



Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference

LIVING OUT OUR VISION

Our vision includes strengthening relationships in order to more deeply engage in the work of the reign of God. When our congregations are better connected we can serve our communities and the world more effectively. We will invite congregations and credentialed leaders who want to be part of this conference to sign a covenant every three years. A congregational representative will sign the covenant on their behalf. Pastors and others who desire their credentials to be held by IN-MI Mennonite Conference will also sign the covenant.

Covenant for Congregations and Credentialed Leaders

As a community of Anabaptist congregations and credentialed leaders we center our life together around Jesus, extending to the world God loves an invitation to discipleship. As we connect with and commit to those who know and care whether we succeed, we are better able to effectively engage our communities and the world. This covenant will help us to maintain accountability and to prevent laxity as we, the community of congregations, commit and periodically recommit to the relationship.

As members of Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference, we commit ourselves to:

- Embrace Conference vision as expressed in relevant documents, currently “Renewing a Vision.”
- Engage the conference shared spiritual practices.
- Submit to the conference discernment process.
- Participate in conference affairs by putting forth volunteers to the various committees, functions, and special groups.
- Participate regularly in Annual Sessions by having delegates attend and report back.
- Support conference financially at whatever level your congregation is able to sustain.
- Indicate our commitment by having congregational representatives and credential leaders sign this covenant document and its periodic continuance thereafter.

To enhance and strengthen our relationship, covenanting congregations and credentialed leaders can agree to engage in inter-congregational activities as listed below. The following ideas are neither exhaustive nor prescriptive, but a list of possible ways to relate more closely as a community of congregations, or a community of leaders.

Covenanting congregations and credentialed leaders:

- Learn from each other. Congregations could find a congregation in a different part of the conference that you don't know very well to share joys, challenges, and prayer over the course of the year. A pastor could meet with another pastor to share in similar ways, or create an "affinity" group of pastors (pastors who are over 60, pastors who are bi-vocational, pastors who serve large churches, pastors who serve small churches, pastors who are mothers of young children, etc.), or design a sermon series and work together with another local pastor or pastors.
- Have fun together. Identify a congregation and plan a fellowship event together, such as a variety show, watch a movie and discuss it, or other ways focused on getting to know each other. Pastors

could start a small group of pastors' families, or attend an event like a baseball game together, or meet together for prayer, fellowship, service, and worship.

- Look outward into the community together. Engage in mission with another congregation to put on a musical for community children, volunteer at a local nonprofit, adopt a local school, do a peace march, host a Vacation Bible School, have a joint offering project, plan a summer or spring break service trip with SWAP together, etc.
- Celebrate God together. Come together for worship. Perhaps have Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, or Good Friday services together, or gather for an old fashioned hymn sing and soup supper. Pastors may wish to pull together a group of pastors and hire someone to facilitate monthly Group Spiritual Direction, or do a pulpit exchange with another church.