

Candidates and Interns: Reports for February 2018

Name	Start Date	Mentor	Church	Intern Report?
Antoon, Martin	05-16	Billy Dempsey	1 st Jackson	X
Barnes, Nicholas	02-17	Chris Wright	Delhi	Oral
Bert, Luke	08-14	<i>Candidate only</i>	Trinity	NA
Bjernegard, Sebastian	08-17	Wiley Lowry	1 st Jackson	X
Brent, Kyle	11-13	Charlie Wingard	Providence	
Bynum, Joe	05-17	Ed Hartman	1 st Jackson	X
Chavis, Cyril	11-16	Paul Rankin	Redeemer	NA
Crawford, Bentley	08-16	Elbert McGowan	Redeemer	X
Edburg, Scott	02-17	Charlie Wingard	1 st Yazoo	NA
Forrest, Anthony	11-14	Ryan Dean	Redeemer	X
Graeber, Chad	11-16	<i>Candidate only</i>		NA
Johnson, Joshua	02-17	Lee Hutchings	Highlands	Oral
Jones, Craig	08-16	Bebo Elkin	Raymond	NA
Jung, Hyoun	08-15	Ryan Dean	Redeemer	X
Kim, Johan	08-17	Steve Jussley	Lakeland	X
McCallister, Jesse	08-17	Stephen Speaks	Trinity	X
Nettleton, Wil	08-16	David Felker	1 st Jackson	
Odate, Haruaki	08-16	Elbert McGowan	Redeemer	X
Owens, Zack	11-11	Ryan Dean	Redeemer	X
Rehers, Chris	05-15	Chris Wright	Lebanon	
Ritchey, James	02-15	Billy Dempsey	1 st Jackson	NA
Robison, Nick	11-15	Scott Huber	Lexington	X
Sinclair, Gary	05-17	<i>Candidate only</i>		NA
Yelverton, John	08-17	<i>Candidate only</i>		NA
Yen, Leo	08-17	Ed Hartman	1 st Jackson	X

Intern Report

Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley

This completed form is to be submitted to the credentials committee three times per year according to the schedule of deadlines (see page 5 of Introduction). At the presbytery meeting that marks the anniversary of your internship application approval, you will present an oral report instead.

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Date: November 2017

Name of intern: Martin Antoon

Name of mentor: Billy Dempsey

Church where you are serving as an intern: FPC Jackson MS

Give a description of your duties as an intern this quarter:

I've been continuing my teaching and meeting requirements as well as visitations, etc. At this point, I've done much of the requirements, but just need to record them formally. I've been able to teach multiple times a week with my job at FPC and help with other aspects of worship and planning.

Describe the content of your meetings with your mentor and the ways you believe you are benefiting from your relationship with him:

Billy and I have been continuing to meet, and much of our discussions have revolved around what life after seminary will look like in pastoral ministry - everything from running session meetings to managing staff to developing curriculum to being a loving husband in the midst of a demanding job.

In what ways do you see your gifts and graces being tested through this internship, and as a result of this period of trial and self-examination what is your sense of your call to the ministry?

There have been two passages of growth I can see as I reflect over the past few months - 1) Working in ministry has brought such a tremendous amount of joy to me. Yes, it can be demanding and difficult, but I wake up almost every morning feeling a profound sense of humility and amazement that I get to help walk alongside others in their faith and that God would use me to speak His Word to others. Though I know (hopefully) everyone in ministry would agree with this sentiment, I wish I heard it verbalized more often. 2) I have had to really rely on God's timing and sovereignty in the midst of trying to figure out what we will be doing next year. It can be hard to simply wait, but it is causing me to more fully trust the some doctrines I have been studying these three and a half years.

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Date: 11/14/2017

Name of intern: Sebastian Bjernegård

Name of mentor: Wiley Lowry

Church where you are serving as an intern: First Presbyterian Church of Jackson

Give a description of your duties as an intern this quarter:

I have taught Sunday School on three occasions, have been on a handful of hospital visits, and I have led a Wednesday night small group where we are studying Hidden in the Gospel by William Farley. I have also worked with our Stewardship committee with ways to use our app and social media to increase giving.

Describe the content of your meetings with your mentor and the ways you believe you are benefiting from your relationship with him:

We have met a couple of times where we have talked about visiting with the sick. He helped talk me through principles behind it, what to think about, and what the purpose is. We have also talked about baptism where he told me what to talk about with parents prior to baptism. I'm benefiting from his deep love and care for the sick and needy.

In what ways do you see your gifts and graces being tested through this internship, and as a result of this period of trial and self-examination what is your sense of your call to the ministry?

The privilege of visiting people in the hospital has been impressed upon me. I have been challenged in my teaching to sound more like myself as opposed to have a different 'teaching voice.' These opportunities have been humbling and through my desire to do these things, my call has been further confirmed.

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Date: 11/28/2017

Name of intern: Joe Bynum

Name of mentor: Ed Hartman

Church where you are serving as an intern: First Presbyterian Jackson

Give a description of your duties as an intern this quarter:

My duties as an intern this quarter entailed updating the Sunday Bulletin on a regular basis with our missionaries of the week. I am also leading an International Bible study using the Life Explored curriculum by Rico Tice as well as assisting with our weekly ESL ministry with Steve Edwards. establishing a broader presence in our Mid-town ministry Bible study. Periodically I engage in neighborhood evangelism around the Mid-town area in an effort to facilitate the smoother transition for those who would visit our church. My neighborhood evangelism have included visits to the Jackson Medical Mall, the Methodist Rehab, and the Fonderan area by passing out tracts and evangelizing.

Describe the content of your meetings with your mentor and the ways you believe you are benefiting from your relationship with him:

My mentor Ed Hartman is an extremely intelligent, kind, and great man to work for. He counsels me occasionally by sharing part of his vast wisdom and insights in an effort to facilitate my ministry as a missions intern. Ed has provided me with invaluable insight on how to approach evangelism and missions from a Biblical perspective.

In what ways do you see your gifts and graces being tested through this internship, and as a result of this period of trial and self-examination what is your sense of your call to the ministry?

Through this internship I have discovered that I have a unique passion and gifting for evangelizing the lost. God has given me the ability to listen to the pain of others with patience without feeling like I have all the answers to their problems. My evangelistic encounters have helped me to realize that Biblical counseling is one of the areas that I feel called to ministry. I have also grown exponentially in my confidence and passion as a Bible teacher.

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Date: 11/27/17

Name of intern: Bentley Crawford

Name of mentor: Elbert McGowan, Jr.

Church where you are serving as an intern: Redeemer PCA, Jackson, MS

Give a description of your duties as an intern this quarter:

During this quarter, my duties included assisting in leading worship, attending staff meetings, teaching Fall Sunday school classes, leading a class for communicants, implementing new church membership software to improve member community, church communication, giving, etc.

Describe the content of your meetings with your mentor and the ways you believe you are benefiting from your relationship with him:

My meetings with Pastor McGowan are always extremely edifying, whether long or short. We've met multiple times to discuss details regarding my internship and ways that I am serving. Pastor McGowan's evident love for God and people come through in every conversation as he clearly recognizes that even the administrative aspects of church life are but a subset of love for people.

In what ways do you see your gifts and graces being tested through this internship, and as a result of this period of trial and self-examination what is your sense of your call to the ministry?

In regard to the administrative and research components of my work thus far, I'm being challenged to remain faithful doing, sometimes, mundane work that most people don't see, believing that the work for the sake of the church is surely worthwhile, loving to God's people and glorifying to Him.

In regard to the teaching and assisting in worship leading, my gifts of teaching, public prayer, and the public reading of Scripture are being sharpened and trained.

Having the opportunity to serve the church in these ways has served to strengthen my call to the ministry.

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Date: 12/1/17

Name of intern: Anthony Forrest

Name of mentor: (formerly Gabriel Fluhrer)

Church where you are serving as an intern: Redeemer Church, PCA

Give a description of your duties as an intern this quarter:

This quarter my internship duties are threefold. I am continuing to assist in worship on the designated dates, responsible for the call to worship, prayer of invocation and confession of sins, reading of the Old or New Testament scripture passage, and the stating of announcements. Secondly, I am weekly at the ministry of Redeemer to the youth who attend Wednesday-night ministry activities at the church. This is mostly opportunity for one-one-one interaction with neighborhood youth that tend to be a distraction and/or hindrance during the assigned small-group time. Lastly, I have an internship focus toward Broadmoor and Broadmeadow, our neighbors, which allows for me to grow in ministry and experience to a diverse group of people, older and younger, wealthy and wanting.

Describe the content of your meetings with your mentor and the ways you believe you are benefiting from your relationship with him:

(My former mentor, Gabriel Fluhrer, is no longer here.) My meetings with my mentor were very constructive. I learned so much each time we met together. The insights about the humility necessary to effectively pastor and the patterns of consistent, faithful, engaging ministry were priceless. We most regularly spoke about the path to ordination and our personal reading lists - which were to be supplementary in a sense to the theological literature we were reading. A great benefit from our meetings and relationship has been the way in which these are forming me into a more thoughtful, biblical, well-read Christian.

In what ways do you see your gifts and graces being tested through this internship, and as a result of this period of trial and self-examination what is your sense of your call to the ministry?

I see the gifts and graces I have received from God as being clarified through this time and internship. I have learned of my gifts, specifically, in preaching and teaching, beyond what I had known. It was been before plenty, that are well-versed and sound in the faith and doctrinally, that I have had opportunity to preach or teach. These moments have confirmed much for me, serving certainly as tests of my gifts. As a result of these times, and the examination so frequently done internally, I feel more confident in my call to pastoral ministry, though I do not mean "senior pastor" by that. I generally feel a sort of general call that could mean solace in Reformed University Fellowship or in the local church as an assistant pastor, or even an "outreach" pastor, without regret. It seems that either of these could be ideal.

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Date: 11-15-2017

Name of intern: David Groendyk

Name of mentor: Wiley Lowry

Church where you are serving as an intern: First Presbyterian, Jackson, MS

Give a description of your duties as an intern this quarter:

I've taught a number of times in adult Sunday school classes, and I am currently teaching through the book of Romans. This is my first experience teaching consecutively through a longer book. I've also been attending various committee meetings, both presbytery and local church. It's been especially interesting to go to the presbytery committee meetings and then see the same committees give their reports at presbytery. I've also been doing some infrequent member visits.

Describe the content of your meetings with your mentor and the ways you believe you are benefiting from your relationship with him:

There are two areas we've discussed in particular. The first is strategically planning an outreach ministry to the Midtown area in Jackson. Wiley has had a Bible study there for a few years, but we're looking to expand our reach beyond one apartment complex. He has had very insightful comments about our primarily white, wealthy church reaching out to a poorer, African-American neighborhood, which will be helpful at any church I work at. The second is that Wiley always takes a personal interest in me and my family. In fact, most of what we talk about is personal. He reminds me that ministry is not all there is, and that my and my wife's personal well-being is more important than working at the church.

In what ways do you see your gifts and graces being tested through this internship, and as a result of this period of trial and self-examination what is your sense of your call to the ministry?

It's been an up-and-down quarter. I feel as though my teaching experiences haven't been as powerful or as well-received (because of a lack of enthusiasm and energy in me) lately. It's also been a relatively stressful semester at RTS, and I've been sick a number of times this semester. All of these things put me in a negative mood and make me wonder if I really should go into ministry. However, I have had a certain adult Sunday school class seek me out to teach, which has been affirming. In addition, another intern and I went out visiting to a nursing home recently, and the other intern was very affirming of my "skill" (if that's the right word) in visitation. When I think about visiting, I do still feel that call to ministry, and I think that there isn't anything else I can do besides ministry.

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Date: 11/25/2017

Name of intern: Hyoun Jung

Name of mentor: Bryant Taylor

Church where you are serving as an intern: Redeemer PCA

Give a description of your duties as an intern this quarter:

I have moved to Philadelphia, PA to pursue a doctoral degree at Westminster Theological Seminary. I have not yet become members of a new church.

Describe the content of your meetings with your mentor and the ways you believe you are benefiting from your relationship with him:

I briefly met with Bryant when he visited Philadelphia. We briefly spoke about how I am adjusting and getting settled in PA.

In what ways do you see your gifts and graces being tested through this internship, and as a result of this period of trial and self-examination what is your sense of your call to the ministry?

Currently I am not serving in an active role.

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Date: 11/27/17

Name of intern: Johan Kim

Name of mentor: Steve Jussley

Church where you are serving as an intern: Lakeland Presbyterian Church

Give a description of your duties as an intern this quarter:

My duties are same as before. I'm assigned to provide pastoral visitations primarily to the elders in the church and other congregations, and visit church members who find themselves at hospitals. I co-teach a sunday school with a member regularly as well.

Describe the content of your meetings with your mentor and the ways you believe you are benefiting from your relationship with him:

Steve has been a great mentor for me as always. The content of our conversations vary from the littlest to most significant of conversation. I ask for guidance, input, and at times we discuss about books as well, not to mention our casual talks we frequently have, too, regarding the church life, my and my family's life.

In what ways do you see your gifts and graces being tested through this internship, and as a result of this period of trial and self-examination what is your sense of your call to the ministry?

I am constantly reminded to put myself aside, so that I may minister to the congregants. Taking things lightly and making fun of myself have been the key recently. In that regard, my chracter has been stretched without a question, for which I am very grateful.

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Date: 11-25-2017

Name of intern: Jesse McCallister

Name of mentor: Stephen Speaks

Church where you are serving as an intern: Trinity Presbyterian Church

Give a description of your duties as an intern this quarter:

This quarter I have helped lead worship both on Wednesday night and sometimes on Sunday nights. Now and then I'll get an opportunity to spend time one-on-one with some of the young adult guys in the church and I have been teaching an adult Sunday School class going through the "I am" statements of Jesus in the gospel of John. I also lead a small group study every other Thursday night. In the small group study we spend time going through the book of proverbs.

Describe the content of your meetings with your mentor and the ways you believe you are benefiting from your relationship with him:

In my meetings with my mentor we are going through some basics of our faith such as, sanctification, justification, glorification, and scripture. These times we spend talking mostly about how that applies to us personally and then briefly about how to apply that in ministry. This has been really helpful in my teaching as I remember to continue to apply the gospel to myself and not just my hearers.

In what ways do you see your gifts and graces being tested through this internship, and as a result of this period of trial and self-examination what is your sense of your call to the ministry?

As I teach Sunday School and Small group, I am challenged by the amount of teaching but mostly encouraged by the fact that I have been improving and becoming more comfortable teaching. It is a blessing to me to have the opportunities to teach, not just for the sake of honing my skills, but as I get to shepherd the people that I am teaching and be shepherded by the time I spend studying for my lessons.

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Date: 11/27/2017

Name of intern: Haruaki Odate

Name of mentor: Elbert McGowan Jr.

Church where you are serving as an intern: Redeemer Church

Give a description of your duties as an intern this quarter:

I have been leading Bible study for our choir every Tuesday, playing guitar for Sunday morning services and other occasions (wedding ceremony, funeral, special evening services, and so on), attending the meetings (worship committee and the meeting for choosing songs for worship), and teaching for Sunday school. I assisted worship service (call to worship, prayer, scripture reading, and announcement), and helped Wednesday night youth ministry this quarter. I also researched ESL (English as second language) classes of some churches hoping to organize ESL class at our church to reach out local international people.

Describe the content of your meetings with your mentor and the ways you believe you are benefiting from your relationship with him:

I had lunch with Elbert and asked about sermon preparation and his strategy on the pulpit. What I learned from him are very useful for me. I am trying to digest it so that I can be a good preacher like him. Fortunately, as I have opportunity of preaching every Sunday afternoon for Japanese congregation (not PCA church), I can try the things what I learned from him at the actual preaching. Elbert is very busy man, but I can see that he is trying to take time with people, which is necessary to the pastoral ministry. I am learning many things from him.

In what ways do you see your gifts and graces being tested through this internship, and as a result of this period of trial and self-examination what is your sense of your call to the ministry?

I had a detailed and sensitive personality. It worked as a minister of gospel when I was working in Japan, but sometime it was too much. I felt I need to be more optimistic and rely on God. Recently, I feel I could be more optimistic than before, probably because of my circumstances. Because of my English ability, I cannot be detailed and sensitive, and this worked for me to be optimistic. I believe this ability (being optimistic) is necessary for me to be a pastor and church planter, which are my call to the ministry.

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Date: 11/14/2017

Name of intern: Zack Owens

Name of mentor: Elbert McGowan Jr.

Church where you are serving as an intern: Redeemer Church, PCA (Jackson)

Give a description of your duties as an intern this quarter:

This summer, I was responsible for equipping members of Redeemer to share the Gospel with kids through Vacation Bible School and our neighborhood mission trip - Mission to Broadmoor. I continue to oversee children's Sunday School, Children's Church (during the sermon of our 8am service, training our youngest as they transition out of nursery into corporate worship), Wednesday night evangelism, and discipleship meetings with parents and volunteers. I have assisted Elbert in worship, hospital visits, counseling (grief, marriage, and personal struggles of church members), and shepherding. I also taught a Communicants class, and ran a major evangelistic outreach (Fall Festival)

Describe the content of your meetings with your mentor and the ways you believe you are benefiting from your relationship with him:

We meet weekly, and he has greatly encouraged me as I train to be a pastor. We discuss doctrinal and ecclesiological issues, as well as pastoral care concerns regarding members of Redeemer and outreach to our community.

In what ways do you see your gifts and graces being tested through this internship, and as a result of this period of trial and self-examination what is your sense of your call to the ministry?

This summer and Fall, I had the privilege of preaching twice at my home church (Plains PCA in Zachary, LA), and once at Redeemer (October 29th). This experience was particularly confirming in my call to ministry: to be able to open God's Word in corporate worship. Additionally, this quarter has been heavy for our church due to sickness and tragedy. Walking with people in the Word as they grieve has been an honor. After 6 years of studying at RTS while working full-time (Twin Lakes and Redeemer), I am excited to begin approaching the end of my studies.

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Date: 11/30/2017

Name of intern: Nick Robison

Name of mentor: Scott Huber

Church where you are serving as an intern: FPC Lexington

Give a description of your duties as an intern this quarter:

As of now, I have finished the bulk of my internship duties. I am still lacking a prison visit and I still need a member of the credentials committee to come hear me preach. Lord willing, I will have these last couple of remaining requirements completed in the very near future.

Describe the content of your meetings with your mentor and the ways you believe you are benefiting from your relationship with him:

As many of you are aware, Pastor Huber has recently stepped down as pastor of FPC Lexington. Most of our meetings have focused on finishing up the internship, and setting a schedule for me to continue preaching one Sunday a month while the church seeks a new pastor. We are still in contact via email and phone.

In what ways do you see your gifts and graces being tested through this internship, and as a result of this period of trial and self-examination what is your sense of your call to the ministry?

I have been adjusting to my new teaching job in Hattiesburg very well. I have enjoyed my time being able to teach these young men and women both the Old and the New Testaments. We have been focusing on the continuity between the two testaments. A pastor friend of mine once told me that a person has never truly learned a subject until he has had to teach it. I am beginning to see the truth of this. It has been wonderful to be able to take what I have learned at RTS and Lexington and use it to teach others.

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Date: 11/22/2017

Name of intern: Leo Yen

Name of mentor: Ed Hartman

Church where you are serving as an intern: The First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, MS

Give a description of your duties as an intern this quarter:

I minister to international students in Jackson. I assist them with their daily issues. I serve at our ESL program and head the weekly Chinese Bible study at our church. I also preach at the Chinese Christian Fellowship at Oxford, Chinese Church at Biloxi, and Mobile Chinese fellowship.

In August, I had an opportunity to assist a Chinese reformed denomination in establishing their denomination. I also assisted the Chinese delegation when they visited the ministry of Dr. Cannada in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Describe the content of your meetings with your mentor and the ways you believe you are benefiting from your relationship with him:

Ed is an experienced mentor both in mission and preaching. He always shares his extensive experience with me and gives me guidance if I have any questions.

In what ways do you see your gifts and graces being tested through this internship, and as a result of this period of trial and self-examination what is your sense of your call to the ministry?

As a native Taiwanese, I share the same culture and language as the Chinese people. During the ministry to local Chinese friends and the Chinese denomination in China, I can sense the great needs of teaching there. I need to be better equipped for potential teaching opportunities there. Perhaps I can export more western experiences in church organization to China's nascent reformed churches.

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