



Cultivating a Culture of Call

A resource for the missional church
from Denominational Ministry
Mennonite Church USA

The Ministry Inquiry Program

Over the last 15 years, the Ministry Inquiry Program (MIP) has provided real-time pastoral ministry opportunities for nearly 300 Mennonite college students. The program functions as a partnership of the respective Mennonite college, the student's home congregation, area conference, the congregation where the student is in ministry and Mennonite USA Denominational Ministry. Each of these five entities provides \$500 toward a \$2,000 scholarship and a \$500 stipend for the student.

A student's participation in MIP usually begins with the student expressing interest in what it is like to be a pastor. Or someone in the college or the student's home congregation may encourage a student to give pastoral ministry a try through the Ministry Inquiry Program. The student makes contact with the person on campus who is in charge of MIP for more information and fills out an application. The student and the campus coordinator then work together on the kind of placement that reflects the student's interest and will best facilitate the student's learning.

The ministry experience is for 13 weeks during the summer. Typically, this happens after the student's sophomore or junior year with the \$2,000 scholarship available for the following year. During these 13 weeks, students have opportunity for a wide range of ministry experiences in a congregation, with regular times of supervision with the pastor. Reading assignments and times of focused reflection are also part of the experience.

After the 13 weeks, the student and the supervising pastor write a reflective report on the experience, including what the student has learned and ways that God may have been leading during this time of ministry inquiry.

Of the nearly 300 students involved in MIP over the last 12 years, more than 25 have continued in some kind of full-time ministry following college. For those who have chosen other vocational paths, the MIP experience has nearly always left a positive impression on the student and given them a unique window in the life of a congregation and the experience of those who have been called to pastoral ministry.

Perhaps there is someone in your congregation currently attending a Mennonite college who would benefit from an experience in the Ministry Inquiry Program. Or perhaps your congregation would welcome the opportunities to host a MIP student.

For more information on the Ministry Inquiry Program or if you are interested in serving as a host church for MIP, contact Denominational Ministry at 866-866-2872 or email at leel@mennoniteusa.org.

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