

Peachtree Baptist Church
Atlanta, Georgia

Teaching Congregation: M.Div. Internship Model

Peachtree Baptist Church, like so many others, supported theological education financially, and sent a few daughters and sons to seminary over the years, but was never actively involved in the educational process until the advent of Mercer's McAfee School of Theology. Peachtree is a founding and sustaining church of McAfee, and has from the second class of students through the present been actively involved in the "mentoring" of M.Div. students in the practice of ministry. Peachtree, a historic church that had been in plateau or decline since 1969, has been greatly strengthened by the infusion of young ministers and has been growing each year since 1999.

Peachtree Baptist has also developed a relationship with the Candler School of Theology at Emory, and has had M.Div students from that school's Contextual Education program each academic year since 1999. The 2005-2006 academic year saw Peachtree actively supervising five M.Div. students, three from McAfee and two from Candler. Scheduling opportunities for all these students to really get their hands dirty in the doing of ministry was a challenge. In the spring of 2006, the three full-time ministers at Peachtree were approached by nine M.Div. students from the two schools about doing ministry placements at Peachtree Baptist next year. With our growing history of ministry training, and with such a large incoming class, Peachtree Baptist incorporated a "teaching church" model as a core component of its new five-year strategic plan.

In 2004 Peachtree Baptist was selected by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship to participate in its ministry residency program. For the past two years the church has learned what intentional ministry residency means, and has seen our Associate pastor flourish throughout the residency process. Our congregation has developed a unique role as a nurturing, teaching, ordaining, and commissioning congregation. Peachtree Baptist has been averaging four ordinations per year of women and men to the gospel ministry for the last three years. We have seen the young ministers who cut their teeth here go into full time ministry in churches, universities, hospitals, missions, and community ministry centers in twelve states the District of Columbia, and two foreign countries.

The following is a brief sketch of what we are putting in place:

Peachtree Baptist Church
M.Div. Ministry Residency

Goal:

To provide intentional and intensive hands-on ministry opportunities, one on one mentoring, peer group reflection, and lay group reflection that will better prepare divinity school students for local church ministry.

Areas of Ministry for Direct Involvement:

- Preaching
- Teaching
- Administration of ordinances
- Pastoral Care
- Church Administration – Financial, Personnel, and Facilities
- Worship planning and leadership
- Long range/strategic planning
- Age group ministries: children, youth, students, young adults, median adults, and senior adults
- Music ministry
- Health and wholeness ministry
- Denominational relations/involvement
- Working with local ministry partners
- Visioning, creating, and implementing new ministries

Participants:

The goal will be to have four residents/students from Candler and four residents/students from McAfee, two female and two male from each. Each resident will have a ministerial staff member who will serve as their individual supervisor/mentor. Each student will also have a trained lay reflection group to meet with them every other month. The students will also meet together monthly as a peer learning group.

The greater vision:

To secure funding to establish a place of residence for the residents to live together in community during this process rent free.

To provide for the residents a stipend that will enable them to be committed to their academics and the residency without need for additional employment.

To encourage the residents to host dialogues for students from the two divinity schools that all may have greater understandings by combining the lessons learned at these two excellent and diverse institutions.

To better minister to our congregation and community by multiplying the number of called and trained ministers.

To create a model for church-based ministry residency for M.Div. students that can be utilized by many other churches, across denominational lines.

Peachtree Baptist Church Ministerial Students Since 1999

1. Kenny O'Bryan ^#!C	Arkansas
2. Keri Gage !gM	Florida - Missions
3. Kiffin Ayers ^#!gM	Florida – Education
4. Scott Lee ^#!gM	Alabama – Hospital Chaplin
5. Ruth Lee ^#!gM	Alabama – Church Student Minister
6. Rachel Gunter Shapard ^M	Texas – Hospice Chaplain
7. Chase Peoples gE	New York – Associate Pastor
8. Scott Shauf !gE	West Virginia – Baptist College Professor
9. William Ashford #C	Maryland
10. David Weatherspoon ^!gM	Indiana – College Student Ministry
11. Matt Duval gM	Georgia – Church Youth Ministry
12. Ashley Callaway Samples *!M	Georgia - Chaplaincy
13. Erin Walker *^#!M	North Carolina – Wingate University
14. Michael Dixon #!M	Mississippi – Church Singles Minister
15. David Garber !gE	Georgia – Seminary Professor
16. LeAnn Gunter *^#!gM	Georgia – Associate Pastor
17. Lori Burgess !M	Georgia – Women’s Ministries
18. Michael Duncan *^#!gM	Virginia – Pastor
19. Brittany Mackey *!g	Georgia – Community Ministry Director
20. Russell Bone #!gM	New Zealand
21. Lane Holland #M	Georgia
22. Todd Boling *!M	North Carolina – College Student Ministry
23. Deedra Oates *^#!gC	Georgia – Church Youth Minister
24. Matt Rich *^#!gC	Georgia – Church Spiritual Formation Minister
25. Joseph Jones #!M	Georgia – Church Planter
26. Amy Shorner*!M	Georgia – Church Youth & Student Minister
27. Rebecca Kearney ^M	Georgia - Student
28. Lyde Andrews *^#!gC	Iraq – Army Chaplain
29. Erin Miller *^#!C	Kentucky – Church Education Minister
30. Eric Bebber *^#!gM	Washington, D.C., - Missionary
31. Brett Baddorf #M	Tennessee – Church Youth Ministry
32. Michael Goodman #!C	Georgia - Student
33. Candace Eldridge #M	Georgia
34. Allen Jones !g#M	Georgia – Student
35. John Davis !^M	Georgia – Student
36. Jennifer McClung ^#!gM	Georgia – Internationals Minister @ PBC
37. Eric Barreto *!gE	Georgia – Ph.D. candidate
38. Doug Watson !E	Georgia – Ph.D. candidate
39. Meg Olive gM	Georgia - Student
40. Marie Lee !^#e	Georgia - Music Ministry Assoc. @ PBC
41. Ann Edmonson ^#m	Georgia - Music Ministry Assoc. @ PBC
42. Susan Rogers !^#M	Georgia – Youth Minister @ PBC
43. Rob Dowdle !M	Georgia - Student
44. Clayton Davis !#M	Georgia - Student
45. Daniel Stallings ^#M	Georgia – Music Ministry Assoc. @ PBC

- * Ordained By Peachtree Baptist Church (13)
- ^ Employed by Peachtree Baptist Church (18)
- # Did Ministry Residency/Mentoring at Peachtree Baptist Church (25)
- ! Joined Peachtree Baptist Church (33)
- g Went to Ghana on Mission with Peachtree Baptist Church (20)
- C Candler School of Theology @ Emory (7)
- M McAfee School of Theology @ Mercer (30)
- E Emory University Ph.D. Program (5)
- e Emory School of Music (1)
- m Mercer School of Music (1)

Ministers now in 12 states, D.C., and two foreign countries.