

GUIDELINES FOR *PLACEMENT CHURCHES*

Placement Churches are essential to the mission of the Chicago Course on Preaching (CCP). All the classes and training in the world will not matter if the students do not receive ample opportunity to practice what they have learned in the context of the local church. Partnership with *Placement Churches* is, therefore, a top priority in our training strategy. We are looking primarily for churches that will commit to providing *mentorship* and *ministry opportunities* for students.

Offering Ministry Mentorship

We are looking to partner with churches, and especially pastors, that will nurture as well as mature the students participating in the CCP. While the notion that ‘more is caught than taught’ is a cliché, it is a cliché grounded in truth. Knowledge is, at best, a waste without the guidance of experienced leaders to help a student through the application of that knowledge. Of course, mentorship can take many forms. It may be a meeting for 45 minutes every second week over coffee. It may be hours of life-on-life interaction nearly every day. Our hope is to find mature pastors who are willing to pour into students with the goal of helping them find their way in ministry.

Offering Ministry Opportunities

Our hope is that *Placement Churches* will be a place where students participate in a full range of ministry activities, from setting up chairs to preparing Sunday liturgies. Of course, seeing as the primary goal of the CCP is public proclamation, we are looking for churches which will also provide regular teaching/preaching opportunities to the students in a variety of contexts. It may be one sermon per term, or weekly Bible-study leading, or regular preaching opportunities in a prison. Word ministry has many expressions. What is important is that the student gets opportunities to practice in real—not merely simulated—ministry contexts.

Each church will have its own unique culture, ministry needs, and opportunities. Likewise, each student will have their own unique background, skills, and desires for training. Our goal is to pair up students with prospective churches and let them work on a plan for local church training together.

Timing Expectations

We have intentionally set up the CCP in a way that facilitates the students participating in the local church. For part-time students, classes are limited to two days per week (Mondays and Tuesdays, or Thursdays and Fridays). For full-time students, classes are four days per week (Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays). For all students, Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays are always free from classes. Likewise, classes always finish in the afternoon, so evenings should also be free.

Locations

Our desire is to partner with a diverse group of churches across Chicagoland. While we do not have specific requirements for proximity, the key factor will be in the student's ability to commute to the south side of Chicago either 2 days per week (part time) or 4 days per week (full time).

Costs and Expectations

Church Placements will vary in their ability to provide for students. The students serving in churches must still pay a small tuition to the CCP as well as find a way to pay for their living expenses. It would be encouraging for students to have some to all of these costs covered by the churches in which they serve. How this provision takes place will depend on the church. And whether this is payment for serving in the church, will of course, depend on the church. We just ask that churches be mindful of the workload. It will be hard for students to study and prepare adequately for the courses at the CCP if they work more than 25 hours per week in the church.

We look forward to what God will do in the lives of students as well as the churches that dedicate themselves to be the context for training. Our hope is to see Paul's strategy of trainers training future generations trainers carried out for the sake of churches everywhere (2 Timothy 2:2).

For more information about being a *Church Placement* location, please contact the Director of the Chicago Course on Preaching, Rev. Jeremy Meeks (jmeeks@simeontrust.org).