

Proposal for a Spiritual Directors and Pastoral Counselors Listing

Within Mountain States Mennonite Conference

The Ministerial Council is proposing that we list the Mennonite Spiritual Directors and Pastoral Counselors that are active members of congregations in Mountain States Mennonite Conference on the Conference Website for the following reasons:

1. **Geographical distance.** We are a geographically scattered conference of churches. Pastors of Congregations have limited time for counseling. In addition, congregational members may wish to work with a Spiritual Director or Pastoral Counselor who is not a member of their home congregation. Ordinarily, this may require long drives to meet with a person with similar faith perspectives in person.
2. **Safe Distancing recommendations.** Since face to face meetings may not be possible, for personal safety reasons (due to the presence of CO-VID 19 in all of our communities) we need other ways to meet. Other ways of interacting are now possible and more familiar, as a result of Tele Health, Zoom, Google Meet and Skype capabilities and usage this Spring and Summer 2020.
3. **Resource information.** This listing would provide the names of credentialed resource people to serve the spiritual direction/ pastoral counseling needs of congregants. It would provide a brief biographical profile including the type of training and experience each person has and the areas that they specialize in. Contact information would be listed as well.

Qualifications for listing on the website and Accountability-

1. **Spiritual Directors** would be members of Mountain States Mennonite Conference. They would be required to adhere to the Code of Ethics for Spiritual Directors published by Spiritual Directors International. They would also be required to become members of the Mennonite Spiritual Directors Network. (contact@mennosdn.org) There is a one page application on line for SDI and MSDN.
2. **Pastoral Counselors** would be required to show appropriate training and certification. They would be encouraged to belong to the American Association for Pastoral Counseling or American Association for Professional Chaplains and adhere to the ethical and accountability guidelines of said organization.

A form would be submitted to the conference listing biographical and formal training information. The Conference Minister and Ministerial Council chair would vet each application. These persons would be affirmed by their congregations and by the conference. Active and Retired Pastors and Chaplains would be accountable to Conference Leadership through an Annual Accountability Plan and participation in Healthy Boundary Training every three years, plus agree to have regular Supervision, in order to retain an ACTIVE credential with the conference. Congregations would have an affirmation service for those from their congregation.

Cost of Services – Fee guidelines are available from the Conference Minister. Some persons use a fixed fee schedule and some operate on a donation only basis. Costs should not be a major barrier for persons to get the help they need.