BAPTISTS TOGETHER



Funding Ministerial Formation

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Introduction

When considering a call to accredited Baptist ministry, you will no doubt want to think through the implications of that calling. One of the implications will be financial. The period of initial formation can be particularly challenging, as you will be at best only part-time in a paid role and be expected to pay fees to your training college. Individual circumstances vary enormously of course, but you may feel daunted by the prospect of finding enough money to both live and train. This document seeks to outline some of the possibilities for funding your ministerial formation. Please read it carefully and prayerfully, and be assured that your regional minister and your chosen college are there to talk through your options and to pray for you. Our aim is that no-one called by God to accredited Baptist ministry will be prohibited because of finance.

Working out a budget

We recommend you begin by drawing up a basic household budget for your expected income and expenditure. Appendix 1 provides a template that you may find useful. There may be some fields that you initially cannot complete, and this will reveal where further thinking and research is needed. If you are unfamiliar with budgeting, you may wish to ask your church treasurer or another person you trust to help you. The budget should consider any household income you receive, including any support you have been promised for your training, and any expected stipend from your training placement if you are on a church-based track. Try to be realistic about your anticipated expenditure, including leisure and holiday costs. You should include any student fees. Remember that you may well be able to access student-related discounts, such as student rail cards, for council tax, or discounts with retailers.

College fees

The Baptist colleges, as higher education providers, charge university tuition fees. However, it is not as straightforward as assuming you will have to pay the usual full university annual fee for undergraduate study. You might be studying part-time rather than full-time. You might be studying for a master's degree rather than a diploma or bachelor's degree, with a different fee

structure. Your college might also charge fees for your study of ministerial and missional practice that are separate from those for your academic qualification. You might or might not be eligible for a student loan from the Government. Your college might or might not be able to offer you a bursary. In short, you should arrange a conversation with the college you hope to attend and they will help you to understand the costs involved. They will do all they can to make sure your ministerial formation is affordable.

Possible sources of support

The suggestions below outline some of the different sources of income and support on which ministers-in-training depend during their ministerial formation. Most ministers-in-training make use of a combination of these.

Stipend and housing from a placement church

If you are on a church-based track, you will spend roughly half of your working time in college or personal study, and half in a placement church. Where this is the case, our recommendation to churches is that they pay you half the Standard Stipend and provide you with manse accommodation. The current Standard Stipend can be found at www.baptist.org.uk/stipend. Along with the provision of accommodation, the church should also pay council tax, water and sewerage bills, and for a phone line. Some churches may also offer a contribution towards energy costs. This provision of accommodation for ministers-in-training does not usually give rise to a taxable benefit. Please refer to our taxation leaflets on taxation matters for ministers. If you are going to live in your own accommodation, the placement church may instead pay a cash housing allowance, but this would be taxed as if it were additional stipend.



Personal income and savings

Some ministers-in-training train over a longer period of time and continue in other paid employment for part of each week. Though some do this for financial reasons alone, others choose it deliberately as preparation for bi-vocational ministry beyond training, in which they intend to mix church or pioneer ministry with other employment. Other ministers-in-training rely on other household income, often the salary of their spouse if they have one. Some ministers-in-training come with savings that they use to contribute towards student fees or living expenses. We recognise that some or all of these options are simply not open to many who wish to train for ministry.

Home church support

We recommend you approach your 'sending' church, if it is different from your placement church, to see if they can support you in any way. Not all churches are in a position to do this, but often home churches will help pay student fees, or provide a gift each year from their general funds, or appeal to church members to consider supporting you directly.

Building a team of personal supporters, with Stewardship

You may have friends, church members or other individuals who wish to partner with you by offering prayer, encouragement and financial support during and even beyond your training.

The Baptist Union has a partnership with Stewardship, www.stewardship.org.uk, to promote giving to Baptist ministers-in-training. You can apply for their 'Partner Account for Individuals', to which those wishing to support you can make one-off or regular gifts, choosing to remain anonymous if they wish. If anyone giving to you is a UK taxpayer, they may choose to add Gift Aid to their donations. For a small percentage fee, Stewardship enables this to happen at the moment of donation, meaning that for every £10 given, you will receive £12.06 after deduction of Stewardship's fees.

Further, we have a page on our own website where all those using Stewardship can be listed. A photo of you and a short explanation of your call can be displayed. We will promote the webpage across Baptists Together to encourage individuals to choose to give to you during your period of ministerial formation. This is not mandatory, and you may still apply for a Stewardship account even if you choose to opt out of the Baptists Together webpage.

You can find further details of how to apply for a Stewardship account in Appendix 2.

Government student loans

It is always worth exploring whether you are eligible for a government student loan to pay for some or all of your degree or master's course fees. In England this loan comes

from the Student Loan Company. In Wales it comes from Student Finance Wales. Depending on your circumstances, you may also get a loan for living costs. Details can be found at www.gov.uk/student-finance for those studying in England or www.studentfinancewales.co.uk for those studying in Wales.

In addition you can also explore whether you are eligible for the disabled students allowance, parents learning allowance and adults dependants' grant. These are separate to the student loan and can be investigated even if you are not eligible for a loan for fees.

Many ministerial students are not eligible for student loans from the government, usually because they have already received a government loan or grant for a previous qualification at the same level. So, it is important you confirm your eligibility for this option.

Baptists Together 'Funding for Training' loan

If you cannot access student finance through the UK or Welsh Government, you may instead apply for a loan for student fees through Kingdom Bank, with whom the Baptist Union has entered an agreement. If your application is approved, payments for student fees will be made direct to your college. In addition, you can borrow up to £1,500 for resources that enable your study, such as a laptop, or books. You will have to make a nominal repayment of £5 per month during your training. After training, you are expected to pay back the loan over ten years. The interest rate is favourable compared to a typical personal loan because the Baptist Union acts as the guarantor of the loan.

You are welcome to apply for a Funding for Training loan at any stage during your training at one of our colleges.

You can find further details of the Funding for Training loan option in Appendix 3.



Baptists Together/College bursaries

The colleges are given an amount each year from Baptists Together central funds so that they may offer bursaries to ministers-in-training who need more financial support. If you know that you will struggle to finance your training period, please speak to your college about this possibility.

Association grants

Some of our regional associations are in a position to offer grants to ministers-in-training. Please ask your regional minister if you want to explore this possibility.

Ministries Team October 2026

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BUGB operates as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO)
with registered Charity Number: 118139

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Appendix 1
Budgeting help sheet

This sheet may be used to help you consider your anticipated annual income and expenditure during your years of ministerial formation at a Baptist college. By no means will all categories apply to everyone, and there may be additional categories that you want to add. However, it provides a starting point for your planning, and may help identify where you need to research further, where income could be sought, or where savings might be made.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	**ANNUAL AMOUNT**
Stipend from placement church	
Housing allowance from placement church, if no manse	
Salary from additional employment	
Spouse's salary	
Income from personal supporters	
Income from supporting organisations such as a home church	
Pension income	
Rental income	
Investment income	
Universal credit	
Child benefits	
Other State benefits	
Government student loan	
Baptists Together 'Funding for Training' loan	
Any other grants	
(Other)	
TOTAL ANNUAL AMOUNT	
TOTAL MONTHLY AMOUNT	

HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE	**MONTHLY AMOUNT**

Rent or mortgage	
Ground rent and service charge for leasehold properties	
House and contents insurance	
House repairs	
Hire purchase payments	
Car finance – loan, lease, or contract plan	
Other loans	
Maintenance payments for dependants	
Baptist college fees	
Council tax	
Water	
Energy – gas and electric	
Car servicing	
Car tax	
Car insurance	
Car breakdown cover	
Car petrol, diesel, or electricity	
Public transport fares or season tickets	
House telephone and broadband	
Mobile phone	
TV licence	
Media subscriptions	
Childcare	
Food	

Clothing	
Healthcare and medicines	
Life assurance	
Savings plan	
Charitable and church giving	
Birthdays and Christmas	
Entertainment and social events	
Sport and recreation	
Pets	
Holidays	
(Other)	
TOTAL MONTHLY AMOUNT	

Appendix 2
Applying for a Partner Account for Individuals with Stewardship

Baptist ministers-in-training are invited to apply for a Partner Account for Individuals with Stewardship. A Stewardship account allows your supporters to make donations to Stewardship in support of your training. If the donor is a UK taxpayer, Stewardship can claim Gift Aid which will increase their gift by 25%. Stewardship grant these funds to you, paying gifts received for your support into your bank account each month.

Once registered with Stewardship, you will also be able to access their training in support raising. This aims to equip you to build a team of partners who will support you in your call to ministry through encouragement, financial support and prayer.

Stewardship covers their costs by making a charge of 3.5% for gifts where Gift Aid is claimed, and 3% where there is no Gift Aid claimed. Assuming the majority of your supporters are UK taxpayers, the gain to you of the reclaimed Gift Aid will comfortably outweigh Stewardship's charges. If any of your supporters are higher rate taxpayers, they can also potentially benefit from further tax relief via their tax return.

Please note this is taxable income. Please refer to our taxation web pages on how to submit a Minister of Religion Tax Return.

You can apply up to two months before your training starts or at any point from then on until you conclude your training.

Eligibility Criteria

To apply you must fulfil the criteria set by Stewardship.

If you are unsure if you are eligible to apply, feel free to call the Stewardship team on 020 8418 8195.

Eligibility and the amount you can receive per year from Stewardship, funded by your supporters, can only be confirmed upon assessment of your completed application form.

The details of how you can apply for an account can be found at www.stewardship.org.uk/partner-account-individuals.

Stewardship will provide you with a unique giving link that you can send to potential supporters if your application is successful.

Baptists Together website profile

Once you have a Stewardship account, we invite you to create a profile that will be displayed on the supporting ministers-in-training webpage of the Baptists Together website. The page will give a bit of information about you and your calling to Baptist Ministry and direct supporters to your Stewardship account.

We encourage Baptists to support ministers-in-training, so you may find some supporters that you do not even know will support you in this way. However, placing your profile on this webpage is optional and you may still apply for a Stewardship account even if you choose to opt out of creating a public profile. Any profile you do create can remain on the website for the duration of your training. You can ask for it to be removed or amended at any time.

To set up your profile, please request a form by emailing ministriesforms@baptist.org.uk. If you are applying to begin ministerial training at college you will find this form among your enrolment paperwork sent to you by the Ministries Team. This form will ask you for:

1. Your first name and surname.
2. The name of your actual or intended ministry or mission placement whilst training.
3. The college where you are or will be training.
4. A head and shoulders photo of yourself, in a portrait rather than landscape format.
5. A very brief description of your sense of calling to, and hopes for, Baptist ministry. Please use no more than 120 words. Given the public nature of the webpage, please focus on your calling and hopes for ministry and avoid personal details such as family information.
6. The unique giving link to your Stewardship profile page, once you have it. You may submit your form before you have this link so that the Ministries Team can prepare your Baptists Together website profile page. However, the page cannot go 'live' until you send this link to Ministries Team.
7. Permission for your details to be published on the Baptists Together website.

Appendix 3
Baptists Together 'Funding for Training' loan option

Overview

Baptists Together have developed a student loan offer which can be used by Baptists Together ministers-in-training to fund their ministerial training. The loan is an unsecured personal loan from Kingdom Bank to you as the student. The Baptist Union of Great Britain (the legal entity behind Baptists Together) acts as guarantor. This allows loans to be offered without being tied to your income during your training period and enables Kingdom Bank to charge a reduced rate of interest. Baptists Together also covers the cost of interest during the training period and life assurance to cover repayment of the loan should you die before it is repaid.

You may apply for a loan once you have been accepted for ministerial training by your regional Ministerial Recognition Committee, or at any point from then on until you conclude your training.

Key features are as follows:

Use of the loan

- The Loan is primarily intended to cover your student fees for study at a Baptist college. These are Bristol Baptist College, Cardiff Baptist College, Luther King Theological College, Regent's Park College, or St Hild Centre for Baptist Ministry.
- Payments to cover your fees are made direct to a college against a fee invoice issued to you by the college.
- You may pay part of the fees from a Kingdom Bank loan and part from other resources if you wish.
- As well as fees, you may borrow up to £1,500 to cover expenditure resources needed for study, such as a laptop, books, and study aids. You pay for these resources yourself and request reimbursement from the loan by submitting to Kingdom Bank any receipts or invoices. You can only access this £1,500 after a first payment has been made to a college towards your student fees.
- The minimum amount you may borrow in any one year is £1,000. The maximum you may borrow in any one year is £10,000. The maximum you may borrow in total is £30,000.

Repayments

- As the borrower, you are responsible for repayment of the loan. You must therefore consider the affordability of the expected repayments.
- You are required to make a nominal repayment during your training period of £5 per month.
- The loan will normally be repaid over a 10-year repayment period, beginning on 1 September following the completion of your training.

- At the start of the repayment period, the outstanding loan balance will be the total amount you have drawn down during your training period less any repayments made
- Kingdom Bank will calculate your monthly repayments to repay the outstanding loan balance, together with accrued interest, over the repayment period and the monthly repayment amount will be confirmed to you.
- Baptists Together, alongside Kingdom Bank, obtain life assurance to repay any outstanding loan in the event of your death. The cost of this will be paid by Baptists Together.

Interest

- Interest on the loan is reviewed annually and set by the Bank. Any changes take account of recent interest rate movements and forecasts for future rates. The revised rate is confirmed by 1 June each year and applies from 1 September.
- For the twelve months from 1 September 2026, the interest rate is 7.15%.
- To help maintain a modest interest rate on this unsecured personal loan, the Baptist Union of Great Britain acts as guarantor.
- During your training period, interest on the loan is paid by the Baptist Union of Great Britain, so the amount you owe at the start of the repayment period is generally the amount you have drawn down.
- After completing your training, you become responsible for the interest charged on the loan and for repaying the outstanding loan balance in accordance with the agreed monthly repayment arrangements.

Application

Once you have been accepted for ministerial training by your regional Ministerial Recognition Committee (MRC), the MRC informs the Baptists Together Ministries Team. Ministries Team then sends you your ministerial training enrolment paperwork. This includes a draft application form for a Kingdom Bank loan, so that you may see what information will be required. If you do decide to apply, you should wait until your place at a college has been confirmed and then contact the Ministries Team. They will, with your permission, pass your details on to Kingdom Bank who will complete the form with you during a meeting. Kingdom Bank undertake credit checks.

If you have questions, please contact the Ministries Team on ministriesforms@baptist.org.uk.