

**INDIANA-MICHIGAN MENNONITE CONFERENCE
CENTRAL REGIONAL MEETING**

Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, IN
March 4, 2017

TABLE WISDOM

What questions of clarification do you have about Renewing a Vision?

Table #1) What happens if congregations do not choose to sign the covenant? Is any of this different from the current polity of MC USA?

Table #2) How do we make positive connections specific, practical suggestions, with other congregations? One congregation has asked for this but can't find another congregation willing to do it. How do we pair up not just in mission but also in worship? What will help two churches worship together? Have fun together? We need more clarification on voting as congregations reps vs. what's best for conference – people of wisdom not people expecting to be voted on. If congregations choose not to sign, what kind of conversation will happen? Role of pastors not amplified enough in the doc. Term “covenant” is not clear to what this doc asks...not like marriage (renew every 3 yrs?) or Abrahamic (God promises to Abraham).

Table #3) How will the new covenant relationship differ from before? What is the accountability for process of discernment for not keeping the covenant? Small and large things? What if the congregation is not ready to sign? Are we going to process other issues of variance such as peacemaking? Women in leadership? Are we on our own in finding other congregations for accountability or processing, or will it be assigned? Assigning might stretch us. Why do we seem to be addressing only the LGBT issue and not others (women in leadership, peacemaking, etc.)? Does the autonomy make us stronger or weaker?

Table #4) If a congregation does not sign the covenant by June 2018, are they out of the conference? Our group thinks that the answer is yes so that this means something.

Table #5) Are we at new Reformation on Scripture among the people? Should we focus on Gospel – Bible? Focus on Jesus at center, peace over violent interpretations. How much can we count on individual congregational process for discerning the covenant? How vulnerable to single congregational representative to hijacking the process? What are procedures to make this work well? Can we flag this for close monitoring by conference? Is the discernment process at variance with Breadth of Variance section? Theory? Practice? Background? Future?

Table #6) Process of discernment...logistics...who facilitates...what kind of process...who chooses these pairings? What happens to conferences and pastors that don't sign? What if a congregation signs but pastor doesn't (or vice versa)? How “final” is this document (in terms of clarifications)? Would conference actually ask a congregation to leave? What about

credentialed leaders who aren't pastors? Why was 3 years chosen for covenant period (too frequent?)? Is there a Plan B if document doesn't pass?

Table #7) Is this document asking conference to change its position on matter of LGBTQ people or is it asking conference to change how we relate on divisive issues? (We think it's the latter.) Is it healthy/helpful for this document to focus on a specific issue? If so, should it also focus on other issues on which we disagree? Given that the MCUSA resolution on Forbearance speaks to how we are to be in relationship with each other, why isn't it listed in the footnote as one of the documents that define our belief and practices? Questions and concerns the IMMC is not recognizing full humanity of LGBT persons.

Table #8) If pastor or congregation refuses to sign, what are the consequences? Where will the covenant physically be held? What EXACTLY are we/is being signed and meaning of? A contradiction: accept gay/lesbian people/couples in the congregation but will not ordain or license? Would like a "new" vision, not "renewing" a vision.

Table #9) What is MCUSA polity on #3 of unity of variance? Is this a document about what we are covenanting together? When will the first signing be? Where will discipline fit in? What is the difference between discernment and accountability? Is the invitation to live with the dissatisfaction? Will the document become a weapon to pull us apart? How do we ask other congregations to hold the tensions together with us? How will congregations get along if at exact opposites? Will this bring us together or will it pull us apart? Will this actually pull away the liberal congregations? Does this actually broaden our ministry or not? First two variance points are congregation bases. Last point is conference based – it's a fine line. Renewing a Vision could be a line of congregations deciding to stay or go? Some churches at table feel hurt by some saying they are welcoming or not welcoming. Concern this Ren A Vis will divide conference even more. Tension – churches that accept LGBTQ feel they are doing ministry of Jesus and others are holding fast and don't see it as a ministry of Jesus. How do the congregations hold fast? Will this actually help us discern? It's hard enough to discern with our own congregation let alone doing it with another. Does this document invite us to accountability in a health way?

Table #10) Process of discernment – who selects? If same-sex sin, why is that the only sin we are focusing on? Broader question – how local congregations decide – language on discernment too loose...beyond LGBT issue. Shared practices – no communion?? What happened to all of the expectations for pastors included in document presented at Kokomo? What is the role of appendices?

Table #11) What happens if we choose not to sign covenant? Some have voted on the vision but with a caveat about point 3 (same-sex leadership credentials). Do we need clarification how to address that (yes, but; or no, but)? Can there be even more time beyond 2018 for those still processing the decision to sign?

Table #12) Does not credentialing or holding credentials of someone in same-sex relationship also include someone in a covenanted relationship? What happens if cong. Rep signs for the covenant, but pastor/s choose not to sign? Is this possible? Does this give variance to Military involvement? Who sets up or organizes congregation discernment with another congregation, when it is needed? Are there guidelines in place? What happens when the congregation and pastor have differing opinions? Does the pastor just have to go with the congregation's thinking?

What fruit can Renewing a Vision produce in our conference? What might our conference look like in ten years?

Table #1) The more conversations between churches the better, but church decisions should be made independently. Combined wisdom is better than individual wisdom. Might see more congregations doing activities together like singing together or VBS. If some church has a call to a particular ministry, people from other congregations may join them in the ministry even if it is not done in their church. Small congregations would be happy to work with other congregations to help them do activities they cannot do on their own. Hopefully in 10 years, when the next big issue comes up, we will be better able to address it because of more relationships between congregations. The youth coming up will change the way we feel about the LGBT question. Looks like the churches represented by our table would be willing to support this covenant. The years of discussion seem to have produced a workable covenant.

Table #2) Fruit may be mystery, unknown at this time. May come as a surprise, we don't know 10 years ahead. Our eyes may not see now – Holy Spirit moves ahead of us! Fosters more intentional, accountable relationships. Gives permission to congregations to work in own varying context (sociological, theological, economic contexts). Encourages us to realize we work and live in pastoral theological mode most of the time, within the larger confessional theology framework. (Implications for economic decisions as well as controversial matters of sexuality.) If we adopt this document, a fruit will be that we will not have anyone in leadership for the LGTB community.

Table #3) Being able to see God's love more fully because of different experiences we bring. Love – How do we see that love being expressed next 10 yrs? One possibility – having space plus accountability. Could breaking pattern of splitting offer its own fruit? Covenant will bring us into different contexts – what "Mennonite" =, more images of embodied faith. Open us to greater relationship with Holy Spirit – practicing listening. Experience growth from being in uncomfortable/unknown space, diversity. Vision helps remind us that most important is centrality of Jesus. Unity in body of Christ vs. uniformity of thought – can we stay together?

Table #4) If a congregation signs the covenant and struggles to financially support the conference, other churches could help out. As congregations discuss the covenant, they can recognize the benefits of conference.

Table #5) At best, this scheme may offer a framework in which we can understand and agree to experiment with differing approaches to tough questions and practices while not yet agreeing that each congregation will see and choose the same path. Like the Cities of Refuge in O.T. A real fruit would be if we did see individual congregations getting more closely involved with each other.

Table #6) Potentially stronger inter-congregational relationships. Still won't have more clarity on LGBT issue. Some more fruit will fall off the tree...will it be 25-30% smaller than today? But those that are left will be more committed to conference's work. Might even prompt congregations to look outside IMMC for fraternal relations. Will we be able to focus more on something else? (More missional?)

Table #7) Providing clarity. Greater sense of connection. We split when we disagree; perhaps this will help us stay together and be less threatened by difference (a counter-cultural response to the dominant spirit of polarization). What does "membership" mean – in congregations, conference, denomination?

Table #8) If we want to have ministry and meaning in our communities, change will happen. Missional presence requires doing ministry differently, bending to present the love of Jesus. Millennials will alter the church dramatically – more open, less rigid, less critical – if they are not co-opted by culture. Hopefully Anabaptists will continue to be different than main-stream culture. Conference may/will be smaller. Will be past the sexuality issues (but not entirely, will be more in the background).

Table #9) If we can relate to each other in this issue, then as we face other issues we will face in the future. Hope in the Holy Spirit. Question if this process will actually bring discernment or not. In ten years there will be less around the table. In ten years we will grieve this time period.

Table #10) Intentionality of commitment is positive. Connecting with other congregations, on shared practices is positive. Losing congregations could be a positive – pruning fruit trees. Potential of theological diversity – list of shared practices provides the agenda. Ten years – fear of less diversity – moving toward (up arrow) education/ (down arrow) urban.

Table #11) Could help us actually be less independent; increase relationships between congregations. Voting yes can be openness to further discernment/listening, rather than having to be totally agreed on everything to be in relationship. Encourage connecting over enjoyable things, not just "discerning hard issues." Greater embracing of diversity. Centered on Jesus, not boundaries or "issues." As churches live out all four sections, diversity of conference will increase (focus on mission). Encourage people to engage spiritual practices, not just go Sunday morning. Come to see differences as reflection of God. Also a concern.

Table #12) Tolerance – Respect. To love each other in spite of our differences – (this is our goal!) Can we learn from our history of (divisive) issues? (ex. women leadership, divorce, etc.) Hopefully we can!

In what ways is your congregation already living out key parts of the Renewing a Vision document?

Table #1) Vision and goal for congregation is to think how others think or feel. Deaf support group. Various peace ministries. Joint vacation Bible School with other churches. Focus on common church practices. Interfaith group to support homeless in the community. Saturday morning breakfast with area black pastors to discuss concepts of race relations. Serving and learning together – help an agency in the community for several weeks. Help a house program in Goshen.

Table #2) Partner with others for social times – 3 churches, worship, ice cream social, work projects, helping neighbors. Framing words or rituals to make social or work into a spiritual event. Food pantry – conjoint congregational effort. IHN – Goshen. Sharing Bible with neighbor. Hot dog roast. “Women in the Word” daytime Bible study in homes. “Qualified Bible teachers” – can Conference designate such? – roving, resourcing, by invitation, teachers.

Table #3) Discernment process – difficult discussions. Practicing formative spiritual practices (ex: children). Hospitality, Bible with strangers: prison ministry volunteers, inviting ex-prisoners, food pantry ministry. Peacemaking; immigration advocacy. Hospitality: growth of families with young children. Hospitality/ministries – roots, shoots, hospitality; core principles – vision- that guide. Common identity – Jesus – care for each other in diversity.

Table #4) Picnics, joint worship services, pastor exchange, fellowship meals, vacation Bible school.

Table #5) Careful study of documents. Intense congregational discernment. Engaged case of member who came out gay.

Table #6) Seeing hospitality extended to many kinds of people, resulting in more diversity in church. Peacemaking: recite Christian pledge of allegiance. Trying to be generous givers as congregation – from 10% to 15%. Various ways of praying. Outreach with local senior citizens. Hospitality with some “different” local youth. Shalom House purchased for emergency shelter. GIHN and local house for temp. housing. Food pantry and prayer for pantry clients, GIHN. Food collection, Jubilee program assistance, Hispanic and deaf ministries.

Table #7) Gathering for hymn sings. Neighborhood walk in prayer with another congregation. Sanctuary movement – Goshen/Elkhart churches. Planning and leading meaningful worship, offering hospitality – local school. Offer space for congregations and people to come together to study scripture and fellowship together.

Table #8) Doing things jointly with 2 churches nearby. Swanee Lake pastors are sharing ideas/has been talk of a pulpit exchange. Have had a cong. Meeting re. doing spiritual practices. Dan M. preached on Renewing a Vision. Pulpit exchange with congregation with much different views.

Table #9) Getting together with other congregations, some gatherings worked well – others have not. Working with another church with VBS. Incorporating our life experiences while studying a specific book of the Bible. Studying the topic of rest – what is life-giving and what is not. Wednesday night study – have 5 different study topics. Pulpit exchange. Hospitality to community – ESL classes; remembering losses with the community. Worked with other congregations in recent years and realized each church is very involved in its own stuff. Already do Bible study but the challenge is how to do this in a life-giving way that gets us to study in an intergenerational way. Likely all the practices feed into our congregations in one way or another because the practices are our bread and butter. There is security in talking/discussing with those we are already in relationship with.

Table #10) Issues of space, worship central part of congregation, immigration issues. Developing welcome statement, undocumented, LGBTQ, etc. More practices, seasonal, “Doctrines of Discovery.” Shared practices similar, discernment process. “Year of the Bible”, discernment surrounding this document. Community outreach.

Table #11) Congregational discussions around tables in the midst of differences. Conversation café – good but painful discussions around LGBT. Centers in Jesus and spiritual practices, connecting with neighbors. Strategic planning around hospitality and welcoming i.e. facility and small groups, spiritual growths and practices, will vote on LGBT statement at end of month. Talking about extending hospitality to immigrants as well as LGBT. Trying to hear in new ways what it means to be empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Table #12) Table group meetings, Sunday school discussions, and speakers to work through and hear each other on LGBT issues (included youth group). Processed the 4 parts of Renewing a Vision: What clarity do you need? What can you affirm? What concerns do you have?- Used “talking stone” to help facilitate people sharing without interruption. Everyone is accepted – worship is the focus – work in and for the community no matter what they believe – acceptance!!

What can MLT and conference staff do between now and June to help your congregation make an informed vote on Renewing a Vision?

Table #1) Have someone like Dan come to a worship service and speak about it. Could be webinar or video recording. Some view from Conference rather than just leaving it to congregational people. Make a video of Dan’s explanation as done this morning. Then either post it on the web and/or make it available to congregations to show at a congregational meeting. Have copies of the brochure available hand out to church members.

Table #2) Be sure pastors themselves are informed and willing to help congregation vote. Help pastors frame the question clearly and simply – perhaps make smaller card – provide brochure for those who want much detail in background of understanding the vote.

Table #3) Presentations in congregation. Suggestions to leadership on how to present to congregation.

Table #4) Important to communicate Renewing a Vision to each member so might be helpful to give a brochure to congregations for each member. Dan could come to preach, talk during Sunday school, or talk during week night. Provide counsel on how to be in relationship and not agree. If a church does not sign, then what? Ability to talk about hard issues depends on how good they worship together so we need more worship and less business.

Table #5) No comments.

Table #6) Desire staff to visit congregations (and affirmations for when that has already happened). Give reinforcement to point that this is about the best interests of the conference, not necessarily the congregation.

Table #7) Staff visit – very helpful at Olive. FAQ – written responses to questions raised at regional meetings. Sunday school lesson plan or guide for small groups discussing this proposal. Rich Preheim’s book and presentation give us a historical perspective. We need to tell our stories – from our common history.

Table #8) Find a new name for the document before us, rather an “renewing” language. Provide support and current info to pastors. Utilize a “third party” to discuss the issues. Make AMBS instructor available for discussion on sexuality. Provided bibliography on differing viewpoints.

Table #9) Have Dan talk to the congregations. Purposefully having conversations with another congregation. Have MLT match opposing side conversations with a specific set of “listening” questions. We need tools to know how to do this. Need a model for Bible study. Need tools to know how to have difficult conversations.

Table #10) Elkhart area having Dan present. Couple of congregations have not started addressing but will before 2018.

Table #11) Have Dan and Bob come to talk about the vision. Long term would like to see conference introduce and share what other congregations are doing. Help congregations to know each other – focus congregations each month – 3 of our churches are focused on “walking” theme unbeknownst to each other. Tell the stories of happenings in other congregations/area councils through Dan’s monthly letter/communication. Use language of Christian LGBT. Like the idea of recording Dan’s presentation for the churches to use between now and June.

Table #12) Invite Dan or staff member to explain the Renewing a Vision – helpful for Waterford! This discernment process could also be used with other issues of our congregational life (such as Mennonite Education Fund, etc.). Meeting together with some other churches to hear from a conference staff member on this process.

**INDIANA-MICHIGAN MENNONITE CONFERENCE
SOUTHERN REGIONAL MEETING**

Shalom Mennonite Church, Indianapolis, IN
March 11, 2017

TABLE WISDOM

What questions of clarification do you have about Renewing a Vision?

Table #1) Desire for Conference to give more clarity on homosexuality. Fear that if this is discussed locally, it will divide congregation. Congregations need to figure out where they stand. Why not get clarity on this issue to keep congregations from leaving? Overall, this is evolving conversation around the table... on our pathway to understanding. If we had this figured out, we could move on – yet working through stuff is good. Maleness/femaleness is on a continuum. Like that Conference will not change credentialing unless MC USA does. Good to stay in conversation...stay at table even though we don't agree.

Table #2) 1)While delegates may individually “bring their own heart,” how does it work when the congregational representative signs the covenant on behalf of the congregation? 2)How do we assure that congregational rep has both the heart of the congregation and good for conference in mind? 3)How will churches be linked together? 4)Is it necessary to distinguish between single and covenanted relationships with people who are LBGT in this document?

Table #3) What happens if a congregation decides not to covenant, what happens to that congregation? Can they still participate in conference events? Vote? Have pastors with credentials? How do you encourage congregations to think in terms of discerning delegates, not just representing delegates? And how do you empower them to bring their discerning experience to the congregations? How will congregation-to-congregation accountability over contentious issues work?

Table #4) What does 3 year covenant mean? How binding? Discernment process – does congregation choose other congregation to study with? See this part as a checks and balances part. Will former IN-MI Conference churches be invited to sign?

Table #5) How does this intersect with congregation visions? Did Conference produce this document solely out of variance issues? The credentialing process will become cumbersome and potentially divisive.

Table #6) Understanding delegates as individuals vs representatives. Relationship of Conference to congregation . . . hostage/I'm going to leave. How does this speak to congregations who are leaving? Upper Peninsula – mission plants – feel abandoned? *What is renewing a vision a response to? -How do we hold together in disagreement? –What is relationship with or of Conference? *Can we make room for variance in general? This doc

seems to only make space for LGBTQ variance. How do we encourage congregational connection beyond delegates?

What fruit can Renewing a Vision produce in our conference? What might our conference look like in ten years?

Table #1) To grow in capacity to talk with each other across our differences.

Table #2) A place where Jesus is the CENTER and all are welcome. A place where differences in belief and practice are recognized but the discernment of congregations and in connection with each other is affirmed.

Table #3) This can help us break out of our “silos” – particularly our urban/rural silos – and can allow us to be salt and light in a divided country/world. Centering on Jesus can permeate our actions. It provides us with a network of support beyond ourselves, and hope. Covenanted people are more engaged and committed to what they are doing. You may have less people who come together, but their commitment is deeper. You have to remember why you are doing it. Renewing the covenant keeps us vital. Sharing and studying the Bible with neighbors and strangers might lead to new believers.

Table #4) Looking to Jesus rather than “outer appearances.” Worried about age divided – young people not coming – want to see more younger people come. What do we hang onto that is important but doesn’t turn young people away. Relationships with other congregations – learning from each other. Centering on Jesus, worship, practicing being spiritual to bring others in. More multicolored in 10 years! Faith based, not ethnic based.

Table #5) Joy. Communication. Joining together.

Table #6) Could we have a “frolic” or other social events? Encourage diversity. Active relationship – through signing covenant. How can we encourage lay leadership? Starts to create distinct identity and function for conference: resourcing vs. regulation.

In what ways is your congregation already living out key parts of the Renewing a Vision document?

Table #1) Community night with meal first. Coach is very positive. Area Councils very positive. Appreciate new brochure. Good to look inside for answers – not depending on somebody else. Walk with pastors.

Table #2) -Focusing on common beliefs. (unity amid diversity). Listened, processed being welcoming congregation. –Reporting back to leaders in church on conference dialog at annual conference/other meetings. –Connecting with other congregations in conference related to

Morningstar's vision and mission. –Centering on Jesus – “Who is Jesus?” -Focusing on shared spiritual practices. –Acknowledging, cultivating, embracing diversity (in many areas including theology). –Building caring relationships as part of our vision, outside our community. –Inviting in speakers from other conference churches. –Having community nights to eat together and learn about Jesus.

Table #3) In our congregations, we worship, pray, give, study the Bible, practice hospitality. We already practice breadth of variance in many ways.

Table #4) Talked about areas to work on – fasting, strengthening relationships with other congregations, receiving hospitality, studying Bible with neighbors and strangers. Strengths – giving, worshipping.

Table #5) Meeting with other congregations – regions, locally, affirming Anabaptist identity. Feeding neighbors in a service of hospitality. Joint services.

Table #6) Most of shared spiritual practices – but not studying Bible with neighbors, no literal fasting. Practicing living with variance as congregation. Communal Biblical discernment? . . . Internal work. Discernment for Amigo Centre.

What can MLT and conference staff do between now and June to help your congregation make an informed vote on Renewing a Vision?

Table #1) No responses.

Table #2) No responses.

Table #3) Could we see a written form of the actual covenant we will be seeing at Annual Sessions? (A more concise “statement” than the Renewing a Vision doc.)

Table #4) Checking website (so keep it up to date). Knowing MLT is available is helpful. As a pastor watches over congregations (flock), conference watches over congregations as they work.

Table #5) Continue sharing in congregations.

Table #6) Sunday school – visit from rep. Gospel Evangel article/discussion. Sunday school curriculum – class agenda, other tools. Explanation of how this document/agreement would affect life of congregation/congregant.

**INDIANA-MICHIGAN MENNONITE CONFERENCE
NORTHERN REGIONAL MEETING**

New Hope Community Church of Midland, Midland, MI
March 25, 2017

TABLE WISDOM

What questions of clarification do you have about Renewing a Vision?

Table #1) Questions of implementation: If pastor signs, but congregation does not? Questions about when a congregation articulates a varying position...what then? There are congregations with vitality issues. How can the vision be encouraged as a way to build vitality in individual congregations?

Table #2) How can the local church connect with other IN/MI churches? Can we connect with other Anabaptist churches? What is Renewing a Vision? Why change what we are doing?

Table #3) Shared spiritual practices: should they be interpreted as a required checklist, or something to inspire to? Or holding it up as a vision? How do we hold each other accountable and give each other invitation to grow? Is there a process for encouraging congregations to interact over issues they disagree – what is the mechanism to get these congregations together?

Table #4) -Technical clarification on the Breadth of Variance: in general and specifically the first bullet point “Individual congregations may without fear of censure, receive or not receive single or LGTB people in covenant relationships, as members and non-credentialed leaders in their congregations.” Maybe rewrite the sentence – more explicit. –Where is the spiritual practice of starting new churches in the “Renewing the Vision?”

What fruit can Renewing a Vision produce in our conference? What might our conference look like in ten years?

Table #1) How does Amigo continue relationships with congregations no longer a part of Conference? This may provide opportunity in deeper relationship of congregations. This is needed in keeping congregations together. Geography is an issue, but particularly a reason congregational relationships are needed. Even simple connections between congregations can bring great fruit.

Table #2) - I cannot envision how conference looks in ten years. -We are different now than when I was a young person by how people dress and look. -We hope no other churches leave the conference because of differences. -MLT has discerned this vision...others may have another vision.

Table #3) -Can grow if we understand that we are not at the same place. –Different kinds of communities of faith – some large, some small, some meeting in places other than churches – we will end up with Anabaptist Mennonites rather than Mennonite Anabaptists. – Congregational interdependence. –Go beyond our individual four walls.

Table #4) -If we lose the conservative churches – then it won't be as diverse – we all have a lot to share with each other. –More networking churches in conference (example: amongst Michigan churches). –Building relationships/connections with others. –We would like to see growth in the conference as we move forward with God's work in the world.

In what ways is your congregation already living out key parts of the Renewing a Vision document?

Table #1) -Pretty much the whole – Jesus is Lord. –Study Bible with strangers is a big challenge. Not the norm. –Discussion of belief and practices of congregation. –Northern MI congregations have a history of a lot of congregational interaction, but this has changed. –Worship, prayer, Bible all valued highly. –There is diversity in one congregation, but people are very involved in their own lives and yet are committed to each other. The vision does not seem to affect much in the congregation.

Table #2) Gideon ministry, knitting for Native Americans, beans for Haiti. Sharing pulpits with the Wesleyan Church. Saginaw United Men's Fellowship, annual picnic, supplies for men's shelter. South Central pastors praying for and working on gun violence. Problems with LGBT support.

Table #3) Praying for opening for what is feasible to do for immigrant families. Monthly community dinner/ yearly community picnic (multiple churches). Worshipping God as the central act with other churches. Fasting. Interfaith dialogue to understand faith tradition of each group. Family night-two churches (food, games, etc.).

Table #4) -Jesus is the center of worship – everything stems from that – service and outreach – in community very involved/interdenominational, celebrating diversity. –Fairly involved – worship, hospitality, discussion of diversity. Needs work: engaging with other churches in conference and more deliberate at being involved. –Jesus is the center of all we do – hospitality – we love food and sharing it with others; Bible study and prayer; prayer vigils; some conference involvement. Needs work: peacemaking/justice issues – discussion – being more clear – going to be needed in the world; Bible study for our neighbors/strangers; we love God, but we need to show His love for others and not be so reserved.

What can MLT and conference staff do between now and June to help your congregation make an informed vote on Renewing a Vision?

Table #1) -Staff visit. –Emphasize benefits to congregations. –Clarify that congregations don't need to be ready to covenant prior to voting on the vision in June. –Clarify the shifts in authority structures and organizational expectations.

Table #2) Staff visit to congregations.

Table #3) -Staff visit (Sun. eve or morning) to explain the vision and covenant in greater depth. –Clarify vision to lessen some of the individual thoughts about what is happening – let the congregation know that it is a unifying vision / helps them to understand why congregations are leaving. –Touch on meaning of Mennonites/Anabaptist.

Table #4) -Staff visit – explanation of vision and time for questions would be greatly beneficial to our congregation. –Need to decide whether to sign the covenant or not – no staff visit needed. –I don't know what would help.