



Emmanuel Baptist Church

Elder Apprenticeship (Vocational Track)

November 23, 2023 (Updated June 29, 2024)

Vision: To help equip future and potential elders—particularly those with an interest and gifting for vocational ministry—with the knowledge, skills and maturity to engage in sustainable, Biblically faithful leadership within the local church.

What: The apprenticeship will include a combination of practical experience, personal mentoring and training, and substantial reading.

Who: Candidates will be men who have an interest in the ministry of eldership (1 Tim 3:1), gifting and desires in alignment with vocational ministry, and who are on a trajectory of growth towards the character requirements of 1 Tim 3:2-7 & Tit 1:6-8

Program length: Approx. 3-6 years. Note that the apprenticeship program is designed to be adapted to an individual's schedule and pace, and thus is suited to those already engaged in full or part-time employment or studies. Portions of the apprenticeship may be completed in a more concentrated manner as circumstances and finances permit. It is not assumed that the entire program as detailed below must be completed before a candidate is ready for pastoral ministry. Some aspects, such as reading and mentoring, may continue at a distance after someone has moved to take up a pastoral position.

How: The process of beginning a vocational elder apprenticeship may be initiated either by the candidate or the existing elders. After discussion, if there is agreement on proceeding between the elders and the candidate, the apprenticeship may begin. What follows is a general description; specific details will be arranged on a person-by-person basis. It must be understood that there is no guarantee that the candidate will become an elder (staff or otherwise) at Emmanuel upon the completion of the apprenticeship.

Competencies: The focus of the apprenticeship is to equip men for well-rounded ministry by focusing on 8 competencies. For most of these competencies, there will be reading objectives, practical ministry application, and personal training (if applicable). Apprentices will be encouraged to apply themselves broadly in all competencies instead of deeply in a few.

Reading requirements may be adjusted to account for existing or anticipated training. Many of the books listed below are available for loan from the church and/or Chris' personal library. Some financial assistance may be available for acquiring books for yourself if needed.

Philosophy of Ministry & Mission

- Reading Objectives:
 - *Paul's Theology of Preaching* by Duane Litfin
 - *The Trellis and the Vine* by Colin Marshall & Tony Payne
 - *Taking God At His Word* by Kevin DeYoung
 - *What Is the Mission of the Church* by Kevin DeYoung & Greg Gilbert
 - *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* by Mark Dever
 - *Growth and Change* by Andrew Heard

Biblical Studies & Theology

- Reading Objectives:
 - *Jesus Blood & Righteousness* by Brian Vickers
 - *God's Kingdom Through God's Covenants* by Peter Gentry & Stephen Wellum
 - *Men and Women in the Church* by Kevin DeYoung
 - *Elder Affirmation of Faith* from Bethlehem Baptist Church
 - The Bible (read completely and slowly)

Historical Theology & Church History

- Reading Objectives:
 - *27 Servants of Sovereign Grace* by John Piper
 - *The Courage to be Protestant, 2nd ed.* by David Wells

Preaching & Teaching

- Reading Objectives:
 - *Expository Exultation* or *The Supremacy of God in Preaching* by John Piper
 - *8 Hours or Less* by Ryan Huguley
 - *Invitation to Biblical Preaching* by Donald Sunukjian
 - *The Whole Counsel of God* by Tim Patrick
- Personal Training:
 - as schedule allows, participate in weekly preaching workshops
- Practical Ministry Experience:
 - preach and/or teach at least 2-3 times a year (here and/or elsewhere) with guidance and follow-up evaluation

Church Ministry

- Reading Objectives:
 - *How to Build a Healthy Church* by Mark Dever & Paul Alexander
 - *The Church* by Mark Dever
 - *Elders in the Life of the Church* by Phil Newton and Matt Schmucker
 - Read/listen to the 9 messages found at <https://ebcnipawin.ca/sermons/topics/ecclesiology>
 - *Missions* by Andy Johnson
 - *Budgeting for a Healthy Church* by Jamie Dunlop
- Personal Training:
 - observe 4-6 elders' meetings a year
 - as much as possible, attend all four congregational meetings each year
 - join an elder for several pastoral visits/conversations as availability coincides
 - attend one of each committee meeting
 - as opportunities arise, observe and/or participate in the planning and execution of a baptism, funeral, and wedding
- Practical Ministry Experience:
 - if possible, join a small group at Emmanuel
 - become a member of Emmanuel
 - gain some experience in all areas of church life, including ministry to children and seniors
 - participate in Sunday morning leadership, which may include reading Scripture, giving welcome & announcements, etc.

Leadership

- Reading Objectives:
 - *Wisdom in Leadership* by Craig Hamilton
 - *Spiritual Leadership* by Oswald Sanders
 - Passing it On course from Crest/MentorLink
 - <https://mentorlink.org/resources/passing-it-on/crest-mentoring-course/>
- Personal Training:
 - "shadow" a leader in a ministry within the church for a time
- Practical Ministry Experience:
 - exercise leadership yourself within this ministry role

Counselling

- Reading Objectives:
 - *The Gospel for Disordered Lives: An Introduction to Christ-Centered Biblical Counselling* by Robert D. Jones, Kristin L. Kellen & Bob Green
 - *Christians Get Depressed, Too* by David Murray
- Personal Training:
 - join in one (or more) counselling conversations as an observer
- Practical Ministry Experience:
 - join in one (or more) counselling conversations as a participant

Personal Leadership & Growth

- Reading Objectives:
 - *Dangerous Calling* by Paul Tripp
 - *A Praying Life* by Paul Miller
 - *The Pastor's Family* by Brian Croft
 - *Every Day Matters* by Brandon Crowe
- Personal Training:
 - connect monthly with a mentor
 - preferably an elder/pastor themselves, though not necessarily from Emmanuel
 - preferably working through the MentorLink Leader's Covenant
 - work toward mentoring a younger man yourself.
 - Apprentices will gather as a group every 3-4 months with the lead pastor (and/or other elders) to discuss how they are progressing, what they are learning, etc.
 - this group will also use the "Leading Like Jesus" material as a tool for growth and discussions

Summary of Opportunities and Expectations

- Work through the reading list at a healthy pace
- Church Involvement:
 - be a member of Emmanuel and attend all four congregational meetings each year
 - if possible, join a small group at Emmanuel
 - gain some experience in all areas of church life, including ministry to children and seniors
- Observational Training:
 - observe 4-6 elders' meetings a year
 - join an elder for several pastoral visits/conversations as availability coincides
 - "shadow" a leader in a ministry within the church for a time
 - join in one (or more) counselling conversations as an observer
- Personal Training:
 - as schedule allows, participate in weekly preaching workshops
 - monthly mentorship meetings
 - quarterly cohort meetings
- Practical Ministry Experience:
 - exercise leadership within a ministry role
 - participate in Sunday morning leadership, which may include reading Scripture, giving welcome & announcements, etc.
 - preach and/or teach at least 2-3 times a year (here or elsewhere) with guidance and follow-up evaluation
 - join in one (or more) counselling conversations as a participant
 - as opportunities arise, observe and/or participate in the planning and execution of a baptism, funeral, and wedding
 - work towards mentoring a younger man