

Peer Mentoring for Clergy New to Rural Settings

Starts Summer 2010

CiRCLe M is offering a *Peer Mentoring* program to help clergy make a gracious and informed entry into their new rural site by connecting them with a local guide to their community's history and cultural dynamics. This two-year program begins in Summer 2010.

Starting ministry in a rural parish can be daunting for someone who has never served a rural parish before. Even those who have previously done so, quickly recognize that rural communities and congregations are highly unique with complex social networks that must be navigated with care. It takes considerable time to know a community and for them to get to know and trust you.

In this program, Clergy will be paired with a local mentor who can help them come to understand the history, key players and important customs of the community. Clergy will be assisted to identify an insightful, long-time member of the community with whom they can form a mentoring team. This person may be a professional—a teacher or doctor, for example—but will not be a member of the clergy person's congregation. This allows for some freedom and confidentiality in their conversations.

Once a mentor has been identified, clergy-mentor teams will come together for a two-day training event that will help them get to know each other in a structured way and provide some tools for intentionally exploring the life and culture of their community. It will also help to set expectations for the mentoring relationship. During the two years of the formal mentoring relationship, teams will be brought into contact with each other once a year face-to-face, and at other times by email, conference call, or other means. They will celebrate their rural ministry experiences and share mentoring strategies.

Participants will be responsible for their transportation. Accommodation can be arranged very inexpensively. The training itself will cost each team \$450 per year. In some cases subsidy for training and other costs is available from grants that support this program.

If you are new or about to move to a new ministry, give us a call and we will include you in a group.

Contact Cam Harder, Executive Director of CiRCLe M: 306-966-7867 (Saskatoon);
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