



# FAQ'S about the Residency Program at First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor

## **What makes the First Pres-Ann Arbor Residency Program unique?**

Our aim is to provide the foundation for pastors and leaders to flourish in a wide array of settings, from small to large congregations, chaplaincies and community organizations. We are alert to the ongoing, disruptive changes in the church and culture as we seek to shape the next generation of leaders. This two-year residency program immerses a small cohort of seminary graduates into an active congregation in a vibrant university town. We are a front-runner in developing first-call pastors to lead and thrive. First Pres strives, with God's help, to be a progressive, inclusive, and welcoming community, stirred to make God's love visible. We are engaged with the matters of equity, racism, poverty and social justice and are committed to serving our neighbors in need. Our program model combines experience and reflection to deepen call, awaken strengths and stimulate a pastoral imagination.

## **Who is eligible to apply?**

- Candidates for ministry in good standing in the PCUSA or a corresponding denomination
- Candidates will have earned a Master of Divinity degree by the start of the program
- Candidates who are seeking a first call to a full-time ministry position and are eligible for ordination
- Individuals who display excellent academic credentials as well as an interest in and potential for parish ministry or community leadership
- Candidates who have completed one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) or an equivalent intensive small group experience are preferred
- Leaders who are curious about ministry, the life of congregations and pastoral leadership in a time of rapid change
- Individuals seeking to learn and develop the skills, practices, habits, and craft of ministry

## **How do I apply, and by what deadline?**

The application period is [currently open](#); all application materials are due by February 3, 2025. Preliminary interviews will take place by Zoom. Interviews for finalists will take place in Ann Arbor March 7, 8, and 9, 2025. First Presbyterian will make the arrangements and pay all costs for travel, lodging, and meals while you are interviewing in Ann Arbor.

## **How are Resident Ministers compensated?**

Residents are compensated at competitive levels for first-call pastors. A housing allowance, adjusted for the cost of living in Ann Arbor, is included. Compensation includes full participation in the PCUSA Board of Pensions benefits program, including healthcare, death and disability and a defined benefit pension plan. Candidates enrolled in other denominational benefit programs receive equal levels of benefits. Professional expenses for continuing education, travel and personal ministry items are reimbursed.

## **What is the program timeline?**

Resident ministers serve two years at First Presbyterian Church in Ann Arbor in validated ministry positions endorsed by the Presbytery of Detroit of the PCUSA. The program begins August 15, 2025 and continues until August 14, 2027.

## **What can I expect to contribute to First Pres in my ministry?**

As full-time pastoral staff team members, residents are immersed in the life of First Pres. Residents serve as liturgists in worship, preach regularly across our worship offerings, particularly our 11:30 a.m. participatory service, and participate in planning with the worship team. They teach regularly in youth and adult Sunday school classes, and gain firsthand experience working with young people, children, and families in faith formation. They tend to pastoral needs of families and older adults, and guide college students in their faith journeys. Residents baptize, celebrate the Lord's Supper and preside at weddings and funerals. The program offers opportunities to lead a pilgrimage, organize a community ministry, train church leaders, promote stewardship, and welcome new members, to name just a few directions a residency might take.

## **What makes up the program's curriculum?**

The curriculum begins with a practicum in preaching and worship leadership. It then adds units in pastoral care, faith formation, community ministry and pastoral identity formation. Another practicum delves into leadership, positive organizational development and adaptive change in a liminal, post-pandemic season. Practical administrative areas—finance, stewardship, facilities and personnel management—are included. Communication strategy and social media are focal points. Church governance and board leadership are points of emphasis. Learning to practice healthy self-care, establishing boundaries and finding rhythms of rest, reflection, learning and fitness is another key component of the Residency.

## **Where do Resident Ministers go following their time at First Pres?**

The Residency program prepares pastors to lead effectively in a variety of settings from small to mid-sized to large congregations, in community ministries and as transitional pastors. Former Residents serve as pastors, associate pastors and interim pastors in all sizes of churches from Florida to California. Former Residents lead community not-for-profit organizations while others

are engaged as trauma therapists. Some are university instructors while others serve as Presbytery leaders. One former Resident is a chaplain in the U.S. Navy, while another is on a seminary staff. Our program aims to prepare pastors and leaders for a variety of roles in a changing church and culture.

## **More Questions?**

Please contact Rev. Sandra McDonald, Resident Ministry Program Administrator, [smcdonald@firstpresbyterian.org](mailto:smcdonald@firstpresbyterian.org), or call 734-662-4466

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