



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF IOWA

225 37th Street, Des Moines, IA 50312
(515) 277-6170
iowaepiscopal.org

Regional Missioners Job Description

I. Overview

The prophet Jeremiah told the people, “Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare” (29:7). The need and opportunity we seek to address with the Regional Mission Initiative is this: How can our faith communities, working alongside others, seek the welfare of the city and sustain a thriving and vibrant community in the midst of depopulation realities in rural Iowa?

[The Diocese of Iowa’s Regional Mission Initiative](#) (RMI) is an immersive program to support and strengthen our lay and clergy leadership in small churches to address the challenges facing our shrinking communities. We are seeking three priests to serve as area missioners and work intensively with cohorts of up to nine congregations each in three geographic areas of our state, over a period of three and a half years. The missioners would live in the region they serve.

The missioners will gather with up to three lay people from each of the small churches they work with in their region in a cohort of mutual learning and support. Missioners will facilitate the cohort’s engagement with rich theological formation and spiritual practices, alongside community organizing methods, and asset-based community development. They will draw on data-driven research and learning modules developed at Iowa State University as part of the [Rural Shrink Smart Initiative](#) funded by the National Science Foundation and other tools to build new partnerships to strengthen the networks of relationships, interactions, and resources within the community.

II. Duties and Responsibilities

The three missioners will work directly with a network of existing lay leaders and retired and/or part-time clergy leaders in those regional areas to:

- Find ways to invest in the health and welfare of their towns to sustain vibrant community in the midst of depopulation realities
- Provide coaching in relational work to develop life-giving partnerships within their local communities
- Work with and nurture a variety of expressions of church in local contexts where there is no current Episcopal presence within an hour’s drive
- Encourage and support creative public projects to be more visible as a progressive, inclusive faith tradition
- Support ongoing leadership formation in each congregation, including robust Christian formation for all ages, lay ministry training, and vocational discernment (including ordination)
- Discern and develop sustainable leadership options to best serve each congregation’s vision and mission
- Gather and share information and resources across the regions and our diocese

Throughout the three and a half years of the project, each missioner will spend much of their working time each week in each community in a rotation, supplementing the supply or part-time



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clergy that the community may already have and officiating worship, preaching, offering formation, lay ministry training, and vocational discernment opportunities in person and on Zoom.

III. Gifts and Skills We Seek

We are seeking 3 priests who are ministry developers, with a genuine heart for equipping and empowering lay leaders. We are looking for creative and adventurous community organizers who embrace a theology of abundance. We need experienced facilitators, comfortable leading discussions in person and on Zoom. Experience working with small churches and small towns is important. Experience with coaching, congregational redevelopment, Asset-Based Community Development, and the College for Congregational Development would all be useful. A demonstrated history of working both independently and collaboratively is paramount.

The Episcopal Diocese of Iowa values diversity of culture and thought and seeks talented, qualified employees regardless of race, gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age, gender identity and expression, or any other protected classification under Federal, State or Municipal law as well as the Canons of the Episcopal Church and resolutions of the Episcopal Church General Convention.

IV. What we can offer you

- The opportunity to work with committed followers of Jesus across the state who will partner with you to seek the good of their neighbors and their town
- The chance to work in new ways towards ensuring the quality of life in small towns
- Co-workers on the diocesan staff that function as a collaborative ministry development team
- The technology and support needed to work remotely
- Financial assistance with moving expenses
- A base salary of \$70,000, with cell phone, 100% full family insurance, mileage, pension, and a low-moderate cost of living
- Continuing Education and coaching training
- 4 weeks (5 Sundays) paid vacation

V. To apply

Send your OTM portfolio or ELCA equivalent, a resume, and a cover letter to the Rev. Cn. Meg Wagner at mwagner@iowaepiscopal.org. Applications will be accepted until April 21, 2024.