



***Structure and Identity Taskforce
Final Recommendations***

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Bylaws Summary

SUMMARY OF THE BYLAWS OF NEW CONFERENCE X

This is a summary of the bylaws for the New Conference, which is the surviving entity of the merger of Franconia Mennonite Conference and Eastern District Conference. This summary is not legally binding and is intended only for informational purposes.

ARTICLE 1 - GENERAL

This article will include the name of the New Conference, once that has been decided, and the location of the Conference offices, which may be changed by the Conference Board as needed.

ARTICLE 2 - PURPOSE

Grounded in the life, ministry, and love of Jesus, the New Conference is a community of congregations that exists to bring God's healing and hope to our local communities and encourage, support, and resource one another for the ministry. With Jesus as the center of our faith, community as the center of our lives, and reconciliation as the center of our work, we seek to: serve our congregations and communities through mutual accountability, equipping, and witnessing to the power of the Holy Spirit; promote healthy relationships among congregations that allows for inclusion, mutual transformation, and collaborative work; practice communal discernment and allow space for the Holy Spirit's leading in visioning and dreaming.

Because this corporation is a 501 (c)(3)

nonprofit, it will follow the guidelines for what these types of corporations may and may not do. This means that none of the Conference Board members, officers, staff, or other private persons may make a profit from the Conference (the Conference may pay reasonable salaries). No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be for the purpose of attempting to influence legislation or contribute to/advocate for any candidate for public office.

The assets of this corporation are for the purpose of educational, charitable, and religious purposes. If the New Conference would ever be dissolved, its assets will be donated to other organizations with similar purposes, as agreed to by the courts.

ARTICLE 3 - MEMBERSHIP

The Conference is a member of Mennonite Church USA. The Conference shall appoint delegates and representatives to the Delegate Assembly, the Constituency Leaders Council, and to other leadership bodies, as appropriate, to provide a link for matters of mutual concern and for effective churchwide decision making. Congregations attain membership in Mennonite Church USA

through their membership in the Conference. See the Bylaws of the Mennonite Church USA for further details.

The Conference is an affiliation of congregations that are joined in common life and mission. The Conference shall provide leadership and resources for lay and pastoral ministries, opportunities for discernment, credentialing, guidelines and services to assist with ministerial placement, regular assemblies, encouragement and assistance toward the development of global and intercultural perspectives and relationships, facilitation and administration of mutual aid opportunities, and sound management of Conference financial resources.

Congregations considered part of the Franconia Mennonite Conference or Eastern District Conference at the time of the adoption of these Bylaws are considered members of the New Conference. To be considered for membership, new congregations need to have developed a membership roster and a leadership structure in keeping with Mennonite polity, demonstrate financial viability, and agree to work with a Leadership Minister as provided by the Conference and affirmed by the congregation, as outlined in the *Leadership Accompaniment for Anabaptist Communities* policy document. New congregations may apply for membership by following the process outlined in the *Welcoming New Communities of Christian Faith* policy document and by expressing their support for the Conference community and agreeing to support the mission and vision of the Conference, which are established by the Delegate Assembly.

Accountability to the faith community is a necessary aspect of faithful living as followers of Christ. In the event that a member congregation acts in ways divergent with the mission or vision of the Conference, the process outlined in the *Community and*

Accountability policy document should be used for discernment, with the goal of maintaining unity within the Conference. When Conference congregations are dissolved, congregations are encouraged to designate assets to the Conference unless otherwise stated in other legal documents.

Conference Related Ministries (CRMs) are agencies, organizations and ministries that extend the missional outreach of the Conference, which is a critical component of the Conference's work and mission. They represent an array of extensions of the reign of God into local communities through nurture, witness, care, and discipling. They often serve as the public face of congregations, the Conference, or the denomination, and may serve as cultural brokers to the broader community. The Conference, in turn, provides for CRMs a support system grounded in Anabaptist values.

CRMs may be (a) religious organizations or non-religious outreach affiliates of member congregations, (b) independent non-profit organizations or organizations fiscally sponsored by a member congregation, or (c) independent non-profit organizations that reflect the mission and vision of the Conference.

CRMs considered part of the Franconia Mennonite Conference or Eastern District Conference at the time of the adoption of these Bylaws are considered CRMs of the New Conference. New CRMs may apply for membership by following the process outlined in the *Welcoming New Conference Related Ministries* policy document.

ARTICLE 4 - DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

The Delegate Assembly is the chief decision-making and oversight body of the Conference. Policies and directives instituted by the Delegate Assembly are executed and

administered by the Conference Board, Committees, and staff. For details on the Delegate Assembly, see the *Delegate Assembly* policy and *Delegate Ministry Description*.

Conference Delegates are voting members of the Delegate Assembly. All credentialed pastors serving in an active pastoral role within a member congregation are Delegates. All member congregations of the Conference may select 2 additional members of their congregations to serve as Delegates and congregations with a membership of over 200 persons will choose 1 additional Delegate for every 100 members, over and above the first 200 persons, up to a maximum of 10 Delegates per congregation, including pastors. Conference-Related Ministries may select 1 voting Delegate per member organization.

ARTICLE 5 - CONFERENCE BOARD

The purpose of the Conference Board is to administer the mission and vision of the Conference, as set by the Delegates. In support of this purpose, the Conference Board is responsible for: 1) hiring and overseeing the Executive Minister; 2) overseeing the business of the Conference, including Conference finances; 3) overseeing Standing Committees that carry out specific functions for the Conference; 4) establishing, overseeing, and dissolving Special Committees, as appropriate; 5) regularly engaging in strategic planning, to ensure that the Conference is maintaining alignment with its vision and following the lead of the Spirit.

Conference Board is composed of 7-9 voting members and 4 non-voting members. All Board Members shall be at least 18 years of age and members of a member congregation. The roles of Conference Board Members are defined as follows:

- **Moderator**, who shall be the Conference

Board Chair and Conference Board Executive Committee Chair

- **Assistant Moderator**, who shall be Conference Board Vice Chair and Nominating Committee Chair
- **Secretary**
- **Treasurer**, who shall serve as Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee
- **3-5 additional at-large members**
- **4 non-voting members** (Executive Minister, Chair of the Ministerial Committee, Chair of the CRM Committee, and Chair of the Intercultural Committee)

When vacancies arise or are anticipated on the Conference Board, the Nominating Committee is responsible for recommending new Board Members to the Delegate Assembly. The Moderator, Assistant Moderator, Secretary, and Treasurer positions will then be elected by majority vote of the Conference Board.

Voting Board Members are elected for a 3-year term and are eligible to serve a maximum of 3 consecutive terms, for a total of up to 9 years. A Conference Board member may serve for one term as the Assistant Moderator and one term as the Moderator. The Assistant Moderator will ascend to the role of Moderator after one term as Assistant Moderator, with approval from the remaining Conference Board members through a majority vote. The Moderator and Assistant Moderator roles may be filled by a majority vote of the remaining Conference Board members if these roles are vacated between terms or in other similar circumstances. Removal of a Board Member will follow the process outlined in the *Member Expectations and Commitments* policy document, as adopted by the Conference Board.

Regular meetings of the Conference Board

shall be held at least 4 times a year and special meetings may be called at any time by the Moderator or upon written request of 3 members of the Conference Board. Two-thirds of the Board Members in office must be present (in person or by video or phone) to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business; a simple majority of Board Members present as a quorum may make decisions on behalf of the Board. The Board may take action without a meeting if consent in writing is signed by all of the Board Members.

ARTICLE 6 - EXECUTIVE MINISTER

The Conference Board shall appoint and determine the compensation and other terms of employment for an Executive Minister, who is hired by the Conference Board to administer the conference's vision and mission.

ARTICLE 7 - COMMITTEES

The standing (permanent) committees of the Conference Board shall be the Executive Committee, the Budget and Finance Committee, the Ministerial Committee, the Nominating Committee, the CRM Committee, and the Intercultural Committee. The Conference Board may, from time to time, create other committees as the need arises.

- The **Executive Committee** shall set the agenda for the Conference Board and work on behalf of the Board between meetings to carry out the work of the Board.
- The **Budget and Finance Committee** shall be responsible for providing leadership on fiscal matters pertaining to the Conference and shall develop a budget based upon the vision of the Conference and recommend it to the

Conference Board for approval.

- The **Ministerial Committee** shall be responsible for overall policies related to the calling, credentialing, training, and disciplining of those persons being credentialed by the Conference. The Credentials Committee shall interview and recommend persons for credentialing in accordance with the policies that the Ministerial Committee develops.
- The **Nominating Committee** is responsible for vetting and discerning potential new Conference Board members and Committee Members. This includes ensuring that the Conference Board and Committees are balanced in terms of the gender, racial, cultural, geographic, and historic diversity of the Conference, reflect the diverse giftings represented in the Conference, and exhibit a high level of intercultural capacity.
- The **CRM Committee** shall work to maintain a positive, mutually beneficial relationship between CRMs and the Conference, and help to ensure that CRMs are supported and affirmed in serving as the missional outreach arm of the Conference.
- The **Intercultural Committee** shall provide leadership in the areas of undoing racism, sexism, and cultural bias, and in facilitating and supporting mutual transformation in intercultural contexts.

Committee members should be individuals in good standing in the Conference or, if from outside of the Conference, have gifts or skills of value to the work of the Committee. The members of each Committee shall elect a chairperson by majority vote. Committee members serve for 3-year terms and may serve for up to 3 consecutive terms.



FMC Properties

Franconia Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities (FMBMC, a.k.a. FMC Properties) serves as a holding corporation for properties owned by the Conference and consults on financial matters as directed by the Conference Board through its Budget and Finance Committee. Conference Board shall appoint a minimum of 3 directors to serve 3-year terms. Property acquisition and disposal shall only be enacted with due process by the Conference Board.

The Nominating Committee has primary responsibility for recruiting Committee members, working in collaboration with each committee. Committees recommend new members to the Conference Board which, by majority vote, approves or denies the recommendation.

50% of the Committee members shall be present (in person or virtually) to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business; decisions may be made by a majority vote of the quorum. Policies and procedures may be recommended by committees to the Conference Board for approval. Once approved by the Conference Board, these become policies and procedures of the Conference, although they may be administered and monitored at the Committee level.

ARTICLE 8 - RECORDS AND FINANCIAL REPORTS

The corporation will keep records of the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws and complete and accurate financial records and minutes of all meetings of the Conference Board and the committees. In addition, the Treasurer will keep the Conference Board informed of the financial condition of the corporation and shall present financial reports to the Conference Board annually, or more frequently if needed.

ARTICLE 9 - CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Any Board Member (or immediate family of a Board Member) who has a direct or indirect financial interest or ownership in an entity involved in any transaction with the corporation shall disclose that interest to the Conference Board and shall refrain from voting on any matter related to the

transaction. If a Board Member votes on a matter in violation of this requirement, the Board Member's vote may be accepted if the Conference Board, without the conflicted Board Member, determines that the transaction is fair to the corporation at the time it was approved.

ARTICLE 10 - NOTICES

Whenever written notice is required to be given to any person, it can be given personally, by electronic distribution (e-mail), or by postal mail. These written notices can be waived in writing, either before or after the time the notice was required to be given.

ARTICLE 11 - INDEMNIFICATION OF BOARD MEMBERS AND OFFICERS AND LIMITATION OF BOARD MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' PERSONAL LIABILITY

The corporation will cover the costs associated with any lawsuit brought against any Board Member, officer, employee, or agent of the corporation because of their role in the corporation. A Board Member shall not be personally liable for monetary damages for any action taken or any failure to take any action, unless they have 1) failed to perform their duties according to the standard of care; and 2) their failure to perform their duties is considered self-dealing, willful misconduct, or recklessness. A Board Member will commit to a trusting relationship with the corporation and shall perform his duties as a Board Member in good faith, in a manner he reasonably believes to be in the best interests of the corporation, to the best of his knowledge.

ARTICLE 12 - AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended by a positive vote of two-thirds of the Conference Board and must be affirmed by a two-thirds vote of the Delegate Assembly at the following Annual Assembly. All proposed amendments to the Bylaws shall be reviewed by staff leaders and counsel prior to approval by the Conference Board.

Leadership Accompaniment for Anabaptist Communities

*Aligning Ministry Around Conference Priorities: Formational, Missional, Intercultural**

* Definitions

Formational

Settings and experiences that touch our hearts and result in emotional, attitudinal, value, and relational change.

Missional

A congregation shaped by participating in the creative love and reconciling mission of God through Christ, where every part of the church and its activities are guided by and focused toward fulfilling God's mission in the world.

Intercultural

Living out the mission of God across the cultural, racial, economic, ethnic, and national boundaries that tend to divide and stereotype people, toward the goal of being one reconciled people who are transformed by our relationships as we experience now the vision of Revelation 7:9-12.

As Leadership Ministers, we engage pastors and/or congregational leadership teams with an incarnational and pastoral presence working collaboratively with them to encourage missional engagement in their local context and beyond based upon the teachings of Jesus and the apostles in the New Testament.

What We Do

- Leadership Formation and Care
- Encourage Healthy Congregational Relationships
- Congregational Presence
- Resourcing/Networking
- Credentialing
- Pastoral Search
- Pastor/Congregation Reviews

Leadership Formation and Care

- Arrange for new pastor orientation within the first month of ministry.
- Connect quarterly with lead pastor of assigned congregations (and other pastoral team member as discerned) for support, care, and accountability.
- Ensure a pastoral presence and care for the pastor in times of personal or family crisis.
- Pray for and with pastor(s).
- Review growth plans with credentialed leaders.
- Assist pastor in transition to end ministry well.

Encourage Healthy Congregational Relationships

- Cultivate relationship with primary leadership team for support and

accountability.

- Pray for and with leadership teams.
- Meet with leadership teams as requested or contracted.
- Advocate for pastor in salary negotiations, scheduling a sabbatical, maternity/paternity leave.
- Attend, coordinate or facilitate leadership retreats as requested.
- Coordinate and/or facilitate conflict interventions and transformation.
- Assist in pastoral transition—conduct an exit interview with pastor and leadership team.

Conference Presence in the Congregation

- Represent the conference in worship, other special services, and events.
- Preach as offered or requested.
- Pray for and with the congregation.

Credentialing Process

- Serve as a primary connection for pastor/leader candidate and conference
- Write a letter of recommendation for candidate's credential addressed to the chairperson of Ministerial Committee and send to the Conference office. (A copy will be sent to the chairperson of CBMC and Associate Executive Minister.)
- Coach candidate on the process and how to prepare for interview.
- Attend credentialing interview (serving as a supportive presence for the candidate and to pass along any helpful information or counsel to Credentialing Committee interviewers).
- Call candidate following interview to notify of recommendation and again after Conference Board Ministerial Committee (CBMC) action on the recommendation. (An official

notification of the CBMC action will be sent to the candidate.)

- Discern a mentor for pastoral candidate if recommended
- Officiate at licensing/installation/ordination service.

Pastoral Search Process

- Educate and guide congregational search committee in the search process to discern the best candidate to recommend to the congregation.
- Coordinate the search process with credentialing process and keep the Associate Executive Minister informed.

Pastor/Congregation Review

- Lead, assist (or delegate leadership to a conference trained leader) a congregational review team in conducting a pastor/congregation review process.

Resourcing and Networking

- Assist congregational leaders/pastors in applying for a Missional Operation Grant (MOG) and initiating a follow-up action/reflection conversation once the ministry is complete.

Staff

- Attend monthly conference staff meetings for teambuilding, resourcing and networking.
- Write articles for Conference newsletters as requested.
- Provide reports as requested.
- Attend conference meetings (Annual Assembly, Assembly scattered and gathered; equipping/resourcing events; Faith & Life events).
- Attend scheduled staff retreats.

Welcoming New Communities of Christian Faith

Steps

1. Initial inquiry with Conference staff.
2. Leadership discernment at congregational levels.
3. Meeting with Conference staff and Conference Board member.
4. Honest conversation about alignment of relationships, vision, and values. This may include:
 - a. Review of Conference bylaws.
 - b. Teaching sessions on *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* and/or *What We Believe Together* from Mennonite World Conference.
5. Cultivating relationships with other member congregations who may act as a sponsoring congregation and further engagement with Conference Board.
6. The Conference Board discerns the fit of the congregation with the Conference vision and the capacity of the Conference to support the congregation. At this point, or any point in the process, the Conference Board may disengage the conversation or adjust the pace of the conversation as needed.
7. Congregation discerns actual desire to join the Conference and expresses this desire in writing to the Conference
8. Pastoral staff begin process of credentialing with the Conference.
9. Congregation moves toward membership at Annual Assembly or by Conference Board action.

These steps may or may not proceed in a linear fashion. The steps will be guided by a key staff person in working with a congregation, most likely the Executive Minister or other Leadership Ministers as assigned.

Priorities

- Mutual respect and a welcoming spirit.
- Transparency and ability to walk together.
- Alignment around *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*.
- Capacity of pastoral leaders to go through the credentialing process and agree to collegiality and a willingness to give/receive counsel.
- Openness of the Conference to treat new congregations and adopted congregations with grace/truth and full access to Conference resources as well as full levels of responsibility.
- The process will be relational with staff, Conference Board, and other key congregations involved.
- An openness particularly to other MCUSA and MWC recommended congregations who seek to find a home with us in ways that honor our global and local connections.
- Active openness to mutual transformation through an intercultural process that values cultural and linguistic diversity.

Changing Conferences within MCUSA

The Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA has outlined the following process (Article III, 3.b of the Mennonite Church USA Bylaws and Membership Guidelines, Part II, No. 12):

A congregation is required to follow a process of discernment with their conference of origin before another conference may formally consider their application for membership.

- A. Normally this process will require several meetings of the congregation's leaders with leaders of the conference they wish to leave (at least three meetings are suggested).
- B. With their application for membership in the new conference the congregation will present a joint congregation/conference of origin statement to the receiving conference which states:
 - i. Reasons why the congregation wants to change area conference affiliation.
 - ii. When the congregation/conference of origin meetings were held, with a summary of the discussion of the meetings.
 - iii. How or if this affects any other matters in the conference of origin.
 - iv. The matters that have been resolved in the congregation and conference of origin relationship along with those that may remain unresolved.

Community and Accountability

Accountability to the faith community is a necessary aspect of faithful living as followers of Christ. In the event that a member congregation acts in ways divergent with the mission or vision of the Conference, this process is used for discernment with the goal of maintaining unity within the Conference. This process reflects a respect for the priesthood of all believers and the agency of each member congregation through the Delegate Assembly and respects mutual congregational and Conference discernment.

Steps

- 1. Begin the Discernment Process**
Leadership Ministers will work proactively with all member congregations of the Conference. Ideally, issues of congregational divergence from the mission or vision of the Conference will be worked at with the Leadership Minister before this formal process is initiated.
- 2. Confer, Inform, Report**
If the issue is not resolved in Step 1, the Leadership Minister will confer with the credentialed leader and/or congregational leadership of the congregation and inform the Executive Minister and Conference Board Chair. The Leadership Minister will then submit a written report to the Conference Board
- 3. Appoint a Review Committee**
When the Conference Board receives a written report of congregational divergence from the mission or vision of the Conference, the Conference Board will appoint a review committee of representatives of the Conference Board plus that congregation's Leadership Minister to conduct an interview with the credentialed leader and/or congregational leadership.
- 4. Listen to the Congregation**
The review committee will listen to the credentialed leader and/or congregational leadership to establish the clarity and content of the report, to understand the congregation's intentions, and to hear how the congregation is processing its actions. Future intentions should also be reviewed. It is important to gather all pertinent information that will assist the Conference Board in their discernment process.
- 5. Submit Written Report to Conference Board**
The review committee will give a full report of the conversations to the Conference Board, along with their counsel and recommendations.
- 6. Conference Board Discernment**
The Conference Board, through further prayer and discernment, may decide no additional action is needed, and, in so doing, acknowledge that the Conference is a living body. Or, the Conference Board, through further prayer and discernment, may choose to put the question of removal of the congregation from the Conference to the Delegate Assembly at the next Annual Assembly.
- 7. Removal of a Member Congregation**
A member congregation can only be removed from the Conference with a two-thirds majority vote of the Delegate Assembly.

Welcoming New Conference-Related Ministries

Applications shall be made to the Conference CRM Committee, which will discern the appropriateness of each request. The CRM Committee will make recommendations for membership to the Conference Board, who will make final decisions via a majority vote. The process for welcoming new CRMs into the Conference will be as follows:

1. Initial inquiry with the CRM Committee, initiated by a letter of sponsorship from a sponsoring member congregation or independently submitted by an interested organization.
2. Meeting with the CRM Committee to discuss alignment of the applicant organization with the Conference and the benefits and expectations of membership for both the Conference and the applicant organization.
3. Recommendation for membership by the CRM Committee to the Conference Board.
4. Applicant organization confirms desire to join the Conference and expresses this desire in writing to the Conference Board.
5. The Conference Board discerns the fit of the applicant organization with the Conference vision and the capacity of the Conference to support the applicant organization. At this point, or any point in the process, the Conference Board or the CRM Committee may disengage the conversation or adjust the pace of the conversation as needed.
6. The Conference Board, by a majority vote, votes to accept or reject the applicant organization as a CRM.
7. The Conference and the newly-appointed CRM agree to a liaison, as outlined in the Conference bylaws.

Delegate Assembly

Delegate Selection

The following delegates shall be voting members of the Delegate Assembly:

1. All credentialed pastors serving in an active pastoral role within a member congregation.
2. All member churches of the Conference may select two (2) additional members of their congregations to serve as delegates. These delegates are chosen at the discretion of each congregation and may include lay leadership, credentialed leaders who are not serving in a pastoral role, retired pastors, or Conference Board members.
3. Congregations with membership of over 200 persons will choose one (1) additional delegate from the congregation for every 100 members, over and above 200 persons, up to a maximum of 10 delegates per congregation, including pastors. For example, a congregation with 2 active pastors and 230 members is eligible for five total delegates: 2 pastoral delegates, and three additional delegates appointed by the congregation. Membership is defined by each congregation.
4. Conference Related Ministries (CRMs) may select one (1) voting delegate per member organization. Delegates shall be members of the CRM's Board of Directors or staff and a member of a Mennonite Church USA congregation.

Delegate Appointments and Procedures

1. For the purpose of creating the Conference delegate roster, the delegate year begins September 1.
2. It is recommended that lay delegates serve at least one three-year term and congregations stagger their terms.
3. When a lay delegate cannot complete their term due to death, illness, a move to another location, or other circumstances, a replacement should be selected for the unexpired term and communicated to the Conference office.
4. When membership increases such that a congregation is eligible for another delegate, an additional person shall be selected to a three-year term beginning September 1.

Qualifications of Delegates

1. Delegates shall be persons who are members of a Conference congregation (or a Mennonite Church USA congregation, in the case of Conference Related Ministries).
2. Preferably, delegates will be actively involved in a leadership role within the life and work of the congregation or CRM.
3. Manifest spiritual discernment, mature judgement, and a commitment to following Jesus.

Annual Assembly

1. The Conference will host one formal Annual Assembly, which will serve as the business meeting for the Conference.
2. The primary purpose of the Annual Assembly is for the Delegate Assembly to carry out its role as the chief decision-making and oversight body of the Conference. The Delegate Assembly shall discern the direction of the Conference vision and objectives by conferring together. It shall be the responsibility of the Delegate Assembly to represent member congregations and Conference Related Ministries via delegates as outlined in the bylaws.
3. The Conference Board shall set the agenda for the Annual Assembly, which shall reflect the intercultural values of the Conference and include the following:
 - a. Collective worship
 - b. Reporting on the work of the Conference Board & Committees, including financial reports
 - c. Discernment around business topics
 - d. Recognition of newly credentialed leaders and those who have passed away
 - e. Appointment of new Board members
 - f. Welcoming of new congregations
4. In years when the Conference Board has elected a new Moderator and/or Assistant Moderator, the Delegate Assembly shall be given an opportunity to affirm the appointment(s) through a ballot process. If the Delegate Assembly

does not affirm the appointment (defined as affirmation by less than 50% of the participating delegates), then this will be understood as a request by the Delegate Assembly for the Conference Board to reconsider the appointment(s) as presented.

5. Great care shall be taken to ensure that the Annual Assembly is accessible to all member congregations, regardless of geographic location or primary language, whether through the provision of travel funds, technologies that facilitate remote participation, translation services, or similar approaches.
6. Voting at Annual Assembly
 - a. For the purposes of voting at Annual Assembly, quorum shall be considered to be 50% of the number of delegates who participate in Annual Assembly in person, remotely, and via submission of a written ballot.
 - b. For those delegates who are not able to attend in person, the Conference Board may provide a process and procedure for submission of written ballots upon request and approval of a delegate's absence. If approved, written ballots shall be provided to those who notify the Conference Board of their inability to participate in person. Written votes are to be submitted to the Conference Board Secretary prior to the Annual Assembly meeting.

Delegate Ministry Description

Commitments

Accepting the role of serving as a Conference delegate means you are committing to the following:

1. **Participate fully** in worship, conferring, actions, and fellowship at all sessions of the Delegate Assembly.
 - a. When scheduled, attend scattered meetings in preparation for the work of Delegate Assembly.
 - b. Prior to Assembly, become familiar with materials sent out in advance and matters for consideration and action.
 - c. In fulfilling your commitments, consider: (1) your own conscience; (2) the congregation or organization you have been entrusted to represent; (3) discernment, along with the other delegates.
2. **Represent** your congregation or CRM to the Conference.
 - a. Engage in conversations with your congregation or CRM on issues that will be discussed at Delegate Assembly, seeking their input.
3. **Report** to your Congregation or CRM following Delegate Assembly.
 - a. Explain the conferring actions of the Assembly and encourage your congregation to support these actions.
 - b. Share stories of how God is at work in the Delegate Assembly and Conference.
 - c. Articulate and interpret the Conference mission statement and priorities to your congregation or CRM.
4. **Act as a two-way communication link** for information and feedback between

your congregation or organization and the Conference.

5. **Keep informed** of what is happening in the Conference between Assembly sessions by reading delegate mailings, emails, and Conference publications, and be familiar with the Conference website.

Qualifications

Delegates shall be:

1. Persons who are members of a Conference congregation (or a Mennonite Church USA congregation, in the case of Conference Related Ministries).
2. Actively involved in the life and work of the congregation or Conference Related Ministry (CRM).
3. Manifest spiritual discernment, mature judgment, a commitment to intercultural values, and a commitment to following Jesus.

Training and Readiness

1. Delegates shall be appropriately trained and prepared to carry out their duties.
 - a. Each congregation is responsible for training and preparing its own delegates, including non-pastor delegates.
 - b. Congregations shall be assisted in this effort by their Leadership Ministers, who will meet with delegates as needed to provide support, training, or other assistance.