

# American Baptist Church Leadership Institute of Northeastern Pennsylvania

## COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

### **I. Ministry:**

#### **Pastoral Leadership**

This course will help the student develop an understanding of various leadership styles, including his or her own style, and of the general role of the pastoral leader in a Baptist church. Attention will be given to planning, the dynamics of conflict and its resolution, personal spiritual development, presiding at various types of services, discipling new members, and issues surrounding confidentiality and clergy conduct.

#### **Christian Education**

This course will focus on the Christian education ministry of the local church by examining its foundation in Scripture, its purpose in ministry, and its impact on people. The course will emphasize discipleship. An adequate understanding of the learner will shape the student's understanding of Christian education. The course will seek to help the students understand Christian education within the context of the overall ministry of the church.

#### **Missions and Outreach**

The course examines the purpose of the church as it embraces Christ's call to "go and make disciples." Moving beyond a survival mentality, strategies for growth will be explored along with training in personal evangelism. An overview of the total mission work of the ABC/USA will be given and ways of establishing financial support for missions through the development of Christian stewardship will be covered.

#### **Pastoral Care**

The course will provide an introduction to the roles and functions of the pastor as a healer/comforter/enabler. Subjects covered will include: an overview of understanding psychology in the context of Christian ministry, human developmental stages, counseling techniques and resources, communication and listening skills, pastoral care in death/sickness/crises/change, awareness of the limits of your own skills/making referrals, taking care of yourself.

#### **Preaching**

Communicating God's Word effectively will be stressed. The personal preparation of the preacher, establishing the meaning of the text, the movement from interpretation to sermon development, sermon construction, and delivery of the sermon will be covered. Messages for special services, gaining feedback on sermons, and record keeping will also be addressed. Each student will present a sermon to the class.

## **II. Biblical Studies:**

### **New Testament**

The subject matter for this course covers the entire New Testament, including its historical and geographical background. Each book will be analyzed as to its historical setting, author, recipients, purpose, genre and theology. The concept and consolidation of the New Testament books and the development of our modern text will also be discussed.

### **Old Testament**

The course will cover the history of Israel by reviewing the Biblical, geographical and archeological data. The importance of God's covenant relationship with Israel will be examined and the messianic hope found throughout the Old Testament will be traced. Issues relating to the writing of the Old Testament and the development of the modern text will be discussed.

### **Biblical Interpretation**

The course is designed to provide skills in understanding the Bible and applying it in our world today. The nature of communication will be considered, and a systematic review of the various parts of the Bible and the ways we interpret those parts will be made. We will also consider how the Bible was written and assembled, how it has been interpreted through the course of time, and the theological issues involved in interpretation.

## **III. Christian Thought:**

### **Baptist History and Polity**

The course explores the origins, development and basic beliefs of Baptists, emphasizing an appreciation for the importance of knowing our rich Baptist heritage. There will be an examination of the associational, regional and national structures of the ABCUSA and of the typical organization styles and policies of the local church.

### **Theology**

The course will help students organize their thinking about faith issues. Topics covered will include: Scripture, God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, creation, humanity, sin, salvation, the Church, eschatology, ordinances, and the role of the pastor and laity. Each student will write a paper stating his or her personal theology in a clear and consistent way.