

A Job Narrative
Description of Conference Minister for Leadership Transitions
IN-MI Mennonite Conference

We seek to call a Conference Minister for Leadership Transitions who is God-centered, with a passion for connecting Anabaptist pastors and congregations in healthy relationships, so they can pursue God's calling to incarnate Jesus in their local settings. This person is able to hold this larger picture while tending the details of search and credentialing processes.

Who should the Conference Minister be?

A God-centered individual

As a primary qualification, the Conference Minister (CM) lives a Christ-centered life with a commitment to spiritual activities which nourish body, soul and spirit. This individual demonstrates good personal spiritual habits and disciplines. The CM functions out of a deep love and appreciation for the church as the Body of Christ and its call to live as ambassadors of God's reign.

A Spirit-led innovator

As a Spirit-led innovator, the Conference Minister encourages congregations to cultivate missional imagination as they move through processes of calling and affirming spiritual leaders. The CM models openness and an ability to work with diversity in helping pastors and church leaders build up the Body of Christ.

An approachable coach/encourager

As an encouraging coach, the Conference Minister helps all parties (search committees, pastoral candidates, credentialing candidates) move thoughtfully and efficiently through the discernment process. The CM is aware how these processes, tended with a pastor's heart, can assist in cultivating a missional imagination in congregations. The CM will have pastoral experience in a congregation as well as skills in mediation and conflict management. A good sense of humor and an ability to be flexible will be assets.

A gifted communicator

Congregations are responsible to alert the conference office when changes are on the horizon. The Conference Minister can also initiate contact with pastors, congregational leaders and congregations. As a wise and discerning listener, this person seeks to understand the particular perspective of the local congregation or individual while keeping in mind the broader picture in relation to IN-MI Mennonite Conference and Mennonite Church USA.

WHAT WILL THE CONFERENCE MINISTER FOR LEADERSHIP TRANSITIONS DO?

1. As a God-centered individual
 - a. Maintain and encourage personal spiritual practices that nourish body, soul and spirit.
 - b. Provide resources and opportunities for pastors and congregations to grow in their understanding of healthy discernment processes.
 - c. Walk with, encourage and empower individuals exploring a call to ministry.

2. As a Spirit-led innovator
 - a. Stay in touch with emerging cultural trends and willingly engage in experiments to test them with local realities.
 - b. Enjoy experimenting with and using technology to help with communications and building relationships with pastors and congregations.
 - c. Attend annual meetings of Mennonite Church USA conference ministers.

3. As an approachable coach/encourager
 - a. Guide congregations and individuals with integrity through the search and credentialing processes so that they feel empowered and encouraged.
 - b. Encourage leaders to engage challenges rather than avoid them.
 - c. As appropriate throughout the search and credentialing processes, connect congregations to resources (from the conference or other congregations) that encourage health and growth in pastoral and congregational mission and ministry.

4. As a gifted communicator
 - a. Develop trusting and effective relationships with pastors, congregational leaders and conference staff.
 - b. Oversee the process of transferring credentials into and out of IN-MI Mennonite Conference. Be the contact person for information about credentials.
 - c. Serve as the primary contact person in IN-MI Mennonite Conference to receive inquiries from individuals seeking pastoral placement and to receive information from denominational offices about potential candidates.
 - d. Build bridges of communication and enthusiasm about new things God is doing
 - i. Between congregations
 - ii. Between the conference body, conference leaders and congregations
 - iii. Between congregations and Mennonite Church USA
 - iv. Between IN-MI Mennonite Conference and other Mennonite Church USA conferences
 - e. Hold and reflect the larger church/denominational picture to pastors and congregations.

Other Requirements/Aspects of Job Description

The Conference Minister will be recommended by a search team consisting of the lead conference minister (chair), one person from the Missional Leadership Team (MLT) and one person from the Church Life Commission. The MLT will nominate the individual, who will then be affirmed by the delegates. The CM will participate in regular supervision and staff meetings. The CM will be ordained and have pastoral experience.

Adapted from work done by the IN-MI Conference Regional Conference Minister Task Force: Eldon Stoltzfus (chair), Denise Colona, Randy Detweiler, Jim Gerber, Peter Janzen, John Troyer, Ross Weber

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