

Westminster Theological Seminary
The Ministry Preparation
Contract

A Vital Partnership in Ministerial Formation

It was He who gave ...some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. Eph 4:11,12
Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. II Tim 2:15
Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season. II Tim 4:2
I can do everything through him who gives me strength Phil. 4:12
SOLI DEO GLORIA

The purpose of this contract is to outline the commitments of the student, the seminary, and the church that are necessary for the preparation of the student for a lifetime of fruitful ministry.

The contract highlights our understanding that ministerial formation includes both the student's growing maturity in Christ (*spiritual formation*) as well as competence in the practice of ministry (*professional formation*). This contract highlights the desire of the seminary to have a stronger relationship in serving the church in the development of leaders for His flock. This contract seeks to solidify that partnership in order to provide the best possible preparation for a lifetime of fruitful ministry.

This contract, together with its annual reviews and academic records, will become a part of the student's permanent record at Westminster Theological Seminary and will be available, upon request, to those to whom the student may apply for ordination. This contract presumes mutual accountability and interaction between student, church, and seminary.

Commitment of the Student

In pursuing a call to ministry, I realize that it must be more than my own skills and understanding. Spiritual formation is character formation. Therefore, I purpose to grow in the grace as well as the knowledge of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ during my studies here at Westminster Theological Seminary through the following ways:

1. I will seek to grow in my personal walk with Christ by communing with Him through His Word and in prayer and will lead my family (where applicable) in the same.
2. Through participation in a local church I will seek to grow in Christ through the means of grace there provided and will lead my family (where applicable) in the same.
3. I will make use of the resources available for spiritual growth provided within the seminary community such as chapels, prayer groups, and fellowship opportunities.
4. I will prayerfully draft the Ministry Preparation Contract and lay out my plans for growth in spiritual and professional formation. These plans will be represented by my response to the *Spiritual Life Inventory*, the *Family Life Inventory*, and the *Prospective Planning Timeline* completed for PT 111 and included in Section II of the Ministerial Formation Notebook.
5. I will regularly worship with a local church body during my studies at WTS.
(*See Church Commitment #1*)
6. I will prayerfully seek a formal relationship with a church with a view toward the confirmation of my call to ministry, the fulfillment of the requirements for Mentored Ministry and the church judicatory's requirements for ordination (if applicable) according to a mutually agreeable prospective timetable. (*See Church Commitment #2*)
7. I will seek a mentor within the church, who will oversee and encourage me in the completion of the seminary's Mentored Ministry work and in my progress toward meeting the denominational requirements for ordination (if applicable).
8. I will endeavor, by the grace of God, and according to the Scriptures, to be conscious of my life and witness in all things so as to be better equipped for life and ministry. (Colossians 3:17)

Signed _____
(Student's Signature)

Date _____

Commitment of the Church

The active involvement of the student in the church is crucial to personal spiritual growth and confirmation of gifts and calling. We understand that it takes time for the student's relationship with a church and its staff to grow. That being the case, this section of the Contract recognizes the likelihood of a step-by-step progression of commitment between church and student. ***It is the student's responsibility to return a copy of this commitment form as part of the PT 111 final report.***

Church Commitment Step #1 (Student Participation): To be completed and submitted by the end of the student's 1st semester at Westminster.

We recognize that _____

is a regular worshipper _____

has become a member _____ at our church.

Date: _____ Name of Church: _____

Church Address: _____

Denomination: _____

Signature of Church Representative: _____

Position at the church: _____

Phone Number _____ E-Mail _____

Church Commitment Step #2 (Student Preparation): This may or may not be the same church from which ***Church Commitment #1*** was secured. ***This commitment should be secured no later than the Fall semester of the student's second year.***

In this step, a particular church deepens its commitment and partners with the student to assist with the completion of the various requirements for the seminary's Mentored Ministry program as well as the respective church judicatory's ordination requirements (if applicable). In this level of commitment it is crucial that the church provide:

- 1) increasingly broad exposure to the various responsibilities of ministry*
- 2) one designated Mentor who will encourage, oversee, and evaluate these various ministry experiences.*

We commit ourselves to partner with _____ in your formation for ministry in the following ways:

- 1. We will provide spiritual oversight for you and your family as you pursue preparation for ministry.*
- 2. We will help to provide sufficient opportunities for you to complete both the seminary's Mentored Ministry requirements as well as the church's internship requirements, if applicable.*
- 3. We will provide a Mentor who will fulfill the following functions:*
 - a. Provide direct oversight in fulfilling the tasks of Mentored Ministry and church internship, if applicable.*
 - b. Provide evaluation and encouragement in ministry assignments.*
 - c. Meet regularly to assess your progress in ministry skills and spiritual growth in Christ.*
- 4. We will provide you with an annual progress report which will also be made available to the Seminary's Dean of Students.*
- 5. We will provide you with an overall assessment of your gifts and calling for ministry in consultation with your Mentor. This assessment will also be made available, if applicable, to the appropriate representative of the judicatory in which you seek ordination, at their request.*

Signed _____ Date _____
(Representative of Church)

Print Name _____ Phone _____

Position _____

Address of Church Representative _____ E-Mail _____

Name of Church and/or Denomination _____

Address of Church _____

Please check here if you would like more information on being a partner with Westminster Theological Seminary in its "Teaching Churches" program.

Signed _____ Date _____
(Mentor, if different from above)

Print Name _____ Phone _____

Address of Mentor _____ E-Mail _____

Please check here if you are partnering with this student in fulfilling the specific requirements of your denomination for ordination (under care, licensure, internship, etc.) The goal is to help the student understand the steps toward ordination in your judicatory and to provide assistance and support in accomplishing that goal.

Signed _____ Date _____
(Representative of Church, if different from above)

Print Name _____ Phone _____

Position _____

Address of Church Representative

E-Mail

Name of Church and/or Denomination

Commitment of the Seminary

In keeping with the Mission Statement of the Seminary (which can be seen at www.wts.edu/general/mission.html) and in partnership with your church, we commit the resources of Westminster Theological Seminary to assist you in your ministerial formation in the following ways:

- 1. We will provide a learning environment with the highest standards of scholarship with the goal of giving you the tools required to understand and effectively minister God's holy and infallible Word.*
- 2. We will seek to provide that scholarly training in an environment which is conducive to your spiritual growth.*
- 3. We will meet with you annually to assess your progress toward the spiritual formation and professional formation goals established in cooperation with the church.*
- 4. The Dean of Students will partner with the church in order to encourage your spiritual formation and growth in Christ.*
- 5. The Director of the Mentored Ministry program will partner with the church judicatory to encourage your professional formation through the coordination of Mentored Ministry and the judicatory's internship requirements, if applicable.*
- 6. The Director of the Mentored Ministry program will provide an annual written update of your progress toward completion of Mentored Ministry requirements.*

Signed _____ Date _____
Jerry McFarland, Dean of Students

Signed _____ Date _____
Tim Witmer, Director of Mentored Ministry