



Accessing and practising mentoring, pastoral supervision and spiritual direction

Mentoring, pastoral supervision and spiritual direction are three means of practising the CMD habit of accountability. In each case, you share with someone outside your ministry setting something of what is going on for you.

A mentor enables you to reflect on all aspects of your life and ministry and works with you to make positive change. Their role is to listen to the issues that you bring to them and then ask questions so that you see matters in the round and can identify ways of moving forward. They can help you gain a better understanding of yourself and clarify what your vision for ministry is. Spiritually, they are seeking to be an agent of God's transforming grace, helping you balance the demands and opportunities of ministry, leadership, friends and family, external commitments and so on. A mentor will challenge you, helping you to set goals and track your progress towards them.

To find a mentor, please first speak to your regional association. They hold a list of those trained to act as mentors. You can also browse the [Christian Coach and Mentor Network](#) website.

A pastoral supervisor provides you with a confidential and safe space to explore the issues that arise specifically from your work and practice as a minister. Emotional and spiritual life is often impacted by experiences of caring. Your capacity for caring is affected by how well you are managing the emotional burden. Pastoral supervisors offer preventative 'care for the carer'. They draw on psychological insights to reveal the impact your ministry has upon your own well-being and to help you navigate your work relationships. They reflect with you on ethical dilemmas. They help you to develop a sensible work/life balance and maintain appropriate boundaries.

To find a pastoral supervisor, you can request access to a list of Baptist ministers trained to provide supervision by emailing accompanimentcoordinator@baptist.org.uk. Your regional minister may also know of supervisors in your region. But you can also go to the website of APSE, the [Association of Pastoral Supervision and Education](#). APSE is the foremost network of pastoral supervisors in the UK. All their supervisors are trained to at least certificate level and have to work within a code of conduct.

A spiritual director helps you attend to your inner life and deepen your relationship with God. They enable you to discern what underlies the varying seasons of your ministry. Their role is mostly reflective as they listen to your understanding of how you encounter and respond to God. They may well suggest possible resources or practices that will aid your spiritual growth. They can help you establish a firm spiritual foundation out of which you find strength and wisdom for your ministry.

To find a spiritual director, you can request access to a list of Baptist ministers trained to provide direction by emailing accompanimentcoordinator@baptist.org.uk. Your regional minister may also know of directors in your region. You can also contact your Anglican diocese as they often keep a list of those offering spiritual directors. If you happen to know of a nearby retreat centre, they too may be able to point you in the right direction. You can also search online for spiritual directors, but you ought to check that they have been trained and that they themselves receive spiritual direction or supervision.

If you wish to train as a mentor, please speak your regional minister as some associations arrange their own training. Initial training to get you started is usually a single day. Alternatively, please contact Tim Fergusson in the Baptists Together Ministries Team who offers occasional online day training. His email is cmd@baptist.org.uk. For more advanced training, often resulting in a qualification, please see the list of providers on the training page of the [Christian Coach and Mentor Network](#) website.

If you wish to train as a pastoral supervisor, courses usually span nine to twelve months and cost around £1000-£1500. They may well mix onsite with online training. Accreditation with APSE, which enables you to advertise as a pastoral supervisor, is partly dependent upon gaining a certificate from one of these courses. You may train with:

[Spurgeon's College](#) online;
[The Sherwood Institute](#) in Nottingham; or
[Wesley House](#) in Cambridge.

Spurgeon's College and the Sherwood Institute offer the same syllabus created by the [Institute of Pastoral Counselling and Supervision](#). For an introduction to pastoral supervision, please read [Pastoral Supervision: A Handbook](#) by Jane Leach and Michael Paterson.

If you wish to train as a spiritual director, you could ask your local Anglican diocese as many run their own training programme, and these are often open to those outside the Anglican tradition. But you can also access training at the following places, some of which offer online options. Courses are likely to cost around £1000 and span up to two years.

[Sarum College](#) in Salisbury
[The London Centre for Spiritual Direction](#)
[Cambridgeshire Courses in Spiritual Direction](#)
[SpiDir Spiritual Direction Network](#) in London
[St. Bueno's](#) in North Wales
[Waverley Abbey](#) in Farnham, Surrey
[Essex Course in Spiritual Direction](#)

The [Retreat Association](#) may know of other training opportunities in your locality. It is important to pick a course that includes practising spiritual direction rather than merely theory. For an introduction to the principles of spiritual direction, please read [Spiritual Direction for Every Christian](#) by Gordon Jeff.

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