

## Colorado Family Church: Reflections On The 2022 Pastoral Internship

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In the summer of 2021, we decided that we wanted to host a pastoral internship for those currently in a pastoral position or that are considering it as a future path in life. Looking at the greater Unificationist Movement, we felt there was room for additional opportunities for pastoral education and training. Although we feel unqualified in many ways, we wanted to provide an opportunity to share our eight years of experience and how we've managed to make pastoring into a part of a harmonious family lifestyle.

Pastoring can be an incredibly rewarding experience, but like all things that have huge potential, it can be very challenging as well. According to 2021 statistics\*:

90% of pastors report the ministry was completely different than what they thought it would be like before they entered the ministry.

38% of pastors are thinking of quitting the ministry, 51% from mainline denominations.

70% of pastors report they have a lower self-image now than when they first started.

70% of pastors do not have someone they consider to be a close friend.

57% of pastors feel fulfilled yet discouraged, stressed, and fatigued.

The profession of "Pastor" is near the bottom of a survey of the most-respected professions, just above "car salesman".

1 out of every 10 pastors will actually retire as a pastor.

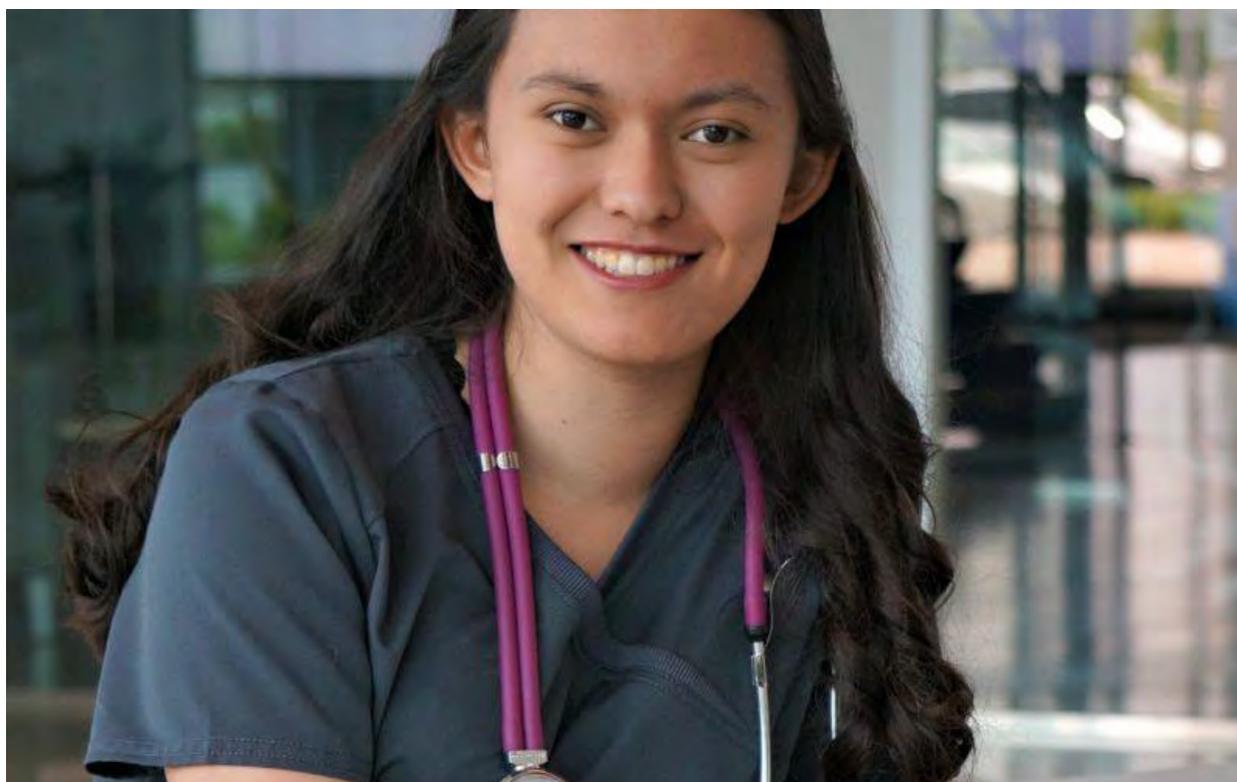
72% of the pastors report working between 55 to 75 hours per week.

84% of pastors feel they are on call 24/7.

80% believe pastoral ministry has negatively affected their families. Many pastor's children do not attend church now because of what the church has done to their parents.

If these statistics also have a bearing on what pastors and leaders in the Unification Movement experience, and we believe they do, then it is imperative that we make as much effort as possible to

prepare new pastors well and provide ongoing care and support for people in current leadership positions. Otherwise, we will most likely continue to see pastors resigning from burn-out or discouragement after a few short years. Therefore, we set some dates for three weeks in July of 2022 and started advertising. We had the capacity to house 3 interns, and although we had quite a few inquiries, in the end we only had one person. This young lady, A. Kuhlmann, 21 year old nursing student from Salt Lake City, became our first pastoral intern.



The three weeks that we spent together was truly a blessing. A. had many questions about what pastoral life looked like for our family, how we worked together as a couple, the effect on our family, our dreams and vision for the future, what challenges we've dealt with, our work and family life balance, and many more. On our part, A. became a part of our family for three weeks, accompanying us to gatherings at members' homes, going roller skating, getting boba, and much more. We wanted her to get the full experience of what life is like for us, and that also included challenging situations we were dealing with at the time.



#### **A. reading Purpose Driven Church while relaxing at a lake for a birthday party**

Besides all this, we also asked A. to read a daily chapter from Rick Warren's Purpose Driven Church, which is a great resource for all pastors and has been an instrumental guide for us to develop our ministry. We would then take time each day to talk about her reflections from her reading. We also spent time reading and discussing the speech titled, "How to Be a Leader" given by Rev. Moon in 1973. This speech provides ahead-of-its-time content on the heart and mindset of a good leader.

We also made sure to take some time to get into the beautiful Colorado Rocky Mountains with a hike and a trip to the Hot Sulfur Springs. A. even got a chance to observe honey being harvested from one of our beehives. At the end of the internship, A. was asked to give the Sunday sermon utilizing the tools and information she had learned during the internship. In our opinion, A. did a great job, and you can watch her message below if you wish.

All in all, we felt really good about this internship, and we hope to do it again next year. If you are reading this article and feel this might be something you or a friend might be interested in, please feel free to reach out to us. We will finish by sharing some excerpts from A.'s reflections and some photos.

*I quickly learned, however, that if pastorship is truly your calling, then so much of it is natural since pastoring largely involves personal care-- that the amount of joy and fulfillment you experience through caring and investing in others far outweighs the difficulty, that pastorship could actually be fun, and that when you offer yourself as a humble vessel for God to build His community, beautiful and amazing things will manifest.*

*I could feel in my heart that pastorship is my calling and could see a vision forward, but I couldn't believe that I could ever be adequate, worthy, or capable enough. One night during the internship, I was praying about this, and I felt like God so clearly told me that He does believe in me, that there is a path forward, and He would be so happy if I answered His calling. I realized that I have such an incredible support network around me and there is so much hope and potential in the Utah providence. This is why God brought me to Denver-- I feel a little bit like Joshua and Caleb following Moses through the wilderness-- I know I have so much growth ahead of me, but I am determined to grow to be the best vessel for God's heart that I can be and to be the one who answers His calling when the time is right.*

*On top of all of this, I feel like God gave me a bonus internship in being able to admire Mike and Adonia in their marriage and parenthood. The way that they love each other and are so happy together gives me so much hope for my own future Blessing. They have somehow managed to find the perfect harmony between work, life, and mission balance-- and so brilliant at it because they are committed to continually re-evaluating and adjusting based on what comes up in their lives. In the era of settlement, it is just as much the mission of a public person to care for his family as it is to invest in the providence, and it was such a joy to see how happy their children are and how involved Mike and Adonia are as parents.*

*Words could never really properly thank Pastors Mike and Adonia for all that they gave to me over the past three weeks. I am a better person for knowing them and they have impacted my life of faith like a handprint on my heart. They have given me so much hope and helped me to believe that it is possible. They've shown me that Pastoring can be joyful, fulfilling, and that you can still have an amazing marriage and family. I'm just so grateful to Heavenly Parent for guiding me here to show me what's next and believing in my heart. I'll definitely be back again soon:)*

