

MLT Recommended Action Regarding “Covenant” Section of *Renewing a Vision*

Renewing a Vision, affirmed by delegates in June 2017, brought together several characteristics of a vibrant conference: centering around Jesus, hope for the future, relationship, shared spiritual practices, and a periodic celebration of corporate life together as Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference (IMMC).

Much of it was well received and affirmed. But, for a variety of reasons, the celebration of “covenant” was not. In December 2017 the Missional Leadership Team (MLT) decided to pause the covenant idea for three years so people could experience living into the vision. As 2021 approaches, MLT tested some ideas regarding the covenant portion in our recent 2020 Spring Regional delegate gatherings. Overall, delegates affirmed our general direction that we not do the covenant as we previously had voted.

The MLT recommends that we delete the “covenant” section of *Renewing a Vision*, thus eliminating the “signing of the covenant.” However, the MLT will continue to focus on strengthening relationships among our congregations.

The MLT believes that one sentence from the “covenant” section highlights our desire: “When we commit to and connect with those who know and care whether we succeed, we are better able to effectively serve our communities and the world, to the glory of God.” In addition, the following guides our understanding:

- “As IMMC congregations live into this vision, we hope for and anticipate...Congregations will strengthen their relationships with each other to foster greater affection, understanding, and mutual sharing” (IMMC *Renewing a Vision*).
- “...the Conference unites members in worship of God and fellowship with one another in openness to the Holy Spirit’s presence, guidance and empowerment, and in the proclamation and embodiment of Christ’s worldwide reign (IMMC *Bylaws*, Article 2. Purpose).

Regarding congregations who have not recently participated in the life of our conference, we plan to reach out to them this next year to remind them of the expectations of congregational involvement and to discern with them their future IMMC membership.