



Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference

An area conference of
Mennonite Church USA

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Dear Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference (IMMC) Delegates,

Greetings in the name of Jesus, our Savior and Sustainer, who through the Spirit has journeyed with us as a community of congregations throughout our history and especially in recent years.

On behalf of the Missional Leadership Team (MLT), we wish to announce that **we are taking a sabbatical from holding our three 2019 Regional Delegate Meetings** previously scheduled for February and March.

Sabbatical is an opportunity to engage different practices by setting aside time for new ways of listening to and being with God as one anticipates continued ministry. Through the practice of sabbatical, we wish to encourage further opportunities for congregations to engage *Renewing a Vision* and to gain greater clarity of purpose for future regional gatherings.

Why a sabbatical?

1. We as a conference have processed much in recent years, including the adoption of *Renewing a Vision*. Regional Delegate Meetings have often served as a precursor to the summer Annual Session. This year we do not anticipate such “pressing matters” for this summer and so wish to encourage other ways for delegates to use that time (see below). We will, however, continue for a 4th year to host webinars in May and June that preview actions and other “business” agenda for our Annual Session (i.e. budget, slate of nominees, etc.).
2. The theme of our 2019 summer Annual Session is “Practicing Our Hope.” Through our worship, discussions, and seminars, time will be focused on equipping of congregations for local ministry. Again, our desire this Spring is for congregations to continue to experiment with Christian practices that can then be shared with one another this summer.

What are we invited to do instead of attending 2019 Regional Meetings?

1. As a congregation, give special time and attention to one of the six practices in *Renewing a Vision*, and/or partner with another congregation or two from your region. In particular, consider practices that will help you engage the “cries of your community” in ways that offer hope.
2. As a team of congregational delegates and/or leaders, spend time engaging in visionary and strategic conversations about the nature and future of conference and church affiliations, and again, perhaps you might do this with a delegate/leadership group from another congregation or two in your region.

This brief list is meant to spur on your imagination...it is not exhaustive!...so please dream and experiment beyond this list! From the conclusion of *Renewing a Vision*:
Jesus sent his disciples out in his name and they returned to report all they had done. Our hope is that when we gather as a community of congregations it will be a time to share all that we have done in Jesus’ name, and a time to support and equip one another in how the Spirit is leading.

May God’s loving grace accompany and guide you as we together live out our conference mission:

We are a community of congregations centered on Jesus, guided by the Holy Spirit, acting through grace, love, and peace engaging the world God loves.

With anticipation of gathering together this summer!

Paula Killough
moderator

Bob Yoder
moderator-elect