

A Recommendation on Residents Coming in the January 31 Business Meeting

The recommendation from the Leadership Council is that FBC Huntsville enter into a partnership with Baylor's George W. Truett Theological Seminary (www.baylor.edu/truett) for the purpose of equipping ministers through a resident program.

Why Partner with a Particular Seminary?

- Reliable stream of candidates
- Networking with other churches in similar partnerships
- Financial resources

Why Truett?

- Theological/Denominational "fit"
- Size (Truett graduates 75-85 students per year and thus has the ability to produce a number of potential candidates for our resident program)
- Excellent reputation and graduates with great track records
- Commitment to preparing ministers for the local church, not merely excellent academicians
- Through Baylor, Truett offers a wider range of degrees than most seminaries can offer

What's "in it" for FBC?

- Reliable source of candidates for the resident program
- Outside help (donors) to build an endowment
- An opportunity to invest in future ministers
- Increasing staff capacity at a reasonable cost
- Keeping our ministerial staff "sharp"
- A sustainable commitment

What's "in it" for Truett?

- Truett's goal is the successful ministry of its graduates, and a residency program with FBC enhances that likelihood
- Theological/Denominational "fit" (Dr. Todd Still has called it "convictional congruence.")
- A recruitment opportunity
- FBC is attempting new things in our effort to join God in His mission (fresh expressions, new Sunday night service, etc.) while remaining committed to time-honored traditions
- FBC offers a breadth of ministerial positions in which potential residents would be interested
- FBC has a history of strength and health
- Truett has an opportunity to expand its reach into the Southeast

What's "in it" for the Residents?

- A place to "land and launch" (a position after graduation and a springboard into long-term vocational ministry)
- An opportunity to learn ministry in a large congregation
- A good first experience in a healthy congregation

What is the difference between an intern and a resident?

Interns usually serve for a summer or a semester. They help permanent staff with programming. The intern gets a taste for ministry and the experience is helpful in his or her discernment process of call to ministry.

Residents usually have completed their seminary training, are called to a ministry vocation, and are headed in that direction. They experience the broad ranges of ministry opportunities/responsibilities, including teaching, preaching, visiting, committee meetings, leading worship, baptisms, weddings, coordinating mission activities, etc. There is an intentional plan for preparation and reflection as well as mentoring. Residents work alongside their ministerial mentors, contributing to the life and growth of our congregation.

With which ministers would these residents work?

Most of FBC's residents have worked with music, children's or students. This new commitment will expand that to include all our ministry areas.

Most residencies involve experience in a particular ministry area. That has been our experience, and we certainly are glad to continue that. So a resident might come alongside the Senior Pastor, or the Missions Minister, for example. As a ministerial staff we also have talked about the idea of residents who come to get an overall sense of how the church operates, rotating among ministry areas.

How will this be funded?

The most effective means of sustaining the resident program is an endowment. If we partner with Truett Seminary, Truett will help us raise money for that endowment from Baylor/Truett supporters. Of course we will be responsible for a major portion of that endowment.

Roughly, it will cost us just over a \$1 million to endow one resident position, just over \$2 million to endow two resident positions, and just over \$3 million to fund three.

How many residents will we have at one time?

There are advantages to having more than one resident. The goal might be to begin with two and see if scaling up would be advantageous. (A two year program is often recommended.)

How will FBC have to organize to host this new program?

- We would form a church oversight committee (set policies, budget, enlisting lay support, organizing welcoming and sending rituals, aiding fundraising, etc.)
- Each resident will have a lay support team (pray, give feedback and encouragement)
- We will develop relationships with other churches that have residency programs, for the benefit of both the residents and the congregation.
- Our ministers will have to make a commitment. The mentoring of a resident requires additional work for the minister. Preparation in the area of mentoring will be needed for those who have not mentored a resident before.

Are we obligated to work exclusively with Truett?

No, Truett would simply be our "preferred partner," our "go-to" seminary. But there might be reasons for us to host residents from other places. A student from another seminary, for example, might contact us and say they would like to spend a year working in our missions area to learn fresh expressions. Or one of our ministers might need a resident and Truett not have anyone that year. In those and other exceptional cases, we would fund the resident outside of the endowment. Of course the endowment would be solely to fund Truett students. Non-Truett residents would be funded by other means.