

Early Ministry Institute The Presbytery Relationship

Early Ministry Institute (EMI) is an ongoing ministry of the Leadership Development Committee of the Synod of the Northeast to provide a continuing education experience for pastors new to parish ministry. An EMI Management Team is made up of representatives of participating presbyteries and the Leadership Development Committee.

Any Presbytery within the Synod may participate in the program when it is appropriate for them to do so. Participation continues through the three years scheduled for any minister of that Presbytery who begins EMI.

Presbyteries which elect to participate in the Early Ministry Institute enter into a formal arrangement with the Leadership Development Committee of the Synod of the Northeast.

Because it is the Committee on Ministry which deals with Pastor Nominating Committees during the search process and with Sessions as new calls are issued, it is this Committee which must be able to interpret EMI and the commitments required. Information must be shared with all churches that may call a pastor who has never served a congregation.

A Presbytery that becomes a participant in EMI agrees to:

1. Instruct the Committee on Ministry of the presbytery to provide a contact person to the EMI Management Team -- To assure effective communication, the management team must have a contact person (not the General Presbyter) who is familiar with the program and who is a current member of the Committee on Ministry.
2. Recruit sufficient mentors -- Mentors are an important element of the ongoing support system. Each EMI participant should be able to select a mentor with whom he or she is comfortable in meeting on a regular basis. EMI will provide training for mentors as to their role and responsibilities in the program.
3. Pay Presbytery's portion of the financial costs. In 2011, \$250 per participant in the program. The Synod will bill the presbytery.
4. Require that participation in EMI be included in all calls and contracts to eligible ministers -- Although this is perhaps the most difficult provision, requiring specific action of the Presbytery, it is an essential component in the agreement. The action does, however, provide the Committee on Ministry a clear opportunity to implement its role in oversight of continuing education. It also emphasizes to the congregation and new pastor that Presbytery is intentional in its support for new pastors and for the congregations which call them.
5. Insure that sufficient continuing education time and funds are included in the terms of call to and contracts with eligible pastors -- By insuring this form of congregational and presbytery support, the participant is not asked to carry a financial burden and is free to take the necessary time to participate.
6. Secure a formal commitment from sessions that they will support their new pastor's attendance at EMI for three years
-- This is a way of assuring support and understanding by the congregation and will provide the pastor with the opportunity of sharing the learnings of the Institute with the lay leaders of the congregation.
7. The Presbytery will negotiate a formal agreement with sessions and new pastors to make possible the pastor's attendance in the Early Ministry Institute for the full three years at the Synod current rates. A copy of the agreement will be sent to the Synod Office.