

MATTHEW SHALLENBERGER



I first felt called into ministry while I was a student at Southern Adventist University. At the time, I didn't know where God was leading me. I knew I wanted more out of life than pursuing worldly wealth or success, but ministry seemed like such a leap of faith. God's calling was persistent and undeniable, though, so I took that leap of faith. Since then God has led me on a journey of discovering my unique gifts and passions for ministry. For the past four years I have been blessed to serve in full-time pastoral ministry in the Georgia-Cumberland Conference.

I've had the opportunity to work as an associate pastor in a large church and as a district pastor with two small churches. Some of my strengths in ministry are preaching and teaching, leading worship, and music. I sing and play several instruments, and I love using music in my ministry whenever I can.

One of the highlights of my ministry so far has been the opportunity to work with children and young people, especially in the church school setting. Some of the aspects of children's ministry that I've engaged in include devotional talks, praise and worship, weeks of prayer, Bible studies, playing sports, and participating in school programs. I believe that children are vitally important to the life and mission of the church; without them we have no future. I am looking for a church that values young people and is discipling them to be the next generation of church leaders.

My wife, Emmalee, and I have two young boys, Malachi and Eli (they'll turn four and two this December). We're looking for a church that has other young families and programs for kids. We want our boys to grow up in an environment that nurtures them spiritually and makes church a place they love to be. We also want the opportunity to minister to other families and help create a positive, healthy church community. At this point in our lives we want a place where we can stay for a while, especially as we look to the future when our boys will be in school. We're looking for a place we belong, a family where we can love and be loved.

But most importantly we want to be in the center of God's will for our lives. We believe that God has been leading us all along. The path has not always been clear, but those times of uncertainty have strengthened our faith. And the times when He has illuminated our way have encouraged our hearts and deepened our resolve to serve Him. We trust that He will show us the way.