

***At CiRCLe M we care a lot about rural churches and communities!  
And we think that they ought to be more closely connected.***



**Our central purpose** is rural ministry leadership development.

**Our objective** is to build bridges between rural churches and other institutions and organizations concerned with the well-being of rural communities

**Our method** is to develop and coordinate instruction, research, mentors, materials, and conferences towards our purpose and objective.

**We are interdenominational** and do not require the folks we work with to subscribe to a specific statement of faith.

## Our Vision ...

- clergy and lay leaders obtain training that is specifically geared to rural contexts
- rural congregations are well-equipped to work with businesses, schools, health care facilities and other churches to address the needs of their communities.
- solid research is done on the ways in which rural churches are already catalysts for hope and health in their communities
- Rural and aboriginal churches work together to strengthen relationships between their communities
- denominational seminaries have resources to give their students a solid theoretical and practical introduction to rural ministry
- clergy that are new to rural settings have a trained rural mentor to help them learn the possibilities and pitfalls of rural ministry in that particular place.



## CiRCLe M



### **Centre for Rural Community Leadership and Ministry**

*... equipping clergy and lay leaders in rural and remote places to help their churches be catalysts for the development of healthy Canadian communities.*

In Partnership with



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# Training for Rural Community Leadership and Ministry

**CiRCLe M was created to help rural churches and communities in a variety of ways:**

## Training in Rural Stress Intervention

This is a workshop for clergy, lay leaders and community members. It will help them to:

- Assess their community's resiliency (e.g. ability to deal effectively with rapid changes such as a boom that stresses infrastructure, or with a disaster, loss of industry/jobs).
- Identify key strengths and weaknesses in community resiliency.
- Begin to make plans to strengthen their community.

Participants gather in their own communities through distance format over two or three days.

## Mentoring

This is for clergy or lay leaders new to rural areas, or those with experience willing to mentor new folks.

With church leaders, the mentoring would normally be cross-denominational (allows greater sense of confidentiality). To some extent it will be done somewhat cross-

professionally as well. For example, a doctor might mentor a pastor new to town, or vice versa.

Pairs will be trained and given a pattern for the mentoring, supportive check-ins, and a regional gathering once or twice a year of pairs to compare notes, share ideas and strategies for helping new folks acclimatize to their contexts. The intent is to ensure that rural leaders are able to stay long and to reduce stress.

## Resource Centre

This is a place where rural congregations and communities can access materials related to: rural community development, current rural issues, rural worship resources, ideas for outreach to youth, seniors, etc, leadership processes for rural church and community planning, and others. Materials are downloadable or sent out by mail for postage cost only.

## STM in Rural Ministry & Community Development

This is a distance-format advanced degree — *Master of Sacred Theology*. It involves clergy,

congregations and their communities in a process of discovering that they have many undiscovered gifts/assets, no matter what their size. Students will be trained to mobilize these gifts for community health and resilience using tools such as Appreciative Inquiry, Asset-mapping and other positive, energy-building processes.

## Rural and First Nations Conversations

Beginning in 2011, CiRCLe M plans to draw together church leaders interested in stimulating conversations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.

## Conferences in Rural Ministry and Communities Development

Conferences offer cross-denominational and interdisciplinary idea-sharing and connections. Keynote speakers help leaders to see their congregation and community strengths. Workshops develop skills and facilitate sharing experiences.

