



PASTORAL RESIDENCY FAQS

Who is the “best fit candidate” for the Pastoral Residency program?

We believe that there is no one-size-fits-all mold when it comes to doing pastoral ministry or church leadership. Everyone has different gifts and abilities, and what we strive to do through the residency program is to bring out and strengthen those gifts in young, humble and courageous leaders for the glory of God and the good of the Body. Therefore, our residents must demonstrate a committed, growing relationship with Christ, a track record of responsibility, and service to the church. We also want to see humility and a “want to” when it comes to learning, a strong desire to be a servant-leader for God’s fame, name and glory and alignment with the doctrine, philosophies and passions of Strong Tower.

Also, to take part in the Residency, you must have completed an undergraduate degree. Please hold your application until you know you will have had your undergraduate degree completed before the July of the year you want to take part in the Residency. We will craft a different experience for an experienced leader ready to plant a church in the foreseeable future from the program than we will craft for an emerging leader not certain how they are wired, where they would fit on a team, or what role they would play.

Finally, please know, we are looking to teach and shape the teachable and moldable. Arrogance, know-it-alls, entitlement mentalities, prima donnas or divas will make for a miserable experience for you and for us.

How do I apply to be in the residency program?

Complete the Pastoral Residency Application form and submit it with a resume, family photo, and three letters of recommendation from trusted leaders in your life to Pastor Ben Turner via email (ben@strongtower.org).

Will I be paid during my time in the residency program?

Yes, the residency is a full-time position with a moderate salary and benefits. Details will be discussed during the interview process. Benefits also include full-coverage for seminary expenses with available scholarships and resources.

Do I have to live in Lakeland, FL full-time to be a pastoral resident?

Yes. Our program is meant to be a comprehensive learning experience wherein we aim to provide the highest quality teaching and guidance possible in every facet of life. We want our residents to leave the program feeling equipped and confident in their ability to not just

pastor a church but to live out the gospel of Jesus Christ daily. Therefore, we feel that it is absolutely necessary for residents to live in Lakeland during their time in the program.

When does the residency program begin?

Ideally, the pastoral residency program would function like a school schedule with a transition period over the summer and a start date of August 1st. However, some exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis and can be discussed during the interview process.

How long does the residency program last?

The program is a 2 year commitment with an optional 3rd year upon approval.

As a pastoral resident, how many hours a week can I expect to work?

We place high demands on our residents to prepare them for the rigors of a life spent in vocational ministry. Residents work about 20 hours a week in ministry and can expect about 25-30 hours a week in seminary classes and studies. The program is not for the faint of heart so be prepared to work hard. Ultimately, we believe this intense preparation will give you confidence and experience as you transition into the next stage of life and ministry.

Does the residency program require the pursuit of a seminary degree?

Yes, the program is designed to provide formal and practical training for ordained, vocational pastoral ministry.

Can I be married during my time as a resident?

Yes, of course!

Is the residency program open to women?

We believe that, according to the Scriptures, God has limited the office of Elder, and therefore pastors, to qualified godly men. Therefore, the Pastoral Residency program is limited to training men toward the goal of ordained pastoral ministry.

Is the residency program open only to ethnic minorities?

Yes, the program was created to meet the specific need for training healthy minority pastoral leadership. Therefore, the program is currently limited to ethnic minority candidates.

What will I be doing during a typical week as a pastoral resident?

The pastoral residency program is incredibly diverse. We want to allow our residents to be a part of as much as possible, and each resident's experience will be different. Therefore, while there will be some constants, such as weekly meetings, ministry involvement and shepherding opportunities, no two residencies are alike. Specifics will be discussed during the interview process.

What can I expect to take away from my experience as a resident?

Our pastoral residents should expect to gain a wealth of real-world knowledge as a pastor,

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leader and person. Our program is intended to leave you feeling equipped and ready for your next venture in life. Specifically, you can expect growth in theological clarity, disciple-making abilities, leadership skills and relationship building. You will take away incredible experiences and relationships with trusted elders and leaders who can speak into your life and affirm you as a leader for your transition into ministry life after your years with us.