

1 **BYLAWS OF THE**
2 **ALLEGHENY MENNONITE CONFERENCE**

3 **Adopted August 7, 1982**

4 **Revised March 7, 1987; March 6, 1993; March 7, 1998; November 7, 1998;**
5 **November 2, 2002; July 18, 2003; July 16, 2004; August 4, 2007; August 6, 2011; March 3, 2018**

6 **ARTICLE I**

7 **Name**

8 This organization, known as the ALLEGHENY MENNONITE CONFERENCE,
9 hereafter called Conference, is an association of congregations duly incorporated under
10 the laws of the state of Pennsylvania.

11 **ARTICLE II**

12 **Membership**

- 13 A. Congregations who maintain qualifications of Article VI are members of Conference.
14 B. Congregations' membership in Conference is exercised through delegates appointed
15 by members of congregations.
16 C. The Conference is an organization within the Mennonite Church USA.

17 **ARTICLE III**

18 **Objectives**

- 19 A. Encourage and assist its members in being the people of God.
20 B. Provide a forum for consultation and sharing.
21 C. Provide perspective and counsel for congregational life.
22 D. Facilitate and promote common objectives of its member congregations in
23 cooperative efforts within the Conference and the denomination, and with other
24 groups.

25 **ARTICLE IV**

26 **Organization**

27 The Conference shall establish an "Allegheny Mennonite Conference Organization"
28 document which shall specify the various functions and duties to be carried out for and by the
29 Conference.

30 **ARTICLE V**

31 **Related Organizations**

32 Conference recognizes various auxiliary organizations having their own constitutions
33 or bylaws, whose memberships consist of Conference congregational members and which
34 function within the framework of this Conference's policies and programs.

35 **ARTICLE VI**

36 **Congregations**

37 **Section A. Congregational Leadership**

- 38 1. Congregations are encouraged to form leadership teams to give oversight to the
39 congregation according to guidelines furnished by the Leadership Council.
40 2. Congregational leadership teams are encouraged to participate with other
41 Conference congregations for mutual programming, counsel, and fellowship.
42 3. The Conference Minister shall establish regular meetings with pastors. In the
43 absence of a pastor, a congregation should designate a representative to attend these
44 meetings.
45 4. Procedures for ordination, licensing, or ministerial changes shall be conducted in
46 cooperation with the Conference Minister and other persons as designated by the
47 Leadership Council.
48 5. Removal from Service

49 When a minister is unsound in theology, or morally disqualified, it becomes the
50 duty of the congregation, in cooperation with the Conference Minister, to deal with
51 the matter. If they need further assistance, they request it from the Leadership
52 Council.

53 6. Culture of Call

54 Congregations are responsible to call forth new pastoral leaders to allow for
55 timely transitions and retirement for those presently serving.
56

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

- 58 1. Congregations that aspire to live in voluntary commitment to Jesus Christ from an
59 Anabaptist perspective, using the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* as
60 a guiding document, qualify to be members of Conference. Through our covenants
61 with one another we endeavor to:
- 62 a. promote Jesus as the center of our faith, community as the center of our life, and
63 reconciliation as the center of our work;
 - 64 b. give and receive resources for pastors and congregations in matters of faith and
65 life, including doing periodic congregational/pastoral evaluation in consultation
66 with the Conference Minister;
 - 67 c. facilitate the reign of God by providing resources and channels through efforts
68 in mission, evangelism, church planting, Christian formation, nurture,
69 peacemaking and justice;
 - 70 d. be supportive and respectful of the discernment processes used by Conference
71 and individual congregations in decision making and understand our diversity as
72 a way of sharpening one another (Proverbs 27:17) in extending the reign of God
73 in our communities.
- 74 2. An annual administrative fee is determined by the Leadership Council and is
75 payable within the first sixty days of the Conference fiscal year. All congregations
76 are expected to support conference budgets and financial commitments based on
77 decisions of the delegate body and the ability of each congregation, above and
78 beyond the administrative fee.
- 79 3. A worshipping group may make application to become a congregation in
80 Conference to the Conference Minister/Leadership Council.
- 81 a. The delegates will be notified of the congregation's membership request.
 - 82 b. The Conference Minister will make an assessment and make a recommendation
83 to the Leadership Council. If the congregation is a member of another
84 Mennonite Church USA conference, guidelines provided by Mennonite Church
85 USA will be followed.
 - 86 c. Leadership Council may recommend to delegates at a delegate session that the
87 congregation's request be affirmed.

88 **Section C. Resolving Congregational Difficulty**

- 89 1. Congregations, in cooperation with the Conference Minister, are encouraged to
90 settle their own difficulties. If necessary the congregational leadership group or any
91 five lay persons may call the Leadership Council to assist.
- 92 2. If the congregation fails to resolve or deal with the difficulty, the Leadership
93 Council may form an ad hoc committee to make an investigation and report to the
94 congregation. If the congregation refuses to act on the finding, the findings shall be
95 reported to the delegates.

- 96 3. The Leadership Council and Conference Minister are available to give counsel to
97 those desiring help or advice.

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

- 99 1. It is expected that events leading toward the dissolution of a congregation will be a
100 matter of discernment between the congregation, the Conference Minister, and
101 Leadership Council. Disposal of assets and care for paid staff persons should be
102 discussed and resolved with Conference oversight.
103 2. Upon request, the final membership list may be held by Leadership Council and
104 letters of transfer will be issued by the Conference Minister for a period of up to two
105 years following dissolution. Requests for extensions will be reviewed by
106 Leadership Council.

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

- 108 1. When a congregation's continuing membership in the Conference is in question, the
109 resources of the Conference Minister, Leadership Council, and/or mediation
110 services shall be enlisted toward resolution of the conflict. Upon recommendation
111 by Leadership Council, action may be needed by the delegate body.
112 2. A congregation considering termination of its membership in the Conference shall
113 engage in discussion with Leadership Council before taking any congregational
114 action. A two thirds majority vote of the congregation will be required for
115 termination of Conference membership.
116 3. Disposal of assets and care for paid staff persons should be resolved satisfactorily
117 with Conference oversight.
118 4. The Conference Minister, upon withdrawal of a congregation from Conference, is
119 authorized, upon a member's request, to issue a certificate of membership for
120 transfer for a period of up to two years from the date of withdrawal. Requests for
121 extensions will be reviewed by Leadership Council.

122 **ARTICLE VII**

123 **Dissolution Provisions**

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

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ARTICLE VIII

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Amendments

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