

Dear Delegate to the Allegheny Mennonite Conference,

Welcome to the delegate body of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference (AMC). You have been chosen for an important role. We suggest that you make a notebook to hold the following suggested things (listed below in bold print), which should help you fulfill your role as delegate.

1. The delegate body is the official governing body of AMC, as such it:
  - a) Elects persons to conference positions,
  - b) Adopts a conference budget, and
  - c) Assists in defining the conference goals and objectives. See Article IV Section A, 2 of the **Constitution of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference** (Attachment 1).
  - d) Also see the article "**Who speaks for Conference?**" (Attachment 2), by Kurt Horst, Conference Minister, regarding delegates' role.
2. Since the work of AMC is done mostly at delegate sessions, it is very important that you attend all meetings. These meetings are usually held at various churches throughout the Conference on the first Saturday of November and March. Annual conference (at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center), which is usually held the first weekend of August, also includes delegate meetings. As a delegate you will be getting all the current minutes; so, use this notebook to file them.
3. As an organization, AMC conducts "business". To find out more about this business, see the **Annual Reports to the Allegheny Mennonite Conference** booklet, published each year for the annual conference in July. This booklet is a handy reference book not only to see the business of AMC, but also the people of AMC. See the list of commissions and commission members. See the constitution for their roles and functions. In the back section are listed all the delegates. On the back cover is a map of the churches in the conference. Keep this handy for easy reference and to help you become better acquainted with AMC.
4. Another way to learn about current/recent happenings within AMC is the *Allegheny Conference News*. This is a newsletter, which is published 6 times a year. Your church should be getting a copy for each household. Read what other churches are doing and share what your church is doing with conference. Stay in touch.
5. The Coordinating Council helps to coordinate the work of AMC. (See Article IV, Section D of the constitution). They usually meet 3-6 times a year. As a delegate you will be getting all the current minutes, so use this notebook to file them.
6. As with any organization over time, we develop statements of how we will function. Some of those statements are nice to have handy. In this packet we have included:
  - a) **Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love** (Attachment 3)
  - b) **Practicing Accountability in Allegheny Mennonite Conference** (Attachment 4 & 4B)
  - c) **Procedural Guidelines for Delegates of Allegheny Mennonite Conference** (Attachment 6)
  - d) **Lines of Accountability in Allegheny Mennonite Conference** (Attachment 7)
  - e) **How Does the Money Flow in Allegheny Mennonite Conference?** (Attachment 8)
7. Allegheny Mennonite Conference is a part of the Mennonite Church USA. To learn more about the broader Mennonite Church and to find more resources, check out the website: [www.mennoniteusa.org](http://www.mennoniteusa.org). Along with other things, you will find:
  - a) a link to churchwide statements,
  - b) the *Confession of Faith* (a **Summary Statement** is included in this packet as Attachment 5), and
  - c) peace resources.

Note: each congregation should have a copy of this packet to duplicate and distribute to their delegates. You may request a copy of this packet be e-mailed to interested persons (provide the e-mail address) by contacting the conference office at [office@amc-mcusa.org](mailto:office@amc-mcusa.org) or visit our web page at [www.amc-mcusa.org/confdocs.html](http://www.amc-mcusa.org/confdocs.html) to download a copy (other important documents will also be available here). This is available as a PDF file on the web and either a PDF file or MS Word files from the AMC office.



31 **ARTICLE IV**

32 **Organization**

33 Conference is an association of congregations whose purpose is to serve its members.  
34 Congregations act officially in Conference through delegates.

35 Program development and implementation is carried out by five commissions.  
36 Chairpersons of the five commissions, the Moderator, and the Moderator Elect serve as  
37 the Coordinating Council, and for legal purposes, as the Board of Directors. The fiscal  
38 year begins on July 1, and all elected positions commence immediately after the annual  
39 summer delegate session.

40 **Section A. Representation**

41 1. Delegates

42 The following persons from member congregations are delegates to Conference:

- 43 a. Licensed or ordained persons who are actively serving as bishops, overseers,  
44 ministers, or deacons.
- 45 b. Persons elected to Conference positions by delegates.
- 46 c. Each congregation may select up to six delegates. They are encouraged to select  
47 persons who represent congregational functions, such as: Christian education,  
48 finance, mission and service, congregational chairpersons, elders, youth,  
49 ordained or lay leaders who are retired.

50 2. Functions of Delegates

- 51 a. Represent and report the views of the congregations.
- 52 b. Keep informed of congregational and Conference matters.
- 53 c. Assist in defining the Conference goals and objectives.
- 54 d. Elect persons to serve on the commissions, the commission chairpersons, the  
55 Moderator Elect, the Nominating Committee, and other persons as need arises.
- 56 e. Relate to matters and commissions in their respective interest areas.
- 57 f. Adopt a Conference budget.
- 58 g. ALL DELEGATES ARE EXPECTED TO ATTEND ANNUAL MEETINGS.

59 3. Non-delegates and guests are also welcome to participate in discussions.

60 4. Allegheny Conference shall send Conference delegates to the Mennonite Church  
61 USA Delegate Assembly according to the by-laws of the Mennonite Church USA.

62 a. Conference representatives serving on the Constituency Leaders Council shall  
63 be delegates by virtue of their office. The following shall serve on the  
64 Constituency Leaders Council:

- 65 (1) The Conference Minister,
- 66 (2) The Moderator, and
- 67 (3) A third person will be elected (or affirmed) from a nominee (or nominees)  
68 presented by the Nominating Committee and will serve for two years (they  
69 may serve two consecutive terms). This term will start on alternating years  
70 from the Moderator Elect's term. This person shall be selected from the  
71 Faith, Life, and Procedures Commission, Leadership Commission or the

- 72 Overseers. Consideration should be given to selecting someone who will  
73 provide diverse and balanced representation to Constituency Leaders  
74 Council.  
75 b. The Moderator Elect shall serve as a delegate (assuming membership in  
76 Allegheny Mennonite Conference is high enough, otherwise they will serve as  
77 an alternate delegate). If additional delegates or alternate delegates are needed  
78 they shall be elected from a slate of candidates drawn up by the Nominating  
79 Committee and will serve for two years (they may serve two consecutive terms).

## 80 **Section B. Commissions**

### 81 1. Leadership Commission

#### 82 a. Membership

83 The commission will consist of a chairperson and three additional members.  
84 The three additional members shall be chosen, one from the overseer body, one  
85 from the pastors, deacons or elders, and one from the laity in the congregations.  
86 The chair of Leadership Commission may be chosen from any of these three  
87 groups. All members of the commission are to be elected at the Spring delegate  
88 meeting.

89 The commission may appoint additional persons or committees for specific  
90 functions or assignments; but, the overall responsibility for administration shall  
91 lie with the elected members. Any commission or committee member who is  
92 directly involved in a conflict situation brought before this commission shall be  
93 disqualified from serving while this matter is considered.

#### 94 b. Functions

- 95 (1) Guide and assist the congregations in the selection, development, and  
96 maintenance of sound pastoral leadership.  
97 (2) Supervise ministerial changes, licensing, and ordinations on behalf of  
98 Conference.  
99 (3) Provide a forum for consultation, encouragement, and general sharing  
100 among pastors and other congregational leaders.  
101 (4) Provide guidance and counsel for congregational leaders by such means as  
102 visitation, seminars, and other opportunities for continuing education and  
103 growth.  
104 (5) Provide for the resourcing and evaluation of congregational overseers. In  
105 consultation with congregations, appoint overseers to congregational  
106 assignments.
- 107 (a) Congregational Overseers
- 108 i) Qualifications and Appointments
- 109 a) An overseer shall be an ordained person with satisfactory  
110 pastoral experience and meet the qualifications of I Timothy  
111 and Titus 1.  
112 b) An overseer shall be a neutral person whom the pastor and/or  
113 congregational leaders can approach in matters of  
114 congregational life, program, and leadership.

- 115 c) A pastor shall not serve as his/her own overseer.
- 116 d) Overseers shall be selected and commissioned for three year
- 117 terms by the Leadership Commission in consultation with the
- 118 leadership of the congregation(s).
- 119 e) In the event of a vacancy, the Leadership Commission shall
- 120 serve as acting overseer.
- 121 ii) Functions of Overseers
- 122 a) Provide counsel to the pastor(s) in matters of personal concern.
- 123 b) Assist the pastor and delegates to: 1) convey to the
- 124 congregation the theological consensus of the Conference and
- 125 Delegate Assembly, and 2) convey to the Conference issues
- 126 and concerns from the congregation(s).
- 127 c) Participate with the congregation in the process of securing
- 128 pastoral leadership for the congregation(s).
- 129 d) Encourage fair and adequate funding for ministerial support.
- 130 e) Counsel with each other in quarterly meetings convened by the
- 131 overseer serving on the Leadership Commission.

## 132 2. Finance and Stewardship Commission

### 133 a. Membership

134 The commission will consist of a chairperson who also serves as  
135 Conference Treasurer and two additional members elected by the delegates at  
136 the Spring delegate meeting. The commission may appoint additional persons or  
137 committees for specific functions or assignments; but, the overall responsibility  
138 for administration shall lie with the elected members.

### 139 b. Functions

- 140 (1) Receive and disburse all Conference funds as directed by the delegates.
- 141 (2) Forward all funds entrusted to it by congregations and/or individuals
- 142 according to the wishes of the contributor.
- 143 (3) Coordinate all specific fund solicitations from Conference congregations or
- 144 churchwide boards.
- 145 (4) Raise capital funds as needed for Conference institutions.
- 146 (5) Manage all Conference property and capital investments in cooperation
- 147 with other Conference commissions involved.
- 148 (6) Promote and provide guidance for giving in the congregations.
- 149 (7) Counsel the congregations in the use of funds for capital expenditures and
- 150 other financial matters.
- 151 (8) Prepare a budget annually for Conference approval after consultation with
- 152 all commissions and congregations of the Conference.
- 153 (9) Provide financial counseling in matters of wills, trusts, estate planning, and
- 154 other matters pertaining to proper stewardship of material wealth.
- 155 (10) Submit an audited report to the delegates on an Annual basis.
- 156 (11) Serve as liaison for connecting Conference and congregations to related
- 157 churchwide agencies and offices.

- 158 3. Nurture and Education Commission  
159 a. Membership  
160 The commission will consist of a chairperson and two additional members  
161 elected by the delegates at the Spring delegate meeting. The commission may  
162 appoint additional persons or committees for specific functions or assignments;  
163 but, the overall responsibility for administration shall lie with the elected  
164 members.  
165 b. Functions  
166 (1) Serve as a resource to congregations in the area of education and nurture.  
167 (2) Promote and evaluate education programs within congregations, including  
168 peace and related concerns.  
169 (3) Serve as liaison for connecting Conference and congregations to related  
170 churchwide agencies and offices.  
171 (4) Develop leadership skills and resources for congregational education and  
172 nurture programs.  
173 (5) Promote and encourage involvement in special interest groups, e.g., clubs,  
174 MYF, senior citizens, single adults, couples, and families.  
175 (6) Serve as liaison between our church-sponsored schools and the  
176 congregations.  
177 (7) Assist congregations in identifying and meeting the needs of their youth.
- 178 4. Missions and Service Commission  
179 a. Membership  
180 The commission will consist of a chairperson and two additional members  
181 elected by the delegates at the Spring delegate meeting. The commission may  
182 appoint additional persons or committees for specific functions or assignments;  
183 but, the overall responsibility for administration shall lie with the elected  
184 members.  
185 b. Functions  
186 (1) Assist congregations and area councils in their outreach activities.  
187 (2) Seek new outreach possibilities and initiate new programs and  
188 congregations in consultation with the Coordinating Council and delegate  
189 body.  
190 (3) Administer all outreach activities of the Conference.  
191 (4) Serve as liaison for connecting Conference and congregations to related  
192 churchwide agencies and offices.
- 193 5. Faith, Life and Procedures Commission  
194 a. Membership  
195 The commission will consist of a chairperson and two additional members  
196 elected by the delegates at the Spring delegate meeting. The commission may  
197 appoint additional persons or committees for specific functions or assignments;  
198 but, the overall responsibility shall lie with the elected members. Any  
199 commission or committee member directly involved in a conflict situation  
200 brought before the commission shall be disqualified from serving while this

- 201 matter is considered. Members of this commission may not serve on the  
202 Nominating Committee.
- 203 b. Functions
- 204 (1) Assist congregational leaders in promoting Anabaptist faith and doctrine  
205 according to the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*.
- 206 (2) Identify and initiate proper consideration and discussion of faith and life  
207 issues and grievances facing congregations or Conference.
- 208 (3) After research and study of the above, recommend to congregations or  
209 Conference appropriate courses of action. This commission is encouraged  
210 to appoint ad-hoc committees to look into issues and grievances brought  
211 before it.
- 212 (4) Supervise the procedures of Conference pertaining to nominations,  
213 elections, the conduct of business meetings, and other procedural matters.
- 214 (5) Receive requests from congregations who desire Conference membership  
215 and make recommendations to the delegate body.
- 216 (6) Present at each Spring delegate meeting a slate of no less than four  
217 nominees who are willing to serve on the Nominating Committee.
- 218 (7) Maintain historical records for Conference and assist congregations in  
219 historical record keeping.
- 220 (8) Recommend amendments to the Constitution.

221 **Section C. Nominating Committee**

222 1. Membership

223 The Nominating Committee shall consist of six persons elected by the delegates  
224 at the Spring delegate meeting, from a list of nominees submitted by the Faith, Life  
225 and Procedures Commission.

226 Two shall be elected each year for three-year terms and may not be re-elected  
227 for two years. The Coordinating Council will appoint the chairperson from among  
228 the elected members.

229 The Nominating Committee shall be responsible to Faith, Life and Procedures  
230 and shall submit its slate of nominees to this Commission for review prior to  
231 elections.

232 2. Functions

233 a. Search out persons exercising the gifts needed for the Conference  
234 responsibilities.

235 b. Give careful consideration to questions of commission continuity, Conference  
236 representation and balance of gifts, offering to the delegates a multiple-  
237 candidate slate, or when deemed appropriate a single-candidate slate, for  
238 delegate election.

239 c. Prepare a candidate slate for all elected offices and for delegate positions to the  
240 Mennonite Church USA Delegate Assembly.

- 241 3. Guidelines for Election  
242 a. Elected members of commissions shall have terms of three years each which  
243 shall be spaced so that one or more is elected each year. Members may not serve  
244 more than two successive terms.  
245 b. Moderator-Elect shall be elected every two years. This person will serve an  
246 additional two years subsequently as Moderator.  
247 c. Any qualified member of any congregation within Conference is eligible for any  
248 position unless otherwise specified.  
249 d. Except for delegates to the Mennonite Church USA Delegate Assembly and  
250 Constituency Leaders Council, persons may serve in only one elected office at a  
251 time.  
252 e. Elections shall take place at the Spring delegate meeting.  
253 f. Persons having served the full tenure of their office as outlined in points a.-e.  
254 above are not eligible for any elected office within Conference for two years.  
255 This two year ineligibility shall not apply:  
256 (1) to commission members being elected chairperson of the commission on  
257 which they serve,  
258 (2) to candidates for Moderator-Elect,  
259 (3) to commission members who were appointed to that commission for the  
260 purpose of filling out an unexpired term.

261 **Section D. The Coordinating Council**

- 262 1. Membership  
263 The Coordinating Council shall consist of a Moderator Elect, Moderator, and  
264 the chairperson of each of the five commissions. The Moderator-Elect is expected to  
265 attend one or more meetings of each commission annually.  
266 2. Functions  
267 a. Coordinate, give guidance, and support the work of the commissions in keeping  
268 with the policies and decisions of Conference.  
269 b. Appoint committees or persons that may be required for inter-commission or  
270 extra-commission functions.  
271 c. Appoint persons to fill vacancies of elected offices. These appointments will be  
272 brought to the next scheduled meeting of Conference delegates for ratification,  
273 and will continue to the end of the original term.  
274 d. Develop and coordinate job description(s) of staff person(s) and designate to  
275 whom the staff person(s) will be responsible.  
276 e. Establish and review annually the salaries and wages of Conference personnel.  
277 f. Keep an accurate record of proceedings of all its meetings through an appointed  
278 recording secretary.  
279 g. Schedule, plan, and conduct Annual Meetings of Conference.

- 280 h. Call special meetings of Conference by notifying the delegates no less than  
281 thirty days in advance.  
282 i. Serve as the Board of Directors on behalf of Conference for legal purposes. The  
283 Moderator shall serve as president of the corporation, Moderator-Elect as  
284 secretary, and Treasurer as treasurer.

285 **Section E. Decision Making**

- 286 1. A quorum shall consist of the delegates present at any regular or properly called  
287 session of Conference.  
288 2. All elected persons shall be elected from a slate presented by the Nominating  
289 Committee. Any member may submit names for consideration to the Nominating  
290 Committee.  
291 3. All decisions of Conference shall require a simple majority of the votes cast unless  
292 otherwise specified.

293 **Section F. Staff Personnel**

294 A Conference staff team may be employed upon recommendation of the Coordinating  
295 Council and confirmed by the delegates. Accountability, specific terms, and job  
296 descriptions shall be developed by the Coordinating Council. An employment review  
297 shall be held every three years for all staff persons.

298 **ARTICLE V**

299 **Related Organizations**

300 Conference recognizes various auxiliary organizations having their own constitutions,  
301 whose memberships consist of Conference congregational members and which function  
302 within the framework of this Conference's policies and programs.

303 **ARTICLE VI**

304 **Congregations**

305 **Section A. Congregational Leadership**

- 306 1. Congregations are encouraged to form leadership groups to give oversight to the  
307 congregation according to guidelines furnished by the Leadership Commission.  
308 2. Congregational leadership teams are encouraged to participate with other  
309 Conference congregations for mutual programming, counsel, and fellowship.  
310 3. Congregations shall cooperate with the Leadership Commission in choosing an  
311 overseer for the congregation.  
312 4. Procedures for ordination, licensing, or ministerial changes shall be conducted in  
313 cooperation with the overseer(s) and the Leadership Commission.

314 5. Removal from Service

315 When a minister is unsound in theology, or morally disqualified, it becomes the  
316 duty of the congregation, in cooperation with the overseer, to deal with the matter. If  
317 they need further assistance, they request it from the Leadership Commission.

318 6. Retirement

319 Ordained persons are advised to lighten their load at age 65 and retire at 70. If  
320 congregations retain their minister after age 70, they are advised to do so by yearly  
321 appointment.

322 **Section B. Qualification for Member Congregations**

323 A worshipping group may make application to become a congregation in Conference  
324 through the Faith, Life and Procedures Commission. Guidelines for congregational  
325 membership are as follows:

- 326 1. Members have covenanted together in a common life of obedience to Jesus Christ.
- 327 2. The congregation confesses a faith common with the *Confession of Faith in a*  
328 *Mennonite Perspective* and accepts the constitution of the Allegheny Mennonite  
329 Conference.
- 330 3. There is adequate provision for leadership and a willingness to give and receive  
331 counsel from member congregations through Conference delegates.
- 332 4. There is a willingness to support Conference decisions.
- 333 5. New groups from existing congregations may apply to the Faith, Life and  
334 Procedures Commission for congregational membership. There will be a waiting  
335 period of one year before full membership is granted.

336 **Section C. Resolving Congregational Difficulty**

- 337 1. Congregations, in cooperation with their overseer, are encouraged to settle their own  
338 difficulties. If necessary the congregational leadership group or any five lay persons  
339 may call the Faith, Life, and Procedures Commission to assist.
- 340 2. If the congregation fails to resolve or deal with the difficulty, the Leadership  
341 Commission may ask the Faith, Life and Procedures Commission to make an  
342 investigation and report to the congregation. If the congregation refuses to act on the  
343 finding, the findings shall be reported to the delegates.
- 344 3. The Faith, Life and Procedures Commission shall always be open to give counsel to  
345 those desiring help or advice.

346 **Section D. Dissolution of a Congregation**

- 347 1. It is expected that events leading toward the dissolution of a congregation will be a  
348 matter of discernment between the congregation, the overseer, and Conference  
349 representation. Disposal of assets and care for paid staff persons should be  
350 discussed and resolved with Conference oversight.
- 351 2. Upon request, letters of transfer will be issued by Faith, Life and Procedures  
352 Commission for a period of up to two years following dissolution. Upon dissolution  
353 of a congregation the final membership list will be held by Faith, Life and  
354 Procedures Commission for two years.

355 **Section E. Withdrawal of a Congregation**

- 356 1. When a congregation's continuing membership in the Conference is in question, the  
357 resources of the overseer, Faith, Life, and Procedures Commission, Conference  
358 minister, and/or mediation services should be enlisted toward resolution of the  
359 conflict. Upon recommendation by Faith, Life, and Procedures Commission, action  
360 may be needed by the delegate body.
- 361 2. A congregation considering termination of its membership in the Conference shall  
362 engage in discussion with Conference entities such as the overseer, Conference  
363 minister, or Faith, Life, and Procedures Commission before taking any  
364 congregational action. A two thirds majority vote of the congregation will be  
365 required for termination of Conference membership.
- 366 3. Disposal of assets and care for paid staff persons should be resolved satisfactorily  
367 with Conference oversight.
- 368 4. Faith, Life and Procedures Commission, upon withdrawal of a congregation from  
369 Conference, is authorized, upon member's request, to issue a certificate of  
370 membership for transfer for a period of up to two years from the date of withdrawal.

371 **ARTICLE VII**

372 **Dissolution Provisions**

373 If for any reason the Allegheny Mennonite Conference is dissolved, any remaining  
374 funds after all bills are paid shall be turned over to its successor or to any tax exempt  
375 organization(s) within the church with similar ideals and purposes. Such dissolution shall  
376 be completed under the laws for corporations in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

377 **ARTICLE VIII**

378 **Amendments**

379 This Constitution may be amended or altered by a two-thirds majority of all votes cast  
380 by the delegates of Conference, providing a notice of the proposed change is given at  
381 least thirty (30) days in advance of the vote, or without notice, providing 90 percent of  
382 delegates present vote in favor at any regularly called meeting.

## Who speaks for Conference?

Charles Colson titled a book some years ago, “WHO SPEAKS FOR GOD?” I still haven’t read the book but the title sticks with me. Underneath decisions or divisions about the direction of church or conference, lurks the question, “Who speaks for God?”

Since our Conference exists to “Encourage and assist its members in being the people of God,” there must be some connection between the question, “Who speaks for Conference?” and the question, “Who speaks for God?”

“WHO SPEAKS FOR CONFERENCE? Our Constitution says, “Conference is an association of congregations.... Congregations act officially in Conference through delegates.” Commissions and the Conference Staff (Conference Minister and Youth Minister) make many decisions. Those decisions, to the best of their understanding and ability, are to carry out the decisions and purposes expressed by the delegates. As the delegates listen to reports and observe activities, they can give further blessing, or, when leaders or commissions fail to represent the delegates, hold them accountable for actions that misrepresent delegate decisions and priorities.

There are only two bodies that have authority to make policy decisions for Conference; the Leadership Commission and the Conference Delegate body. The Leadership Commission makes decisions about the granting or removing Ministerial Credentials (License and Ordination of Pastors). The Delegates are responsible for all other policy and membership decisions.

THE DELEGATES SPEAK FOR CONFERENCE. When Conference Staff and Commissions set priorities and consider the issues that deserve their time, energy and resources they must consider what the delegates have said and the decisions delegates have made. Priorities are set by the delegates through budget and policy. Theological direction is a result of delegate discussion and adopted statements. What Allegheny Conference is or isn’t doing, or should or shouldn’t be saying, are delegate decisions. The job of a delegate is not simply reporting back to congregations, their primary responsibility is to seek to put God’s priorities into Conference action.

Delegates; take your role seriously and carry it out prayerfully. Congregations; choose delegates carefully, speak to them openly and often, pray for them, and interact with their reports and questions.

*-Kurt Horst, Conference Minister*

Note: this article was published in the May 2003 issue of the *Allegheny Conference News*.

# Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love

## *Commitments for Mennonites in Times of Disagreement*

“Making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3) as both individual members and the body of Christ, we pledge that we shall:

### **In Thought**

- |                  |                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Accept conflict  | 1. Acknowledge together that conflict is a normal part of our life in the church. (Rom. 14:1-8,10-12,17-19; 15:1-7)                                                               |
| Affirm hope      | 2. Affirm that as God walks with us in conflict we can work through to growth. (Eph. 4:15-16)                                                                                     |
| Commit to prayer | 3. Admit our needs and commit ourselves to pray for a mutually satisfactory solution (no prayers for my success or for the other to change but to find a joint way). (James 5:16) |

### **In Action**

- |                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Go to the other           | 4. Go directly to those with whom we disagree; avoid behind-the-back criticism.* (Matt. 5:23-24; 18:15-20)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| In the spirit of humility | 5. Go in gentleness, patience, and humility. Place the problem between us at neither doorstep and own our part in the conflict instead of pointing out the others'. (Gal. 6:1-5)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Be quick to listen        | 6. Listen carefully, summarize, and check out what is heard before responding. Seek as much to understand as to be understood. (James 1:19; Prov. 18:13)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Be slow to judge          | 7. Suspend judgments, avoid labeling, end name calling, discard threats, and act in a non-defensive, nonreactive way. (Rom. 2:14; Gal. 5:22-26)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Be willing to negotiate   | 8. Work through the disagreements constructively. (Acts 15; Phil. I - 11) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify issues, interests, and needs of both (rather than take positions).</li><li>• Generate a variety of options for meeting both parties' needs (rather than defending one's own way).</li><li>• Evaluate options by how they meet the needs and satisfy the interests of all sides (not one side's values).</li><li>• Collaborate in working out a joint solution (so both sides gain, both grow and win).</li><li>• Cooperate with the emerging agreement (accept the possible, not demand your ideal).</li><li>• Reward each other for each step forward, toward agreement (celebrate mutuality).</li></ul> |

**In Life**

- |                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Be steadfast in love  | 9. Be firm in our commitment to seek a mutual solution; be stubborn in holding to our common foundation in Christ; be steadfast in love. (Col. 3:12-15)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Be open to mediation  | 10. Be open to accept skilled help. If we cannot reach agreement among ourselves, we will use those with gifts and training in mediation in the larger church. (Phil. 4:1-3)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Trust the community   | 11. We will trust the community and if we cannot reach agreement or experience reconciliation, we will turn the decision over to others in the congregation or from the broader church. (Acts 15) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In one-to-one or small group disputes, this may mean allowing others to arbitrate.</li><li>• In congregational, conference district or denominational disputes, this may mean allowing others to arbitrate or implementing constitutional decision-making processes, insuring that they are done in the spirit of these guidelines, and abiding by whatever decision is made.</li></ul> |
| Be the Body of Christ | 12. Believe in and rely on the solidarity of the Body of Christ and its commitment to peace and justice, rather than resort to the courts of law. (I Cor. 6:1-6)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

\*Go directly if you are European-North American; in other cultures disagreements are often addressed through a trusted go-between.

*From the General Conference Mennonite Church  
and Mennonite Church General Boards  
March-April 1995*

## **Practicing Accountability in Allegheny Mennonite Conference**

Coordinating Council and Faith, Life, and Procedures Commission are providing this document to give guidance to those who have concerns, disagreements, or grievances with others within Allegheny Mennonite Conference (AMC). Much of this document is directly from the constitution of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference. Although the “Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love” document is not part of our constitution, it is in keeping with the intent of the constitution, is a biblical model, and has been adopted by the Mennonite Church as an appropriate way of dealing with disagreements. We hope that the use of this document by delegates and other members of AMC will lead to a healthy and constructive way of dealing with our concerns, disagreements, or grievances with others within Allegheny Mennonite Conference.

- 1) The former Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church Boards developed a document entitled “Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love” (see the attached document). The process outlined in “Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love” should be followed as the preferred method of resolving any disagreements. As indicated in the “Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love” document, if you do not find a satisfactory resolution you may bring the concern to the conference (see #2 below).
- 2) Several parts of the AMC constitution are useful in understanding how concerns or grievances should be dealt with within AMC.
  - a) Article III is important in understanding what the objectives of AMC are.
    - A. Encourage and assist its members in being the people of God.
    - B. Provide a forum for consultation and sharing.
    - C. Provide perspective and counsel for congregational life.
    - D. Facilitate and promote common objectives of its member congregations in cooperative efforts within the Conference and the denomination, and with other groups.
  - b) Article IV Section B, 5, b, (1) to (3) is useful in understanding some related functions of Faith, Life, and Procedures Commission.
    - (1) Assist congregational leaders in promoting Anabaptist faith and doctrine according to the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*.
    - (2) Identify and initiate proper consideration and discussion of faith and life issues and grievances facing congregations or Conference.
    - (3) After research and study of the above, recommend to congregations or Conference appropriate courses of action. This commission is encouraged to appoint ad-hoc committees to look into issues and grievances brought before it.

- c) Article VI Section A, 5 speaks to the responsibility of the congregation, Overseer, and Leadership Commission (regarding removal of a minister).
    - 5. Removal from Service  
When a minister is unsound in theology, or morally disqualified, it becomes the duty of the congregation, in cooperation with the overseer, to deal with the matter. If they need further assistance, they request it from the Leadership Commission.
  - d) Article VI Section B, 3 and 4 indicate requirements for congregations wanting to join AMC and consequently to the implied responsibility of the member congregations to each other and to AMC.
    - 3. There is adequate provision for leadership and a willingness to give and receive counsel from member congregations through Conference delegates.
    - 4. There is a willingness to support Conference decisions.
  - e) Article VI Section C speaks to how AMC can be a resource in dealing with problems within a congregation.
    - 1. Congregations, in cooperation with their overseer, are encouraged to settle their own difficulties. If necessary the congregational leadership group or any five lay persons may call the Faith, Life, and Procedures Commission to assist.
    - 2. If the congregation fails to resolve or deal with the difficulty, the Leadership Commission may ask the Faith, Life and Procedures Commission to make an investigation and report to the congregation. If the congregation refuses to act on the finding, the findings shall be reported to the delegates.
    - 3. The Faith, Life and Procedures Commission shall always be open to give counsel to those desiring help or advice.
- 3) Feel free to contact any member of Faith, Life, and Procedures Commission to assist you (in some cases an ad hoc committee may be appointed or another resource person used to facilitate the process) for any of the following reasons:
- a) If you need assistance following the steps outlined in “Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love” (e.g., if you need help getting a mediator, or if you are overwhelmed with the number of persons contacting you).
  - b) If you cannot find a satisfactory resolution after following the steps outlined in “Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love”.
  - c) You have trouble understanding the constitution (in the points listed above in #2)

## **Reflection on and Implications of: “Practicing Accountability in Allegheny Mennonite Conference”**

What are the implications of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference (AMC) constitution in regard to how we practice accountability to each other within our conference? According to the constitution this happens through “consultation and sharing” and providing “counsel” to each other (Article III). Member congregations have committed themselves to “give and receive counsel” and “to support Conference decisions” (Article VI Section B). The Faith, Life, and Procedures (FLP) Commission assists or facilitates discussions on faith and life issues or grievances with which AMC or member churches are struggling (Article IV Section B, 5, b). FLP is to make recommendations to the AMC, based on the research and study of these concerns. Ultimately, the delegates decide what should be done, or not done, in regard to these concerns. Leadership Commission, along with the Overseer, assists congregations in the selection, development and maintenance of sound pastoral leadership (Article IV Section B, 1.). If a pastor is thought to be morally or theologically unsound, after their installation, then it becomes the duty of the local congregation and Overseer to deal with the matter (Article VI Section A, 5.). Leadership Commission may assist if requested.

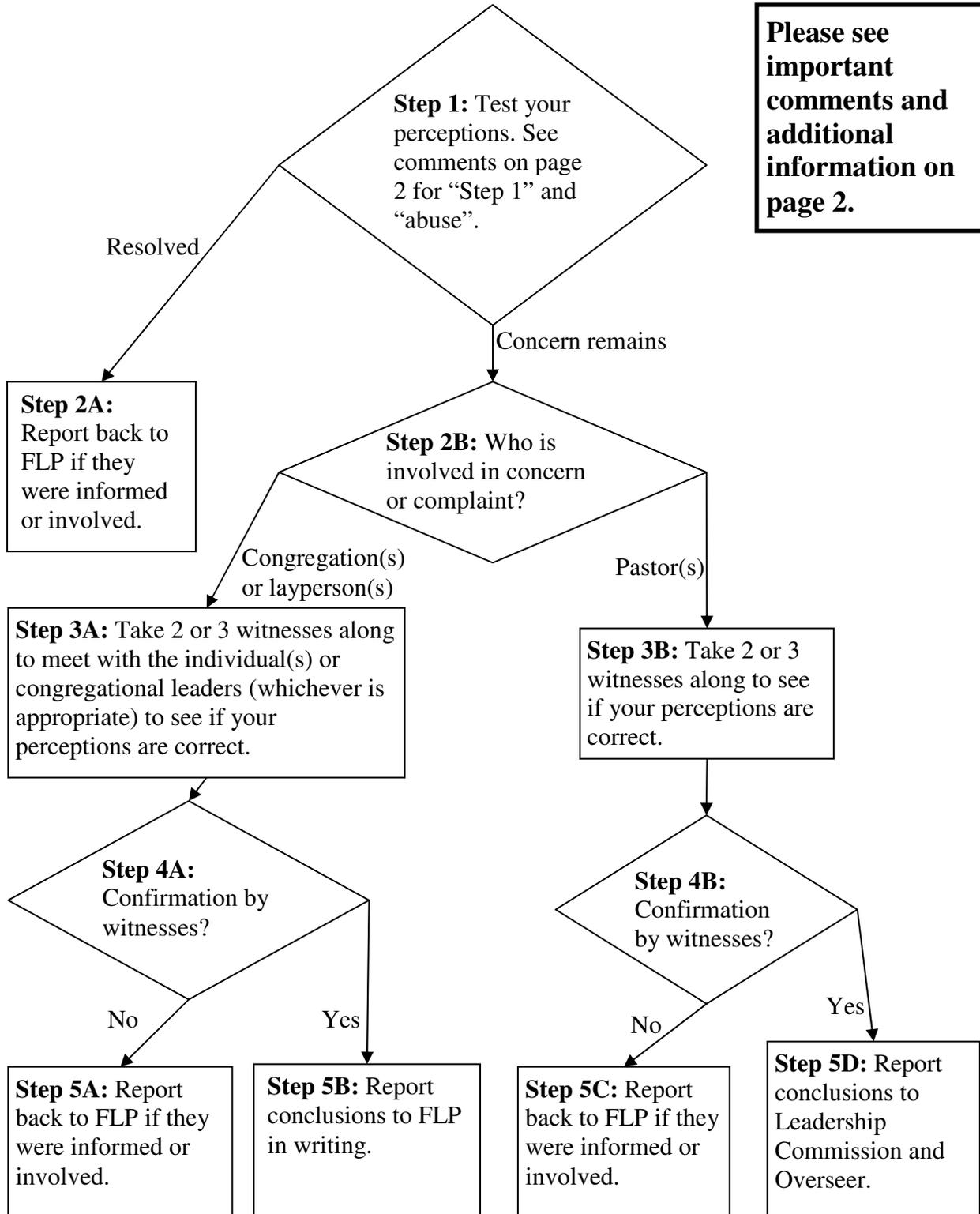
This implies that local congregations have the primary responsibility to process and make decisions relating to their own faith and life issues. However, it is also expected that this be done in light of the counsel received from AMC. Congregations and delegates sometimes find it easier to give counsel than to receive counsel. When counsel is given it needs to be done humbly and with a willingness to learn, in the spirit of the “Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love” document. The delegate or congregation giving the counsel is encouraged to share their concerns and to seek mutual understanding of their differences (i.e., they do not have the authority “to tell” the person receiving the counsel “what to do”). Likewise, the delegate or congregation receiving the counsel is encouraged to take the counsel seriously and work diligently to reach a mutual understanding of their differences. The goal is to have open and honest discussion so that the discussion does not end prematurely. Affirming the giver and receiver for sharing their concerns encourages further discussion. The intent of this document is to encourage creating safe environments for discussing many issues. FLP and Leadership Commission (when pastors are involved), may help facilitate discussions but do not have authority to make decisions for AMC. Ultimately, the delegates of AMC process decisions. This process takes time and patience. However, it allows us to learn from each other, and hopefully grow and mature in our commitment to serve Christ together as a Conference.

Additional helpful insights into discipline and decision-making can be found in the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*. In regard to discipline Article 14 says: “...discipline, rightly understood and practiced, undergirds the integrity of the church’s witness in word and deed. Persistent and uncorrected false teaching and sinful conduct among Christians undermine the proclamation and credibility of the gospel in the world.” In regard to decision making Article 16 says: “In making decisions..., members of the church listen and speak in a spirit of prayerful openness, with the Scriptures as the constant guide.... In the process of discernment, it is better to wait patiently for a word from the Lord leading toward consensus, than to make hasty decisions.”

## Suggested Schematic for Dealing with Concerns or Complaints

A Supplement to:

*Reflection on and Implications of: Practicing Accountability in Allegheny Mennonite Conference*



## Additional Details and Comments Regarding Suggested Schematic for Dealing with Concerns or Complaints

**Preliminary comments:** The intent of this schematic is to illustrate generally how concerns or complaints might be dealt with if it involves two or more people from different congregations in Allegheny Mennonite Conference (AMC). There will be situations that arise that will call for a different approach than illustrated in this schematic.

**Step 1:** Test your perceptions. Did you see or understand correctly what caused the offense or concern? Seek clarification from the individual(s) involved. Review the *Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love* document and prayerfully try to apply it to your situation (this document is in the New Delegate Packet, on the Conference web site or is available from the Conference office upon request). Put your concern or complaint in writing (ask for assistance from a member of FLP, a pastor, your Overseer, or a trusted friend if needed). This written concern or complaint can be used when meeting with the person or group with which you are raising the concern or complaint (alternatively, you might mail it to them first). Hopefully, most concerns or complaints will be resolved during step 1.

Contacting FLP during step 1 is optional. FLP can serve as a “clearing house” so they are aware of the concern and FLP will know if there are other people raising the same concern. FLP can also provide assistance or suggestions if needed. FLP is committed to providing some kind of response within 30 days from the time the request is made, if the concern involves abuse the response should be faster.

**Step 2A:** Report back to FLP if they were informed or involved. Anyone involved up to this point should be informed when the concern or complaint has been resolved.

**Note:** Before investing a lot of time and effort in resolving an issue one may want to ask the following questions. Will a significant number of delegates agree with the concern or complaint? Does the issue have the potential to have significant impact on the life of AMC?

**Step 2B:** Who is involved in a concern or complaint: pastor(s), layperson(s), or congregation(s)? If the concern or complaint involves a credentialed person (licensed or ordained) then this becomes a matter to be dealt with by Leadership Commission or the credentialed person’s home congregation.

**Step 3A:** Take 2 or 3 witnesses along to meet with the individual(s) or congregational leaders (whichever is appropriate) to see if your perceptions are correct. Are they teaching or acting in ways that are inconsistent with the Bible (e.g., as understood in the Confession of Faith)?

**Step 3B:** Take 2 or 3 witnesses along to see if your perceptions are correct. Are they teaching or acting in ways that are inconsistent with the Bible? (e.g., as understood in the Confession of Faith)?

**Step 4A and Step 4B:** Do the witnesses confirm that it is a concern?

**Step 5A Step 5C:** Report back to FLP if they were informed or involved (and anyone else who was consulted during this process).

**Step 5B:** Report conclusions to FLP in writing, including whether you think delegates should be informed. FLP will decide if an ad hoc committee is needed, if, and how the concern should be presented to the delegates. FLP should report back to the individual raising the concern or complaint what the likely next steps will be in resolving the concern or complaint.

**Step 5D:** Report conclusions to Leadership Commission and Overseer in writing for possible review of credentials. Leadership Commission should report back to the individual raising the concern or complaint what the outcome of their investigation is regarding the concern or complaint.

**Alternatives:** In the event someone feels that FLP or Leadership Commission did not address a concern adequately they may send a letter to Coordinating Council expressing their concern (preferably with the signatures of the witnesses plus 3 more concerned individuals.) As a last resort, the home congregation, of the person bringing the concern or complaint, may bring the issue to the delegate floor.

**“Abuse”:** Does the concern involve physical or sexual abuse? The matter needs to be dealt with promptly, but with integrity. Does the person who was abused have witnesses? Is there any other way to verify what happened? Have others been abused? Immediately contact their pastor, overseer or the Conference Minister; if unavailable, contact a member of Leadership Commission. The appropriate parties are informed about the process or the outcome.

## Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, 1995

Mennonite Church USA

### Summary Statement

1. We believe that God exists and is pleased with all who draw near by faith. We worship the one holy and loving God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit eternally. God has created all things visible and invisible, has brought salvation and new life to humanity through Jesus Christ, and continues to sustain the church and all things until the end of the age.
2. We believe in Jesus Christ, the Word of God become flesh. He is the Savior of the world, who has delivered us from the dominion of sin and reconciled us to God by his death on a cross. He was declared to be Son of God by his resurrection from the dead. He is the head of the church, the exalted Lord, the Lamb who was slain, coming again to reign with God in glory.
3. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the eternal Spirit of God, who dwelled in Jesus Christ, who empowers the church, who is the source of our life in Christ, and who is poured out on those who believe as the guarantee of redemption.
4. We believe that all Scripture is inspired by God through the Holy Spirit for instruction in salvation and training in righteousness. We accept the Scriptures as the Word of God and as the fully reliable and trustworthy standard for Christian faith and life. Led by the Holy Spirit in the church, we interpret Scripture in harmony with Jesus Christ.
5. We believe that God has created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, and that God preserves and renews what has been made. All creation has its source outside itself and belongs to the Creator. The world has been created good because God is good and provides all that is needed for life.
6. We believe that God has created human beings in the divine image. God formed them from the dust of the earth and gave them a special dignity among all the works of creation. Human beings have been made for relationship with God, to live in peace with each other, and to take care of the rest of creation.
7. We confess that, beginning with Adam and Eve, humanity has disobeyed God, given way to the tempter, and chosen to sin. All have fallen short of the Creator's intent, marred the image of God in which they were created, disrupted order in the world, and limited their love for others. Because of sin, humanity has been given over to the enslaving powers of evil and death.
8. We believe that, through Jesus Christ, God offers salvation from sin and a new way of life. We receive God's salvation when we repent and accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. In Christ, we are reconciled with God and brought into the reconciling community. We place our faith in God that, by the same power that raised Christ from the dead, we may be saved from sin to follow Christ and to know the fullness of salvation.
9. We believe that the church is the assembly of those who have accepted God's offer of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. It is the new community of disciples sent into the world to proclaim the reign of God and to provide a foretaste of the church's glorious hope. It is the new society established and sustained by the Holy Spirit.
10. We believe that the mission of the church is to proclaim and to be a sign of the kingdom of God. Christ has commissioned the church to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them, and teaching them to observe all things he has commanded.
11. We believe that the baptism of believers with water is a sign of their cleansing from sin. Baptism is also a pledge before the church of their covenant with God to walk in the way of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Believers are baptized into Christ and his body by the Spirit, water, and blood.
12. We believe that the Lord's Supper is a sign by which the church thankfully remembers the new covenant which Jesus established by his death. In this communion meal, the church renews its covenant with God and with each other and participates in the life and death of Jesus Christ, until he comes.

13. We believe that in washing the feet of his disciples, Jesus calls us to serve one another in love as he did. Thus we acknowledge our frequent need of cleansing, renew our willingness to let go of pride and worldly power, and offer our lives in humble service and sacrificial love.
14. We practice discipline in the church as a sign of God's offer of transforming grace. Discipline is intended to liberate erring brothers and sisters from sin, and to restore them to a right relationship with God and to fellowship in the church. The practice of discipline gives integrity to the church's witness in the world.
15. We believe that ministry is a continuation of the work of Christ, who gives gifts through the Holy Spirit to all believers and empowers them for service in the church and in the world. We also believe that God calls particular persons in the church to specific leadership ministries and offices. All who minister are accountable to God and to the community of faith.
16. We believe that the church of Jesus Christ is one body with many members, ordered in such a way that, through the one Spirit, believers may be built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.
17. We believe that Jesus Christ calls us to discipleship, to take up our cross and follow him. Through the gift of God's saving grace, we are empowered to be disciples of Jesus, filled with his Spirit, following his teachings and his path through suffering to new life. As we are faithful to his way, we become conformed to Christ and separated from the evil in the world.
18. We believe that to be a disciple of Jesus is to know life in the Spirit. As the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ takes shape in us, we grow in the image of Christ and in our relationship with God. The Holy Spirit is active in individual and in communal worship, leading us deeper into the experience of God.
19. We believe that God intends human life to begin in families and to be blessed through families. Even more, God desires all people to become part of the church, God's family. As single and married members of the church family give and receive nurture and healing, families can grow toward the wholeness that God intends. We are called to chastity and to loving faithfulness in marriage.
20. We commit ourselves to tell the truth, to give a simple yes or no, and to avoid the swearing of oaths.
21. We believe that everything belongs to God, who calls the church to live in faithful stewardship of all that God has entrusted to us, and to participate now in the rest and justice which God has promised.
22. We believe that peace is the will of God. God created the world in peace, and God's peace is most fully revealed in Jesus Christ, who is our peace and the peace of the whole world. Led by the Holy Spirit, we follow Christ in the way of peace, doing justice, bringing reconciliation, and practicing nonresistance, even in the face of violence and warfare.
23. We believe that the church is God's holy nation, called to give full allegiance to Christ its head and to witness to every nation, government, and society about God's saving love.
24. We place our hope in the reign of God and its fulfillment in the day when Christ will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead. He will gather his church, which is already living under the reign of God. We await God's final victory, the end of this present age of struggle, the resurrection of the dead, and a new heaven and a new earth. There the people of God will reign with Christ in justice, righteousness, and peace for ever and ever.

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Adopted by the delegates of Mennonite Church General Assembly, and of the General Conference Mennonite Church Tricentennial Session, July 28, 1995, Wichita, Kansas. Mennonite Church USA, formed by the merger of these two groups, has adopted this confession as its statement of faith. Copyright © 1995 by Herald Press, Scottsdale PA 15683. Used by permission. Order print copies of *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*, and *Summary Statement, Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*, From Herald Press, Scottsdale, Pa. Worship resources based on this confession, and translations are also available.

## Procedural Guidelines for Delegates of Allegheny Mennonite Conference

*Adapted by Faith, Life, and Procedures Commission  
from Mennonite Church USA "Atlanta 2003, Procedural Rules for Delegates"*

The delegate session is designed to tend the church's business in a timely and orderly manner. To this end, we will use parliamentary procedure. Parliamentary procedure can seem complicated and cumbersome because it consists of an extensive body of rules that few of us have studied. Nevertheless, this method can help us conduct our business in a relatively short period of time while being fair to everyone.

The rules that follow are based on *Robert's Rules of Order* and they will help us conduct our business efficiently while showing respect for others.

### Basic rules

In order to make sure that all who seek to be heard can be heard, please follow these basic rules:

- Seek permission of the moderator to address the Assembly. Once you have received permission, be sure to identify yourself or the group you represent before making your remarks.
- Do not speak more than once on any motion in one day until everyone who wants to speak on that motion has had an opportunity to do so.
- Do not speak more than twice on any motion in one day.
- Speak for yourself only, unless specifically commissioned to speak for a group. If so, name the group.
- Address the moderator, rather than a previous speaker or someone else in the meeting.
- Speak respectfully. If you disagree with another person who has spoken, please describe that point of view with respect.
- Indicate clearly whether you support or oppose a motion on the floor or have a different point of view.

### Making a motion

During a delegate session, if you want to introduce a motion, raise a question or extend discussion, please follow these rules:

- When a delegate wishes to introduce a motion or resolution of new and substantive business they are encouraged to share it with Faith, Life, and Procedures Commission first, when feasible. The purpose of this commission is to help us complete our business on time by reviewing new resolutions for clarity and appropriateness before they are brought to the delegates.
- To amend a main motion, limit or extend debate on a motion or lay a motion on the table, make a motion to that effect while the main motion is still under consideration. To do that, seek recognition from the moderator and then make the motion. (*Simply say, "I wish to amend the motion," and then, when recognized, say, "I move that the motion be amended to say..."* See the end of the document for examples.) When feasible, amendments to resolutions that appear on the agenda should be presented to the Faith, Life, and Procedures Commission before they are presented to the delegates.
- To object to the consideration of a motion, call for a more precise vote, ask a question about parliamentary procedure or offer information on a question, seek recognition of the moderator and then make the motion. (*You might say, "Point of information."* Then, if

*recognized, you might say, “In relation to the current motion, delegates may find it helpful to know that...”*)

- Finally, to call for a recess, adjournment, or a question of privilege (to rectify some problem that is distracting the assembly, for instance), seek the recognition of the moderator and then make the motion. *(You might say, “I rise to a question of privilege.” Then the moderator will ask you what the question of privilege is.)*
- Most motions require a second—that someone else also indicates a desire to consider the motion. *(To second a motion simply rise and say “I second that motion.”)*

For more specific information on the kinds of motions you can make and the rules that apply to them, see *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised (10th edition)*. If you have questions about parliamentary procedure during the delegate sessions, you may seek the assistance of Faith, Life, and Procedure Commission.

We trust that these procedural rules will enable our delegate sessions to be genuine times of discernment. Let’s come prepared to hear God’s voice in the midst of our assembly.

## **Some examples of motions and amendments**

### **Basic Forms of Amendments**

- By inserting (or adding, if placing at the end) words, sentences or paragraphs
- By striking out words, sentences, or paragraphs
- By striking out and inserting words (with the words inserted replacing the words struck out)
- By amending by substitution (a form of strike out and insert applies to paragraphs or entire motions)

### **Examples of Amendments**

<b>Main Motion</b>	“I move that a hymnal be purchased for the organist.”
Primary Amendment*	"I move to amend the main motion by striking out the word, " <del>hymnal</del> " and inserting that a 'copy of Hymnal: A Worship Book '"
Secondary Amendment**	"I move to amend the primary motion by striking out "A Worship Book" and inserting "Accompaniment Handbook."

\*After the primary amendment is made it needs to be seconded, discussed and approved by a majority of delegates before it becomes the main motion.

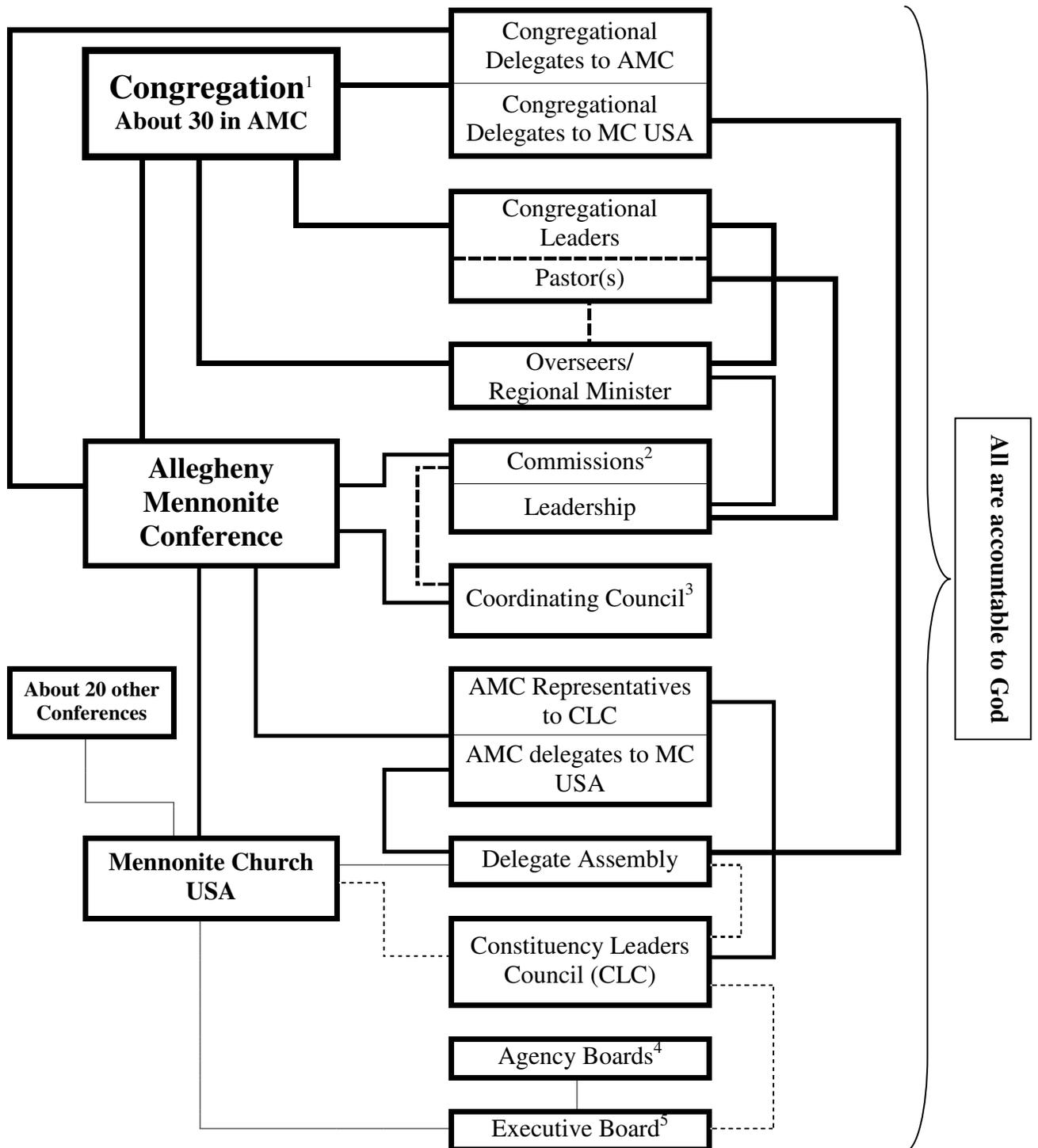
\*\* After the secondary amendment is made it needs to be seconded, discussed and approved by a majority of delegates before it becomes the primary amendment. The secondary amendment may not be amended while it is a secondary amendment.

An alternative to the above would be to amend by substitution.

<b>Main Motion</b>	“I move that a hymnal be purchased for the organist.”
Substitute Motion	“I move to substitute the following for the motion currently under discussion ‘that a Hymnal Accompaniment Handbook be purchased for the organist.’”

## Lines of Accountability in Allegheny Mennonite Conference

Solid lines indicate lines of accountability; dashed lines represent an advisory relationship.



<sup>1</sup> The lines of accountability within a given congregation may be somewhat different from shown here

<sup>2</sup> The Commissions are: Leadership; Nurture and Education; Missions and Service; Finance and Stewardship; Faith, Life, and Procedures

<sup>3</sup> The Conference Minister is accountable to the Coordinating Council through the Moderators

<sup>4</sup> The Agency Boards are: Publishing; Education; Mission; Stewardship; The Mennonite, an Entity, is included here

<sup>5</sup> The Executive Board is responsible for the following offices: Executive Director's office; Congregational and Ministerial Leadership; Intercultural Relations; Administration; Communications; Convention Planning

## **Comments and Additional Clarification of Lines of Accountability in Allegheny Mennonite Conference**

In Allegheny Mennonite Conference (AMC) and Mennonite Church USA (MC USA), leaders are to be servant leaders (Mark 10:42-45). Consequently, the importance of the local congregations and their delegates is shown by placing them at the top of the page. AMC and MC USA leaders are shown in the middle and bottom part to indicate they are serving those higher on the page. The lines of accountability within a congregation may be somewhat different from shown here but the way they relate to Conference should be similar. Most important, at all levels there is also mutual accountability (cf. I Tim 5:1, 17, 19; Heb. 13:17; Eph. 4:1-3), and everyone is accountable to God.

Some boxes in the diagram have a thin line running horizontally through the middle of the box between two related groups, indicating that there may be overlapping of personnel or roles within this box. For example, a congregation may use the same delegates that go to MC USA Delegate Assembly to also serve as their delegates to AMC. For each organizational layer the weight of the lines changes to help differentiate between lines representing congregational lines of accountability (thick lines) from those of AMC (medium lines) and MC USA (thin lines). At two places lines intersect; no connection is intended at these intersections.

In AMC the delegates are the primary decision making body; and, as the AMC constitution indicates: “program development and implementation is carried out by five commissions. Chairpersons of the five commissions, the Moderator, and the Moderator Elect serve as the Coordinating Council, and for legal purposes, as the Board of Directors.” The Leadership Commission is shown in the same box as commissions for two reasons. First, they are to: “supervise ministerial changes, licensing, and ordinations on behalf of Conference.” Hence, this commission has decision-making authority in regard to credentialing people for ministry. Second, the Overseers/Regional Ministers are accountable to both the local congregation and AMC through the Leadership Commission. The staff of AMC is accountable to the Coordinating Council either through the Moderators (this is the case for both the Conference Minister and the Administrative Assistant) or through the Conference Minister (this is the case for the Conference Minister for Children and Youth and the Administrative Assistant).

In MC USA, staff and agency boards are accountable to the Executive Board, or to whatever group appointed or elected them to their position. The Executive Board is accountable to whatever group appointed or elected them to their position (4 are appointed by the Executive Board; 14 are elected by the delegates directly, plus the 2 moderators).