Preaching Opportunities, Evaluations and Compensation

Students who have been licensed to preach by the Candidacy Committee may access preaching opportunities offered in Christian Reformed churches by the Mentored Ministries Office (MMO). More information regarding licensure requirements and eligibility for applying for licensure may be found at http://www.calvinseminary.edu/resources/licensure/index.php CRC students not preparing for pastoral ministry in a congregational setting may but need not be licensed. These students should consult with the DMM regarding preaching/teaching in settings appropriate to their vocational goals.

Students preparing for pastoral ministry in other denominations or independent churches, are encouraged to consult with the Director of Mentored Ministries (DMM) to access preaching/teaching opportunities appropriate to their vocational goals.

Guidelines for Guest Preachers providing pulpit supply

- **Prior to the service, communicate and plan well.**
  Aim to learn what the church’s worship services are normally like, look at their standard order of service or ask to see the service of the previous week(s), as you make your selections. Follow the church’s established order of worship and other conventions observed by the church. They need to know from you what your Scripture, text, sermon, and theme are…at least a week ahead of time.

- **Be sensitive to local conventions.**
  Since you are entering their community, you will need to abide by their customs. A conversation ahead of time will give you the opportunity to discover matters such as: what are they accustomed to in sermon length? What is the proper attire - robe, suit, sport coat, dress, slacks, casual? Observe generally accepted standard of good dress and grooming in the pulpit. Which Bible translation do they use? Do they have any special practices that are uniquely theirs that you should be aware of? What type of microphone will you be using? Who meets together before the service and where? What time should you be there?

- **Review the liturgy when planning for your participation and on the day of service.**
  A conversation with the pastor, an elder, musician, or other worship leader will be very helpful to all. How much of the service do you lead? Are the songs announced? Are they projected or do worshipers use hymnals? What special needs should be included in the congregational/pastoral prayer? How is the offering handled? Should you greet worshipers at the close of the service? Where? Are there any other special instructions you should be aware of? Be present early enough so all discussions about the service can be completed before the time for the prayer before the service. Follow established order of worship and other conventions observed by the church.

- **Arrive early on the day of service.**
  Where is the church? Obtain accurate directions to the church. What is the best route from your home? How long will it take? What time do their services start? How much ahead of time would they like you to be there? How much ahead of time should you leave your home? Leaders get very nervous if guest preachers arrive too late. It is most courteous to arrive at least 30 minutes before the service begins.

- **Make arrangements for preaching evaluations.**
  Remember that sermons are to be evaluated by a representative sampling of members of the congregation. See the following section in this document for complete information re. obtaining preaching evaluations.

- **Be an Ambassador.**
  When you serve as a guest preacher, you clearly are a representative of Calvin Seminary. Be cordial and show interest in the other persons who meet with you. Learn their names, their role of service, and introduce yourself to them if they are hesitant to do so with you. Get acquainted with and express gratitude to the person who serves as your host. Briefly, introduce yourself at an appropriate time in the service. It is fitting to bring greetings to the local congregation from the Seminary community. An expression of thanks for the Seminary will be meaningful to folks who have been supporting the Seminary with their prayers and gifts for many years.
1. Gaining Access to Preaching Opportunities

   a. The MMO receives pulpit supply requests for the morning and/or evening worship services from many churches within driving distance of CTS. Requests are sometimes made by churches as far away as 400 miles from the seminary.

   b. In many cases, pulpit supply entails leading part or all of the worship service and preaching. Note: Some churches may use songbooks that you do not own and/or you are not familiar with. The MMO has copies of a number of songbooks used in area churches. These songbooks are available for student use, but may not be taken out of the seminary.

   c. Licensed students can view the list of open preaching opportunities at http://www.calvinseminary.edu/pulpitSupply/index.php

   d. Students interested in accepting a listed preaching opportunity, should e-mail the MMO mentoredministies@calvinseminary.edu as soon as possible to reserve desired preaching opportunities.

   e. The MMO will confirm this assignment with the student and notify the church’s designated contact person to supply them the student’s name, phone number and e-mail address. Someone from the church will contact the student to request worship service and sermon information.

   f. Alternatively, students may accept preaching opportunities directly offered to them by churches. In these cases, students are responsible for communicating with the church to exchange information, make any necessary arrangements, convey remuneration expectations, etc.

   g. Students from other denominations or from non-denominational churches who are not finding sufficient preaching opportunities, should contact the MMO to request assistance in locating an adequate number of preaching opportunities.

2. Preaching Evaluations

   a. Obtaining Preaching Evaluations

      1) Sermons that students are wanting to be evaluated should be preached in congregations and evaluated by members of the congregation using the CTS Preaching Evaluation form.

         a) M.Div students who plan to pursue ordained ministry may obtain one evaluation from preaching in a non-congregational settings (e.g., chapels, youth groups, educational settings, campus ministries, nursing homes, institutional settings, etc.).

         b) M.Div students who do not plan to pursue ordained ministry may meet the requirements for preaching evaluations by exhorting in various non-congregational settings (e.g., chapels, youth groups, educational settings, campus ministries, institutional settings, etc.).

      2) Sermons that you have prepared and/or preached for another purpose (e.g. for a preaching course, or as a course assignment) may be preached to obtain preaching evaluations.

      3) Student are advised to obtain an adequate supply of the Preaching Evaluation forms from the MMO or go to http://www.calvinseminary.edu/pulpitSupply/sermonEvaluationForm.pdf to download evaluation forms. It is suggested that four (4) or five (5) evaluations per service be distributed.

         a) When preaching in the US, use the self-address postage paid form.

         b) When preaching in Canada, the postage paid form will not work! Please use the simple self-addressed form when seeking evaluations from Canadian churches. (Suggest to Canadian churches that the church secretary be designated to collect the completed form and send them in one envelop to: CTS,Mentored Ministries Office / 3233 Burton SE / Grand Rapids, MI. 49546.)

         c) It is the student’s responsibility to insure that an adequate number of Preaching Evaluation Forms are distributed at each service (four or five per service are suggested).

         d) Request assistance in distributing the forms to a representative sample of the congregation. (If this assignment has been arranged through the MMO, a letter has been sent requesting that the church identify a person to assist with this). If you have difficulty finding someone to help you, ask the person who prays with you before the service to take responsibility for giving the forms to a few members of the congregation.

      1) At least two evaluations must be received by the Mentored Ministries Office (MMO) for a sermon to count as an evaluated preaching event.

      2) No more than two sermons may be evaluated in the same congregation.
b. **Processing of Completed/Returned Preaching Evaluations**

1) The MMO collects and circulates the completed/returned set of preaching evaluations and attached routing slip to the student’s mentoring group leader.

2) The Mentoring Group leader reviews completed evaluations, writes comments and notes any actions to be taken by the student (e.g. requesting a meeting with the student) on the routing slip and returns the evaluations to the basket in the MMO labeled, “Returned Preaching Evaluations.” The MMO will forward the evaluations to the student for review.

3) The student reviews the evaluations and Mentoring Group leader’s comments, and follows up on recommendations, if any, made by the Mentoring Group leader. After reviewing the evaluations and comments, the student marks the routing slip and returns the evaluations to the basket in the MMO labeled, “Returned Preaching Evaluations.”

4) The MMO maintains a file of completed preaching evaluations. These evaluations are available for the student or mentoring group leader to review at a later date.

c. **Receiving Credit for Completed Preaching Evaluations**

1) Your first group of evaluation should normally be on file in the MMO by the end of the fall semester of your second year at CTS.

2) Your second group of evaluations should normally be on file in the MMO by the end of the fall semester of your third year at CTS.

3) The following guidelines apply to these groups of three preaching evaluations:
   a) The three evaluated sermons in this group must be different sermons.
   b) No more than two sermons may be evaluated in the same congregation.
   c) A set of at least two completed preaching evaluations must be received by the MMO for the sermon to count as an evaluated sermon.

1) When the first group of three preaching evaluations are on file, the MMO will notify the student that this first assignment has been fulfilled and will document it in the student’s Mentored Ministries folio. The same procedure will be followed when the student has completed the second group of preaching evaluations.

2) Once the MMO has the required number of preaching evaluations on file they will document this in your mentored ministries folio and notify you and your mentoring group leader via email that this requirement has been fulfilled for each group.

3. **Payment for Preaching**

   d. Students will receive payment for preaching directly from the church. When the student accepts a preaching opportunity, a confirmation letter will be sent to the church from the MMO. This letter includes the following information:

   1) student’s name, address, phone number, and email address
   2) a statement of the amount that should be paid to the student
   3) a request that the church designate someone to assist the student with distributing the preaching evaluation forms.

   e. Students will receive a minimum of $85.00 per service and the current IRS mileage rate for round-trip travel of twenty (20) miles or more from the seminary to the church.

   f. Canadian churches pay for preaching and mileage according to rates set by their classis.