

Lancaster Mennonite Conference

CONGREGATION/CONFERENCE COVENANT

While we recognize that the local congregation is the primary Christian community and basic unit of church life, the congregations of Lancaster Mennonite Conference do not stand alone. We are a fellowship of churches, agencies and fraternal organizations, and relate to each other through our district and conference structures. We also seek to relate in responsible ways to the Mennonite Church. Involvement in the Conference broadens the opportunity for congregations to work together and to undertake together what none can do alone.

As evidence of mutuality, Lancaster Conference Center provides the following benefits to its congregations:

- Settings for fellowship, mutual accountability, conferring and discernment.
- Continuity with the Anabaptist/Mennonite perspective and witness.
- A connection to the wider Mennonite Church.
- Credentialing of leaders.
- An ethical standard of accountability for leaders.
- Resourcing for congregational life (CRC).
- Resourcing for leadership development.
- Resourcing for involvement in global missions (EMM).
- Resourcing through conference agencies and fraternal organizations that provide a variety of services.
- Resourcing for congregational vision, church development, pastoral transitions and conflict resolution (Bishop Board, Conference Minister).

As an expression of our interdependence, congregations affiliated with the Lancaster Mennonite Conference covenant together:

1. To accept the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* (1995) (or the 1963 *Mennonite Confession of Faith*).
2. To accept the Constitution of Lancaster Mennonite Conference.
3. To actively participate in our respective districts and accept counsel and help from district bishop/overseer.
4. To participate in our conferring together by sending delegates to the **CELEBRATION OF CHURCH LIFE**, praying for one another, and sharing times of crisis and celebration.
5. To encourage and assist our credentialed leaders to participate in district and conference discussions, decisions, educational opportunities and other relevant activities.
6. To contribute to the financial support of Lancaster Conference ministries and its mission agency (*Eastern Mennonite Missions*), and other conference agencies.
7. To work within Lancaster Conference guidelines for credentialing ordained and licensed leaders.
8. To receive Lancaster Conference statements as guidance on pertinent issues.
9. To “make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” (Ephesians 4:3)

Approved by Bishop Board: 12/14/98