feedback on how you are progressing.

The third type, the cohort Commissioning, will happen one time at the end of each Ministry Internship (at the end of July or in early August). At these meetings, each Ministry Intern and their loved ones (family, close friends, children, mentors etc.) will be invited to a whole-group gathering to celebrate the ministry year. It is at this Commissioning that we will *commission* Ministry Interns to their next step in ministry, whatever that may be.

COMMISSIONING

How does the Ministry Internship end?

It ends with a party *and* with a clear next step in mind for each intern.

Throughout the evaluation process, Ministry Interns will be asked what Jesus is leading them to do *after* their internship. Are they being called into vocational ministry? Are they being called to work hard and volunteer in their ministry area? Are they being called to step into greater ministry leadership in some way? At Commissioning, we will celebrate the path the Lord is leading them on, pray for the Lord's guidance and protection, and *commission* them through prayer to what the Lord has called them to do.

And we will celebrate! Making it through this program is a feat unto itself. After having completed a Ministry Internship, interns will have:

- Studied every single book of the Bible, memorizing each book's theme and key ideas
- Read every single book of the Bible
- Studied Systematic Theology extensively and become equipped to answer key theological questions relating to bibliology, theology proper, Christology, pneumatology ecclesiology, hamartiology, soteriology, and eschatology (and they'll know what all of those words mean!)
- Developed habits of spiritual disciplines in Bible reading, fellowship, evangelism, prayer, Bible study, service, memorization, and meditation.
- And more!

This is something to celebrate, and celebrate we will, as we commission our Ministry Interns into further ministry service.

If all that we have described so far sounds like something you want to pursue, then take a look at the Appendix. Fill out an application and set up an interview.

APPENDIX

FORMS & COVENANTS

MINISTRY INTERNSHIP APPLICATION

To make everybody's life easier, we have an online application form. Find it by scanning the QR code or going to the link below.

MINISTRY INTERNSHIP APPLICATION

https://forms.fellowshipone.com/?formId=102cc9d7-8217-4a8a-8269-2d36000f4c1d

SPIRITUAL GIFTS SURVEY

Part of the Ministry Internship will include discussion on and exploration of your spiritual gifts. The application also includes questions about your spiritual gifts. At RiverLakes Church, we use the Church Growth Spiritual Gifts Survey. Find it with the QR code or the link below.

CHURCH GROWTH SPIRITUAL GIFTS SURVEY

https://gifts.churchgrowth.org/spiritual-gifts-survey/

MINISTRY INTERNSHIP COVENANT

- I commit to pursuing the qualifications for leadership listed in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.
- I commit to giving 100% of my effort and attention when I am present for Mentor Meetings, Cohort Fellowship, and in my ministry service.
- I commit to regularly scheduling and attending my Mentor Meetings with my Ministry Mentor and to attending my Cohort Fellowship meetings.
- I commit to having integrity by communicating promptly when I am unable to attend a Cohort Fellowship.
- I commit to completing all assignments in the *Becoming a Biblical Leader* workbook in a timely manner.
- I commit to completing all assigned work from my Cohort Leader and/or Ministry Mentor in a timely manner.
- I commit to pursuing biblical reconciliation in accordance with Matthew 18:15-18 when I am faced with conflict issues.
- I commit to continually pursuing Christlikeness in my personal life and, when I fail, repenting and confessing my sin to a brother/sister in Christ.
- I commit to being teachable and humbly receiving the constructive feedback and correction that my Cohort Leader, fellow Ministry Interns, and Ministry Mentor provide.
- I commit to attending the Commissioning at the end of the Ministry Internship.

FULL NAME [PRINTED]

SIGNATURE

DATE

MINISTRY MENTOR COVENANT

- I commit to regularly scheduling *monthly one-on-one* Mentor Meetings with my Ministry Intern.

- I commit to opening my heart to my Ministry Intern so that they can imitate me as I imitate Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1).

- I commit to providing upbuilding, constructive, honest feedback to my Ministry Intern. I realize that the things I need to tell them may not feel great to hear, but I acknowledge that my Ministry Intern is putting in their best effort to receive feedback well. I will give feedback graciously, in love, and to build up.

- I commit to clearly communicating any ministry tasks that my Ministry Intern needs to complete (including due dates).

- I commit to being actively involved in the life and discipleship of my Ministry Intern. I recognize that I am the primary person to whom my Ministry Intern is looking for guidance and wisdom in this ministry.

- I commit to pursuing biblical reconciliation in accordance with Matthew 18:15-18 when I am faced with conflict issues, and I will guide my Ministry Intern through this process should the need arise.

- I commit to filling out quarterly (November, March, and July) Mentor Evaluations for my Ministry Intern and will submit them to the Cohort Leader and to the Ministry Intern before the final day of each month they are due.

Note: Please fill out a new covenant for each Ministry Intern being supervised.

FULL NAME [PRINTED]	**SIGNATURE**
NAME OF MINISTRY INTERN BEING SUPERVISED	**DATE**

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

All Ministry Interns that will serve in Student and/or Children's Ministries must have the following requirements fulfilled:

- **LIVESCAN BACKGROUND CHECK (ONE-TIME)**

All Ministry Interns serving with minors must undergo a **LiveScan Background Check**

- **LIVESCAN ANNUAL WAIVER (ANNUALLY)**

All Ministry Interns serving with minors must fill out a **LiveScan Annual Waiver** to allow us to maintain records of your LiveScan background check. If you do not sign the waiver, you will be removed from our database and unable to serve at RiverLakes Church until you have an updated LiveScan Background Check.

- **CHILD ABUSE RECOGNITION & REPORTING TRAINING (EVERY TWO YEARS)**

All Ministry Interns serving with minors must complete a Child Abuse Recognition and Reporting (CARR) training every two years.

Please Note: Each of these requirements are mandated by California and/or Federal Law. You will <u>not</u> be allowed to serve with minors until you have complete <u>all</u> requirements.