



Caring for One Another in Love

Clergy and Laity Care

The life of a clergyperson carries with it a number of unique challenges and anxieties. The burden does not just fall on them, but also members of their family who support their ministry. We also recognize that the leadership demands of clergy and laity, and the added pressures experienced by all our members, have been even more troubling since the Pandemic began.

To care for our most valuable resources, the Conference offers several resources for our clergy, laity, Conference staff, and their families. There are resources to address physical, mental, and family health concerns. Other resources provide practical information and guidelines around specific areas of concern in their life, for example: financial health, time management, and vocational discernment. We invite and encourage our clergy, laity, Conference staff, and their families to utilize the resources listed below.

Human Resources/Benefit Office and the Conference Board of Pension

Contact Persons:
Joni Mardesen, Dir HR/CBO
Kristina Merfeld, HR/Benefit Manager

Employee Assistance Program through Employee & Family Resources

The Iowa Conference Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) provides appointed clergy, Conference staff, and their family members a variety of resources including confidential counseling, consulting, resourcing, and coaching benefits to help with or guide you through daily concerns, personal issues, or work/life stresses. Your EAP Benefits are cost free to you, confidential, and available 24/7/365.

A few of the benefits, resources, and services available include: Managing Stress; Relationship & Family Concerns; Coping with Anxiety & Depression; Personal Growth & Development; Substance Use & Addiction; and Legal, Financial and Tax-Related Questions; Credit Concerns & Reports, as well as Identity-Theft.

To view a comprehensive listing of the services available through Employee & Family Resources, please follow this link to review or download a copy of the IAUMC EAP Benefits Summary:

[IAUMC EAP Benefit Summary - English](#)

[IAUMC EAP Benefit Summary - Spanish](#)

Wespath

Wespath has multiple resources to address the overall wellbeing of our clergy, Conference staff, and their families. The resources available include benefit education, retirement readiness, health coaching through Virgin Pulse among others. These resources are made available online, over the phone, and in person as Wespath representatives visit the Conference.

To view the resources available through Wespath, please visit their website at www.wespath.org and be sure to read through the electronic and hard-copy communications sent by Wespath to your email and/or mailing address. To review your individual benefits and/or update your personal information, you may access that information through your online Wespath account at: [Benefits Access](#)

Office of Clergy and Leadership Excellence and the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry

Contact Persons:

Rev. Dr. Lanette Plambeck, Dir Clergy & Leadership Excellence

Lisa Steel, Director of Ministerial Services

The Office of Clergy and Leadership Excellence works diligently to connect clergy and laity of the Iowa Conference with resources, opportunities, networks and supports that will encourage and empower connexion and collaboration in ministry. These resources and support include: the connection of Orders/Fellowship, care teams, mentoring supports, connection to ministry coaches and spiritual directors, and continuing education opportunities offered across the Conference and the denomination. Individual referrals may also be made to the Des Moines Pastoral Care and Counseling Center and other forms of coaching and mentoring.

As the context within our communities, Conference, and across the globe continues to shift, the Office of Clergy and Leadership Excellence strives to offer relevant and meaningful opportunity for connection and dialogue, including:

Reflective Supervision - out of partnership with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry - a unique hybrid of spiritual direction, ministry coaching and pastoral care.

“Abiding in Exile” and other supports and resources coming out of the Conference Mental Health Task Force - this is a weekly e-letter for clergy and laity both; and,

“Redeeming Babel”, which is in partnership with Duke Divinity School available to clergy and laity both. This is a 7-week study on anxiety as an opportunity for spiritual growth.

National Alliance of Mental Illness offers a fantastic lunch-time webinar through the NAMI Iowa connection.

If you are experiencing challenges or anxiety, or if a member of your family could benefit from additional support, please reach out through the support systems listed above. For more information or assistance in connecting with these support systems and resources, you may contact a member of the Human Resources team to assist you. Please send a message to HR@iaumc.org and a member of our team will respond as quickly as possible.