Overview

The School of Theology’s Missional Engagement Initiative (MEI) program is a six-month learning lab where teams based in churches, schools, or other organizations learn the fundamental practices of collaborative leadership. Through organizing a mission-focused project, teams are coached to engage in an action-reflection model where they plan, act, evaluate, and celebrate. In addition to the regular meetings and events, teams participate in a Taste & See discernment event; three Saturday trainings; regular coaching sessions with an experienced guide; and a program conclusion and celebration.

Projects typically have taken congregational leaders to “places that we don’t usually go and seeing things we haven’t seen before,” and offer a broader vision of God’s mission and the church’s potential, as well as a deeper sense of hope for the future.

—School of Theology’s Mission Enterprise Zone

“Be The Change Alabama” 2015 Participant

To register or learn more, contact:
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theology.sewanee.edu/seminary/academics/contextual-education/missional-engagement-initiative
Missional Leadership Practices

1. Shared Story—telling our stories in ways that motivate others to join.
2. Relational Commitment—building relationships with others enabling purpose, meaning, and outcomes.
3. Strong Team Structure—developing stable, bounded teams that achieve results and build others’ leadership.
4. Creative Strategy—setting goals, inviting others to participate, and achieving those goals.
5. Measurable Outcomes—measuring, evaluating, and learning from successes and failures of our shared action.
6. Guidance & Awakened Hearts—mutual support for living the baptismal covenant together at the intersection of urgent community need.

Frequently Asked Questions

How much does it cost?
- There is no program fee. The only cost is your team’s time and travel expenses. This is a mutually enriching opportunity for learning and growth with our field education partners.

What constitutes a team?
- Four or more people

What makes for a successful participant?
- Wants to lead with others, not alone
- Seeks transformation and learning
- Models flexibility and commitment
- Interested in the intersection of faith and action and is comfortable with Christian worship.

Previous Alabama Participants

Church of the Nativity, Huntsville
St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Huntsville
St. John’s Episcopal Church, Decatur
Church of the Good Shepherd, Decatur
St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, Scottsboro
St. Philip’s Episcopal Church, Ft. Payne

2016 Core Leadership Team

The Rev. Evan Garner
St. John’s Episcopal Church, Decatur, Alabama

Ms. Marilyn Lands
Church of the Nativity, Huntsville, Alabama

Ms. Lisa Leopold
Southside Abbey, Chattanooga, Tennessee

Mr. Rob McAllister
The University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee

The Rev. Lisa McIndoo
The Diocese of West Tennessee, Memphis, Tennessee

Dr. Andrew Thompson
The School of Theology, Sewanee, Tennessee

The Rev. Kammy Young
The School of Theology, Sewanee, Tennessee

The program has been described as “exceeding expectations,” “providing us with tools that we will continue to need in the future,” and “just fantastic stuff!”

—2015 Mission Enterprise Zone Participants