DEVELOPING A MINISTRY PACKET: PRESENTING YOURSELF FOR MINISTRY

We are excited and prayerful for what the Lord is going to do with you as you advance towards ministry opportunities. Liberty University has consistently trained and nurtured Christian leaders, pastors, missionaries, and church leaders since 1971. As you progress in your pursuit of ministry we want to make sure that you have the opportunity to answer specific questions that are important as you follow the Lord.

Your search for a ministry role needs to begin immersed in prayer and focused on truly submitting your desires to the Lord and asking where you fit best in accomplishing Kingdom work. Seeking out ministry opportunities can be a long process so it is important that you not get discouraged. Spend your time now developing your Ministry Packet so that when that church, non-profit, or other Christian ministry calls, you can have the information necessary to determine if it is a right fit for you.

Begin your advance towards ministry by creating a resume, compile a list of references, and write your cover letter. These three distinct documents are what you have available and send out to a church, non-profit, or other ministry. After you have developed those consider developing your ministry packet. Here is an overview, beginning with your resume, references and cover letter, to consider when taking that step into the ministry search:

- **Create a resume**: It is important that you gain practical experience while you are pursuing your education and that you communicate the experiences you have in a clear, concise manner through your resume. Highlight your ministry skills, educational background, volunteer experiences, and professional roles. All of these contribute to who you are ministerially, therefore it is important that you communicate clearly who you are. Utilize the sample resumes for both the School of Religion and Seminary we have created on our Career Center website.

- **Compile a list of references**: During your academic and professional journey be proactive in establishing great references either here at Liberty, at your workplace, local church, or in the community. Focus on individuals that can speak to who you are in various settings such as ministry settings, personal settings, academic settings, and vocational settings. Highlight individuals that have known you for a variety of years and be purposeful in building relationships and developing a network of peers. You can see an example of a reference list at the Career Center website.

- **Write your cover letter**: Your cover letter is a first impression on a potential ministry, organization, or non-profit. If you can excel in your cover letter then you are one-step closer to achieving that
position. As you search for ministry roles consider utilizing LU Network to find a job that interests you. As you apply utilize our sample cover letter to help you make that great first impression.

- **Develop your philosophy of ministry:** This is one of the most important aspects of your ministry packet. This will help you determine if a particular church, ministry, or non-profit is right for you. Your philosophy of ministry answers the questions of how you would minister in specific contexts and what your approach would be to different ministry situations. There are many valuable resources to assist you in building your philosophy of ministry. Consider utilizing Jeremy Pace’s article at the Resurgence entitled “Developing a Philosophy of Ministry.”

- **Draft your call and conversion testimony:** As you progress towards entering ministry, be encouraged to reflect on why you are pursuing ministry. The goal of this is to clearly communicate how the Lord has led you towards the calling into vocational ministry and to communicate how you came to salvation in Jesus.

- **Write your personal biography and use an appropriate picture:** Communicating who you are in a personal biography is different than communicating how you came to know Jesus and expressing your effectual call to ministry. A brief biography with an appropriate, clear picture is worth considering. It may not be the best idea to include a picture within your resume, unless specifically requested.

- **Determine your belief system:** What are the central tenants of your belief system? How can you articulate your beliefs? Have you ever taken time to write down the core beliefs that you adhere to and compare them to Scripture? Great places to start regarding developing your belief system are:
  - Liberty’s Doctrinal Statement
  - Baptist Faith and Message
  - Lausanne Covenant
  - The Apostle’s Creed
  - Nicene Creed

- **Post a recording:** Consider posting a video, audio, or teaching lesson that you have recently done. This allows a particular church, ministry, or non-profit to get an idea of your teaching style and allows you to compare your style with that of the particular organization. Some great sites to post videos are:
  - YouTube
  - Vimeo