

- ✧ **March 7, 2020 – South delegate meeting at Parkview Mennonite Church (Kokomo, IN)**
- ✧ **March 14, 2020 – Central delegate meeting at East Goshen Mennonite Church (Goshen, IN)**
- ✧ **March 21, 2020 – North delegate meeting at New Hope Community Church (Midland, MI)**

8:45 Gathering and fellowship, pick up a hot drink

9:00 **Worship:** Ephesians 2:11-22

**10:30 BREAK**

11:00 *Delegate agenda*

- Stewardship Team report: affiliation sheets, finance update, spending plan draft
  - Affiliation sheets
  - Financial update and draft spending plan
- *Recommendation from Tanzania Affinity Group, with table discussion*

*Announcements before lunch*

**12:00 LUNCH – something to do around tables?**

1:00 *Gathering back from lunch*

*Breakout conversations: Congregation to Congregation Relationships*

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.

*from Renewing a Vision*

Wrap-up – What is your testimony?

When did you sense the Spirit's presence?

What will you remember from today?

Who shares what back home?

Closing song and ritual

4:00 Dismiss

[Type here]





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Offices at East Goshen Mennonite  
Church

February 10, 2020

We greet you in the name of Jesus, who lives and walks among us,

After last year's delegate meeting sabbatical, we invite you to gather for a day of celebration and discernment. Here is a sample of the comments received:

- We had a worship day with other congregations
- The pastor had a breakfast with delegates
- I missed checking in with people I have come to know and care about.
- I didn't miss spending a Saturday in a meeting

Receiving and noting all the feedback, we (Missional Leadership Team) believe these gatherings are valuable and they should be worth the time required. We expect meetings will reflect the goals described in *Renewing a Vision*.

The day will begin with worship (after hot drinks). We will share congregational stories. Some regions may hear from visitors from Shirati Diocese.

Because of the varied reactions to covenant as presented in *Renewing a Vision*, MLT needs your help to consider fitting ways to celebrate belonging and to recognize healthy boundaries. See the invitation to breakout sessions in the docket.

Watch for a separate email with agenda and supporting documents. Please register at <https://2020regionaldelegatemeetings.eventbrite.com> by the end of February.

There are three regional meetings – central, south and north. If the meeting in your region does not work for you, we encourage you to attend another meeting.

Your presence strengthens connections between your congregation and others. This day is not for delegates only. What leaders would be interested in connecting with others in celebration and discernment?

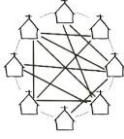







Grace,

  
Bob Yoder  
moderator

  
Dan Miller  
conference pastor

## Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference 2020-2021 Spending Plan

*Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference undergirds and connects congregations with others as we center our spiritual development in Jesus Christ. Committed, caring communities of faith are the bases from which Christ is proclaimed in word and deed. This is God's work, and it is exciting indeed!*

<b>CARE OF PASTORS AND CONGREGATIONS</b>	Expenses related to the things conference does together that congregations cannot do alone: Congregational Coaches, Pastor/Congregation in Crisis, Pastoral Family Assistance Program	<b>1.3%</b>	
<b>COMMUNICATIONS</b>	Gospel Evangel printing and distribution Website development and maintenance	<b>2.1%</b>	
<b>CONFERENCE INITIATIVES</b>	Initiatives related to priorities and new ventures: Intercultural Transformation Church planting Special regional projects Pastor Summit Youth Resources	<b>0.8%</b>	
<b>CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP TEAMS EXPENDITURES</b>	Travel and miscellaneous expenses: Leadership Teams Retreat Missional Leadership Team Ministry Credentialing Team Leadership Enhancement Team Stewardship Team Gifts Development Team	<b>2.0%</b>	
<b>LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT</b>	Leadership Training Ministry Inquiry Program (college students) Seminary Student Assistance	<b>1.8%</b>	
<b>MENNONITE CHURCH USA CONNECTIONS</b>	Conference first fruits: A 10% tithe of congregational contributions to conference goes to support denominational work. Denominational Ministerial Database Mutual Aid-Corinthian Plan General Assembly Del. Travel	<b>13.3%</b>	
<b>OFFICE EXPENDITURES</b>	Office Space cost sharing Equipment maintenance Office Supplies and Equipment Liability Insurance	<b>7.7%</b>	
<b>CONFERENCE STAFFING</b>	Salaries, benefits and networking expenses for all staff: <b>Conference Pastor</b> provides leadership development, administration and vision. Oversees and participates with teams, maintains relationships with pastors and congregations, credentialing, and connects with MC USA. <b>CPLT</b> works with all aspects of leadership transitions and credentialing. <b>Administrative Coordinator</b> manages office responsibilities, event coordination, communication, writes and edits Gospel Evangel, manages electronic media. <b>Bookkeeper</b> maintains financial records and transactions. Leadership consultant Sabbatical fund	<b>71.1%</b>	

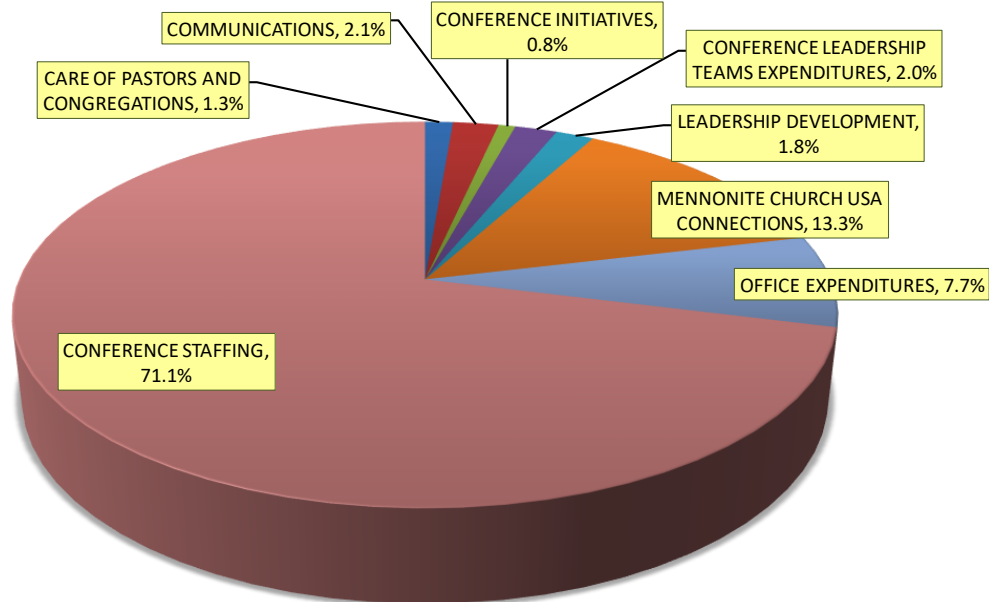
## Proposed 2020-2021 Spending Plan Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference

*Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference undergirds and connects congregations with others as we center our spiritual development in Jesus Christ. Committed, caring communities of faith are the bases from which Christ is proclaimed in word and deed. This is God's work, and it is exciting indeed!*

	2019-2020 Spending Plan	Actual through 2/29	Proposed 2020-2021	\$ Change from 2019-20	% Change
<b>INCOME</b>					
CONGREGATIONAL SUPPORT FOR CONFERENCE	\$ 223,000	\$ 128,129	\$ 210,000	\$ (13,000)	-5.8%
INDIVIDUAL GIFTS AND OTHER EXPECTED INCOME	\$ 25,900	\$ 18,225	\$ 28,750	\$ 2,850	11.0%
<b>TOTAL EXPECTED INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 248,900</b>	<b>\$ 146,354</b>	<b>\$ 238,750</b>	<b>\$ (10,150)</b>	<b>-4.1%</b>
<b>EXPENSE</b>					
CARE OF PASTORS AND CONGREGATIONS	\$ 3,500	\$ 1,848	\$ 3,300	\$ (200)	-5.7%
COMMUNICATIONS	\$ 6,250	\$ 4,155	\$ 5,400	\$ (850)	-13.6%
CONFERENCE INITIATIVES	\$ 3,090	\$ 1,156	\$ 2,000	\$ (1,090)	-35.3%
CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP TEAMS EXPENDITURES	\$ 5,000	\$ 3,737	\$ 5,000	\$ -	0.0%
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	\$ 2,100	\$ 1,732	\$ 4,500	\$ 2,400	114.3%
MENNONITE CHURCH USA CONNECTIONS	\$ 35,900	\$ 18,933	\$ 33,600	\$ (2,300)	-6.4%
OFFICE EXPENDITURES	\$ 21,800	\$ 12,499	\$ 19,500	\$ (2,300)	-10.6%
CONFERENCE STAFFING	\$ 170,400	\$ 107,973	\$ 179,972	\$ 9,572	5.6%
<b>TOTAL EXPECTED EXPENSE</b>	<b>\$ 248,040</b>	<b>\$ 152,033</b>	<b>\$ 253,272</b>	<b>\$ 5,232</b>	<b>2.1%</b>
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>\$ 860</b>	<b>\$ (5,679)</b>	<b>\$ (14,522)</b>		

In the spirit of the Listening and Redesign Report of 2007: "Because we live in a time of rapid change and because we heard such a strong call for improved relationships between congregations, **we believe that we need an organization that will emphasize relationship and that will be more flexible and less centralized.**"

### 2020-2021 Spending Plan Allocations



Spending plan draft approved by Stewardship Team 1/8/2020

Approved to delegates by Missional Leadership Team 1/25/2020

To: Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference (IMMC) Office, MLT, delegates and churches  
From: The Tanzanian Affinity Group, an IMMC task force: Bess Fitzgerald (Kalamazoo Mennonite), chair; Dick and Nancy Yoder (Berkey Avenue Mennonite), Leighton Miller (Wildwood Mennonite), David B. Miller (Prairie Street Mennonite) and Dan Miller, ex officio  
Date: February 10, 2020

A proposal for a response to the invitation for a relationship from the Shirati Diocese of Kanisa la Mennonite Tanzania (KMT)

This proposal will be discussed at the IMMC regional meetings held in March this year:

March 7	Southern Region	Kokomo, IN
March 14	Central Region	Goshen, IN
March 21	Northern Region	Midland, Michigan

We anticipate a vote at Annual Sessions on this proposal, or a revised one based on feedback from Regional Gatherings.

Bishop Kateti of the Shirati Diocese of Tanzania Mennonite Church approached our Conference in 2017 with a request to enter into a relationship for the mutual upbuilding of our Mennonite churches. This invitation came when five Tanzanian Bishops visited Mennonite Church U.S.A. in 2017. Paula Killough and Dan Miller visited Shirati Diocese in 2018. The Tanzanian Affinity Group was formed at last year's Annual Sessions and charged with researching the current context, possibilities and advisability of a relationship.

The Tanzania Affinity Group is now recommending that we accept the invitation.

There are many ways that all involved can benefit. We all know ourselves better as we learn about the lives of others and as we watch others learn the distinctive features of our culture. For example, David B. Miller traveled to Tanzania in his role as Teaching Associate of the AMBS Church Leadership Center. During his time there, he experienced life in a very different setting. The power would go out. The tap would sometimes not yield water or cold water only. Sometimes he was almost unbearably hot. A short shopping trip might turn into a long one or become impossible. He felt a disturbing loss of control of his comfort and planning. As he prayed, he began to move into a desire for a state of "yieldedness". The uncomfortable experience was productive as he waited, prayed, sought contentment, and thought about this context. Turning over these ideas with a colleague, he received a further insight: That "yieldedness", if taken too far was a snare equal to and opposite from his former sense of independent control. People who live without much control of their circumstances can be prone to resignation. The twin traps of over-control and under expectation began to show David and his friend the wisdom of a middle way. Dick Yoder recently summed up the lesson in a pithy way: The Serenity Prayer. "God grant me the serenity to accept things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference". We are convinced that talking extensively about our different ways will yield other insights like these, insights into our thinking, use of scripture and blind spots.

Our committee has been meeting since August to gather information to help us make a good recommendation to the Conference. We have read books on the history of the Shirati area and the coming of the Gospel for the first time through the missionaries of the Lancaster Conference in the 1930's through the 1960's. We have spoken together about our own experiences in East Africa and have interviewed Missions experts, those who have served over the years and several people from Tanzania to learn the current status of bi-lateral relationships. Some trips, relationships and mission giving have not gone particularly well. A short book about some of the key differences between our culture and East African culture, very broadly, was recommended and has proved informative. Initially we hoped to learn enough to avoid misunderstanding and embarrassment for both parties to the relationship. While our studies and coaching will help with this, we have become aware that relating perfectly is never humanly possible. In fact, as the Colossian Forum has taught us, conflict is an opportunity for Christian growth. The fruit of the Spirit grows in situations where we need the fruit of the Spirit. Hosting and being the guests of brothers and sisters in Christ across many miles is the workshop where forbearance, patience, kindness and peace can be made within us. Knowing our conference and theirs to be gifted in hospitality give us confidence that we can make visits work and be profitable for all involved. The Reverend Tobias Magatti, a resident of Goshen with roots in Shirati, has been appointed as Shirati Diocese's official Public Relations Officer. He has been a wonderful source of insight and ideas for our interactions. We welcome his on-going involvement.

Seven delegates from Shirati Diocese are arriving, God willing, for a visit the 10th through the 24th of March of this year. The delegates are paying their own travel and donations from IMMC individuals will provide for expenses related to hosting them here. This will be an opportunity to explore the benefits of sharing with these brothers and sisters from far away.

Our proposal is to engage in a mutual relationship with the Diocese of Tanzania for an introductory period of three years (June 2020 through May 2023). During that time we would nurture the relationship in several ways.

1. We would plan to send one or two delegations to beautiful, resource rich Tanzania. These pastors, lay leaders and perhaps skilled professionals would retreat with clergy and lay leaders to learn each others' stories and to mutually seek wisdom on spiritual and practical issues within our preview.
2. We would plan to receive one or two delegations from the Shirati Diocese (not counting the planned delegation for this March) to offer an opportunity to welcome fellow Mennonites, full of the Holy Spirit, with a different history of church life that might inform and enrich our appreciation of God's big world and God's awesome variety as God build's God's Church.
3. We would foster youth engagement by making and receiving video chats with youth groups in Shirati and encouraging the sharing of stories of life in these different places.
4. We would exchange prayer concerns on a quarterly basis and distribute these through the established email links through out the Conference.
5. We would distribute a poster for display in Conference Churches to familiarize us all with bare facts of our partner's location, history and challenges. We would make available periodic updates to display prayer requests, political or weather-related emergencies and words of greeting from far away.

We have no plans to make any financial commitments, capital or otherwise, in this initial time. Any ideas in that direction would be vetted through the Conference office and would be undertaken after very specific consultation with our national missions partners and other development specialists. We believe that much can be shared to the profit of both partners without capital projects.

Not every Conference church or church-member will be involved in this endeavor. We believe we need at least 12 people representing six or more churches, with at least one church in each region (Northern, Central, Southern) for this relationship to be successful. We hope to involve groups and individuals, especially those who can support us with logistics or those with skills and interests that match those of people who will be involved from the Tanzanian side. We hope this relationship will provide insights to and from urban, suburban and rural churches from one end of our Conference to the other. We believe that it is best to include churches large and small, majority white as well as congregations of color. No one will be required to participate.

There will be evaluation by our committee with input to the MLT after each visit to check on difficulties, benefits and need for fine-tuning goals and logistics of the visiting program. We will keep the Conference apprised of cash flow and of areas of communication needing attention.

Our Conference mission statement contains the aspiration, “engaging the world God loves.” God’s world is around the corner and far over the ocean. This proposal signals a desire and attempt to engage in a different way of relating- personal, corporate, as equals, as God’s beloved, as One Village.

An invitation to delegates and attenders at 2020 regional delegate meetings:

*Renewing a Vision* brought together several characteristics of a vibrant conference: centering around Jesus, hope for the future, relationship, shared spiritual practices, a periodic celebration of corporate life and a recognition that not all choose to be part of Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference (IMMC).

Much of it was well received and affirmed. But the celebration of covenant was not. Missional Leadership Team (MLT) decided to step away from the covenant celebration planned for 2018 so people could experience living into the vision. As 2021 approaches, MLT wants to test some ideas for a way forward.

The covenant plan approved by delegates in 2017, part of *Renewing a Vision*, was:

Congregations and credentialed leaders who want to be part of this conference will be asked to sign a covenant every three years. In brief, the covenant asks us to commit to: engaging the shared spiritual practices, to participate in conference affairs (via volunteers, delegates, finances, prayers and communications), to use the communal discernment process as needed, and to foster inter-congregational relationships.

The intended goals of the covenant plan are:

- as a celebration of being together and belonging. The idea of signing covenant was thought of as a way of expressing this commitment.
- Covenant also provided a way for congregations and credentialed leaders to cease belonging by not signing. There are congregations and pastors in IMMC who have not participated in decades but have not “left.” The idea of signing covenant was a way to address this question of whether congregations wanted to be part of IMMC, and what commitment is required for membership.

As MLT listened to the concerns, it became clear that several items complicated the covenant idea as presented:

- It was in the same document as the Breadth of Variance, raising concerns across the spectrum about the integrity of signing a document if one doesn’t agree personally with the stated positions on variance.
- There was a possible conflict if a congregation made one decision about signing and the pastor(s) made another.
- Some pastors thought their credential would be revoked if they personally differed from the breadth of variance.

**MLT’s suggestion is to NOT do the covenant as we had previously voted, but seek ways to strengthen congregational relationships.** Delegate help is needed as we focus on the hopes of *Renewing a Vision*. MLT will bring two questions about congregational connections and invite the group to name two additional discussion items. You will identify the question you want to talk about with others who share your passion. To do this, an hour of the delegate meeting will be held in breakout conversations, followed by some large group wrap-up.

The work done on this day will be set alongside work done at the other delegate meetings. It will be compiled and then summarized for distribution. Using the work done at delegate meetings, MLT will bring a proposal to delegates at Annual Sessions.