



# Lancaster Mennonite Conference 101: Brief Descriptions of Ministries and Resources

## Acronyms:

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| AMBS | Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary |
| ACC  | Atlantic Coast Conference              |
| CCL  | Celebration of Church Life             |
| EMM  | Eastern Mennonite Missions             |
| EMU  | Eastern Mennonite University           |
| LMC  | Lancaster Mennonite Conference         |
| LMHS | Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society |
| LMS  | Lancaster Mennonite School             |
| MCC  | Mennonite Central Committee            |
| MMN  | Mennonite Mission Network              |
| MPN  | Mennonite Publishing Network           |
| MWC  | Mennonite World Conference             |

**Bi-Weekly Announcements:** a bi-weekly email of information, announcements, updates, and reminders from the conference office, conference agencies, fraternal organizations and congregations sent to credentialed leaders and others across LMC. To receive this bi-weekly communication, contact the LMC office.

**Bishop Fraternal Relationships:** five bishops serve as a LMC link to churches in Asia, Africa, Central America, Europe, Mexico and South America. These bishops attempt to visit the churches on a regular two-year cycle.

**Board of Bishops:** consists of all bishops/overseers/supervisors from the districts in LMC. The Board of Bishops meets monthly for resourcing, sharing, and giving overall leadership to LMC.

**Celebration of Church Life:** an annual weekend gathering of our fellowship of congregations held on the campus of Lancaster Mennonite High School. The event is planned for the third weekend in March. All persons in LMC are encouraged to attend this event that includes: worship, speakers, seminars, displays, Bible quizzing, youth rally, ice cream social, and more.

## Child Abuse and Criminal Background

**Checks:** persons credentialed by LMC must complete a Child Abuse History and a Criminal Background Check prior to receiving a certificate and ministry card.

**Church Building Consultancy:** provides resources for conducting a Financial Feasibility Study and a Financial Faith Commitment Process. Resources are also available for discerning needs, developing vision, and planning good congregational processing.

**Church Planting:** a partnership with Bishop Board, Eastern Mennonite Missions, LMC staff, congregations and individuals to nurture a culture of church planting multiplication centered around the Great Commission.

**Church Revitalization:** resourcing for congregations that have a readiness and openness to a process of renewal and revitalization. There are a number of resources available to assist congregational leadership teams or district leaders in the discernment of suitable resources for their journey of revitalization.

**Conference Agency:** a ministry organization that is recognized as closely identified with the mission and vision of LMC and is necessary for LMC to achieve its mission. These ministries help to develop and carry out strategies for the mission and vision of LMC. Agency CEOs meet with LMC staff four times a year. Conference agencies are: Eastern Mennonite Missions, Friendship Community, Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, Lancaster Mennonite School, Landis Homes Retirement Community, and Philhaven.

**Conference Minister:** an oversight ministry at the conference level: assists with bishop search processes, serves as a pastor to overseers, assists with linking pastors and congregations, and other significant roles.

**Confession of Faith:** a statement of beliefs that guide and anchor Christian belief and practice within Mennonite Church USA and provide guidelines for interpretation of Scripture. Congregations within LMC are asked to affirm and adopt either the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective (1995) or Mennonite Confession of Faith (1963).

**Core Values:** shared values around which LMC congregations unite and that reflect a missional Anabaptist identity. With Jesus Christ as the center of our faith and life, the core values examine a way of seeing the world through God's reign, a way of reading Scripture through Jesus, and a way of living the Christian life as disciples. A multimedia curriculum package is available for study and reflection.

**(The) Corinthian Plan:** a health care plan for pastors and other church leaders. The plan ensures that all eligible pastors and church workers have access to health coverage, no one is discriminated against for having health or financial problems, and pastors can move from one congregation to another in Mennonite Church USA and continue to have health coverage.

**Credentialing Commission:** a commission appointed by the Board of Bishops to interview all candidates for leadership roles in LMC congregations or other assignments. The commission meets monthly and each person serves a term of three years.

**Districts:** all congregations in LMC are geographically divided into one of 22 districts. The district leaders of the congregations meet together on a regular basis. A number of bishops oversee more than one district.

**District Advocate Meetings:** lay persons from district groups meet together twice year with conference leaders to share what is happening in congregations and issues conference leaders are working with. Those who have interest in attending one of these meetings should contact the Conference Office.

**Finance Committee:** appointed by the Board of Bishops to review the annual Financial Plan, prepare an offering schedule, suggest ways to increase congregational and individual giving, and make recommendations on fiscal matters. The fiscal-financial year for Lancaster Mennonite Conference is February 1 - January 31.

**FirstFruits:** LMC promotes the principle and practice of a firstfruits tithe (10%) of regular income as a biblical standard of giving through the local congregation. Congregants are encouraged to give additional offerings and gifts to support God's kingdom through many worthy Mennonite Church organizations and agencies. LMC shares a firstfruits tithe with Mennonite Church USA, Urban Education, and Misión Red.

**Fraternal Organizations:** non-profit ministry organizations recognized by LMC as supporting the conference mission and vision. The fraternal organizations are: Black Rock Retreat, Camp Deerpark, Camp Hebron, Choice Books, Garden Spot Village, Harmonies Workshop, Jubilee Ministries, Mennonite Home, No Longer Alone Ministries, Welsh Mountain Home.

**Giving to LMC Ministries:** a suggested annual contribution for LMC per attendee is \$60.00. If persons are able, they are encouraged to give more than \$60.

**Honorarium Guide:** suggested guidelines for compensating speakers, preachers, teachers, etc. for sermons, seminars, workshops, leading worship, etc. when a cost was not pre-arranged.

**Income Tax Guidelines for Pastors/Churches:** guidelines for treasurers and/or pastors on congregational financial issues including: reporting wages for clergy and church employees, income taxes withheld, Medicare and Social Security taxes and other applicable withholdings, housing allowance tax benefit.

*We are people of Christ's peace*