

DISCERNMENT GUIDE

it's **epic**
remembering
God's future

 Mennonite Church Canada

assembly 2011



it's **epic**
remembering
God's future

The theme for Adult Assembly 2011
"it's epic: remembering God's future"

is taken from Revelation 21 & 22. In the beginning God walked with us in a garden of abundance and beauty that met all our needs (Gen 1:28-30). Though we broke our covenant with God, Jesus came as "God with us" so that we could remember our past relationship and count on God's promise to make a home among mortals again in the future (Rev. 21-22). God with us; remembering God's future. Now that's epic!

The primary purpose of the Adult Assembly is
"To call Assembly participants to make a commitment or strengthen their commitment to Jesus Christ and His church."



Mennonite Church Canada

ASSEMBLY 2011 • Waterloo, Ontario

July 4-July 8 • Revelation 21:1-4, 22-26 and 22:1-5

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HOW TO USE THIS DISCERNMENT GUIDE

This book contains the discernment topics will will address.

Please read through these discernment topics carefully and come prepared to participate.

A more detailed agenda can be found in the Program Book, which will be available onsite.

We hope that you find this Discernment Guide to be a helpful way of visualizing the depth and breadth of your denomination, and the work that we do together.

ASSEMBLY PURPOSES AND GOALS

The primary purposes of the Mennonite Church Canada Annual Delegate Assembly are to:

1. Provide opportunities for participants to build up and nurture the church by:
 - a. Forming faith and Christian identity from an Anabaptist Mennonite perspective, in children and adults.
 - b. Learning about and discerning Mennonite Church Canada's participation in God's work.
 - c. Debating issues facing the church and issuing statements as appropriate.
 - d. Worshiping and building community with people from across the national church.
 - e. Learning through seminars, displays and special events, which highlight available resources.
2. Conduct the business of the organization as described in the Mennonite Church Canada bylaws¹ by:
 - a. Reviewing the work and ministry of Mennonite Church Canada.
 - b. Accepting or rejecting the budgets and financial statements of Mennonite Church Canada.
 - c. Appointing an auditor.
 - d. Accepting, rejecting or removing area churches as members or as provisional members.
 - e. Electing its officers, Boards, Councils, and Committees.
 - f. Amending the bylaws of Mennonite Church Canada as needed and monitoring adherence to those bylaws.

Approved by Support Services Council March 6, 2009

¹ These are summary statements. See Part III, Section 8 of the Mennonite Church Canada bylaws for a full description of the duties and powers of voting delegates.

Words from the Moderator

We remember that God provides the leadership needed for God's future

Andrew Reesor-McDowell

Welcome to the 12th annual delegate sessions of Mennonite Church Canada titled "*It's Epic: Remembering God's future.*" Like Christ, as part of the people of God, we are chosen (called), holy (set aside for the work of God) and beloved of God. Gratefully remembering God's goodness strengthens us to work for God's future.

As Mennonite Church Canada, we gather from 225 congregations in five Areas Churches and over two dozen related ministry partner organizations, to carry on God's kingdom work. By coming together in these sessions, we remember and affirm what we believe together, we live out our beliefs based on the teachings of Jesus, and we are called to God's future as we discern the movement of God's spirit in the church and in the world that God so dearly loves.

We have a strong and inspired vision statement, *Healing and Hope*, which we know is part of God's past, present and future. Our purpose and identity statement "...called, equipped and sent..." remind us that the people of God have always been called by remembering God's leading in the past and then sent into God's future with hope for the Kingdom of God.

Remembering God's Gift of Dedicated Leaders

Mennonite Church Canada and our founding church bodies have been blessed with many dedicated leaders who have helped us remember God's goodness and lead us in hope. Recently, I read *Becoming a National Church* by Adolf Ens, *JJ Thiessen, A Leader for His Time* by Esther Epp-Tiessen, and *David Toews Was Here* by Helmut Harder. Remembering the contribution of the many church leaders who accepted the sacred call to serve the church, often in difficult circumstances, has been a wonderful exercise in remembering God's goodness and approaching God's future with hope.

Gratefulness for new leaders

Many ministries related to Mennonite Church Canada are saying 'thank you' to dedicated leaders and welcoming new leaders. Last year we introduced, and this year are pleased to welcome, Willard Metzger as General Secretary. I am grateful that he is willing to joyfully take on the significant demands of leadership. Willard had served as Chair of the Christian Witness Council for 10 years before being called to the new role of General Secretary and brings many leadership gifts to the church. At a pastor's supper sponsored by the General Board in Saskatchewan last November, I found Willard, an hour after everyone else had left, enthusiastically engaged with a group of youth who had joined the supper to see how the church works. I don't know where he gets the energy, but he has it.

Hope in the midst of change

This is a time of change at Mennonite Church Canada, not only in leadership but also in organizational structure. At the Delegate Assembly 2010, there were presentations and discussions on the downward giving trends to the national church and upward giving trends to congregations and related ministries. We celebrate and encourage the continued generosity of our members to all parts of the church. At the same time, the leadership of the national church and Executive Staff are implementing plans to reduce the Mennonite Church Canada organizational structure, to create a smaller entity that focuses on the essential components of a national church. At this time, we are estimating a need to reduce by about \$500,000, or 13%. For many volunteer leaders and staff this is an unsettled time as we work through the changes. We ask for your prayers for wisdom.

Remembering with gratitude

We value over two dozen related ministries that support the work of Mennonite Church Canada. This past year and the coming year is a time of organizational change for many of our related ministries. As in the past, the church is well served by the staff and volunteer leaders of these related ministries. For example:

- Mennonite Central Committee Canada (MCCC) is now implementing the results of the New Wineskins process which sees MCC as a ministry of the Anabaptist churches and will strengthen the accountability of MCC to the supporting Anabaptist church bodies. Mennonite Church Canada supports a new direction where the Council of Canadian Anabaptist Leaders (CCAL) will recommend and affirm appointments to the MCCC Board. Thank you to Arli Klassen, Don Peters and Neil Janzen for their leadership.
- Conrad Grebel University College has recently announced the appointment of a new President, Dr. Susan Schultz Huxman. We are deeply appreciative of the long-time leadership provided to the church by Henry Paetkau as Pastor, past Denominational Minister of Mennonite Church Canada, and most recently as President of CGUC.
- Canadian Mennonite University is now seeking a new



Andrew Reesor-McDowell

President following the lifetime of faithful service of Gerald Gerbrand.

- The Christian Formation Council and the General Board have endorsed the proposal of Mennonite Publishing Network to merge with Third Way Media. Thank you to Ron Rempel, (Executive Director) and Phil Bontrager (Board Chair) who will both be retiring from these roles after years of faithful service in difficult circumstances.

On behalf of the General Board we are deeply grateful for dedication of the many leaders past and present who share their God-given gifts to strengthen the church for Kingdom work.

Being a Faithful Church

The General Board works to strengthen the church both now and in the future. This year and in future years we will continue to strengthen the capacity of our church to discern God's purposes and methods to build his Kingdom. The *Being a Faithful Church* process of discernment has considered papers at Assembly in 2009 and 2010. Paper #3 will be considered at the Assembly this summer.

The reason we are in the *Being a Faithful Church* (BFC) process is that it is the calling of the church. When telling of God's purposes in a particular matter, Scripture often speaks more than once. For example, Jesus said, "You have heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy, but I say to you, love your enemies..." The Church carries a similar responsibility as it discerns God's will for our time. When the Church "speaks again" it does one of three things: it says the same thing it has said before (e.g. loving the enemy means pacifism); makes incremental changes (e.g. moves from no resistance to non-violent resistance); or it says something new.

Five focus issues have been identified for the BFC process: Unity and Diversity in the Church, Being a Peace Church, Witness in the Context of Religious Pluralism, Human Sexuality in the Life of the Church, and Perspectives on Ecological Concerns. The General Board of Mennonite Church Canada anticipates engaging the issue of human sexuality in the church next, which will include specific questions such as common law marriage, same sex relationships, extra-marital sex, pornography, or other issues. The order and pacing of these questions will be decided in consultation with many parts of Mennonite Church Canada.

The *Being a Faithful Church* process has 6 components.

1. Wide participation. The General Board will invite individuals, congregations, Area Churches, and special interest groups to contribute.
2. Affirmation. While working through issues, the church affirms past discernment, such as the *Confession of Faith*, as having authority until the church speaks again.
3. A missional calling. The church is called to be attentive to the transforming initiatives of God in creation and to extend Christ's love to all people.
4. Discerning together. Mennonite Church Canada speaks into issues only after discussions and approval by delegate body.
5. Unity. Our unity is given to us by Jesus. It is our prayer that the discernment process will energize the church. Discernment is part of our life together as Mennonite Church Canada.
6. Understanding. A commitment to be the kind of church that makes a place for those who have an alternative understanding to the majority.

Thank you for your generosity toward the work of Mennonite Church Canada. Each part of the church is needed to strengthen God's work in the world.

Andrew Reesor-McDowell
Moderator,
Mennonite Church Canada

RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions from area churches, congregations, or individual delegates in Mennonite Church Canada assemblies

1. We (want to) recognize that all our discussion and decision-making in the church is an attempt to discern God's will and to align our energies with what God is doing.
2. We want to create ways for the members to raise concerns and recommendations and to share/test insight into God's will and a prophetic word.
3. We accept the process of introducing discussion and testing ideas through the presentation of motions, discussing those following (a modified version of) Robert's Rules of Order, and recording an action either by identifying a consensus or recording a vote.
4. We want to respect the time of the delegates, to use it efficiently.
5. We want to respect the churches and the delegates by giving them opportunity to consider in advance the issues that will be discussed on the Assembly floor.
6. We believe we can best manage the resolutions initiated by members through an ad hoc Resolutions Committee. This Committee can work best if it receives resolutions in advance, and can serve the delegates and churches best if it makes the resolutions available in advance.
7. In order to serve the delegates well, the Resolutions Committee is given responsibility to decide which proposed resolutions will be debated. Some proposed resolutions may be combined with others or modified for presentation and some may be referred to the General Board or other body.
8. If the delegates disagree with a decision of the Resolutions Committee they can, with a majority vote, determine to bring a motion to the floor.
9. The attached statement defines the processes which guide the Resolutions Committee in its work.
3. Congregations will be invited, when the assembly registration materials are sent out, to submit anticipated resolutions by May 31. The Resolutions Committee will consider and, as appropriate, edit the resolutions and will make them available to delegates by posting on the web site and sending to each congregation (via email or fax if possible) no later than June 15.
4. During the Assembly, the Resolutions Committee will be seated at the front of the meeting room at a specially marked table during the business sessions. It has three tasks:
 - a. It prepares procedural resolutions such as recommending floor privileges, thanking hosts, etc.
 - b. It formulates motions when asked by the delegate body or the moderator.
 - c. It receives resolutions from delegates, and ensures that they are clear and appropriate. Delegates have asked that resolutions be worded in plain English, avoiding formality and lengthy introductions.
5. Resolutions from delegates will normally be directed to the Resolutions Committee for processing. Delegates will be made aware that resolutions need to be submitted in time for the Resolution Committee to process them adequately and for moderators to schedule them into the business sessions.
6. A resolution should include the names of the mover and seconder. The Resolutions Committee does not move actions.
7. The Resolutions Committee has the prerogative to combine resolutions with others or modify them for presentation; to refer a resolution to the General Board or other body as an alternative to delegate action; or to rule a motion out of order. Wording changes need to be checked with movers and seconders.
8. The Resolutions Committee will seek counsel from the Moderator and the General Secretary on all impending resolutions both for appropriateness and to plan for timing of presentation.
9. If the delegates disagree with a decision of the Resolutions Committee they can bring a motion to the floor. In that case, the moderator will call for a vote on whether to debate the motion. This vote will require support of a simple majority of the delegates.

Guidelines for Presenting and Processing Resolutions at Mennonite Church Canada Assemblies

1. The Resolutions Committee shall consist of one member of the General Board and two or three persons not on the General Board.
2. The Resolutions Committee will be appointed by mid-March and will begin its work in advance of the assembly.
10. An effort will be made to publicize forthcoming resolutions well before inviting a floor discussion of them. This will be done either through the newsletter, through special distribution, or public announcement.



11. Resolutions which have program or budget implications should be checked with the affected board or Council to determine what effect they will have on their activities. If further research and testing is needed before a decision can be made, it will be referred to the appropriate board or council with instructions to bring it forward for discussion at the next annual assembly. There may be times when the Resolutions Committee will decide, however, that the resolution should come to the floor for immediate discussion.

12. The Resolutions Committee has the prerogative of ranking the resolutions for presentation to the delegates. If any resolutions cannot be discussed because of lack of time they will be published for the information of the delegates and referred to the General Board for consideration and action.

July 2001/ revised March 2004/ revised May, 2011, to update language from "conference" to "assembly and "Area Conference" to "Area Church."

2011 DELEGATE ACTIONS

Proposed Delegate Action:

Action recommended by General Board, Mennonite Church Canada; July, 2011.

We approve Being a Faithful Church 3 as a framework and plan to guide the ongoing discernment in Mennonite Church Canada on matters of sexuality.

Our approval is also a commitment to encourage and support the General Board as it continues to provide the leadership needed to implement this plan, and to encourage our congregations and Area Churches to participate as fully as possible.

See Being a Faithful Church 3, on the following pages.

Resolution #1

During its meeting on April 16, 2011, the General Board agreed to recommend the following two by-law changes to the delegates at Assembly 2011, via resolutions at the Mennonite Church Canada Assembly in Waterloo, Ontario (July 4 – 8, 2011):

1. Whereas the budget reductions being implemented in 2011 limit the amount of staff time available for assembly planning, making it impossible to continue with annual assemblies unless additional staff are hired, the following by-law change is recommended:

Current by-law on annual assemblies: Delegate Assemblies

9 (1) Regular delegate assemblies shall be held: (a) annually, beginning normally during the first two weeks of July

Proposed by-law: Delegate Assemblies

9 (1) Regular delegate assemblies shall be held:
(a) biennially, beginning normally during the first two weeks of July

Resolution #2

2. Whereas there has been increasing anxiety about achieving quorums at recent assemblies and whereas other denominations (including Mennonite denominations) require at most one-third of eligible voting delegates for a quorum (with no impact on attendance), the following by-law change is recommended:

Current by-law on quorums: Voting at Delegate Assemblies

11 (1) The quorum for a delegate assembly shall be one half the total number eligible voting delegates from the area churches plus 200 voting delegates from constituent congregations.

Proposed by-law: Voting at Delegate Assemblies

11 (1) The quorum for a delegate assembly shall be 20 eligible voting delegates from the area churches plus 150 voting delegates from constituent congregations.

Being a Faithful Church 3:

Testing the spirits in the Midst of Hermeneutical Ferment A Plan to Discern Faithfulness on Matters of Sexuality

Brief Review:

The questions, responses, and plans articulated in this document are built on the previous two resources that have been processed with the delegates of Mennonite Church Canada at Assemblies 2009 and 2010.¹ It is important to understand this document as fruit of a process that we have already engaged. What is articulated here needs to be processed by the delegates of Mennonite Church Canada congregations and Area Churches.

The first discernment paper (June/2009) emphasized several important points:

- a) Discerning the will of God is the ongoing task of the church;
- b) Christian Scripture is foundational for the ongoing discernment of the church;
- c) Christian Scripture can be interpreted in different ways depending on which voices gain dominance and which ones are less dominant;
- d) The church will want to speak what it understands so that it can live accordingly;
- e) We do not discern in a vacuum; we have previous statements (e.g., *The Confession of Faith*) and these are sufficient as a foundation for our life together until something else is discerned;
- f) Through discernment, the church speaks again and either confirms what it has said before, modifies what it has said, or changes what it has understood.
- g) We can trust that God's Spirit will guide our discernment;
- h) It is important to discern in a "churchly way," and focus on that, rather than pre-determine where we want to get to;
- i) What is most important is that we have exercised the discernment in a Spirit-filled manner befitting the Body of Christ, and have done so as well as we can.

The second discernment paper (July/2010) applied some of the basic principles of reading and interpreting the Bible to the question of being a Peace Church:

- a) We identified the form of scriptural interpretation that has led us to affirm our Peace Church-Pacifist identity;
- b) We identified how we have dealt with the scriptural voices that are used by others to deny a Peace Church-Pacifist emphasis;
- c) We identified contextual realities that pressure us to change the style of our discernment and the conclusions we reach;
- d) We indicated that we need to define the criteria that we would need in order to test the spirit of the voices within and beyond scripture;
- e) We indicated that this same ongoing discernment is needed for any challenge facing the church.

Sexuality in the life of the church:

Issues related to sexuality in the life of the church are among the challenges that precipitated the General Board's sense that we need to strengthen our corporate capacity to discern the will of God. The challenges we face are many. It is important to discern the appropriate response of the church to the realities it faces, such as: cohabitation and common law marriage, same-sex committed relationships, extra-marital sex, pornography, and perhaps others. There is some public disagreement in our Body, and this causes private pain that is very real. We yearn to be healthy, but we are hurting. These hurts and the potential divisions lead us to a sense of urgency to discern again our understanding of sexual fidelity in the Christian life and in the Church. Our sincere desire is to be a witness to the presence of God's reign within us, among us, and in the world.

The General Board has discerned that it is important at this time to reconnect the broader discussion about discernment with the specific challenge of issues related to sexuality in the life of the church. The church needs to face these challenges, and needs to do so as part of the joyful task of being the church in Canada in the 21st century.

¹ *Being a Faithful Church: Testing the spirits in the Midst of Hermeneutical Ferment (Mennonite Church Canada Assembly 09); Being a Faithful Church 2: Testing the spirits in the Midst of Hermeneutical Ferment: "Peace Church" as "Pacifist Church"* (<http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/resourcecentre>)

A suggested timeline for this stage of the "Becoming a Faithful Church" process:

1. July 2011 Assembly: Discussion of parameters for the next 4-5 years. Process to be adapted and approved by delegates.
2. September 2011- March 2012: Discussions of criteria to guide interpretation of Scripture.
3. July 2012 Assembly: Approval of criteria for interpretation. A study theme will focus on scriptural interpretation.
4. Sept 2012 to March 2013: Begin discussions on sexuality in the life of the church with reference to specific questions such as cohabitation and common law marriage, same sex relationships, extra marital sex, pornography, or other issues, and prepare a presentation for the 2013 Assembly.
5. July 2013 Assembly: The Church will begin to speak into issues as it is ready.
6. Sept 2013 to March 2014: All parties are invited to reflect on preliminary discussions/decisions made at Assembly.
7. July 2014 Assembly: Mennonite Church Canada will speak again on some of the issues identified in this process.

Next steps:

We are a Christian/Mennonite denomination. Different parts of the denomination play different roles in discernment. This paper focuses on the role of the central denominational structure in moving discernment forward. It is important to understand this limitation. This paper does not outline processes that may be used in congregations or Area Churches.

While the first two papers suggested a framework critical for communal discernment to happen and applied this framework to the challenge of being a Peace Church, this paper takes us into the nitty-gritty of healthy, ecclesial discernment. An important part of such discernment is to name and agree to basic issues of who, what, where, when, and how. To facilitate delegate discussion, the General Board has identified some of the key questions that require common understandings to move ahead. There may be others that should be named as well. The General Board has also provided responses to these questions. These responses represent the framework of a plan. They need to be tested/edited/approved by Mennonite Church Canada delegates. In this way, we hope to move forward together.

As we begin:

1. We need to be intentional about inviting our discernment to be guided by the Holy Spirit. How can we do that?
 - a) We invite the Holy Spirit into our discernment when we undergird the process with our best spiritual disciplines, like prayer, careful study of scripture, worship, meditation, fasting, use of the arts, and more. (Some of these have already been laid out in the previous papers.)
 - b) Listening well to our community is central to allowing for the leading of the Holy Spirit. Good listening will include sharing our experiences of God's leading, practicing respectful conversation, allowing for silence, and being clear on the ground rules of discussions.
 - c) We invite the Holy Spirit to guide us when we resist the temptation to predetermine the outcome of our discernment.
 - d) To allow the Spirit to lead, we are intentional about opening ourselves to wisdom from outside of ourselves and our immediate circles. We acknowledge that God's Spirit blows where it wills, and sometimes God's wisdom surprises us and comes from unexpected places.
 - e) We pray that the Holy Spirit will lead us to agreement in our discernment, but we recognize that we may feel the Spirit nudging us in different directions. We commit ourselves to listening carefully in an ongoing way to the dissenting voices and recognize that the Spirit is also guiding the church through them.
 - f) We invite the Holy Spirit to deepen our understanding of how the life of Christ and his cross unite us in spite of our differences and disagreements.
2. We understand scriptural authority as foundational in the life of the church. How do we make this real?
 - a) We understand that the Bible's authority comes alive in the life of the church when Scripture is open, in the midst of the church, with the presence of the Holy Spirit. The fruit of such discernment guides the life and faith of the church.
 - b) The participation of the membership of the church is, thus, critical to the process of discernment.

Being a Faithful Church 3 cont.

A. Questions about responsibility and authority:

- 1) Who has the responsibility/authority to lead and facilitate the discernment process for the whole denomination?
- 2) Who has the responsibility/authority to set the timeline that will guide the process?
- 3) When a multi-stage process of discernment is going on, who has the responsibility/authority to declare an acceptable consensus to move ahead to the next stage?
- 4) Who has the responsibility/authority to speak on behalf of the church?

Response:

- a) Mennonite Church Canada's polity identifies two levels of membership: congregations and Area Churches. Final responsibility/authority lies with the delegates chosen to represent these members.
- b) Mennonite Church Canada's by-laws give responsibility/authority for the ongoing care and decision-making process to an elected General Board and its officers. This board has representatives from Area Churches, congregations, program councils, Faith and Life Committee, and members-at-large.
- c) There are other key circles of consultation and discernment that help the General Board in its discernment. One is a group made up of the Area Church Moderators and Executive Leadership, and the Area Church Ministers. Another is the Faith and Life Committee. Another is the Executive Staff of Mennonite Church Canada. Another is the Executive Committee of the General Board. Others are the Program and Finance Committees of Mennonite Church Canada. The General Board also consults broadly with other groups as needed.

B. Questions of Process:

- 1) How will we assure that we have a process that allows all concerned to participate?
- 2) What is the time-line that will be used for decision-making?
- 3) What is the process that will be used to "speak again?"
- 4) What are the key questions that will be addressed?

Response:

- a. Study and feed-back instruments will be designed, and the Mennonite Church Canada constituency will be encouraged to respond.
- b. Care will be taken to make the mechanisms of response as user-friendly as possible.
- c. These responses can be individual, congregational, or by interest-group.
- d. All responses will be compiled and considered seriously as the process moves ahead.

- e. This plan (*Being a Faithful Church 3*) will be recommended by the General Board to the Mennonite Church Canada Assembly in July 2011. Delegates will have opportunity to amend, approve, or reject the plan.
- f. Some parts of the plan (see below) will be worked at after July 2011, and a comprehensive report for discussion and affirmation will be presented to Assembly/2012.
- g. It is hoped that in this process, the key questions that need to be asked and answered will emerge. These questions will be presented and approved in Assembly/2013.
- h. Depending on the questions that are identified, and the time needed to prepare for them, Mennonite Church Canada will begin to "speak again" in Assembly/2014. It is anticipated, however, that this will be a multi-year process, because it is unlikely that all questions can be addressed at the same time.

C. Questions of Content:

- 1) What criteria will be used to weigh the voices of scripture so that they will help us decide whether our "speaking again" will be saying the same thing, modifying our previous speech, or saying something new?
 - a) This very important question needs careful attention and must be addressed for discernment to happen in ways that have spiritual integrity. We will encourage broad participation and feedback from all constituents who wish to shape the discernment. The criteria will be shaped together.
 - b) A feed-back tool will be developed to facilitate this participation. We are confident that this exercise will strengthen our sense of being a biblical people, and offer guidance to our congregations and beyond to others who also are struggling with issues of discernment.
 - c) The spiritual discernment will be sifted, organized, and compiled so that the sense of the respondents can be identified. The hope is that a framework will emerge that will help us interpret the voices of scripture in faithful and relevant ways.
- 2) What alternatives within the Body will be available for those who will choose to exercise an alternative understanding?
 - a) The fruit of the process of discernment should not be the injury and division of the Body, but the faithfulness of the Body. Yet, it is possible that not all will embrace the outcomes. Sometimes faithfulness involves the creation of new cells within the Body.

- b) Together we need to think seriously about the ongoing role and presence in the Body of those who disagree with the outcomes of the discernment. The “democratic” answer, namely that if 51% are “right” then 49% must be “wrong” is not good enough for the church. The answer that you are “either for us or against us” is also not good enough for the church. Nor is the oft quoted political slogan “love it or leave” good enough for the church. There is no blueprint; it will need to emerge from our discernment process.

A way ahead:

Not everything can or should be defined at the beginning. Flexibility, informed by the process itself, is needed. But it is prudent and realistic to assume that some of the processes and decisions will require more time than others. It is also possible that the process itself will point to paths that are not yet contemplated in this document.

These are not sequential processes but parallel ones, i.e., they all need to be worked at simultaneously. The framework is before us. The General Board is presenting this plan for delegate approval.

A Watching World:

The challenges presented by the questions around sexuality are complex and can be divisive. There are lessons but there is no easy “menu” that we can borrow from other denominations to apply to our own process of discernment. Rather, our approach needs to be home-made, taking seriously the sensitivities, ethos, and processes that are assumed by Mennonite Church Canada[ians]. We need to apply our best expertise with boldness and humility, recognizing that we depend on God’s grace and timing and not our hopes and skills alone. In that spirit of bold humility, we move forward in hope that, by God’s grace, the process and decisions we make will be what we can own as ours; that it will energize and unite us as a people; and that it will be a faithful witness to the watching world.

Having said this, we are keenly aware that others are watching closely: our young people and young adults (within and beyond our denomination); our sister Anabaptist denominations in Canada; our sister denominations in the USA; the leadership, and beyond, of Mennonite World Conference members; the ecumenical worlds we move in (EFC, CCC); the inter-faith world we are connected to; the disenchanted Mennonites (and others) who are no longer active in church life; the public media and press; and so on.

Will there be squabbling, in-fighting, power-plays, back-stabbing, anger, gossip, threats, and division? We want to be a people confident of our identity as faithful Christians, going about the vocation that is ours, practicing the love, forgiveness, burden-bearing, truth-telling, humility, sincerity, trust, and nonviolent

spirituality that are embedded in our identity, our formal Confession, and our proclamation to others.

Will we understand the need for such a process as an unwelcome burden imposed on Christ’s Body? Or will we understand the potential witness to others that this process offers? Will we engage each other with the joy of our vocation, which is to “discern the times [kairos]” (Luke 12:54-56), to “test the spirits” (I John 4:1), to “be worthy of our calling” (Eph. 4:1), “to live our life in a manner worthy of the gospel” (Phil. 1:27), and to be a “cloud of witnesses” (Hebrews 12:1) to a watching world?

We are boldly stepping into a risky conversation. We need to keep seeking God’s help and depending on God’s grace and timing for this to be a positive witness to a watching world. Without that, our human efforts will fail. We believe that the final outcome of our discernment will pale in comparison to the missional potential of the witness offered by the process itself if we yield our spirits, our wills and our path boldly and humbly to God.

Conclusion:

We need to live what we proclaim, namely that the unity of the church is not of our doing, but is a gift of the Spirit that we celebrate. The Faith and Life Committee helped us understand this profound insight in 2006. They stated:

According to the apostle Paul in his letter to the Ephesians, unity is not our doing. We are bound together by something bigger than our own efforts and immeasurably greater than our failures. Unity in Christ is not something we choose to create; rather, it is the blessing of Christ’s death on the cross granted to us. In Ephesians 2, Paul is talking specifically of how Christ broke down the barrier between Jews and Gentiles. In Paul’s mind there could be no division more radical, yet God through Christ broke down the barrier and placed the two enemies into one family.²

And we conclude with them:

There is nothing that can usurp the preeminent place of faith in Jesus Christ. In Christ Jesus we are all children of God through faith and nothing else. “There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3: 28-29). We are chained together in peace by Christ through his death on the cross (Eph. 4:3).³

- Mennonite Church Canada General Board
July, 2011

² The Unity of Christians in the Body of Christ; Presented by the Faith and Life Committee at the Annual Assembly in Edmonton (July 2006), p.2.
(www.mennonitechurch.ca/resourcecentre/ResourceView/5/9119)

³ Ibid. p.3.

Councils and Committees: 2010-11

GENERAL BOARD EXECUTIVE (maximum of 3 terms of 2 yrs each)

Position	Name	Term Exp
Moderator	Andrew Reesor-McDowell, ON	2012
Asst. Moderator	Hilda Hildebrand, MB	2012
Secretary	Don Friesen, ON	2011
Treasurer	Gordon Peters, SK	2011
Member at Large	Donita Wiebe Neufeld, AB	2012

GENERAL BOARD

Moderator of MCBC	Dan Rempel, BC	2013
Moderator of MCA	Loretta Kroeker, AB	2012
Moderator of MCSask	Renata Klassen, SK	2012
Moderator of MCM	Hans Werner, MB	2012
Moderator of MCEC	Aldred Neufeldt, ON	2012
Member at Large	Betty Loewen, BC	2012
Member at Large	Kate Janzen, AB	2012

General Board representation from the councils - chairs Rudy Dirks, Lisa Carr-Pries, and, Rudy Baergen. And two council appointments Earl Reimer, Lynell Bergen, Louie Sawatzky.

FINANCE POLICY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE (maximum of 3 terms of 3 yrs each)

Treasurer	Gordon Peters, SK	2011
	Helen Kasdorf, MB	2011
	Ewald Boschmann, MB	2013

CHRISTIAN FORMATION COUNCIL (maximum of 3 terms of 3 years each)

Chair	Lisa Carr-Pries, ON	2012
	Veronica Dyck, BC	2011
	Campbell Nisbet, ON	2013
	Earl Reimer, MB	2011
	Rebecca Seiling, ON	2012
	Pauline Steinmann, SK	2013
	Naomi Unger, SK	2012
	Tom Yoder Neufeld, ON	2013

CHRISTIAN WITNESS COUNCIL (maximum of 3 terms of 3 yrs each)

Chair	Rudy Dirks, ON	2013
	Lynell Bergen, MB	2013
	Irene Crosland, AB	2012
	Emily Dueck, ON	2011
	Pat Gerber Pauls	2011
	Bock Ki Kim, ON	2013
	Hugo Neufeld, AB	2012
	Waldo Neufeld, BC	2011
	JD Penner, ON	2012
	James Watson, ON	2013

CHURCH ENGAGEMENT COUNCIL (maximum of 3 terms of 3 years each)

Chair	Vacant	
	Bud Kehler, MB	2013
	Bryan Moyer Suderman, ON	2013
	Kaye Rempel, ON	2013
	Louie Sawatzky, MB	2011
	Emily Toews, SK	2012
	Dori Zerbe Cornelsen, MB	2011

FAITH AND LIFE COMMITTEE (maximum of 3 terms of 3 years each)

Chair	Rudy Baergen, MB	2011
	Doug Klassen, AB	2013
	Betty Pries, ON	2011
	Sharon Schultz, SK	2012

NOMINATING COMMITTEE (appointed by Area Churches for a max of 3 terms of 3 years each)

	Janet Bergen, BC	2013
	Lorne Buhr, AB	2012
Chair	Dave Feick, SK	2012
	Justina Heese, MB	2011
	Gladys Bender, ON	2011

CANADIAN MENNONITE PUBLISHING SERVICE (terms renew in February)

	Les Klassen Hamm, SK	2012
	Joon Hyoung Park, BC	2012
	Doreen Martens, ON	2013
	Ed Janzen, BC	2013

MENNONITE FOUNDATION OF CANADA (terms renew in March)

	Abe Fehr, ON	2013
	Clayton Loewen, BC	2011

Position	Name	Term Exp
ASSOCIATED MENNONITE BIBLICAL SEMINARY (appointed by Formation Council - max of 3 terms of 4 yrs each)		
	Bruce Baergen, AB	2014
	Kathy Koop, MB	2011
	Marlys Neufeld	2014
	Nak Sun Kim	2011
	Allan Klassen	2013

BINATIONAL MENNONITE WORSHIP COUNCIL (appointed by Formation Council - 3 yr terms renewable)		
MC Can Staff	Dave Bergen, MB	
	Mark Diller Harder, ON	2012
	Irma Fast Dueck, MB	2012

CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY - COUNCIL (appointed by Formation Council - max of 3 terms of 3 years each)		
CMU Board Rep	Ruth Friesen, AB	2012
	Matthew Derksen, SK	2012
	Harold Hildebrand Schlegel, MB	2011
	Rudy Franz, MB	2011
	Linda Garland, ON	2012
	Leona Friesen, MB	2011
	Marlene Janzen, AB	2011
	Clarence Yip, BC	2011
	(Vacant position)	2011
	Bruce Wiebe	2012
	Ryan Siemens, SK	2012
	Ted Regehr, AB	2012
	Ken Thiessen	2013
	Don Neufeld	2011
	Marco Funk	2013

MENNONITE CREATION CARE NETWORK (appointed by Formation Council - max of 3 terms of 3 yrs each)		
	Dave Neufeld, MB	
	Joanne Moyer, MB	

MENNONITE PUBLISHING NETWORK (appointed by Formation Council - max of 3 terms of 3 yrs each)		
	Abe Bergen	2011
	Dan Jack	2012
	Joan Pries	2013

MENNONITE PROPERTY INCORPORATED
no longer functioning

ASSEMBLY PROGRAM COMMITTEE
now in house

Position	Name	Term Exp
CANDIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (appointed by General Board for ___ terms, ___ years per term)		
Governing Council		
	Vacant Position	
Biotechnology Reference Group		
	Vacant Position	
Faith And Witness		
	Arnold Neufeld-Fast, ON	2011
Peace And Justice Commission		
	Vacant Position	

PENSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (appointed by FPAC) - (3 year terms, max of 3 terms)		
	Loren Brown, MB	2013
	Glen Siemens, MB	2013

MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE (appointed by General Board for, 6 years per term, no max # of terms)		
	Tom Yoder Neufeld, ON	2015
	Janet Plenert, MB	2015
	Robert J. Suderman, MB	2015

CHRISTIAN PEACEMAKER TEAMS (appointed by Witness for 3 yr terms, terms)		
	Brian Petkau, MB	Dec-11
staff appt.	Eric Olfert, SK	Dec-09

MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE - Canada (appointed by Witness for 3 yr terms, max of 3 terms.)		
	Dora Koop, QC	2010
	Chris Rollins, BC	2012
	Noe Gonzalia, ON	2013
	Waldo Neufeld, BC	2013
	Janet Plenert, MB	2012
	Andrew Reesor-McDowell, ON	2012
	Robert J. Suderman, MB	2012

MENNONITE DISASTER SERVICE (appointed by Witness for 2 yr terms)		
	Abe E. Ens, MB	2010

MENNONITE MEN/JOIN HANDS (appointed by Witness for 4 yr terms)		
	Marv Baergen	
staff appt.	Samson Lo, BC	2013
	Murray Logan	2011
	Vacant Position	

Nominations Committee Report



Once again we would like to thank each of the councils and committees for your valuable input in suggesting to us either names and/or qualities for persons to be nominated. We trust that the above people and those still to come will meet or possibly even exceed the desired qualities.

We are also thankful to Vic Thiessen and Lois Friesen Wiebe for their assistance.

I believe I speak for all the committee when I say that we consider it a privilege to work in this manner for the benefit of Mennonite Church Canada and that we anticipate having a full slate prepared as soon as possible.

On behalf of the Nominating Committee

Dave Feick
Chairperson

Nominees

General Board Executive



Donald G. Friesen

Secretary

Occupation: Clergy.

Church Membership:

Ottawa Mennonite Church.

Past/present involvement/positions in local church:

Leading minister of one congregation for 33 years; secretary of the Refugee Assistance Program Committee for ten years; Chair of the Worship Committee.

Other church or related vocational/volunteer experience:

I have served on the executive of the Christian Council of the Capital Area for 24 years,

as President, Vice-President, and several times as Secretary. I also serve as Secretary of the local Habitat for Humanity Faith Relations Committee.

Special interests that might be relevant to your work on this board/council: Author of a book of meditations, *Rhythms of Grace* (2010).

What are your visions/goals for Mennonite Church Canada?

To encourage faithfulness to Jesus Christ; to provide resources for local congregations that encourage unity of purpose and action; and to promote loyalty to and financial generosity for the national church.



Gordon Peters

Treasurer

Occupation: Self-employed.

Church Membership:

Nutana Park Mennonite, Saskatoon

Past/present involvement/positions in local church:

Church Treasurer, 6 years

Other church or related vocational/volunteer experience:

Mennonite Church Canada Treasurer, Board member, The Micah Mission, Saskatoon, A number of other community based organizations.

also worked as church treasurer, doing books. My other work life has been as a manager and so finances and money have usually been a big part of my work world.

What are your visions/goals for Mennonite Church Canada?

My vision for Mennonite Church Canada would be to find relevance with the congregations and the membership. What role does the national church body have to the life of the people in the pews? What kind of work can we do together? What are your goals and visions? Does the national church know about them? Lets find new ways of talking together about issues and visions.

Special interests that might be relevant to your work on this board/council: I work in the financial world as a bookkeeper and have

Christian Formation Council

There is one position outstanding for the Christian Formation Council.

Earl Reimer

Photo/Profile not available at print time.

Christian Witness Council



Pat Gerber-Pauls

Occupation: Student.

Church Membership:
Carrot River Mennonite Church.

Past/present involvement/positions in local church: Missions/MCC Rep., Choir member, musical small group member, women's group president, worship committee, education committee, pre-school Sunday School teacher, adult Sunday School teacher.

Other church or related vocational/volunteer experience: Mission worker in Paraguay with COM 1980-1992, President of Manitoba Women in Mission 1999-2000.

Special interests that might be relevant to your work on this board/council:

Learning to know other cultures. I worked as a settlement services provider for newcomers to Canada for 9 years.

What are your visions/goals for Mennonite Church Canada?

I believe the church is where Christians gather to worship God, to be strengthened in their faith, and enabled to minister in Christ's name. A vision I have for the church is that we would welcome all who are searching for meaning and listening for God's voice. A goal I have for the church is that we share the good news of God's grace and also be open to receive God's word as it comes to us from Christ's followers throughout the world.



Waldimar Neufeld

Occupation: Retired.

Church Membership:
Emmanuel Mennonite, Abbotsford BC.

Past/present involvement/positions in local church: Various committees in the church, teaching, preaching on occasion.

Other church or related vocational/volunteer experience: Served with MCC for 25 plus years, broadcasting, both commercial and for the church, involvement with MDS. Since retiring, doing volunteer assignments under the SOOP program.

Special interests that might be relevant to your work on this board/council:

Have concerns and a vision for engaging the church in mission, both locally and globally, with a concern to engage the next generation in this global ministry.

What are your visions/goals for Mennonite Church Canada?

The challenge facing us a church is to continue focusing and challenging one another (in this current culture of doing our own thing) to maintain and catch a vision for the national church, that we can be more effective to doing ministry together.

Church Engagement Council

There is still one position outstanding for the Church Engagement Council - the position of chair.



Louie W. Sawatzky

Occupation: Retired from a career in Agriculture; doing volunteer work.

Church Membership: Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, MB.

Past/present involvement/positions in local church: Past Member and Chair of Church Council, have been Sunday School teacher, have been very involved with local Mennonite Voluntary Service Unit, and various committees, choir member, etc.

Other church or related vocational/volunteer experience: I am currently the Project Director of the Ukraine Ministry of the Mennonite Benevolent Society (Manitoba) and chair of the Board of the Mennonite Family Centre (Ukraine).

Special interests that might be relevant to your work on this board/council: I believe in a strong church body that is dedicated in building God's Kingdom, that builds and maintains our faith, while also giving structure to sharing our faith with others.

What are your visions/goals for Mennonite Church Canada? To represent member congregations, as a witness and a voice on questions of faith in our broader society at home and abroad, and also responding to invitations and opportunities to share our faith within the broader context of the world through International ministry programs extending the reach of local congregations.



Dori Zerbe Cornelisen

Occupation: Stewardship Minister.

Church Membership: Hope Mennonite Church, Winnipeg MB.

Past/present involvement/positions in local church: Former pastor, current worship leadership.

Other church or related vocational/volunteer experience: Former MCCM Open Circle program coordinator, former Christian Witness Council member.

Special interests that might be relevant to your work on this board/council: Creating a culture of generosity in individual and congregational lives.

What are your visions/goals for Mennonite Church Canada? I believe Mennonite Church Canada can play a role in supporting and strengthening the identity of our congregations and their members as followers of Jesus in the peace church tradition. Together we can be salt and light.



Billy Chiew

Occupation: Associate Pastor.

Church Membership: Vancouver Chinese Mennonite Church.

Past/present involvement/positions in local church: Children's Pastor, Youth Pastor.

Other church or related vocational/volunteer experience: Church Health and Church planting in MCBC, crisis line.

What are your visions/goals for Mennonite Church Canada? My vision for Mennonite Church Canada is to be faithful to the gospel of Jesus Christ and bringing life transforming truth to all communities.

Faith And Life Committtee



Rudy Baergen (chair)

Occupation: Pastor.

Church Membership:

Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg MB.

Past/present involvement/positions in local church: Pastor at Bethel Mennonite; previously pastored at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener ON.

Other church or related vocational/

volunteer experience: Teacher and professor at Rosthern Junior college, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, and Seminaries in Bolivia and Colombia.

What are your visions/goals for

Mennonite Church Canada? My vision is that Mennonite Church Canada be a beacon of God's light and grace through the good news of Jesus to an increasingly pluralistic Canadian society and to the world beyond.

Appointments



Helen Kasdorf To FPAC by the General Board

Occupation: Chartered Accountant; Senior Vice-President and Chief Internal Auditor for Great-West Life Insurance Company.

Church Membership:

Douglas Mennonite, Winnipeg.

Past/present involvement/positions in local

church: Past: Finance Chair, Music committee Chair, Finance Committee member, Church council member, Sunday school teacher, youth leader, choir member; current: choir member.

Other church or related vocational/

volunteer experience: Board of Directors – Crosstown Civic Credit Union; volunteer in children's schools; Mennonite Church Manitoba finance committee member.

What are your visions/goals for Mennonite

Church Canada? My vision for Mennonite Church Canada would be to ensure its role and value are understood by all area churches and members across Canada and at the same time that the organization reflects the expectations of the membership. Specific to FPAC my vision would be to ensure that we are able to ensure we are fiscally responsible with the member churches' funds and work with Mennonite Church Canada executive to ensure we are fiscally mindful and prudent while at the same time are ensuring that we are still facilitating the goals of the church as a whole.



Justina M. Heese To Nominating Committee by MCM

Occupation Retired

Church Membership: Bethel Mennonite Church, Winnipeg MB.

Past/present involvement/positions in

local church: Teach Sunday School, chaired Education Committee, Church Council, secretary of Women in Mission.

Other church or related vocational/

volunteer experience: Educational Resource Person for MB; Jubilee Curriculum development; Formation Executive Secretary.

Special interests that might be relevant

to your work on this board/council: Role of children and youth in the church, encouraging younger persons to take on leadership roles.

What are your visions/goals for

Mennonite Church Canada? Together with congregations and area churches, to discern God's work in the world and energize and equip our denomination to align with God's work and to be people of God in our time and place.



Arnold Neufeldt-Fast To FLC by FLC

Occupation: Associate Professor of Theology / Associate Academic Dean, Tyndale Seminary

Church Membership: Community Mennonite Church Stouffville

Past/present involvement/positions in local church: Regularly assist with preaching, worship leading, teach Adult Sunday School; Ordained (specialized ministry)

Other church or related vocational/volunteer experience: • 2010-present: Member, MC Canada Strategic Taskforce for Pastoral Leadership Development • 2008-present: MC Canada representative, Faith and Witness Commission, Canadian Council of Churches • 2008-present: Member, MCEC Leadership Commission • 1995-1997: Member/ chair, MCEC Listening Committee for Gay and

Lesbian Concerns • 1992-1995: Member, MCEC Theological Concerns Council

Special interests that might be relevant to your work on this board/council: My area of specialization is theology and ethics and I have a long-standing commitment to doing theology for the church. I am particularly interested in the work of rethinking church and our God-talk missionally for a uniquely Canadian, post-Christendom context.

What are your visions/goals for Mennonite Church Canada? In a post-Christendom context, many denominations are asking us: How do you do church from the margins of society? We have much to rediscover in our own Anabaptist, peace church tradition, much to share, and much to receive as well from the broader church ecumenical.



Gladys Bender To Nominating Committee

Occupation: Nurse Therapist

Church Membership: Steinmann Mennonite Church

Past/present involvement/positions in local church: Chair of Vision Focus Team at home congregation.

Other church or related vocational/volunteer experience: Chair of Shalom Counselling Services Inc Board- Waterloo.

Special interests that might be relevant to your work on this board/council: I am involved in our congregation's sponsorship of a Palestinian family. It has allowed me to meet some of our Muslim neighbors and friends in our community.

What are your visions/goals for Mennonite Church Canada? It is valuable for the local and area churches to realize that they are a part of something bigger. We have lots to learn from each other. If we can listen and try to understand each other rather than to convince someone that they are wrong, we have something that more people may want to be a part of.

I have faith in the leadership and what they are trying to accomplish am excited to help see to it that the councils have good representation from MCEC.

BYLAWS

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Mennonite Church Canada

Bylaws

Last Updated July 2010

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112	PART I - DEFINITIONS
113	
114	Definition of Terms
115	
116	1 In these bylaws:
117	
118	(a) "Act" means The Act of Incorporation of the Conference of
119	Mennonites in Canada as amended by An Act to amend the Act of
120	incorporation of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.
121	(b) "Area Church" means a body of congregations that have been accepted
122	to membership in the area church, visibly grouped in a region of Canada
123	not necessarily bounded by provincial borders;
124	(c) "Congregation" means a body of persons who have responded to the
125	call of Christ in repentance and in faith, who symbolize their unity
126	through the practice of baptism and communion, and who are visibly
127	grouped for the express purpose of implementing their obedience to
128	Christ as head of the church;

- 129 (d) "Congregational member" means a person who is a member of a
130 constituent congregation;
131 (e) "Constituent congregation" means a congregation which is a member
132 of an Area Church and of Mennonite Church Canada;
133 (f) "MC Canada" means Mennonite Church Canada; and
134 (g) "MC USA" means Mennonite Church USA.
135

136 **PART II - MEMBERSHIP**

137 **Eligibility for Membership**

138
139
140 **2** (1) An Area Church in Canada which accepts the Confession of Faith in
141 a Mennonite Perspective, supports the Vision Statement and Identity and
142 Purpose Statement of MC Canada and accepts these bylaws is eligible to
143 become a member of MC Canada.
144

145 (2) Any Area Church that wishes to become a member of MC Canada is
146 invited to submit a request in writing to the General Secretary, who
147 will submit it to the General Board which will, in turn, present the
148 request and a recommendation to a delegate assembly.
149

150 (3) A constituent congregation is a member of MC Canada as long as the
151 Area Church to which it belongs is a member of MC Canada.
152

153 **Rights and Privileges of Members**

154
155 **3** (1) Membership in MC Canada entitles Area Churches to:
156

- 157 (a) send delegates to a delegate assembly, as specified elsewhere in
158 these bylaws, with the right to vote;
159 (b) representation on the General Board, as specified elsewhere in
160 these bylaws; and
161 (c) participate in programs and receive services from MC Canada.
162

163 (2) Membership in MC Canada entitles constituent congregations
164 to:

- 165 (a) send delegates to a delegate assembly, as specified elsewhere in
166 these bylaws, with the right to vote;
167 (b) have their congregational members serve on the General Board or
168 stand for election to any elected positions except as otherwise
169 provided in these bylaws; and
170 (c) participate in programs and receive services from MC Canada.
171

172 **Expectations of Members**

173
174 **4** Area Churches and constituent congregations are expected to:
175

- 176 (a) give faithful attention to the Scriptures;
177 (b) accept the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective;
178 (c) uphold statements of Christian faith and life made by MC Canada
179 from time to time;
180 (d) respond to the invitation to become engaged in mission and service;
181 (e) participate in the church's life and mission through generous
182 contributions of time and personal resources all in commitment to Jesus
183 Christ in response to the grace of God and in loving service to the
184 church in which the Holy Spirit lives and works; and

185 (f) assume all duties as defined in these bylaws.
186

187

188 **Provisional Membership**

189

5 (1) Provisional membership is open to any Area Church which:
190

191

(a) meets the eligibility requirement in bylaw 2(1);

192

(b) is not ready for full membership; but which

193

(c) wishes to evaluate the meaning of full membership for itself.
194

195

(2) Provisional membership:

196

(a) may be requested in writing to the General Secretary, and the
process set out in bylaw 2(2) shall apply;

197

198

(b) is restricted to a maximum of five years;

199

(c) carries with it the expectations listed in bylaw 4;

200

(d) provides all the rights and privileges of membership listed in
bylaw 3 except that:

201

202

(i) their delegates are not entitled to vote at delegate
assemblies;

203

204

(ii) their congregational members may be elected to a Council,
but may not serve on the General Board; and

205

206

(iii) participation in programs and services from MC Canada, and
the costs associated with them, will be negotiated on a case-by-
case basis.
207

208

209

210

(3) A constituent congregation is a provisional member of MC Canada as
long as the Area Church to which it belongs is a provisional member of
MC Canada.
211

212

213

214

215 **Removal of Members**

216

217

6 An Area Church may be removed from membership in MC Canada only on
the recommendation of the General Board, and such recommendation may
only be made after the General Board has followed procedures defined in
Guidelines for Building Faithful Relationships in the Church (1998) and
Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love (1995) to try to resolve matters with
the area church in a way that would avert the need for such a
recommendation.
218

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225 **PART III - DELEGATE ASSEMBLIES**

226

227

228

229 **Representation at Delegate Assemblies**

230

231

7 (1) Area Churches and constituent congregations may be represented at
delegate assemblies as follows:
232

233

234

(a) delegates appointed by constituent congregations:

235

236

(i) in the ratio of one delegate for every 50 congregational
members or a portion thereof; but

237

238

(ii) not less than two per constituent congregation; and

239

(b) delegates appointed by the Area Churches:

240

241

(i) in the ratio of one delegate for every 1,000 congregational
members, or portion thereof, of their constituent
congregations; but

242

243

(ii) not less than six and not more than 12 delegates per Area
Church.
244

245

246

241
242 (2) Each delegate may represent only one of either an area church, or a
243 constituent congregation, but not both simultaneously.
244

245 (3) Delegates must be congregational members. There are no other
246 restrictions on who may be a delegate.
247

248 **Duties and Powers of Voting Delegates**

249

250 **8** The delegates entitled to vote and present at a delegate assembly
251 shall:

- 252
- 253 (a) have the authority to act on behalf of MC Canada;
 - 254 (b) discern MC Canada's participation in God's work as reflected in its
255 Vision Statement and Identity and Purpose Statement;
 - 256 (c) debate issues facing the church and, from time to time, issue
257 statements, including, but not limited to, statements pertaining to
258 faith and life, position statements, and statements to governments;
 - 259 (d) review the work and ministry of MC Canada;
 - 260 (e) approve the budgets of MC Canada;
 - 261 (f) receive the General Board's recommendation on the appointment of an
262 auditor to hold office until the close of the next regular delegate
263 assembly, and accept or reject such recommendation;
 - 264 (g) consider and accept or reject the financial statements of MC Canada
265 and the auditor's report;
 - 266 (h) receive the General Board's recommendation and accept, reject or
267 remove Area Churches as members or as provisional members;
 - 268 (i) elect MC Canada's officers, members of the Councils and members of
269 the Nominating Committee; and
 - 270 (j) make the bylaws of MC Canada, amend bylaws as deemed appropriate,
271 and monitor adherence to those bylaws.
- 272

273 **Delegate Assemblies**

274

275 **9** (1) Regular delegate assemblies shall be held:
276 (a) ~~annually~~ **biennially**, beginning normally during the first two weeks
277 of July,
278 (b) at a place determined by the General Board.
279

280 (2) Elections shall be held at regular delegate assemblies except where
281 the General Board determines that it is necessary to hold elections at
282 a special delegate assembly. The General Board and all Councils shall
283 provide written reports of their activities, plans and relevant
284 financial statements for consideration by delegates at regular delegate
285 assemblies.
286

287 (3) A special delegate assembly may be called from time to time by the
288 General Board at a time and place it may determine.
289

290 **Notice of Delegate Assemblies**

291

292 **10** (1) The date and place of the next regular delegate assembly
293 shall be announced at the conclusion of each regular delegate assembly.
294

295 (2) Notice of a special delegate assembly shall be given to Area
296 Churches and to constituent congregations not less than 21 days in
297 advance.

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Voting at Delegate Assemblies

11 (1) The quorum for a delegate assembly shall be ~~one half the total number~~ 20 eligible voting delegates from the area churches plus ~~200~~ 150 voting delegates from constituent congregations.

(2) The business of a delegate assembly may be conducted:
(a) by consensus without a formal vote;
(b) by a show of hands at the discretion of the chair or on the request of a voting delegate; or
(c) by ballot vote when directed by the chair, or when a motion to require a ballot vote is passed by a majority of votes cast on such motion.

(3) Unless otherwise provided in these bylaws, or if a motion to require a larger number is passed by a majority of votes cast on such motion, a simple majority of the votes cast is sufficient to carry a resolution.

(4) In the event of a ballot vote, the votes shall be counted by tellers who have been appointed in advance.

PART IV - NOMINATIONS, ELECTIONS, TERMS OF OFFICE AND VACANCIES

Qualifications for Elected Positions

12 (1) Each person nominated for an elected position must be a congregational member. However, congregational members of provisional constituent congregations are not eligible for election to the General Board.

(2) In the event that an elected person ceases to be a congregational member, that person's term shall be deemed to have expired at that point.

(3) No person may hold more than one elected position at the same time. Where a person who holds an elected position is elected to another elected position, that person is deemed to have resigned from the previously held elected position.

(4) Staff of MC Canada are not eligible for election to an elected position in MC Canada.

(5) Any question of eligibility for election shall be resolved by the General Board.

Nominating Committee

13 (1) Each Area Church shall nominate one person to the Nominating Committee for election at a delegate assembly.

(2) The Nominating Committee shall:

- 352 (a) in advance of a delegate assembly where elections are to be held,
353 use its best efforts to prepare a slate of nominees consisting of one
354 nominee for each elected position that needs to be filled;
355 (b) recommend, upon the request of a Council, persons to serve on its
356 committees; and
357 (c) on request, suggest to the General Secretary names of candidates
358 for vacant staff positions.
359

360 **Election Procedures**

- 361
362 **14** (1) The Nominating Committee will receive further nominations
363 at a delegate assembly if:
364 (a) it is endorsed by five voting delegates;
365 (b) the nominee has agreed to stand for the elected position; and
366 (c) it is presented to the Nominating Committee at least 24 hours
367 before the scheduled election.
368
369 (2) Twenty-four hours before the scheduled election, the Nominating
370 Committee shall present its slate of nominees, including those
371 nominated in accordance with 14(1) above, to the delegate assembly.
372
373 (3) Where only one person has been nominated for a given elected
374 position, that nominee shall be declared elected by acclamation.
375
376 (4) Where multiple nominations have been received for any elected
377 position, there shall be a ballot vote.
378

379 **Terms of Office**

- 380
381 **15** (1) The terms of office:
382 (a) for the officers and the General Board members at large:
383 (i) shall be two years; and
384 (ii) they shall be eligible to serve for up to three consecutive
385 terms;
386
387 (b) for all other members of the Councils:
388 (i) shall be three years; and
389 (ii) they shall be eligible to serve for up to three
390 consecutive terms.
391
392 (2) A person's term shall begin at the end of the delegate assembly at
393 which the person was elected.
394

395 **Vacancies**

- 396
397 **16** (1) Where a vacancy occurs in any elected position between regular
398 delegate assemblies, such vacancy may be filled by the General Board,
399 at its discretion, until the next regular delegate assembly.
400
401 (2) Where a person has been appointed to fill a vacancy, the time spent
402 completing that vacant term of office shall not be considered as a
403 portion of any succeeding term.
404

405 **PART V - GENERAL BOARD**

406
407 **Composition of the General Board**

408
409 **17** The General Board shall consist of:
410 (a) the officers;
411 (b) the moderator or a designate of each Area Church;
412 (c) the chair of the Faith and Life Committee
413 (d) the following from the Councils:
414 (i) the chair of the Christian Witness Council and one other
415 named by the Council;
416 (ii) the chair of the Christian Formation Council and one other
417 named by the Council; and
418 (iii) the chair of the Church Engagement Council and one other
419 named by the Council; and
420 (e) three members at large appointed by the General Board and confirmed
421 by the delegate assembly.

422
423 **Duties and Powers of the General Board**
424

425 **18** The General Board shall:
426 (a) act on behalf of MC Canada between delegate assemblies;
427 (b) act as the legal representative of MC Canada, authorize such of its
428 officers to sign contracts, cheques and other documents on behalf of MC
429 Canada as the General Board may consider advisable, and prescribe the
430 limits, if any, of such authority;
431 (c) report to, and be accountable to, its members at delegate
432 assemblies;
433 (d) between delegate assemblies, continue the process of discerning MC
434 Canada's participation in God's work as reflected in the Vision
435 Statement and Identity and Purpose Statement;
436 (e) lead MC Canada in developing its identity and vision;
437 (f) create forums for interaction among the leaders of the Area
438 Churches;
439 (g) direct and coordinate the work of the Councils;
440 (h) review financial statements and direct the preparation of budgets;
441 (i) make recommendations at regular delegate assemblies on the
442 appointment of auditors for MC Canada;
443 (j) appoint the General Secretary;
444 (k) at its discretion, fill vacancies in elected positions that occur
445 between regular delegate assemblies;
446 (l) process issues of membership in MC Canada and make recommendations
447 thereon at regular or special delegate assemblies;
448 (m) foster relationships with other church bodies, including
449 appointments as appropriate to:
450 (i) MC USA;
451 (ii) Mennonite World Conference;
452 (iii) other Mennonite church bodies;
453 (iv) Canadian Council of Churches; and
454 (v) Evangelical Fellowship of Canada;
455 (n) do any other thing which is likely to support and promote the
456 mission of MC Canada.

457
458 **General Board Governance**
459

460 **19** The General Board shall formulate and adopt rules of procedure and
461 governance under which it shall operate.
462

463 **PART VI - OFFICERS**

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Officers

20 (1) The officers of MC Canada shall be the:

- (a) Moderator;
- (b) Assistant Moderator;
- (c) Secretary; and
- (d) Treasurer.

(2) The officers shall be elected at a regular delegate assembly.

Duties of the Officers

21 (1) The Moderator shall:

- (a) preside at all delegate assemblies;
- (b) chair all meetings of the General Board and the Executive Committee; and
- (c) act as the official representative of and spokesperson for MC Canada.

(2) The Assistant Moderator shall:

- (a) assume the duties of the Moderator:
 - (i) in the absence or incapacity of the Moderator; or
 - (ii) at the request of the Moderator or of the Executive Committee.

(3) The Secretary shall be responsible for recording all minutes of delegate assemblies and meetings of the General Board and the Executive Committee.

(4) The Treasurer shall oversee the Financial Policy and Audit Committee established by the General Board.

PART VII - GENERAL SECRETARY

Appointment

22 The General Secretary shall be appointed by the General Board.

Duties of the General Secretary

23 The General Secretary shall:

- (a) lead and oversee the total program of MC Canada;
- (b) hire and supervise the MC Canada staff;
- (c) participate, without a vote, in meetings of the Executive Committee and the General Board;
- (d) receive and record the credentials of all voting delegates prior to each delegate assembly; and
- (e) publish proceedings of each delegate assembly.

PART VIII - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Composition of the Executive Committee

24 The Executive Committee shall consist of:

- (a) the officers; and

520 (b) one member at large of the General Board appointed by the General
521 Board from among its members.

522

523 **Duties and Powers of the Executive Committee**

524

525 **25** The Executive Committee shall:

526 (a) act on behalf of the General Board between its meetings;

527 (b) report its activities to the General Board; and

528 (c) between meetings of the General Board, continue the process of
529 discerning MC Canada's participation in God's work as contained in the
530 Vision Statement and Identity and Purpose Statement.

531

532 **PART IX - JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

533

534 **Composition of the Joint Executive Committee**

535

536 **26** The Joint Executive Committee shall consist of:

537 (a) the Executive Committee of MC Canada; and

538 (b) the Executive Committee of MC USA.

539

540 **Duties of the Joint Executive Committee**

541

542 **27** The Joint Executive Committee shall meet at least annually

543 to:

544 (a) foster relationships between MC Canada and MC USA; and

545 (b) foster effective cooperation regarding binational partnership
546 activities.

547

548 **PART X - FINANCIAL POLICY AND AUDIT
549 COMMITTEE**

550

551 **Composition of the Financial Policy and Audit Committee**

552

553 **28** The Financial Policy and Audit Committee shall consist of
554 3 people, namely:

555 (a) the Treasurer, as chairperson; and

556 (b) two other persons appointed by the General Board whose term shall
557 be three years; and who shall be eligible to serve for up to three
558 consecutive terms.

559

560 **Duties of the Financial Policy and Audit Committee**

561

562 **29** The Financial Policy and Audit Committee shall meet in person at
563 least once annually and otherwise by teleconferencing as required to:

564 (a) Review the financial statements (YTD) prepared by the Director of
565 Finance and report to the General Board.

566 (b) Recommend financial policies and procedures as needed.

567 (c) Recommend investment policies and procedures as needed.

568 (d) Ensure that MC Canada has implemented appropriate systems to
569 identify, monitor and mitigate significant business risks.

570 (e) Monitor the review of senior management's expense claims.

571 (f) Provide initial recommendations regarding the budgeting process for
572 the upcoming year and review proposed budgets before submission to the
573 General Board.

574 (g) Act as an audit committee with the following responsibilities:

- 575 (i) Review and recommend the appointment of the external auditor.
576 (ii) Review annually the audit plan and fees presented by the
577 external auditor.
578 (iii) Review the annual audited financial statements prior to
579 submission to the General Board for their approval.
580 (iv) In camera meeting with the auditor.
581 (v) Review and report to the General Board the results of the
582 external auditor's annual audit including the management letter
583 and significant issues encountered during the audit and how they
584 were resolved.
585 (vi) Review with management and the external auditors MC Canada's
586 systems of internal control to ensure compliance with legal,
587 ethical, regulatory and financial reporting requirements and
588 report to the General Board as required.
589 (h) Oversee the MC Canada Pension Plan
590

591 **PART XI FAITH AND LIFE COMMITTEE**

592 **Composition of the Faith and Life Committee**

- 593
594
595 **30** The Faith and Life Committee shall consist of 5 people, namely:
596 (a) a chairperson, who will be a member of the General Board, elected
597 at a regular delegate assembly;
598 (b) two additional persons elected at a regular delegate assembly;
599 (c) one additional person appointed by the General Board;
600 (d) one staff member appointed by the General Secretary.
601

602 **Duties of the Faith and Life Committee**

603 **31**

604
605 The Faith and Life Committee shall meet at least three times annually,
606 and one of the meetings will be together with a Reference Council which
607 shall include the Moderators, Secretaries and Area Church Ministers and
608 faculty members appointed by our higher education institutions, to:
609

- 610 (a) Attend to the interface among Scripture, the Confession of Faith in
611 a Mennonite Perspective and our identity as MC Canada.
612 (b) Give leadership to Mennonite Church Canada in discerning God's will
613 on issues of theology, ethics, polity and practice.
614 (c) Work cooperatively with educational institutions and other church
615 agencies to facilitate, create and distribute resources for study by
616 and guidance for the church.
617

618 **PART XII - MINISTRIES OF MC CANADA**

619 **Christian Witness Council**

620
621
622 **32** (1) The core activities of the Christian Witness Council shall
623 focus on ministry together with Area Churches and their constituent
624 congregations including, but not limited to:

- 625 (a) evangelism and church planting;
626 (b) international mission;
627 (c) multicultural ministries;
628 (d) Native ministries;
629 (e) peace and justice advocacy; and
630 (f) service ministries.

- 631
632 (2) The Christian Witness Council shall consist of **not more than** 10
633 people, namely:
634 (a) a chairperson elected at a regular delegate assembly;
635 (b) **the** other persons elected at a regular delegate assembly.
636
637 (3) The Christian Witness Council shall have authority to:
638 (a) select any other officers from among its members that it deems
639 desirable;
640 (b) modify its programs to adapt to the needs of MC Canada and the
641 availability of resources;
642 (c) oversee its programs, staff and budgets;
643 (d) delegate parts of its authority to various committees, and
644 (e) appoint representatives to related organizations.
645
646 (4) The Christian Witness Council shall assume responsibility for and
647 recommend financial budgets for its own programs and reports for
648 presentation at regular delegate assemblies, covering it's activities
649 since the last regular delegate assembly, and shall prepare and provide
650 to the General Board such other statements or reports as the General
651 Board may request.
652
653 (5) The Christian Witness Council shall, on behalf of MC Canada, relate
654 to:
655 (a) Mennonite Central Committee;
656 (b) Mennonite Women Canada;
657 (c) Christian Peacemaker Teams;
658 (d) Mennonite Disaster Service
659 (e) Mennonite Men
660 (f) Mennonite Voluntary Service Adventure, and
661 (g) any other organization or group assigned to it by the General
662 Board.

663
664 **Christian Formation Council**

665
666 **33**

- 667 (1) The core activities of the Christian Formation Council shall focus
668 on providing leadership and resources to enable Area Churches and their
669 constituent congregations to promote the Christian formation of their
670 members, including, but not limited to:
671 (a) congregational and ministerial leadership;
672 (b) youth and young adult ministry;
673 (c) Christian education and nurture; and
674 (d) resources and publishing.
675
676 (2) The Christian Formation Council shall consist of **not more than** 10
677 persons, namely:
678 (a) a chairperson elected at a regular delegate assembly;
679 (b) the other persons elected at a regular delegate assembly.
680
681 (3) The Christian Formation Council shall have authority to:
682 (a) select any other officers from among its members that it deems
683 desirable;
684 (b) modify its programs to adapt to the needs of MC Canada and the
685 availability of resources;
686 (c) oversee its programs, staff and budgets;
687 (d) delegate parts of its authority to various committees, and

688 (e) appoint representatives to related organizations.
689

690 (4) The Christian Formation Council shall assume responsibility for and
691 recommend financial budgets for its own program, and reports for
692 presentation at regular delegate assemblies, covering it's activities
693 since the last regular delegate assembly, and shall prepare and provide
694 to the General Board such other statements or reports as the General
695 Board may request.
696

697 (5) The Christian Formation Council shall, on behalf of MC Canada,
698 relate to:

699 (a) Mennonite Publishing Network;

700 (b) Mennonite Camping Association;

701 (c) Elementary, secondary and post-secondary schools related to MC
702 Canada; and

703 (d) any other organization or group assigned to it by the General
704 Board.
705

706 **Church Engagement Council**

707

708 34

709 (1) The core activities of the Church Engagement Council shall be to
710 represent MC Canada to Canadian congregations and individuals, develop
711 and strengthen ministry and financial support, and strengthen the
712 missional vision of congregations. These activities include but are not
713 limited to:

714 (a) develop and foster a missional vision with Area Churches and
715 their constituent congregations;

716 (b) coordinate missional formation processes for congregations;

717 (c) develop transformative congregational partnerships for
718 ministry;

719 (d) oversee resource development and communications activities; and

720 (e) form relationships with congregations and individuals,
721 encouraging partnership and financial support in the ministry
722 of MC Canada
723

724 (2) The Church Engagement Council shall consist of not more than 10
725 persons, namely:

726 (a) a chairperson elected at a regular delegate assembly;

727 (b) and the other persons elected at a regular delegate assembly.
728

729 (3) The Church Engagement Council shall have authority to:

730 (a) select any other officers from among its members that it deems
731 desirable;

732 (b) modify its programs to adapt to the needs of MC Canada and the
733 availability of resources;

734 (c) oversee its programs, staff and budgets;

735 (d) delegate parts of its authority to various committees; and

736 (e) appoint representatives to related organizations.
737

738 (4) The Church Engagement Council shall assume responsibility for, and
739 recommend financial budgets for, its own programs. It shall prepare
740 reports for presentation at regular delegate assemblies, covering its
741 activities since the last regular delegate assembly, and shall prepare
742 and provide to the General Board such other statements or reports as
743 the General Board may request.
744

745 (5) The Church Engagement Council shall, on behalf of MC Canada, relate
746 to:
747 (a) Mennonite Foundation of Canada;
748 (b) Canadian Mennonite Publishing Service; and
749 (c) any other organization or group assigned to it by the General
750 Board.

751
752 **Council Governance**

753
754 **35** Each Council shall formulate and adopt rules of procedure and
755 governance under which the Council shall operate.
756

757 **PART XIII - MODERATORS, SECRETARIES AND**
758 **AREA CHURCH MINISTERS MEETING**

759
760 **Membership**

761
762 **36** The members of the Moderators, Secretaries and Area Church Ministers
763 meeting shall consist of the moderator or a designate, leading staff
764 member and denominational ministers of Mennonite Church Canada and each
765 of its member Area Churches.
766

767 **Functions**

768
769 **37** The Moderators, Secretaries and Area Church Ministers will meet
770 annually to:
771
772 (a) Report to each other the ministries and state of health of the
773 national church body and its Area Churches.
774 (b) Serve, together with others, as a reference council for the Faith
775 and Life Committee.
776 (c) Discuss issues of common concern in order to provide mutual counsel
777 and support and to seek common approaches where appropriate.
778 (d) Develop relationships of trust, respect and mutual subordination.
779 (e) Other functions that may be helpful to building up the unity and
780 faithfulness of the church.
781

782 **PART XIV - OPERATIONAL MATTERS**

783
784 **Fiscal Year**

785
786 **38** MC Canada's fiscal year shall end on the 31st day of January in each
787 year.
788

789 **Corporate Seal**

790
791 **39** The Corporate seal shall:
792
793 (a) have inscribed thereon Mennonite Church Canada; and
794 (b) be affixed to such signed documents as the General Board considers
795 necessary or advisable.
796

797 **Indemnities**

798
799 **40** Every officer, member of the General Board and member of a Council
800 of MC Canada, and their heirs, executors and administrators shall at

801 all times be indemnified and saved harmless, out of the funds of MC
802 Canada, from and against

803
804 (a) all costs, charges and expenses whatsoever which such officer or
805 member sustains or incurs as a result of any claim, demand or
806 proceedings made or brought against him or her for anything done, or
807 omitted or permitted to be done, in the course of carrying out his or
808 her responsibilities as an officer or member, except for any costs,
809 charges and expenses sustained or incurred by the officer or member
810 because of the wilful neglect of such officer or member; and

811
812 (b) all reasonable costs, charges and expenses incurred by such officer
813 or member in the course of carrying out his or her responsibilities as
814 an officer or member.
815

816 **PART XV -AMENDMENTS OF BYLAWS**

817 818 **Amendments to the bylaws**

819
820 **41** (1) These bylaws may be amended at any regular or special delegate
821 assembly; provided that the proposed amendments have been sent to the
822 member Area Churches and their constituent congregations at least two
823 months in advance.
824

825 (2) In order to pass, bylaw amendments require a two-thirds
826 majority of the votes cast.
827

828 **Coming into force**

829
830 **42** (1) These bylaws come into force at the conclusion of the
831 delegate assembly at which they are adopted.
832

833 (2) Any subsequent amendments to these bylaws come into force at the
834 conclusion of the delegate assembly at which they are adopted.

835 Approved: July 14, 2001

836 Amended: July 6, 2002

837 Amended: July 9, 2005

838 Amended: July 6, 2007

839 Amended: July 2, 2010
840

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850

How these decisions will impact my home congregation

What inspired me personally?

The new appreciation I have for the work we do together as Mennonite Church Canada

The questions I expect my congregation will ask me about Assembly

What opportunities will I have or can I create to report back to my home congregation?

Additional Notes

OUR VISION

God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

STATEMENT OF IDENTITY AND PURPOSE

God calls, equips and sends the church to engage the world with the reconciling Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We are a community of disciples of Jesus, a part of the Body of Christ, covenanted together as congregations, area churches, and a national church body.

Gratefully responding to God's initiatives and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves and our resources to calling, equipping and sending the church to engage the world with the reconciling Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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OUR PRIORITIES:

To engage the world with the reconciling Gospel of Jesus Christ, we will:

Form a people of God
Become a global church
Grow leaders for the church

CORE PROCESSES FOR EACH PRIORITY

Form a People of God by;

- Discerning, calling forth, and equipping the gifts of the Spirit that are among and within us;
- Discerning the "signs of the times,": the terrain in which we minister and need to engage;
- Nurturing and strengthening the "body-life" of our people-hood;
- "Extending our table;" being intentional about inviting people into relationship with Jesus Christ, and nurturing our capacity for hospitality within the life of our community

Become a global church by:

- Strengthening our capacity to engage with and learn from the diversity that God nurtures among us and beyond us;
- Committing to reconciling ministry "from across the street to around the world;"
- Nurturing a growing accountability to the global communion of faith, especially to the community of Anabaptists:
- Embracing and fostering our Mennonite identity as a perspective of Christian faith within all cultures and ethnic identities.

Grow leaders for the church by:

- Strengthening the family and the home as a seed-bed for emerging church leadership;
- Becoming more intentional about broadly based leadership training;
- Focusing resources on educating pastors to be leaders and some leaders to become pastors;
- Encouraging new models and styles of leadership for a missional church.