

Practical Christian Ministries Handbook

2025-2026

**“Moreover it is required in stewards,
that a man be found faithful.” (1 Cor. 4:2)**

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Welcome to Calvary University's Practical Christian Ministries Program!

What is Practical Christian Ministries?

Classes offered at Calvary University teach the Word of God. Practical Christian Ministries guides students in taking the teaching from these classes and applying it in local churches and ministries. These areas of service reflect the values and beliefs that are foundational to Calvary University while strengthening our students in their faith walk. Students attend a local church and participate in Christian ministry with a local church or organization. The students then report back to the Director of Practical Christian Ministries who prays for the ministry and provides direction as needed.

Criteria for a Christian Ministry:

The Bible is our guide to know what ministry is. Christian ministry begins with prayer (Acts 2:36-42), is empowered by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8, 1 Cor. 2:1-5), and uses the gifts, talents, and potential for growth God has given to each believer to use for His glory (Col. 3:23-24). It meets people's needs impartially, unconditionally, and with love and humility on Christ's behalf. It is always done for the glory of God and the true good of others (1 Thes. 5:12-18).

Therefore, the criteria for an activity to be counted as a ministry are:

It focuses on people—sharing the gospel of Jesus and/or discipleship (Mat. 20:25-28).

It meets the physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, and/or financial needs of others.

Why do we have a Practical Christian Ministries Program?

1st Reason: Our Bible accreditation association requires it.

Our Practical Christian Ministries Program meets the following guidelines from the Association of Biblical Higher Education (ABHE):

11.b. Ministry Formation

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS Relative to this standard, an accredited institution offering undergraduate curricula (and graduate curricula that feature field education) is characterized by . . .

- 1. A culture and programs that promote development of effective witnesses and servants in the church and the world at large.*
- 2. An educational philosophy in which ministry formation is viewed as an integral part of the student's education.*
- 3. A program of supervision that provides an adequate basis for evaluating and guiding students in the pursuit of their professional goals.*
- 4. A ministry formation program coordinated by a director normally with faculty status and implemented under the supervision of faculty.*

5. *Evidence that the program is adequately staffed and financially supported.*
6. *A system of ongoing program review and assessment of outcomes that results in program improvement.*
7. *Evidence that academic credit given for practicums, internships, or other practical learning experiences, if awarded, is warranted.*

ABHE requires each student to be formally involved in Practical Christian Ministries. Because it is required, we provide an official permanent record of your Practical Christian Ministries on your university transcript. Therefore, it is essential that you complete all the program's requirements in order to graduate from Calvary University.

Best Reason: It is how Jesus prepared His disciples.

Jesus Christ not only taught his disciples, but He sent them out to put into practice what they had been taught by Him. Following their practical ministry, they reported back to the LORD and He questioned them and answered their questions. Jesus was discipling and preparing them for their future ministry when He would no longer be physically with them. Our prayer is that God will use local churches, pastors, lay leaders, and ministries, as well as Calvary's faculty and staff, to give you the best discipleship experience possible to prepare you for ministry beyond graduation.

We pray the Practical Christian Ministries assignments will be helpful in guiding you through learning experiences in your ministry.

Basic Guidelines for Fulfilling Practical Christian Ministries

- Enroll in Practical Christian Ministry—**Fall** and **Spring** semesters (no summer sessions).
- Attend a minimum of 2 services/week at a local church.
- Serve in a ministry for a minimum of 24 hours per semester.
- Submit a Church/Ministry Form and a Mentor Form once per semester.
- Debrief with the Practical Christian Ministries Director once per year. (Undergraduate: Last Name A-M: Fall Semester, Last Name N-Z: Spring Semester. Graduate: See "*Who Needs to Do Practical Christian Ministries?*" below.)

Who Needs to do Practical Christian Ministries?

CM-099 (Undergraduate Students)

- All Degree-Seeking Undergraduate Students (Certificate, A.A., B.S.)—Required every semester they are registered for any class.
- Students pursuing 5-year Bachelor's to Masters—Until students are taking more graduate-level classes than undergraduate, they are considered undergraduates and must fulfill undergraduate PCM requirements.

Early College students and non-degree seeking students are not required to enroll, though they are allowed and encouraged to do so.

CM-559SEM and CM-599GRAD (Graduate Students)

- *CM-559SEM*—Seminary Students in the following programs:

- Master of Divinity
- Master of Arts in Bible and Theology
 - 1 PCM credit, preferably during first semester of degree.
- Students Pursuing 5-year Bachelor's to M.Div.
 - 1 PCM credit for their graduate program, preferably during their first semester of graduate status.
 - Once students are taking more graduate-level classes than undergraduate, they are considered graduate students and must fulfill graduate PCM requirements.
- *CM-559GRAD*—Graduate and Seminary Students in the following programs:
 - Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling
 - 1 PCM credit during internship with a paragraph submitted by their university supervisor.
 - Master of Science in Education, Elementary Education emphasis (leading to state certification)
 - 1 PCM credit during internship with a paragraph submitted by their university supervisor.
 - Master of Science in Organization Development
 - 1 PCM credit during internship with a paragraph submitted by their university supervisor.
 - Students Pursuing 5-year Bachelor to Masters
 - 1 PCM credit during internship with a paragraph submitted by their university supervisor.
 - Once students are taking more graduate-level classes than undergraduate, they are considered graduate students and must fulfill graduate PCM requirements.

Ph.D. students and those pursuing a Master of Science in Education that does not lead to state certification are not required to enroll, though they are allowed and encouraged to do so.

Assignments for Practical Christian Ministries

1. Attend a Local Church:

Faithfully attend two church services a week. We would encourage you to attend as many as possible to connect with your church family. If you do not already have a local church where you will be living, pray and seek the Lord's will for a home church. Contact the Practical Christian Ministries office for assistance with finding a local church. If you have a special problem in attending two services, please discuss this with the Director of Practical Christian Ministries.

Services that qualify as church attendance: Morning worship, Sunday School, evening service, youth meeting, prayer meeting, church small group, Haystack, etc.

2. Serve in a Ministry:

Minister a minimum of 24 hours per semester in your selected ministry. Ideally, it should be 2 hours per week for 12 weeks for a total of 24 hours for the semester. If you have difficulty finding a ministry or fulfilling your hours, please contact the Director of Practical Christian Ministries as soon as possible.

What counts as ministry time?

- Prayer for your ministry, preparation, ministry, and time spent with the people to whom you are ministering.
- The entire length of a service you are ministering in (helping with music, teaching Sunday School, Youth Group, etc.), counts as both ministry time and as a service you attend.
- Travel time does not count for ministry time.

One of the purposes of Practical Christian Ministries is to train students in the importance of being faithful (1 Cor. 4:2). For this reason, consistent attendance is expected. We understand, however, that there will be times when you will be absent. The following excused absences can be counted towards your 24 hours of ministry:

Excusable absences

- Cancellation of church or ministry activity
- Emergency at home
- Illness
- Poor weather

Though we understand that the following situations may arise, absence from ministry for these reasons may not be counted towards ministry hours.

Unexcused absences

- Studying/homework
- Traveling
- Social activity
- Oversleeping
- Employment

You are responsible for scheduling your employment and schoolwork around your church and ministry involvement. Furthermore, you are obligated to notify your ministry leaders ahead of time if you will be absent from your ministry or as soon as possible if an emergency arises.

What counts as a Christian Ministry?

In the Practical Christian Ministries Program, we give you some structure and accountability. However, you have freedom to choose prayerfully and wisely what you discern God would have you do for ministry. Please see “Criteria for Christian Ministry” (p. 3) for the basic criteria for approval.

Special Circumstances:

- Internships required by a student’s major may be used for a Christian Ministry.
- A summer ministry of at least 24 hours may count as a ministry for the following semester.
- On campus activities, such as on-campus jobs, res-life team, praise band, small group leader, athletics, plays, etc. are **not** able to fulfill Practical Christian Ministries requirements.
- If a Christian Ministry does not meet the basic criteria, it needs approval from the Director of Practical Christian Ministries.

***Guidelines for Christian Ministry Credit for First Semester Undergraduate Students:**

Your first semester's Christian Ministry is "Church Search." Attend two services a week at your home church or by visiting churches as you seek where the Lord would have you attend. This counts as your ministry credit. If you are unable to find a church home during your first semester, you may continue to look in subsequent semesters. However, you will also need to serve in a ministry for 24 hours each semester.

***Guidelines for Christian Ministry Credit for Graduate Students Enrolled in CM-**

599GRAD (Counseling, Business, and Education) programs: Your only semester of CM-599 is during your practicum. Your ministry is that internship. In lieu of completing a debrief, your department supervisor will send the Director of Practical Christian Ministries a letter of confirmation of ministry in your internship.

The Director of Practical Christian Ministries reserves the right to evaluate if activities meet the criteria for a Christian Ministry.

3. Complete Assignments:

You will be registered in Practical Christian Ministries in Canvas. It requires the following assignments:

Church/Ministry Form:

Fill out the Church/Ministry Form each semester. You will receive full points for completion.

Mentor Form

A mentor is a person, usually the same gender and older than you are, who learns about your life and ministry, gives you honest feedback, encourages and advises you, and shows you that the ministry God has for you is doable and worth it! Paul and Timothy, Elijah and Elisha, and Jesus and His disciples are just a few examples of mentorship. It is vital to have a mentor in your life.

Fill out this form with your mentor every semester. Send them the link in the assignment. Have them fill it out with you if possible. Once the form is filled out, it will automatically submit to the Director of Practical Christian Ministries. She will pray over it, and you will receive credit for the assignment.

If you cannot be present when your mentor is filling out the form, you may visit the Practical Christian Ministries office to review the form or email cminsec@calvary.edu to ask for a copy.

Debrief

Once a year, meet with the Director of Practical Christian Ministries; this normally takes 15 to 30 minutes. This helps you evaluate both your ministry and what you are learning from it. If you live on campus, you must meet in person with the Director of Practical Christian Ministries unless you have received permission to call. If you are a commuter and/or an online student, you may select one of the following channels: in person, over the phone, or over a Teams video call (for overseas students only). If you do not need to debrief during the semester, you will automatically receive credit for this assignment at the beginning of the semester.

**Undergraduate Debrief schedule (graduate students—see requirements on p.4-5 under “Who Needs to Do Practical Christian Ministries?”):*

- Last Name A-M: Fall Semester
- Last Name N-Z: Spring Semester

4. Grading:

This is a pass-fail course. Passing is defined as 65% for undergraduate students and 100% for graduate students. Late work is not accepted. Plagiarism is defined as copying any content without identifying the source. This also includes taking another person’s or AI entity’s ideas or constructs and presenting them as your own. The use of AI generated content in student work is prohibited (even if cited) as it does not represent original work created by the student and is an unreliable aggregate of ideas from other sources. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated.

How to Get the Most out of Practical Christian Ministries

Choose a Healthy Attitude:

When Christ measures our service in ministry, our gifts in ministry only play a small part. Christ is concerned with our motives and our willingness to serve Him (Is. 6:8; Matt. 28:19a). To be given greater responsibilities by God in the future, we need to learn to be faithful in the little things He asks of us now. Please look at the requirement of Practical Christian Ministries as an opportunity to serve the LORD and grow in Him rather than just an obligation to fulfill.

Demonstrate a Commitment to Faithfulness and Excellence:

- Attend worship services and ministry faithfully.
- Come to your ministry fully prepared.
- Follow the policies and procedures of the organization and your ministry leaders.
- Exhibit an enthusiastic, respectful, and teachable attitude.
- Refrain from criticism.
- Notify your ministry leaders when you will be absent.

Please be sure to notify your ministry leaders if you do not plan to return the next semester.

Know the Importance of the Local Church

The local church is not a man-made idea. It is God-ordained for worship, fellowship, and service (1 Tim. 3:15). Please remember that Scripture exhorts us not to forsake gathering (Heb. 10:24-25). Our prayer is that you will develop a beautiful relationship with a great family of believers.

Please Remember: Ministry is a privilege, and it is an honor to be called by God and to serve HIM.

Resources:

The Practical Christian Ministries Department exists to help students thrive in ministry. To that end, the Director of Practical Christian Ministries prays for students weekly, networks with churches and ministries, and is available to meet with students for counsel in life and ministry.

Please contact the Practical Christian Ministries office if you would like assistance in finding a church or a ministry.

Practical Christian Ministries Fair:

To help you find a local church and/or a Christian Ministry, we host a Practical Christian Ministries Fair as a chapel at the beginning of each fall semester. This is a great opportunity for students to learn of area churches and ministries in order to find opportunities for service that fulfill the Practical Christian Ministries requirements.

Non-Academic Monitoring

Non-Academic Monitoring happens when a student fails a semester of Practical Christian Ministries. Students on monitoring must complete these requirements by the beginning of the **fourth** week of the following semester:

- a. Write a one-page paper which acknowledges that s/he has been placed on Non-Academic Monitoring, affirming that this will not happen again, and detailing a plan for change within the semester. This paper is to be submitted to the Practical Christian Ministries office by the beginning of the **third** week of the following semester and must be approved by the Director.
- b. Meet with the Director to go over the plan by the beginning of the **fourth** week.
- c. Complete two Practical Christian Ministries sections per semester until s/he has made up all missed semesters.
- d. By the end of that semester, the student must have enacted the plan that was laid out in the aforementioned paper to be removed from Monitoring. If the student remains on Non-Academic Monitoring for three semesters, the student will be recommended for non-academic dismissal from Calvary.
- e. Students not complying with Practical Christian Ministries requirements will not be cleared by the Practical Christian Ministries Committee for graduation.

As a Bible-driven and ministry-focused university, Calvary views Practical Christian Ministries and church attendance as important factors in maturing students' Christian life and service. Neglect of these activities is viewed seriously. You are important to us, therefore, so is your preparation for the rigors of life and ministry ahead!

The Rewards of Ministry

When we accepted God's call of salvation, we accepted His call to ministry. We are not saved by good works but to do good works (Eph. 2:8-10). Ministry is difficult, but joy comes when we diligently study the Word and answer those who are seeking Him (1 Pet. 3:15, 2 Tim 2:15). What a God we serve! May you and those to whom you minister be blessed through this program.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." Acts 1:8

How to Contact the Practical Christian Ministries Office

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