

Renewing a Vision

Summarized

Mission statement

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.

As IMMC congregations live into this vision, we hope for and anticipate the following:

- Congregations will strengthen their relationships with each other to foster greater affection, understanding, and mutual sharing.
- Conference activities will equip congregations to be spiritually and biblically grounded, led by Spirit-filled leaders, and telling stories and celebrating God-with-us.
- Each congregation and its members will grow in capacity for God-centered worship, Christ-like love, and reaching out to their neighbors in Spirit-led witness and service.

Centering conference life around Jesus

Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior. This simple confession unites the church across cultural, national, racial, denominational and every other human-made boundary that separates people from each other. As one, the church proclaims faith in Jesus for salvation from sin and service to God.

Jesus is a person, the fullest expression we have of our Creator and the original intent for the salvation of the world. We follow this Jesus whom God sent into the world (Colossians 2:6). Jesus is not a theology or belief construct. While Jesus is not bound by Anabaptist traditions, we believe the Anabaptist stream of faith contributes to a deeper understanding of what it means to follow Jesus here and now.

Shared spiritual practices

We are shaped over time by what we pay attention to and the habits we form. Thus we want to pay attention to and enact several spiritual practices that will continually bend us toward Christ, and form us over time as Christ followers. These practices help us stay centered on Jesus even in the midst of differences. This vision proposes we agree to be accountable to one another for implementing the following set of common spiritual practices. These practices are currently embedded within our Confession of Faith (related COF article numbers listed after each).

1. We will worship God as the central act of our common life whenever gathered (*COF 1, 9*).
2. We will practice prayer, fasting and generous giving (*COF 18, 21*).
3. We will prayerfully study the Bible together whenever we gather to increase our competence in reading, interpreting, and applying the scriptures in an Anabaptist perspective to our everyday lives and to issues we face in the world (*COF 3, 4, 15, 17, 18*).
4. We will accept and offer hospitality, believing it creates the context for God's kingdom to appear in our midst (*COF 10, 18*).
5. We will study the Bible with neighbors and strangers, inviting them to become disciples of Jesus (*COF 10, 8*).
6. We will practice peacemaking by extending loving-kindness and forgiveness (*COF 17, 22*).

We believe that by committing ourselves, together, to work at these spiritual practices, God will bring transformation toward Christ-likeness and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion

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.

As a conference, we want to live in such a way that when we stand before our Lord and humbly ask, "When did we see you hungry and thirsty?" that we will hear the words, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:40).

