



AIM

APPRENTICESHIPS IN MINISTRY

A LOCAL CHURCH YOUNG ADULT CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



**The Office of Leadership Vitality
The Mission Vitality Center**



Apprenticeships in Ministry (AIM)

AIM

The Rio Texas Conference Apprenticeships in Ministry (AIM) program is an initiative of the Mission Vitality Center to develop experienced and skilled young adult Christian leaders for the unique ministry challenges facing in the church today. AIM will create a ministry learning environment where young adults responding to or discerning a call to ministry have the opportunity to understudy seasoned and experienced pastoral and church leaders and develop practical skills for the practice of ministry.

The Apprentice

AIM is an initiative that helps to address an important need for the Christian leadership development of young people. In the apprentice role, young adults responding to or seriously discerning a call to ministry have the opportunity to gain experience and critical reflection of focused ministry as they apprentice seasoned and experienced pastors who are providing effective leadership in congregations.

The Mentor Pastor

AIM taps the storehouse of knowledge and wisdom of experienced pastors who have charge of leadership and oversight of the pastoral, sacramental, and missional ministries of congregations. As needed, pastors can utilize the skills and knowledge of trained and certified Lay Servants to offer the same guidance and wisdom as mentors on their behalf.

The Church or Ministry Setting

AIM offers churches the opportunity to share their spiritual gifts as teaching congregations while also allowing them to benefit from the energy and passion of young people responding to callings to serve in ministry. Apprenticeship environments will seek to exemplify high standards for learning opportunities, promote leadership principles and values that are aligned within the Wesleyan tradition, and provide quality training along with practical application. AIM creates new pathways into church leadership that help address the unique needs for today's emerging church. The training program will reflect a missional focus in nature but be adaptable to the

ministry needs of the congregation and the learning needs of the apprentice.

Outcomes

Young people participating in AIM can accomplish specific leadership goals and obtain practical experience with leadership in the church. Churches benefit from the energy, excitement and new ideas of young leaders in the making. Apprentices benefit from the skills and expertise of experienced and devoted church leaders. New appetites for leadership are established, and studies show that a large percentage of interns go on to pursue vocations in fields related to their internship experiences. In addition, this program helps fulfill the Mission Vitality Center charge to develop vital leaders along with our denominational charge to develop "Principled Christian Leaders."



AIM Program Components

Program Period

The pilot period will focus on a ten-week period during the summer months from June to August. The program will be based upon SMART goals and the covenant-setting, weekly coaching and mentoring, evaluation and feedback. Work hours are to be arranged between the pastor, church and the apprentice. The church is to provide a Lay Encouragement Team. Additional options may be possible if conditions allow.

Qualifications

***Young adults** ages 18-25 responding to or discerning a call to ministry, seeking more definition, clarity, or experience to assist in developing, or enhancing skills and competencies for the practice of ministry. Applicants are to be enrolled in a college or university, have noted experience in ministry, be a member of a United Methodist Church, and be able to describe a call or passion to serve in ministry.

***Pastors** with a minimum of 5 years of pastoral experience may serve as mentors. The pastor may assign a Certified Lay Servant to serve in the mentor role.

***Congregations** willing to foster a teaching/learning environment in support of the apprenticeship program being conducted in their churches.

Costs

- Intern - Receives stipend of up to \$2500.00
- Pastor - Receives honorarium of \$500.00
- Church - Responsible for housing for apprentice, additional stipend above grant, or other resources
- Grants - \$2500.00 grants available to churches by the Mission Vitality Center through request from Pastor & District Superintendent

The Covenant

A covenant between the apprentice, pastor, and congregation will be entered into in which all parties covenant to abide by a certain set of rules and conduct where the congregations agrees to establish an environment that is conducive to creating a learning environment for the apprentice, the pastor agrees to mentor and coach the intern, and the intern agrees to be responsible meet obligations and fulfill goals of the apprenticeship.

Lay Encouragement Team (LET)

A group of 3-5 members of the laity who are willing to covenant to encourage, support, and pray for the apprentice in their work, to help foster an environment of support among the congregation for the program, and to support the pastor in ways needed to support the program.



Learning Objectives & Foundational Orientation

Based upon the premise that learning is enhanced when study and reflection occurs along with experience, Apprentices will be expected to work with their mentors in order to determine what they would like to learn about during their Apprenticeship experience. Based upon their goals, they will be encouraged consider selecting one of the suggested learning tracks to help them achieve their leaning goals. In some instances, young adults will have specific interests or learning goals. In other cases, they may arrive ready to serve, and their goals or learning objectives may be designed based upon the needs of the church or ministry setting where they will serve. Once these goals are established, Apprentices will work with their mentors to select a learning track and plan so they can be reading and reflecting upon assigned books that inform and instruct the learning tracks that they select. The Orientation session will provide some basic information that any leader would be helped to be mindful of when working in the setting of a United Methodist Church.

Foundational Learning (Orientation):

- Basic concepts of the Christian faith
- Wesleyan Concept of Grace
- Wesleyan Concept of Personal & Social Holiness
- Social Principles of the United Methodist Church
- Spiritual Gifts (Membership to Discipleship,



Suggested Learning Tracks:

- 1. Christian Education**-Development of Christian Discipleship
 - *Resources in adult, young adult, youth, or children’s Christian education (Depending on target age group)
 - 2. Outreach/Mission**-Develop ministries that extend God’s love to the neighborhood.
 - *Resources on missional leadership development
 - 3. Evangelism & New Faith Formation**-Development of strategies to expand the Christian message to those new to the faith
 - *Resources on Evangelism, missional leadership, Wesleyan DNA
 - 4. Christian Care**-To experience and learn Christian care with elderly, sick, afflicted, bereaved, etc. (Based on target group)
 - *Resources on pastoral care, Stephen ministries, care for sick, bereaved, etc.
 - 5. Hispanic Ministries**-To assist congregation extend ministry to the Hispanic population within the church’s mission field
 - *Resources: Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary’s “Certificado en Ministerio” program, or other ministries adapted to serve Hispanic populations.
- Others**- based upon learning goals of apprentice or needs of congregation



Steps of the Apprenticeship Process

1. Getting Started: Applications/Invitations/Setting Up

An apprenticeship can be initiated by an applicant, pastor and congregation, or by the District Superintendent. A written request to begin an Apprenticeship must be submitted to the office of Leadership Vitality by **April 14th**. Once selected, the applicant will be considered a part-time employee of the church and must complete the church's employment application for the position of "Rio Texas Conference Apprentice", be willing to comply with the church's employment policy, which will include the Rio Texas Conference Background Check. The apprentice, mentor, and church must develop and enter into a Covenant, which includes signatures of key church leaders as well as the District Superintendent. The church's application process and related approvals and steps to set up the apprenticeship can be occurring simultaneously. The 6-12 week apprenticeship **can begin in June**.

2. Approvals

The mentor pastor must accept this invitation to serve, the Church Council must approve on behalf of the church leadership, and the approval and blessing of the District Superintendent must be obtained.

3. Lay Encouragement Team Selection

The mentor pastor is asked to carefully select a team of 3-5 church members to be in prayer, and offer encouragement and feedback to the Apprentice. This team is to select a team leader who will organize their means of meeting to pray for and support the apprentice.

4. Orientation Retreat

A two-day orientation retreat will be held on the campus of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary where interns will be introduced to work in the church and theological setting. Seminary professors and seminarians will make up a support team to lead the retreat. The mentor pastor and Lay Encouragement Committee members will be invited up for one day of orientation regarding roles. During the retreat, required paperwork is completed, roles & responsibilities reviewed, a learning plan, work schedule, and covenant is finalized. Expenses for overnight stay in seminary housing will be paid for interns.



5. Learning Objectives between Mentor & Apprentice

Working with the mentor, the apprentice is to select a major learning objective that she or he would like to focus on during the **AIM** period utilizing the SMART goals method. A learning track will be designed by the mentor and the apprentice to support the Apprentice's learning during the period. Based upon the learning objectives, a ministry activity plan will then be developed that will define how the apprentice's time will be spent during the program period. This plan can serve as the working duties and responsibilities of the apprentice while in service.

6. Mentor/Apprenticeship/Church Covenant

- A. The Mentor Pastor and Apprentice develop learning objectives which become a part of the covenant agreement for the apprenticeship term.
- B. The Mentor Pastor and Apprentice agree to a regular meeting date near the end or beginning of each week where the previous week's goals, learnings are reflected upon, and the coming week's goals are established toward fulfillment of learning objectives.
- C. Do weekly ministry situation papers copies to mentor and Lay Encourage Group

7. Installment and Farewell Worship Rituals

Special installment and farewell rituals are recommended at the beginning and end of the Apprenticeship period to keep the **AIM** experience within the context of worship.

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RESOURCES

**APPRENTICESHIP IN MINISTRY (AIM) PROGRAM PARTICIPATION
COVENANT AGREEMENT**

This is a covenantal agreement between:

Pastor/Mentor _____

Apprentice _____

Congregation _____

This covenant represents our commitment to devote the necessary time and care to ensure the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of a fruitful learning and ministry experience for all involved in this Apprenticeship in Ministry experience.

We covenant to make every effort to uphold and support the ministry and learning objectives that are established for this Apprenticeship program to support the learning experience of the apprentice and the ministry of the church to the best of our ability.

We covenant to support the apprentice, pastor/mentor, and the Lay Encouragement Team in whichever role we find ourselves, and in our own role, we remain encouraged that we are upholding the church.

We understand that we enter into this covenant before God through our Christian faith that has been confirmed by our baptism, confirmation, and for some of us by our consecration or ordination.

We will uphold the mission and vision of The United Methodist Church and our unique goals in fulfillment of that mission at all times.

We will always conduct ourselves with integrity, in good character, upholding the General Rules of the United Methodist Church; to do no harm, to do good, and to attend to the ordinances of God.

Mostly we remember that we covenant before our God, not to be perfect, but to strive for perfection in our faithful service and witness as we co-labor with Christ to establish God's kingdom.

Date of Agreement: _____

Signatures:

Apprentice Phone Number/Email Address

Pastor/Mentor Phone Number/Email Address

Lay Encouragement Team Leader Phone Number/Email Address

Church Council Chairperson Phone Number/Email Address

District Superintendent Phone Number/Email Address

APPRENTICESHIP IN MINISTRY (AIM)
LEARNING, MINISTRY, AND EXPERIENCE PLANNER

Learning Objectives

(The Apprentice's description of what she/he wants to learn during this period):

Learning Track

(Learning track selected by Mentor Pastor and Apprentice for the program period)

Ministry Plan

(Duties and responsibilities of the Apprentice during the period)

Work Schedule

(Specific days and hours during the week the Apprentice will work)

Apprentice/Mentor Feedback Coaching Schedule

(Day of week when the Apprentice and mentor will meet to discuss a) reflection paper that will have been turned in from the prior week, and b) discuss plans for the coming week.)

Apprentice/Lay Encouragement Team (LET) Engagement Plan

(Understanding about how support from the LET team will occur for the Apprentice)

Ritual of Welcome to the Apprentice

Pastor: Today we celebrate a new beginning in the life of our congregation. By welcoming _____ to serve as an Apprentice among us, we are opening ourselves to a new experience of God's power and presence in a special way. She/he has some clear goals to achieve in our time together that we have agreed upon to also meet the needs of the church, to include support from the Lay Encouragement Team and to experience ministry in an open and affirming congregation. We do not know all the ways that this relationship will be lived out during this period, but we move into this new relationship with joy and excitement, looking forward to the ways God is still speaking to us through this experience.

Pastor: As the pastor of this congregation, I covenant to mentor _____ (Apprentice), to guide her/him towards growth in ministry, to pray with and for her regularly, and to offer her appropriate feedback. I promise, with the help of God, to lead by example and to model faithful ministry work in this congregation. I also recommit myself to my own covenant with you, the congregation, and promise to continue to labor alongside of you in the ministry of reconciliation and extravagant welcome to which we have been called.

Apprentice: In my role as Apprentice, I covenant to work faithfully to the best of my abilities, to offer you myself and to receive you as brothers and sisters in Christ. I covenant to be accountable to the work of the learning objectives and work assignments that we have agreed upon, and to study, learn, and grow in faith. I promise to take on the authority of my position as an Apprentice with grace and humility, and to receive your feedback as faithfully as possible.

Lay Encouragement Team Leader: As a representative of the Lay Encouragement Team and on behalf of the team, I covenant to help _____ (Apprentice) grow in her/his gifts and skills for ministry. We promise to provide her/him genuine opportunities to do pastoral work, to offer her/him appropriate feedback when requested, and to help guide her/him, along with her/his mentor _____ (Pastor), as they learn and grow together.

Congregation: We covenant to learn from you, _____ (Apprentice), to introduce you to others in our community and to the story of who we are, to open our hearts to what you have to teach us. We covenant to offer loving and gracious feedback to you in order to help you grow. When we offer criticism, we covenant to do so only when asked and with appropriate care. When we offer praise, we covenant to do so honestly and generously. We give thanks for the ministry that _____ (Apprentice) begins in our midst this day.

ALL: May God surround all of us with grace to accept the gifts of this new stage on our journey, and the courage to act in faith and hope, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!

Prayer of Blessing

Presenting of Gifts

(Symbols of acceptance, expectation, hope for learning, growth, success)

Ritual of Farewell to the Apprentice

Pastor

Our church family is constantly changing. People come and go. Babies are born. Children grow up. People commit themselves to one another. Loved ones and friends among us transition to the church eternal. Individuals move into our community and church life. Others leave us, moving away to new places, new experiences, and new opportunities. Today, we recognize the completion of another wonderful experience, an Apprenticeship relationship in our church. A short time ago we welcomed _____ to walk with us as an Apprentice, inviting her/him to share her/his gifts with us, to help to lead us, and to grow in skills and faith. She/he has done so with grace and wisdom. But now it is time to say good-bye, to release her/him from the obligations of this relationship and to bless her/him to new fields of Christ's service.

Apprentice: I thank you all for the love, kindness and support you have shown me during our time together. I am grateful for the ways my leadership has been accepted. I ask forgiveness for the mistakes I have made. As I leave, I carry with me all that I have learned here.

Congregation: We receive your thankfulness, offer forgiveness, and accept that you go now to continue your life's journey of Christian service. We express our gratitude for your time among us. We ask your forgiveness for our mistakes. Your influence on our faith and faithfulness will remain with us.

Apprentice: I forgive you and accept your gratitude, trusting that our time together and our parting are pleasing to God.

Pastor: Do you, the members and friends of _____ Church release Apprentice _____ the duties of the Apprenticeship, and offer your encouragement for her his ministry as it unfolds in new ways?

Congregation: We do, with the help of God.

Pastor: Do you Apprentice _____, release this local church from turning to you and depending on you, and offer encouragement for the continued ministry here?

Apprentice: I do, with the help of God.

Prayer of Blessing

God, in whom we find everlasting love and trustworthy care, help each one of us to keep faith in the future that rests in your arms. The time we have shared with _____ (Apprentice) saw our laughter and tears, hopes and disappointments, learning and growing. Guide us as we hold these cherished memories but move in new directions. Let your Spirit guide _____ (Apprentice) as she/he moves to new and unknown places, and let your Spirit also guide us as we move forward in our own journey as a faith community. Help us to hope for the time when we are all completely one with you and with each other, as Jesus our Savior so taught and lived. Amen.

Presenting of Gifts

(Symbols of gratitude, remembrance, encouragement for future growth and development)



APPRENTICESHIPS IN MINISTRY

Checklist for Getting Started

Here are a few steps for the pastor to consider once a decision is made to pursue participation in AIM:

1. **Be in prayer and discernment** with your District Superintendent and key leaders at your church about how God can work through having an apprentice at your church, contact the Leadership Vitality office by **April 14th** to begin the application process.
2. **Think of an area or need where an Apprentice might serve** in your church and write out a brief description of the work that would be adequate for an intern-type position. Select a starting and ending date, keeping in mind Annual Conference from June and the Fall College Semester, which usually begins in mid to late August. Develop a payment scale that could be \$10-\$12 per hour and from 10-30 hours per week, up to \$3500.00. A job description could be posted with the flyer or promoted.
3. **Think of a young adult or college student** whom you may know of whom might be interested; perhaps a member or family member of the church. Ask around your congregation for good candidates. Or distribute and post the AIM flyer in areas in your community where there may be an interest.
4. **Plan a meeting with the student** and ask if she or he might be interested, explain the type of work you need done, seek input regarding the student's interests, and consider incorporating some of their interests in the plan. If the student is interested, clarify the time frames of the internship.
5. **Offer the student your church's usual application for part-time employment.** Include with the application a background request form. Be sure to tell the student to plan for the two-day expense paid **orientation** that will be held at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary (2017 date to be announced)
6. **Select from three to five persons whom you feel would make up a good Lay Encouragement Team** to be supportive of this project and ask them if they could serve in some form for the duration of the Apprenticeship. Be sure to invite them also to join you for the Orientation tentatively scheduled for the week of May 22-26, 2017. There will be a special orientation for the pastor/mentor and Lay Encouragement team on that day where roles, expectations, and meeting times will be established.
7. **Contact the Leadership Vitality Office** to inform them of those whom will be traveling to Austin for the orientation, whether the pastor/mentor and Lay Encouragement Team members and the student. Provide information on attached form that includes names of student, pastor/mentors, Lay Encouragement Team members, schedule, payment arrangement, etc., so support details can be arranged with the Conference office. See attached forms.
8. **Plan for your installment worship service.** Feel free to use the sample in the AIM program guide.
9. **Engage your Apprenticeship,** mentor, ministry, learning and support experience.
10. **Prepare to culminate Apprenticeship well** with evaluations, closing worship, and sending forth.



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“An Investment Today in Tomorrow’s Church Leaders”



AIM has been developed for the use of the Rio Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church and completed for presentation in 2016.

The Resource is produced by the Office of Leadership Vitality in the Mission Vitality Center of the Rio Texas Conference.



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