



Church Residency Overview

Mission

The mission of Unlocking the Bible (UTB) is to multiply believers who are rooted in the word of God, growing in love for Christ and bearing fruit around the world. We accomplish this mission by:

Proclaiming Christ through Media
Mobilizing Believers in Evangelism
Equipping Leaders for the Church

The UTB Church Residency is one way we equip leaders for the church.

Why a Residency?

The statistics of burn-out among those in vocational ministry is alarming. Research shows many pastors who experienced traditional theological training alone felt unprepared to face the realities of practical ministry. Missionaries and church planters often lack experiences related to cross cultural contexts, entrepreneurial efforts and team unity. We partner with [The Orchard](#), a healthy, multi-site church in the Chicagoland area to offer a full church-immersion experience. This allows for hands-on opportunities for a breadth of experiences and depth of practice that bridges the gap, enabling gospel leaders to apply biblical truths and theology in pastoral ministry and sharpen leadership skills in organized settings.

Why a UTB Residency?

Our program is designed to establish healthy rhythms for life and ministry that emphasize our ministry distinctives of ***life, doctrine and skills***. In 1 Timothy 4 the Apostle Paul challenges the young pastor Timothy to “*Watch your **life** and **doctrine** closely*” (4:16, NIV) and “*Do not neglect your gift (or **skills**)*” (4:14, NIV). UTB takes responsibility for cultivating spiritual ***life*** and deepening Christ-centered ***doctrine***; The Orchard provides opportunities to develop and refine ministry ***skills***.

To cultivate a rich spiritual ***life***, we focus on three elements that are essential for long-term sustainability and fruit in ministry:

- Devotional, life-giving time in *God’s Word*
- Fervent, faithful *prayer*
- Maintaining *healthy rhythms* in personal/family life and ministry

To deepen Biblical **doctrine**, we focus on three truths essential to faithful and transformative ministry:

- The centrality of the *Gospel* to life and ministry
- The foundation of *God's Word* for all faith and practice
- The priority of the *local church* in God's missional and discipleship plan

To refine ministry **skills**, we focus on three competencies essential for well-rounded and effective ministry:

- Preaching/Teaching (which echoes Christ's prophetic role)
- Pastoral care (which echoes Christ's priestly role)
- Leading (which echoes Christ's kingly role)

Resident Commitments

All Unlocking the Bible Residents are expected to work six days or 50 hours a week. Many lay leaders work full-time jobs and volunteer an additional 5+ hours a week in service at the church. We aim to produce leaders that are ahead of their flock in commitment level. The average work week is divided into three main activities: training, ministry and administration.

Training

Training is conducted by experienced pastors and church leaders such as Colin Smith, and focuses on our ministry distinctives of **Life, Doctrine and Skills**. Particular emphasis is given to cultivating a rich spiritual **life** and deepening Christ-centered, Biblical **doctrine**. Training makes up roughly 20-25% of a Residents work week. Homework is involved between classes/meetings.

- **MOMENTUM** – This rigorous 4-semester curriculum was developed for vocational ministers. The class meets weekly August-December and January-May. Attendance is a diverse mix of men and women who serve in, or are called to, a variety of ministry roles. Average attendance is 50.
- **FOUNDATIONS** – This Resident-Only training occurs three times per month throughout the year. Peer relationships are fostered as are healthy rhythms of life. Emphasis is on establishing a close walk with the Lord in Word and prayer. Workshop activities and additional training experiences with ministerial practitioners are part of the curriculum.

- **LEVERAGE** – This weekly training is for lay leaders of The Orchard. Residents participate in this 16-week course that meets four months out of the year during their first year of ministry and lead a group in their second year.
- **One-on-One Dashboard Meeting** – Residents meet monthly with a UTB staff person for mentoring, coaching and measuring progress toward goals.
- **Annual Theology or Pastoral Conference** – Registration is provided for each Resident to attend a national conference annually. Either *The Gospel Coalition Conference* or the *Together for the Gospel Conference*, depending on the year. Accommodations, transportation and meals are covered to a reasonable degree.

Ministry

Ministry experiences are designed to expose Residents to a breadth of experience and depth of practice that allows them to sharpen their **skills** for more fruitful and lasting ministry. This makes up roughly 60-65% of a Residents work week.

Unlocking the Bible

Residents will contribute about 10 hours a week to ministry areas of Unlocking the Bible; Proclaiming Christ through Media, Mobilizing Believers for Evangelism and Equipping Leaders for the church. Each Resident is expected to:

- Lead two unbelieving people or groups through OPEN in consecutive years
- Answer theological questions submitted by UTB listeners
- Lead a group through Leverage in year two of ministry

Consideration is given to need, gifting and desire for additional tasks which may include; producing biblical content, developing evangelistic tools or serving on outreach teams.

The Orchard

Residents are assigned to a campus of The Orchard and spend about 25-30 hours/week fully immersed in local church ministry. Worship days are work time.

Residents will first observe and then practice a variety of ministry experiences. Activities are organized around developing and refining **skills** to:

- **Preach/Teach**
- **Pastor**
- **Lead**

A list of ministry experiences within the framework of these roles is given to each Resident to complete during their term. Residents are expected to **proactively seek out** these experiences. An Orchard pastor will meet regularly with each Resident to provide direction and opportunities for ministry experiences and feedback on performance.

- Residents planning to pastor *internationally* will spend part of their church immersion working directly with the Director of Global Ministries
- Residents are encouraged to join a mission trip if the opportunity presents itself through The Orchard, and to teach the **MOMENTUM** curriculum as one part of their experience abroad

Administration

Administration is an important part of every organized church, mission's team or church planting effort. This makes up roughly 10-15% of a Residents work week.

- **All-Staff Meetings** – Residents will attend All Orchard and UTB staff meetings *monthly*.
- **Partnership Development** – Residents will work to recruit and cultivate relationships with financial and prayer supporters. This includes monitoring donations, sending regular newsletters (or equivalent communications) and pastoring this group.
- **Preparation for Future Ministry Context** – Residents will be mindful throughout their term of actively preparing for future deployment. This activity will increase during the second year. This can include:
 - Identifying an area to plant a church, recruiting a team, raising support and preparing to launch
 - Joining a Mission's sending organization, raising support, preparing to leave
 - Efforts to become a licensed minister in a particular denomination
 - Resume writing, interview role-playing, and researching and applying for jobs

Who Can Apply?

- Men called to be preaching pastors. This includes those who would hope to pastor an existing church, either domestically or internationally, or those called to plant a church, either domestically or internationally.

Qualifications to Apply:

- Candidates should have completed an advanced theological seminary degree (an MDiv or MA) at the time of intake (August 1 each year)¹
- Candidates should fit the "Candidate Profile" described below
- Candidates must be willing to raise financial support determined in consultation with Unlocking the Bible staff. See *Financial Matters* for more information
- In compliance with federal law, all persons hired will be required to verify identity and eligibility to work in the United States and to complete the required employment eligibility verification form upon hire.

Candidate Profile:

Candidates for the UTB Church Residency are evaluated based on "5 C's": Calling, Character, Chemistry, Convictions and Competency.

Calling:

We are looking for men called to preach. Practically, this may mean serving, after the Residency, as a youth pastor, associate pastor, senior pastor, or church planter – either domestically or internationally. This pastoral calling should begin with strong personal conviction, revealed in personality and temperament assessment tools, and confirmed by others within the body of Christ.

Character:

We are looking for Residents who demonstrate the godly character consistent with passages such as 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; Ephesians 4:17-5:16; Galatians 5:22-25; Colossians 3:5-17. This includes, but is not limited to, a deep commitment to:

- Personal holiness and growth in godliness with a plan for battling sin
- Consistent time with God in personal Bible reading, meditation and prayer
- A teachable, humble, eager spirit, ready to learn and ready to work

¹ Those without a theological seminary degree should contact our staff to discuss potential fit.

Convictions:

We are looking for Residents who share our theological convictions about God's Word, the role of women in the church and biblical marriage, as well as, those outlined in the [EFCA Statement of Faith](#).

Competencies:

We are looking for Residents with confirmed gifting in ministry skills associated with being a preaching pastor. Beyond preaching, such gifts include: Teaching, Shepherding, Evangelism, Discipleship, Ministry Leadership and Entrepreneurial/Gathering (especially for church planters). Experience in cross-cultural settings and/or training/equipping others is also valued.

Chemistry:

We are looking for Residents whose theological beliefs and philosophy of ministry and preaching are a good fit with Unlocking the Bible and The Orchard. Residents should be comfortable working within a multi-site church structure.

When do I Apply?

We accept applications on a rolling basis. You can apply at any time.

- There is one official intake: August 1
- For the optimal time to go through the assessment process and raise support, we **strongly encourage you to apply by December 13th**
- See *Financial Matters* below for more on support raising

What is the Application Process?

Pre-application

- If living in the Chicagoland area, interested applicants are welcome to visit **MOMENTUM** Aug-May
- UTB Staff are available to answer questions at any time

Official Application and Assessment Process

- Submit Application Form

- Application will be reviewed by Unlocking the Bible Equipping staff according to stated program criteria. (See application form)
- An initial phone call is made to further discuss criteria
- If criteria are met, a one-on-one interview is granted to affirm the call to ministry
- If affirmation of call is confirmed, and application is approved, a more comprehensive interview is planned with an assessment team to evaluate candidacy based on the 5 C's in the application
 - Including spouse if candidate is married
 - Selective personality tests/instruments may be required of candidate in advance of interview
- If the applicant is recommended and approved by the UTB management Team, the candidate will receive an offer of employment and begin to raise support for an August 1 start date

Financial Matters

Unlocking the Bible offers \$50,000 as the annual salary of a Resident and offers full health benefits. Residents are asked to raise **at least** half their compensation in support.

Rationale for Requiring Support-Raising

- Every ministry leader must be comfortable talking with others about money. Support-raising develops an essential skill for long-term ministry
- Willingness to raise support and positive results in those efforts further affirm a candidate's call
- Support-raising expands the financial base of Unlocking the Bible and allows us to equip more people for Gospel ministry

Approved Residents Receive

- Support-raising resources, coaching and training on best strategies.
- A secure, online giving option through our website. Donations may also be received via checks to Unlocking the Bible.

Unlocking the Bible is an independent 501c3. Tax-deductible receipts are generated for all donations. Pay is disbursed bi-weekly and is subject to taxes by law, so net earnings should be considered when budgeting for the Residency.

Final acceptance into the Residency Program is contingent upon Resident raising donations *received by UTB by the hire date* equaling at least 25% of the Total Support Goal, as well as, evidence the Resident has acquired verbal or written commitments

totaling an additional 25% of the Total Support Goal. If these conditions are not met by the start of the Residency Program term, the Resident will not be accepted or entrance into the program will be delayed. Exceptions or extensions may be considered in extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis at the sole discretion of UTB.

Additional Expectations

Housing

No housing is provided. It is the responsibility of the Resident to find housing if relocating for this role.

Other Employment

Full-time Residents are permitted to engage in outside work or to hold other jobs, subject to certain restrictions as outlined below.

Activities and conduct away from the job must not compete with, conflict with or compromise Unlocking the Bible interests or adversely affect job performance and the ability to fulfill all job responsibilities. You should refrain from performing or providing any services during nonworking time that are normally performed or provided by Unlocking the Bible. This prohibition also extends to the unauthorized use of any company assets or equipment and the unauthorized use or application of any confidential information. In addition, you are not to solicit or conduct any outside business during paid working time.

Residents are cautioned to carefully consider the demands that additional work activity will create before accepting outside employment. Outside employment will not be considered an excuse for poor job performance, absenteeism, tardiness, leaving early, refusal to travel or refusal to work overtime or different hours.

For More Info

Contact us at residency@unlockingthebible.org, or visit our website, www.unlockingthebible.org/training, for testimonies, more information or to download an application.