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Mission and Identity Report: Discerning the Mind of  
Christ in Conservative Mennonite Conference

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## Introduction

This past spring, Brian Hershberger, CMC Executive Director, approached us about the possibility of clarifying and articulating the identity of CMC in preparation for the possibility of a renaming/rebranding process. In creating a proposal for CMC to consider, we suggested an assessment that considers both the mission of CMC as well as its identity. More than anything else, we noted, such a process will attempt to listen to the mind of Christ in regard to these questions.

We suggested that identity-related questions should include:

- What did God birth at CMC’s beginning—and what has He done over time—that remains critical to who CMC is called to be today?
- What has become identified with CMC over the years that needs to be discarded in order to become more closely aligned with the identity that is in God’s heart for CMC?
- What does CMC need to do differently to become more fully aligned with its identity in Christ?

We also indicated that mission related questions would be:

- For what purposes did CMC emerge from the heart of God “for the sake of the world that God so loved” and for what purposes does CMC continue to exist for the sake of a “world that God loves still?”
- What is the trajectory from where and to whom CMC was sent at its beginning and where and to whom God is sending CMC today and into the future?

To answer these questions we proposed a conference-wide survey as well as listening sessions at the annual conference in Greenwood, Delaware in August, 2016. In both of these, we asked questions about CMC’s mission and identity, as well as that of its agencies—RBC and RMM.

With the leaders of CMC, RBC, and RMM, we also discerned several scriptures that would guide our process including:

John 17:13-19: <sup>13</sup>“I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. <sup>14</sup>I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. <sup>15</sup>My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup>They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. <sup>17</sup>Sanctify them by<sup>[a]</sup> the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup>As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup>For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

I Corinthians 3:1-11: **3** Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. <sup>2</sup>I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. <sup>3</sup>You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans? <sup>4</sup>For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow

60 Apollos,” are you not mere human beings? <sup>5</sup> What, after all, is Apollos? And what  
61 is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has  
62 assigned to each his task.<sup>6</sup> I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been  
63 making it grow. <sup>7</sup> So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is  
64 anything, but only God, who makes things grow. <sup>8</sup> The one who plants and the  
65 one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to  
66 their own labor. <sup>9</sup> For we are co-workers in God’s service; you are God’s  
67 field, God’s building. <sup>10</sup> By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a  
68 wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with  
69 care.<sup>11</sup> For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is  
70 Jesus Christ.

71  
72 Matthew 9:35-10:16: <sup>35</sup> Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in  
73 their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every  
74 disease and sickness. <sup>36</sup> When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on  
75 them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a  
76 shepherd. <sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers  
77 are few. <sup>38</sup> Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his  
78 harvest field.” **10** Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority  
79 to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. <sup>2</sup> These are the  
80 names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother  
81 Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; <sup>3</sup> Philip and Bartholomew;  
82 Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and  
83 Thaddaeus; <sup>4</sup> Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. <sup>5</sup> These  
84 twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Do not go among the  
85 Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans.<sup>6</sup> Go rather to the lost sheep of  
86 Israel. <sup>7</sup> As you go, proclaim this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven has come  
87 near.’ <sup>8</sup> Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, <sup>[a]</sup> drive out  
88 demons. Freely you have received; freely give. <sup>9</sup> “Do not get any gold or silver or  
89 copper to take with you in your belts— <sup>10</sup> no bag for the journey or extra shirt or  
90 sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep. <sup>11</sup> Whatever town or village  
91 you enter, search there for some worthy person and stay at their house until you  
92 leave. <sup>12</sup> As you enter the home, give it your greeting. <sup>13</sup> If the home is deserving,  
93 let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. <sup>14</sup> If anyone will  
94 not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the  
95 dust off your feet. <sup>15</sup> Truly I tell you, it will be more bearable for Sodom and  
96 Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

97  
98 The current report reflects the responses of 1282 respondents from eighty-three (74.8%) of the  
99 111 congregations in Conservative Mennonite Conference. Both the response from members and  
100 from congregations is quite strong.<sup>1</sup> The report also includes responses from two days of

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<sup>1</sup> The response from Naumburg Mennonite Church was exceptional, with 279 individuals (21.8 percent of the total sample) completing the questionnaire. Naumburg members are different in some respects from the CMC sample as a whole. For example, Naumburg members are more likely to have grown up in a CMC home, less likely to have experience in a non-Anabaptist congregation, are more interested in their congregation embracing an Anabaptist/Mennonite perspective, are more likely to see their congregation as a typical CMC congregation, more

101 listening sessions with nearly 200 individuals that we conducted at the annual CMC  
102 conference—listening sessions of pastors, women, young adults, intercessors, apostles, and  
103 board members of CMC, RBC, and RMM.

## 104 **Demographic Information**

105 Demographic information about the Conservative Mennonite Conference sample of respondents  
106 includes:

- 107 • Fifty-two percent (51.8) are men and 48.2 percent are women.
- 108 • The average age of respondents is 50.9 years. Twenty-two (22.1) percent are between the  
109 ages of 18-35 years, 26.1 percent between 36-50 years, 31.8 percent between 51-65 years,  
110 and 20.0 percent 66 years of age or older.
- 111 • Eighty-six percent (85.6) are married, 8.5 percent are single, 1.7 percent are separated or  
112 divorced, and 4.1 percent are widowed.
- 113 • Seven percent (7.3) have not completed high school, 34.2 percent have a high school  
114 diploma as their highest level of education, 31.0 percent have some level of education  
115 beyond high school but not a Bachelor's degree, and 27.5 percent have at least a  
116 Bachelor's degree (10.7 percent a Master's degree or higher). There are significant  
117 differences in education between members and pastors, with 83.1 percent of CMC pastors  
118 having some level of college education and with 46.1 percent having a Bachelor's degree  
119 or higher (27.0 percent have at least a Master's degree).
- 120 • Eight percent (8.3) of respondents to the CMC questionnaire serve in pastoral roles, 15.1  
121 percent have congregational leadership positions but are not pastors, and 76.6 percent  
122 completed the survey as members of their congregation.
- 123 • Twenty-four percent (23.9) of respondents attended Rosedale Bible College/Institute and  
124 5.4 percent are graduates of RBC. Both pastors (39.3%) and current congregational  
125 leaders (38.3%) are more likely to have attended RBC than are members as a whole. In  
126 addition, 14.6 percent of pastors graduated from RBC as compared to 8.0 percent of  
127 congregational leaders and 4.1 percent of members.
- 128 • Three percent (2.6) of respondents participated in RMM's REACH program, 6.0 percent  
129 participated in City Challenge, 6.6 percent in Voluntary Service, 3.3 percent were long-  
130 term workers with RMM, 6.2 percent have served on an RMM Support Team, 29.6  
131 percent have contributed financially to RMM, 9.9 percent give regularly on behalf of an  
132 RMM worker, 25.8 percent pray regularly for an RMM worker, and 7.6 percent have  
133 participated in RMM fundraising.

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likely to identify with an Anabaptist/Mennonite identity, are less likely to have graduated from RBC, and are more likely to be female and to have lower educational levels. Naumburg members are no different than other CMC respondents in terms of age, length of time a Christian, how often they participate in activities of the congregation, or on identification with being Evangelical or not. This report will be based on all of the 1282 respondents, but from time to time we will report results excluding Naumburg—but we will always note when and why we are doing so.

137 Eighty percent of respondents have been a Christian for twenty or more years, with fewer than  
138 five percent becoming Christians in the last ten years and less than two percent coming to Christ  
139 within the past five years. The sample is composed of largely long-time Christians.

140 Respondents are highly engaged in their congregations, with more than one-third (33.8%)  
141 participating more than once a week and 91.8 percent participating at least once a week. There  
142 are few marginal respondents in this profile of CMC members.

143 Fifty-two percent (51.8) of CMC respondents grew up on a home where one or both parents were  
144 attenders of a CMC congregation—while for 48.2 percent their parents did not attend a CMC  
145 congregation. Forty-one percent (40.5) attended a congregation for six months or more that was  
146 not Mennonite/Anabaptist. The fact that just over one-half of respondents are “cradle” CMCers  
147 likely reflects the growth of CMC over the last two decades as new congregations have joined its  
148 ranks.

149 Not surprisingly, not growing up in a CMC home is related to the likelihood of participating in a  
150 non-Anabaptist congregation at some point in one’s life. Among those who did not grow up in a  
151 CMC home, 54.6 percent have attended a congregation that was not Mennonite/Anabaptist.  
152 Among those for whom both parents attended a CMC congregation, only 26.6 percent of  
153 respondents have attended a non-Anabaptist congregation for six months or longer. That is, if  
154 one’s parents attended a CMC congregation, he/she is much less likely to have ever attended a  
155 non-Anabaptist congregation.

156 For 50.7 percent of CMC respondents, a Mennonite/Anabaptist perspective is very important,  
157 while it is somewhat important for 34.0 percent of respondents. Fifteen percent (15.3) state that  
158 such a perspective is not important (10.9% percent “not very” and 4.4% “not important at all”).  
159 The percentage of respondents who support a Mennonite/Anabaptist perspective is quite high—  
160 nearly 85 percent.

161 A majority—71.5 percent—of respondents believe that their affiliation with CMC is helpful to  
162 the fulfillment of their congregation’s mission, as compared to 25.5 percent who say the  
163 affiliation is irrelevant and just 3.0 percent who believe the affiliation is detrimental. Individuals  
164 for whom both parents were members of CMC are most likely to say that an affiliation with  
165 CMC is helpful (76.4%) followed by those for whom neither parent attended a CMC  
166 congregation when the respondent was a child (66.9%). Interestingly, those for whom one parent  
167 only attended a CMC congregation are least likely to say that a CMC affiliation is helpful, most  
168 likely to say it is irrelevant, and most likely to say that it is detrimental. In addition, whether one  
169 attended a non-Anabaptist congregation for at least six months or not did not make any  
170 difference in one’s view of the value of a CMC affiliation for one’s mission.

171 Respondents ages 36-50 are least likely to agree that an affiliation with CMC is helpful, most  
172 likely to agree that it is irrelevant, and along with those 18-35 most likely to agree that is  
173 detrimental (these differences by age are statistically significant). There was no difference by age  
174 or marital status in view of the value of a CMC affiliation. However, there is a significant

175 difference by educational level—with those having no more than a high school diploma and  
176 those with a Bachelor’s degree or equivalent being least likely to say that a CMC affiliation is  
177 helpful for the congregation’s mission and most likely to say that it is irrelevant.

178 As we step back a bit, several questions emerge: Why are those with only one parent in CMC  
179 when the respondent was a child least likely to see CMC as helpful to the mission? Why are  
180 those 36-50 years old less supportive of CMC, and why those with only a high school diploma or  
181 a Bachelor’s degree? On the other hand, overall support for CMC is high in this question and  
182 particularly high among those who had both parents in CMC and among other educational levels.

183 When asked how “typical” their congregation is relative to other CMC congregations, most  
184 agreed that it is at least somewhat typical—only 13.0 percent said their congregation is not  
185 typical at all. At least one person from each of 44 congregations indicated that their  
186 congregation was not typical of CMC, but in only 14 congregations did 50 percent or more say  
187 the same (and in six of these congregations only one individual responded to the questionnaire).

188 By and large, respondents to the questionnaire are more likely than not to see themselves typical  
189 of CMC congregations. Responses to this question do not seem to indicate serious distance  
190 between members and CMC. This clarity is further revealed in responses to a question that asked  
191 about the characteristics that most often come to mind when the respondent considers a “typical”  
192 CMC congregation.

- 193 • Eighty-nine percent (89.1) pointed to “sound Biblical teaching.”
- 194 • Seventy-four percent (73.7) noted “mission-minded.”
- 195 • Fifty-one percent (51.2) said “spiritually vibrant.”
- 196 • Forty-four percent identified “cultural non-conformity.”
- 197 • Twenty-two percent (21.6) checked “plain dress.”
- 198 • Fifteen percent (14.9) suggested other characteristics.

199 These responses reveal that CMC members believe that CMC holds to Biblical teaching and that  
200 CMC is engaged in mission, or at least that mission is important to CMC. There is less  
201 unanimity in responses to the other characteristics and clearly some disagreement about the  
202 spiritual vibrancy, non-conformity, and importance of plain dress within CMC congregations.  
203 Indeed, of the 14.9 percent who responded “other,” this disagreement or lack of clarity is  
204 reinforced with some respondents feeling very positively about CMC, others identifying  
205 concerns, and some rather cynical in their descriptions of CMC.

206 Responses to this question do suggest that CMC has some work to do in defining how it relates  
207 to the broader culture and in strengthening the spiritual life and vibrancy of its congregations.

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### Qualities of CMC Congregations

212 Respondents were given six qualities of congregations and asked to indicate their agreement as  
213 to whether these characteristics represent their congregation.

214	<b>Qualities of a Congregation</b>	<b>Percent who agreed</b>
215	Readily welcomes new persons to the congregation	90.3
216	Actively shares Christ in the local community	85.8
217	Equips members to live out God’s mission to the world	84.4
218	Has a clear sense of mission and purpose	80.3
219	Meets the physical and social needs of the local community	76.1
220	Creates a sense of belonging for all persons	73.4

221 Members were most likely to agree (two categories of agreement combined) that CMC  
222 congregations readily welcome new persons (90.3%), followed by “actively shares Christ in the  
223 local community” (85.8%) and “equips members to live out God’s mission” (84.4%). Eighty  
224 percent (80.3) agree that their congregation has a clear sense of mission and purpose, 76.1  
225 percent that it meets the physical and social needs of the local community, and 73.4 percent that  
226 their congregation creates a sense of belonging.

227 The greatest difference among these categories is between welcoming new persons and creating  
228 a sense of belonging—this gap needs to be addressed if CMC congregations are going to  
229 effectively live out the mission that God has for them. It is easy to welcome but much more  
230 difficult to create a culture of belonging. But without such a culture, those who are so readily  
231 welcomed initially will rarely stay. The difference between being welcoming and belonging is  
232 often typical of congregations and is an important cultural challenge for CMC leadership to work  
233 on: How might the conference as a whole become known for nurturing a belonging culture? This  
234 would be an adaptive challenge for a conference that has been known for its non-conformity and  
235 separation from the world. What risks might the leadership face in creating “belonging”  
236 congregations? What benefits might be attained?

237

### Congregational and Personal Mission

238 A second set of questions asked about personal engagement in mission, and the results are  
239 typical of most individuals and congregations, with the personal measures are at odds with the  
240 general beliefs about the congregation’s overall effectiveness at mission just discussed above.  
241 The following table shows the percentages of those who do the respective activity once a month  
242 or more:

243	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Percent who do so at least monthly</b>
244	Pray by name for at least one unchurched person	72.6
245	Have casual conversations with your neighbors	63.0
246	Talk about your faith with someone who is not a church attender	43.5
247	Participate in civic and community activities	29.5
248	Participate in ministries that focus on the physical and social	
249	needs of your local community	24.8

250 Invite unchurched persons to join you at your congregation 10.1  
251 Invite unchurched persons into your home or out to lunch/coffee, etc. 19.1

252  
253 Of these activities, members are most likely to pray for one unchurched person by name (72.6%)  
254 and to have casual conversations with neighbors (63.0%). They are least likely to invite  
255 unchurched persons to join them at their church (10.1%) or to invite unchurched persons to their  
256 home or out to eat (19.1%). Relatively few regularly engage in civic and community activities  
257 (29.5%) or participate in ministries in their local community (24.8%).

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259 We are struck by how few CMC respondents regularly invite unchurched folks to church or into  
260 their homes or out to a restaurant, and these findings point to the lack of energy given to sustain  
261 relationships with folks in the local community. In addition, engagement in ministries and in  
262 civic and community events is rather minimal. These percentages are probably not surprising,  
263 given CMC's historic concern for non-conformity and separation from the world. But these  
264 findings also illustrate why creating a sense of belonging is so difficult, particularly in the case of  
265 folks who come to church from the local community—they simply do not have sufficient  
266 relationships to support a strong sense of belonging. An adaptive challenge for CMC  
267 congregations will be identifying ways to more intentionally engage in their local communities  
268 to illustrate to those communities their care and compassion for those communities.

### 269 270 **Faith Practices**

271  
272 Eighty-four (84.4) percent of respondents pray daily, 43.9 percent read or study the Bible daily,  
273 and 65.0 percent are in a small group that meets several times a month or more. Seventy-six  
274 percent (76.4) of respondents give 10 percent or more of their household income to church or  
275 charitable causes.

### 276 277 **The Broader Culture and Theological Identity**

278  
279 CMC members responded to a set of statements that are measures of engagement with the  
280 broader culture, including several that have been important to Anabaptists in particular.

- 281
- 282 • Fifty-eight percent (58.1) disagree—both categories of disagreement--that it is okay for
- 283 Christians to fight in a war.
- 284 • Forty-seven percent (47.1) disagree that it is okay for Christians to file a lawsuit.
- 285 • Thirty-nine percent (39.4) disagree that the government should use the death penalty for
- 286 serious crimes.
- 287 • Thirty-seven percent (37.0) disagree that it is okay for Christians to have a concealed
- 288 carry (to legally to carry a concealed weapon).
- 289 • Thirty-one percent (31.0) agree that it is okay for Christians to participate in public
- 290 protests.
- 291 • Fourteen percent (14.3) disagree that it is okay for Christians to run for political office.
- 292 • Six percent (5.7) disagree that it is okay for Christians to vote in government elections.
- 293

294 Of all these items, respondents are most supportive of voting (87.1% support), running for  
295 political office (66.5% support), and carrying a concealed weapon (42.1% support). Respondents



296 are least supportive (or most likely to disagree with) Christians fighting in a war (58.1%) and  
297 Christians filing a lawsuit (47.1%).

298  
299 For all but the question of voting (7.3% “not sure”), there were relatively high percentages of  
300 folks who are not sure about these items:

301

302 <u>Activity</u>	302 <u>Percent not sure</u>
303 Okay to fight in a war	17.8
304 Okay to have a concealed carry	20.8
305 Okay to run for political office	19.2
306 Government use of death penalty	27.9
307 Okay to file a lawsuit	25.1
308 Okay to participate in public protests	33.0

309

310 These “not sure” responses suggest quite a bit of ambivalence among CMC members about how  
311 and if Christians should engage the broader culture along lines that have been historically  
312 opposed by Anabaptists. This variation among CMC members in part accounts for the challenge  
313 in defining CMC’s identity.

314  
315 Interestingly, when faced with words that describe their religious identity, CMC members  
316 overwhelmingly identify as Mennonite/Anabaptist (77.9%), Evangelical (52.3%),  
317 Charismatic/Pentecostal (7.8%), Fundamentalist (8.4%), and Other (15.7%). Most commonly  
318 repeated “Other” responses included:

- 319
- 320 • Follower of Jesus, Christ-follower or something similar
  - 321 • Christian
  - 322 • Bible-believing or something similar
- 323

324 Some distinguished Anabaptism from being Mennonite and others combined Mennonite with  
325 some other identity. But overwhelmingly, the “other” responses had to do with Jesus, the Bible,  
326 and being a Christian.

327  
328 When considering those who identified as Mennonite/Anabaptist and/or Evangelical we find  
329 that:

- 330
- 331 • 9.4 percent define themselves as neither of these terms
  - 332 • 39.5 percent define themselves as both of these identities
  - 333 • 38.4 percent identify only as Mennonite/Anabaptist
  - 334 • 12.8 percent identify only as Evangelical
- 335

336 So interestingly, while there is quite a bit of ambivalence around key indicators of Anabaptism,  
337 members of CMC overwhelmingly self-identify as Mennonite/Anabaptist. This fact will likely  
338 make the clarification of identity easier if leaders do so in an Anabaptist direction. And doing so  
339 will likely not be as challenging as it would have been had members overwhelmingly chosen the  
340 Evangelical or Fundamentalist labels. Clearly, CMC members are expecting CMC to remain  
341 Anabaptist.

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## Moral Behaviors

When presented with a list of additional moral behaviors, respondents were asked whether these are never acceptable, sometimes acceptable, or always acceptable.

Ninety percent or more agreed the following are never acceptable:

- Cohabitation before marriage (96.6%)
- Use of illegal drugs (96.6%)
- Premarital sexual intercourse (97.3%)
- Homosexual relations (98.1%)
- Viewing pornography (98.4%)
- Euthanasia (93.1%)
- Abortion (95.1%)

Behaviors that fewer than thirty percent said are never acceptable included:

- Divorce (28.0%)
- Unhealthy eating (25.0%)
- High risk/dangerous sports or activities (18.4%)

Among other behaviors, 75.5 percent believe that marriage between a Christian and non-Christian is never acceptable, 41.1 percent that drinking alcohol is never acceptable, 70.6 percent believe tobacco use is never acceptable, 78.4 percent believe gambling is never acceptable, and 83.8 percent believe littering is never acceptable.

CMC members are solidly committed to Biblical understandings of sexuality and marriage, and the conference has the advantage of not being divided on these issues. This unity will be helpful as CMC clarifies its mission and identity, since these issues are contributing to division in many other denominational affiliations throughout the U.S.

## Women in Leadership

By and large, respondents to the CMC survey are reticent to support women in formal pastoral roles within a congregation, but open to women using their spiritual gifts in teaching, worship, and to a lesser extent pastoral care and counseling. But no more than one-fourth of respondents are open to women serving as elders, preaching sermons, serving as pastor or lead pastor.

In 25 of 80 congregations, no respondents indicated support for a woman serving as elder of a congregation. In 42 of 80 congregations, no respondents indicated support for a woman being a pastor. In 56 of 80 congregations, no respondents indicated support for a woman being a lead pastor.

There was no difference in support for a woman as pastor between men or women, with 13.9 percent of men supporting women in this role as compared to 12.3 percent of women. There was very little difference by age, with folks 51-65 years old most likely to support females pastors (17.3%) as compared to 13.2 percent of 18-35 year olds, 12.9 percent of 36-50 year olds, and 6.8 percent of those over 65 years of age. Not surprisingly, however, education makes a significant

388 impact on attitudes about women in leadership, so that 24.4 percent of those with at least a  
 389 Bachelor’s degree supporting women pastors as compared to 8.8 percent of those without a  
 390 Bachelor’s degree.

391  
 392 The presence of Naumburg Mennonite Church in the sample makes some difference in this  
 393 question but does not change the overall narrative about women in formal roles of leadership.  
 394 Without Naumburg, support for women in leadership increases slightly depending on the  
 395 leadership role. Nonetheless, the overall story remains the same—one of the distinguishing  
 396 characteristics of CMC is the continued support for male leadership in formal congregational  
 397 roles. It is difficult to imagine this changing quickly since there is no difference by age and  
 398 gender. Only a rapid increase in educational levels is likely to change the level of support for  
 399 women in leadership.

400	401 <b>Activity for women</b>	402 <b>Percent who support</b>
402	Teach children	99.5
403	Teach adults	80.4
404	Plan and lead worship	72.8
405	Pastoral counseling and care	58.3
406	Serve as elder	29.6
407	Preaching sermons	26.4
408	Serve as pastor	16.6
409	Serve as lead pastor	8.1

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 411 **Congregational Health**

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 413 It is remarkable (see table below) how few respondents see their congregations as being open to  
 414 change.<sup>2</sup> Beyond this item, respondents tend to see their congregations as accepting of others  
 415 and with exciting futures ahead of them, but less so that they worship passionately, actively use  
 416 their gifts, or are unified. In fact, just 13.9 percent strongly agree that their congregations are  
 417 unified and less than three fourths (71.9%) agree with this statement.

418	419 <b>Characteristics</b>	420 <b>% Strongly Agree</b>	421 <b>% Agree<sup>3</sup></b>
420	Readily embraces change	3.5	37.3
421	Unified	13.9	71.9
422	Has exciting future ahead	28.2	82.9
423	Actively use gifts	14.4	77.3
424	Worships passionately	18.7	79.9
425	Accepts people	29.4	82.4

426  
 427 If we consider congregational health—both change and unity are the two items that respondents  
 428 are suggesting their congregations most need to address. Close behind, however, are the use of  
 429 gifts by members and passionate worship.

430  
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<sup>22</sup> Further analysis reveals that this percentage is influenced by Naumbaug Mennonite Church where fewer members (22.6%) are open to change as compared to 41.2 percent of other CMC members.  
<sup>3</sup> Both categories of agreement combined.

## 431 Commitment to the Conservative Mennonite Conference

432

433 When asked about their level of commitment to various levels of church, respondents are most  
434 committed to their local congregation (74.6% very strongly committed), then to the broader  
435 church (40.3% very strongly committed), and finally to the Conservative Mennonite Conference  
436 (just 23.3% very strongly committed).

437

438 Those for whom both parents attended a CMC congregation are more committed to CMC (26.4  
439 % very strongly and 81.1% committed at any level) as compared to those with one parent in  
440 CMC (20.0% and 66.7% at any level) and no parent in CMC (20.2% and 72.2% at any level).  
441 This finding suggests that the entry of new congregations and members into CMC does not  
442 automatically translate into commitment to CMC in the long run. Commitment to CMC cannot  
443 be assumed but must be nurtured.

444

445 Interestingly, education makes no difference in the level of one's commitment to CMC but age  
446 does. Forty percent (39.9) of those over 65 years of age are very strongly committed to CMC as  
447 compared to 28.8 percent of those between 51-65 years of age, 15.7 percent between 36-50 years  
448 of age, and 14.9 percent of those 35 years old and younger. In addition, there is an interaction  
449 between age and whether both of one's parents were in CMC or not, with 40.4 percent of those  
450 65 years of age and older whose parents were in CMC being strongly committed to CMC as  
451 compared to the strong commitment of just 9.8 percent of those under 36 years of age and whose  
452 parents were not part of CMC. The combination of not growing up in CMC and being younger  
453 makes commitment to CMC quite low. The loss of older cohorts and the ongoing addition of  
454 historically non-CMC congregations is likely to create a commitment problem for CMC unless  
455 this is addressed sooner rather than later.

456

457 When given a list of concerns about the Conservative Mennonite Conference, respondents  
458 indicated greatest concern about:

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469

470 It's not entirely clear whether respondents mean that they are not concerned about an item  
471 because it is not important to them, because they are not sure whether CMC is well positioned in  
472 regard to that item, or because that item is simply near and dear to their heart, but their responses  
473 do give us some measure of where respondents are suggesting that CMC leaders put their  
474 energies. If we assume the latter, respondents are asking for the greatest attention to the retention  
475 of young people, reaching their local communities, and Biblical orthodoxy. They are suggesting  
476 some attention to Mennonite/Anabaptist identity, membership decline, the development of

477 leaders, and a focus on CMC’s mission. They are least concerned about whether CMC will reach  
478 the least reached peoples or whether it will communicate a culturally relevant Gospel.

479  
480 In sum---retaining their youth, reaching local communities, and Biblical orthodoxy are the  
481 greatest concerns of respondents. And interestingly, the first two concerns are two of the primary  
482 engines of growth and sustainability of any social group—the third is an increase in birth rates.  
483 Without retaining young people, effective evangelism, and sufficient birth rates—denominations  
484 are bound to plateau and eventually disappear. Perhaps without being conscious of these  
485 prerequisites, respondents are voicing their concerns about these critical issues.

### 486 **Resources of CMC**

487  
488  
489 When asked about the importance of the resources provided by CMC, respondents ranked the  
490 importance of resources in the following order:

491

492 <b>Resources (% Somewhat/Very important)</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Leaders</b>
493 Training, resourcing and fellowship for pastors and leaders	93.9	92.1
494 Avenues to cooperate with other groups on mission and relief projects	93.4	93.2
495 Outside help when congregations face conflict	92.0	93.2
496 Leadership and congregational coaching through CMC’s overseers	88.2	93.2
497 Educational resources and other means of congregational discipleship	86.3	88.7
498 Sense of identity and belonging that is larger than just the local context	81.2	92.1
499 Events...which provide...conference-wide fellowship and networking	78.0	87.7

500  
501 Leaders (Senior or Associate Pastors) rank five items nearly equally—cooperation on mission  
502 and relief projects, outside help in conflicts, coaching, a larger sense of identity and belonging,  
503 and training, resourcing and fellowship for pastors.

504  
505 All respondents rank three of the above five most highly—they want CMC to provide training,  
506 resourcing, and fellowship for their pastors, they value avenues to connect on mission and relief  
507 projects, and they value outside help in conflicts. These are areas that are win-win outcomes for  
508 CMC because both members and leaders value them—by focusing on these there is likely to be  
509 most bang for the buck.

510  
511 The largest differences between all respondents and members are in the areas of identity and  
512 conference-wide fellowship and networking—all respondents are less likely to value these than  
513 are leaders.

514  
515 While respondents express low levels of commitment to CMC, they clearly see the resourcing  
516 offered by CMC as valuable to their congregations and to their leaders. Three-fourth or more of  
517 all respondents (and more than 85 percent of leaders) identify all of CMC’s resources as being  
518 somewhat or very important.

519  
520 When asked whether they have experienced an increase, decrease, or no change in the resourcing  
521 offered by CMC over the past five years, members overwhelming responded with no change or  
522 even an increase. The greatest increases are seen in training, resourcing and fellowship for

523 pastors (36.0 %), educational resources and other means of congregational discipleship (30.2),  
 524 cooperation on mission and relief projects (29.7%), and leadership and congregational coaching  
 525 (28.0 %). From all appearances, the resources offered by CMC are very much valued and are not  
 526 seen as diminishing.

527  
 528 When asked to identify the resources of Rosedale Bible College that they most valued,  
 529 respondents, leaders (Senior or Associate Pastors), and those who did not grow up in CMC  
 530 offered the following responses:

531

532 <b>Resource (% value)</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Leaders</b>	<b>NCMC<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>Attended</b>
533 Teaching in the context of Evangelical Anabaptism	60.0	75.3	55.0	76.9
534 Transferable college credit...vibrant environment	52.4	60.7	50.5	65.2
535 Spiritual formation offered in a nurturing community	64.9	85.4	62.5	83.3
536 Programs...that offer internship and discipleship	53.5	62.9	49.7	66.7
537 Connection with the broader CMC community as a value	54.6	55.1	50.5	70.5
538 Do not value any of these	13.7	3.4	16.1	4.2

539  
 540 Leaders are much more likely to value the resources of RBC—in fact, CMC pastors are clearly  
 541 allies of RBC. Those who did not grow up in CMC are not much different from all respondents  
 542 in the value they place upon RBC resources—so not growing up in CMC does not seem to affect  
 543 one’s view of RBC. This is good news for CMC—adding new congregations does not appear to  
 544 be dimming member views of RBC.

545  
 546 At the same time, our belief is that RBC is undervalued by the CMC constituency. Given the  
 547 concerns about retaining youth and Biblical orthodoxy, RBC is positioned to socialize a new  
 548 generation of CMC adults (we will address further in our conclusions).

549  
 550 Another group of advocates for RBC are those who attended. When we ask RBC attenders and  
 551 graduates about the value they place upon RBC resourcing we find that they are overwhelmingly  
 552 supportive of the resourcing of RBC. And interestingly, this group more than any other sees  
 553 value in RBC connecting students to the broader CMC community. If CMC wishes to strengthen  
 554 its members’ commitment to CMC, it would seem that it is to CMC’s benefit to encourage  
 555 participation in RBC.

556  
 557 When asked about the benefit of Rosedale Mennonite Missions, one benefit or resource in  
 558 particular jumped out--Programs like Reach and City Challenge (71.7%). Several others  
 559 clustered second to this one:

- 560
- 561 • Opportunities to financially support people I know on the mission field (56.8%)
  - 562 • Opportunities to respond to natural disasters (57.1%)

563  
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<sup>4</sup> Respondents who did not grow up in a CMC congregation.

568 All other RMM benefits or resources were valued by fewer than 50 percent of respondents:

569

- 570 • Ministry partnership with my congregation in overseas context (48.1%)
- 571 • Mission communication and education (43.7%)
- 572 • Discipleship making and church planting resources (38.3%)
- 573 • Opportunities to help raise funds for missions (38.5%)
- 574 • Help for my congregation in developing mission vision (38.5%)
- 575 • Opportunities to contribute to general mission offerings (37.8%)
- 576 • Missionary prayer guides, etc. (35.4%)
- 577 • Opportunities to engage in mission as business (25.3%)

578

579 When asked whether their interest in RBC has increased, decreased, or remained the same over  
580 the past five years, 14.9 percent stated that their interest had decreased, 17.7 percent that it had  
581 increased, and 67.3 percent that it had stayed the same. This means a slight net gain of 2.8  
582 percent for RBC in the past five years. Interestingly, the increase in interest differs dramatically  
583 by status—with 36.0 percent of pastors saying their interest in RBC has increased compared to  
584 just 16.0 percent of members. There was little difference between cradle CMCers on this  
585 question and those who did not grow up in a CMC congregation.

586

587 Asked the same question about RMM, 8.6 percent replied that their interest had decreased, 27.4  
588 percent that it had increased, and 64.0 percent that their interest had remained the same, resulting  
589 in a net increase in interest of 18.8 percent. As with RBC, pastors are much more likely (40.9%)  
590 than members (25.1%) to say that their interest in RMM has increased in the past five years.  
591 Again, there was little difference between folks who grew up in CMC and those who did not.  
592 Both sets of questions—about interest in RBC and RMM—suggest that pastors are a key  
593 constituency in strengthening interest in these organizations. In addition, the influx of non-  
594 CMCers does not seem to be weakening support for these organizations, just as it is not building  
595 support either.

596

597 Respondents were asked to identify the strength of relationship between CMC and its agencies.  
598 Sixty-one (60.9%) percent said the relationship between RBC and CMC was strong, while 33.3  
599 percent were not sure. Sixty-eight (67.9%) percent believe the relationship between RMM and  
600 CMC is strong, but 28.5 percent are not sure. Fifty-two (51.8%) percent said they were not sure  
601 how the relationships between CMC and its agencies had changed over the past five years, with  
602 28.0 percent identifying no noticeable change, 5.9 percent saying they had drifted further away,  
603 and 14.3 percent said they are closer together.

604

605 Findings for this question do not suggest that members sense a crisis in the relationships among  
606 CMC and its agencies—there is much uncertainty about the relationships but no strong sense that  
607 the relationships are diminishing.

608

609 In a final comprehensive measure of connection to CMC, respondents were asked: “How  
610 connected do you personally feel to Conservative Mennonite Conference and its agencies?”  
611 Members responded with 24.5 percent saying not connected at all, 59.9 percent are somewhat  
612 connected, and 15.6 percent are very connected.

613

614 We conducted a correlation analysis of this question and whether or not one grew up in CMC,  
 615 and there is a significant positive association between growing up in CMC and one’s level of  
 616 connectedness to CMC ( $r=.14$ ). Those who grew up in CMC feel more connected to CMC.

617  
 618 **Regional Analysis<sup>5</sup>**  
 619

620 In an effort to measure the effects of region—distance from Rosedale offices as well as number  
 621 of CMC congregations in the region--on connectedness to CMC, congregations were divided  
 622 into sixteen regions. The following table shows the number of respondents within each region as  
 623 well as their responses to several measures of connectedness to CMC. It will be important for  
 624 CMC leaders to assess the extent to which region impacts a respondent’s connection to CMC.

625

Question	DE	FL	IN/MI	IN South	IA	KS	KY	MD	MI Upper	NY	OH Col.	OH Hart.	OH Other	PA Cent	SW
Respondents	64	61	91	16	7	28	11	62	103	315	116	8	50	83	9
Both parents attended	64.2	38.1	42.1	31.2	50.0	51.7	33.3	44.9	35.7	79.2	46.3	33.3	56.6	30.3	44.4
Anabaptism very important	40.3	56.2	33.7	37.5	25.0	62.1	18.2	36.2	46.4	77.5	49.6	44.4	25.0	41.6	55.6
Affiliation helps mission	71.9	70.5	45.1	43.8	42.9	75.0	72.7	82.3	63.1	75.2	75.9	87.5	74.0	80.7	77.8
Very typical CMC congregation	22.1	33.3	16.1	31.2	25.0	33.3	9.1	25.0	13.1	45.2	31.0	55.6	17.3	36.0	11.1
Very connected to CMC	17.2	16.1	47.6	18.8	28.6	33.3	11.1	15.0	28.6	23.4	18.9	37.5	42.6	12.2	33.3

626  
 627 **Open-ended Questions**  
 628

629 The CMC questionnaire concluded with several open-ended questions:

630  
 631 **What do you believe to be God’s purpose for Conservative Mennonite Conference?**  
 632

633 Responses to this question were very constructive and positive, and one has the sense that  
 634 members are calling on CMC to be a stronger center—to resource pastors and leaders, to lead in  
 635 local and global mission (much emphasis on outreach and evangelism), to connect congregations  
 636 to one another, offer discipleship training, communicate an Evangelical Anabaptist perspective,  
 637 offer Biblical teaching, and equip congregations.

638  
 639 One articulate respondent put it this way: “I believe God can use CMC to embody the love of  
 640 Jesus to the world in a way that holds unashamedly to Biblical faith in the Anabaptist tradition,  
 641 while being driven by a missionary fervor that compels it to find ways to connect meaningfully  
 642 to various cultures where members live and serve.”

---

<sup>5</sup>The congregations within each region are listed in Appendix A.



643 Another enthusiastically and perhaps prophetically responded: “To be a unified body of  
644 individuals and congregations who stand solidly on the Rock of the Word of God, without  
645 wavering in our faith in Jesus, encouraging and discipling our children and each other, and  
646 reaching out with love and compassion to those around us and in the nations who do not have the  
647 hope of Jesus who are sinking in the sands of despair. I believe we are living in days when it  
648 isn't easy to be a Christian, and CMC encourages its own to keep taking up their crosses and  
649 following Jesus no matter the cost, and shows a watching world that discipleship is still worth it.  
650 I believe that from CMC is arising and will arise a generation of world changers. They are not  
651 status quo Christians. They will follow Jesus to the end and will lead many to follow Him. They  
652 will overcome by the blood of the Lamb, the Word of their testimony and love not their lives  
653 unto death. CMC is putting the wind in their sails and giving them the wings to fly. One day we  
654 will look back and say with amazement, ‘The Lord has done this and it is marvelous in our  
655 eyes!!!’ CMC exists for such a time as this, I have no doubt!”  
656

657 Quite frankly, three things impressed us about responses to this question:

- 658 • The strong optimism and enthusiasm for CMC in a day when most historic  
659 denominations are facing cynicism and erosion. Respondents to this question exude with  
660 enthusiasm and optimism.
- 661 • That mission and outreach, more than any other concern, dominated responses.
- 662 • The sense that members are calling for a stronger CMC center.  
663

664 The low level of commitment that is seen toward CMC relative to the congregation and broader  
665 church might be understood not so much as a reality to be accepted but more as a reality that  
666 members are desiring to see changed. What would it take for CMC to strengthen itself as a center  
667 for its congregations rather than to assume that the centers of all denominations and conferences  
668 are necessarily deteriorating and as a result CMC's must also? CMC is in an enviable position of  
669 being a conference of churches that are not currently deeply divided (nor do we see signs of this  
670 coming in the near future) and where its education and mission agencies are affirmed by key  
671 groups in their constituency.  
672

673 **Can you name one thing that God may be calling Conservative Mennonite Conference to**  
674 **embrace in order to become more faithful in fulfilling its mission?**  
675

676 Three themes emerged from respondents' answers that connect with recommendations that we  
677 will be making in this report:

- 678 • Encouragement to change CMC's name.
- 679 • Asking for greater resourcing and education for pastors.
- 680 • Emphasizing more local outreach and mission.  
681

682 Key quotes that pointed to these themes were:

- 684 • “Encourage pastors to obtain formal education in Bible studies. RBC used to do some of  
685 this, but it seems CMC should be the leader. 2) CMC in conjunction with RMM should  
686 provide resources and training on how to reach our immediate communities for Christ.”
- 687 • “I wonder if we could add the word ‘Evangelical’ in front of Conservative Mennonite  
688 Conference or possibly instead switching to ‘evangelical anabaptist conference.’”

- 689
- “I know that CMC is very focused on the 10 40 window. However I think CMC should  
690 consider equipping missionaries to tell people about Jesus in America. CMC could  
691 provide resources for local congregations to minister to the lost in the local community.  
692 I know in Sarasota there are many who are lost without Christ.”  
693

694 Besides these three, many other concerns were mentioned including CMC connecting more  
695 strongly to its congregations, strengthening theological commitments, allowing women more  
696 freedom in using their gifts, greater openness to the Holy Spirit, greater embrace of change, and  
697 remaining and increasing Biblical faithfulness.  
698

699 **Can you name one thing that God may be calling Conservative Mennonite Conference to**  
700 **lay aside in order to become more faithful in fulfilling its mission?**  
701

702 This item produced responses calling for a name change. Many other responses were related to  
703 the question of how to engage culture and how CMC engages its own cultural/theological  
704 identity. This theme of negotiating culture was the overwhelming focus of comments in this  
705 section and likely reflects the long history of negotiating between cultural assimilation and  
706 complete separation from the world. How to negotiate the broader culture is very much on  
707 respondents’ minds but there is some difference in how they imagine doing so and what it means  
708 to do so.  
709

710 **Can you name one thing that God may be calling Conservative Mennonite Conference to**  
711 **retain from its past in order to be more faithful in fulfilling its mission?**  
712

713 Far and away the most often mentioned concern was Biblical faithfulness. Other themes that  
714 emerged were related to Anabaptist history and theology, mission and how to engage the culture.  
715 In this way, respondents are quite consistent in their responses across questions—they value a  
716 conference that remains true to Scripture, that engages in mission, and that is intentional about  
717 how it relates to the broader culture.  
718

719 **Is there anything else you would like to say about Conservative Mennonite Conference and**  
720 **its agencies—Rosedale Mennonite Missions and Rosedale Bible College?**  
721

722 This question yielded many responses of appreciation for CMC and its agencies. It also  
723 presented an opportunity for folks to express concerns. Many wrote lengthy responses that are  
724 certainly worth considering but the responses were quite diverse and many reflect anxieties of  
725 Christians living in a changing culture and who are looking to the church for direction and  
726 guidance.  
727

728 Answers to these five questions reflect strong engagement with, interest in, and commitment to  
729 CMC, a desire to shape the direction of CMC, and to see CMC thrive. Our sense is that as CMC  
730 leads with clarity and decisiveness, conference members and congregations will follow.  
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## Listening Session Summary

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While at the annual CMC conference in Greenwood, Delaware, we conducted eight listening sessions with approximately 200 individuals. The following is a summary of those sessions.

**Why do you believe that CMC and your agency continue to exist? What is the purpose for which God brought into the world and continues to have you in the world?**

### **CMC**

Multiple themes were shared in response to the existence and purpose for CMC. Themes of being a foundation for local churches, a support for pastors and church leaders, provide resources for local congregations, develop leaders, and empower the CMC body to remain biblically grounded were all present. One participant stated, “CMC exists to be a network of churches for support and fellowship with one another of similar values for encouragement to press forward in the Kingdom.” Another respondent shared, “To help build the Kingdom with the tools God has given us that stem from our view of the Scriptures. Our theological bent, largely influenced by our spiritual ancestors bears testimony of the position of God as the creator, Savior, and eternal hope.”

When asked to rate the current success of CMC (scale of 1-10), there was a mix of scores ranging from 2 through 9. One respondent offered a 4 regarding missional outreach: “We’ve always had a strong overseas mission emphasis, but have not done well at advancing the Gospel and planting churches at home.” When referencing the developing healthy of congregations, one individual rated the success at a 3, due to “growing only certain aspects.” This individual expressed concern that holistic development is not occurring, particularly a lack of emphasis on spiritual gifting. Another participated explained his rating of CMC’s commitment to mission, “If we are rating the heart of CMC and its commitment to our mission, I would give a rating of 9 among the leaders. I don’t know about the local churches. If we are rating what actually happens, it would be somewhat lower, may a 7 or so.”

Interestingly, there was very little direct mentioned of RBC and no mention of RMM. Does this perhaps represent some disconnect between the CMC leadership and those of RBC and RMM? There was much mention of support for local congregations, pastors, and leaders, but very little to no mention of support/guidance for RMM and RBC. In several of the later responses, it is noted by leaders of both RMM and RBC a lack of unified vision and guidance from CMC.

### **RMM**

Themes of a strong foundation, a “dream”, discipleship, and evangelism were all apparent in the participants’ responses. There were several mentions of a solid foundation from which RMM is able to continue carrying out its purpose. This foundation is based on Scripture, truth, and the “original dream” that led to the creation of RMM. The word “dream” was used on several occasions, both to describe the “original dream” that led to the existence of RMM, but also to pass the “dream” on to the next generation.

Participants see discipleship as a responsibility of RMM, specifically in equipping CMC churches and members to reach the unchurched. Evangelism and reaching the “lost people

781 groups” was mentioned repeatedly by groups responding to the question. RMM directly interacts  
782 with the unchurched, trains CMC members for interaction with the unchurched, and casts a  
783 vision for missions for CMC as a faith body.  
784

785 There was not much discussion about how to pass on the “original dream” to the next generation.  
786 Would creating space for young people to participate within the RMM board of directors be one  
787 possibility? It is difficult to pass on a vision if the recipients do not feel ownership and  
788 responsibility for the organization reflecting that vision. How can RMM create greater buy-in  
789 within young people that they desire to be engaged in carrying on the “original dream”?  
790

#### 791 **RBC**

792 Several themes were identified by members of the RBC executive board in response to their  
793 existence as an educational institute. Central to their responses was the idea that RBC exists to  
794 train and educate young people to serve both the church (CMC and globally) and the kingdom of  
795 God. RBC sees it’s self as a mechanism for preparing young people to become the next  
796 generation of leaders within the church. One board member stated as the purpose: “To prepare  
797 this generation to be effective leaders and church workers...and to train and equip this generation  
798 to serve His kingdom.” While RBC has a clear understanding of its current purpose, it is less  
799 clear that there is an identifiable plan to continuing to achieve its mission and purpose.  
800

801 Several mentioned the desire for RBC to be relevant in a post-Christian society. “To prepare this  
802 generation to be effective leaders and church workers in being engaging and ‘relevant’ in the  
803 world,” wrote a board member. Another board member stated, “To be faithful and relevant in a  
804 post-Christian environment.” RBC has the potential to provide students with a unique set of both  
805 educational and spiritual opportunities to grow and develop personally. These are wonderful gifts  
806 that need to be recognized and protected as an integral part of who RBC is. How might RBC be  
807 able to better capitalize on its already established programs through development and expansion?  
808

### 809 **World Café Responses**

810  
811 **What has become identified with CMC over the years that needs to be discarded in order**  
812 **to become more closely aligned with the identity that is in God’s heart for CMC? \*CMC**  
813 **Leadership Only**

#### 814 **CMC**

815  
816 A dominate theme among the responses is the idea that CMC is perceived by many outside the  
817 conference as a “closed group” of conservative Mennonites. In the past it may have been  
818 perceived that individuals with a particular last name received superior respect than those with  
819 “non-Mennonite” last names. As one person shared, “The Yoders are not more important that the  
820 Montgomerys, Tellihos, and Smiths.”  
821

822 There was a sense among the group that CMC experiences feelings of inferiority relative to  
823 Mennonite Church USA and other non-CMC Anabaptist institutions. One group stated, “We are  
824 perceived as not having it quite together.” In spite of the feelings of perceived inferiority  
825 experienced by those in CMC, it is important to recognize the spiritual heritage that laid the  
826 foundation for the conference to continue carrying on the mission and purpose for which it is

827 called. Presently, only conservative congregations are growing in the United States. In the midst 828 of the feelings of inferiority, don't lose sight of the fundamental core values that have led you to 829 where you are today, and will continue to lead you into the future.

830

831 **Where do you see your agency living out God's mission to the world?**

832

833 **CMC**

834 Participants see CMC living out God's mission to the world through the work of both RMM and  
835 RBC, specifically with REACH and a Biblical education. Other ways include the discipleship  
836 and evangelism by local congregations, a system of relational support and encouragement for  
837 church leaders, theological foundation, and through the invitation of people into an authentic  
838 biblical community.

839

840 **RMM**

841 Respondents shared several ways in which they seem RMM living out God's mission to the  
842 world. One way is through CMC and sharing a vision of missions for CMC churches and  
843 members. A grouped shared, "We cast vision for CMC churches about Christ's great  
844 commission and invite them to join us in this awesome task." Another group stated, "Under  
845 CMC's direction, RMM gives opportunities and vision to grow a missional mindset."

852

853 **RBC**

854 Respondents overwhelmingly shared that they witness RBC living out God's mission to the  
855 world through the making of disciples, both directly and indirectly through RBC programs and  
856 students. The contexts in which these evangelistic actions are seen occurs in both international  
857 and domestic arenas. Discipleship that occurs on the campus of RBC is most often experienced  
858 in classes, Pathways, chapels, prayer groups, and community service/projects.

859

860 Not surprisingly, many of the themes highlighted under this question were also addressed under  
861 the note card activity that asked why the organization exists. For example, under both questions  
862 there was emphasis on biblically grounded teaching, a focus on missions/outreach, and preparing  
863 students to serve the church both domestically and abroad.

864

865 **Where do you see your agency failing to live out God's mission to the world? What barriers  
866 or challenges are you facing in doing so?**

867

868 **CMC**

869 Participants revealed several themes in the ways that CMC fails to live out God's mission to the  
870 world. One of the themes mentioned is a lack of clarity of vision. Another respondent added by  
871 stating, "There is a lack of passion in communicating the conference vision." It would seem that  
872 is a significant issue, if local pastors and congregations sense a lack of passion/clarity over the

873 conference vision, how will that affect their level of engagement and support? There needs to be  
874 “buy-in” to the mission and vision of this conference, and it starts with the CMC leadership. If  
875 the leadership lacks vision, how does it expect its local congregations and agencies to effectively  
876 engage in God’s mission to the world. This season of transition lends itself as a time to create  
877 new energy and focus over the conference’s mission and vision.  
878

879 Other challenges include, funding conference agencies, a lack of willingness to make sacrifices,  
880 and, “not operating in the gifts Jesus commissioned for us.” The idea of struggling to develop  
881 spiritual gifts is a recurrent problem that was raised under the note card activity. It is important to  
882 pay attention to this theme, particularly in light of the development of pastors and leaders.  
883 Fostering space for the growth of spiritual gifts is an important part of the development process  
884 for both pastors and leaders at the local congregational level. How does CMC create space that  
885 empowers their pastors and leaders to engage in the development of their spiritual gifts?  
886

### 887 **RMM**

888 The dominant theme shared by participants is a lack of unity and engagement of CMC  
889 congregations and members. One group explained, “The history of congregational  
890 autonomy/independence is a barrier to fulfilling the mission of the church as a whole. As a  
891 metaphor, riding bike in a pack is easier than riding a bike alone.”  
892

### 893 **RBC**

894 Several themes were raised in response to this question. A primary concern shared by  
895 participants is the geographical location of the campus. One respondent stated, “We have a rural  
896 oriented mindset trying to engage in an urbanized world.” Others shared that the small size of  
897 RBC hinders the impact that the institution is able to create.  
898

899 It was noted that there is a lack of vision and boldness, coupled with a sense of fear. One person  
900 shared about hearing the word fear when discussing RBC. Not surprisingly, it was mentioned  
901 that several CMC churches are not interested supporting RBC. A respondent stated, “They don’t  
902 invite us or let us in.” Could there be a correlation between a lack of vision and boldness and an  
903 absence of support expressed by CMC congregations.  
904

905 The issue does not appear to be that RBC doesn’t understand their vision and purpose, it seemed  
906 evident through earlier responses that the institution’s purpose for existence is clear. The  
907 problem lies more in creating greater “buy-in” from CMC congregations, CMC leadership, and  
908 perspective students.  
909

910 **Where, if it all, do you experience conflict or competitiveness between the mission of CMC**  
911 **and of your agency? How might the mission of CMC and your agency become more**  
912 **collaborative?**  
913

### 914 **RMM**

915 Overall, many of the comments shared in response to this question portrayed a mix of  
916 perceptions regarding the competitiveness or lack of between RMM and CMC. One group stated,  
917 “In reality, it seems there is a greater cooperation and understanding to where each agency is  
918 headed.” Another group responded, “As CMC has taken the lead role in vision development,

919 conflict and competitiveness has decreased.” This is something to be applauded and recognized  
920 as a positive aspect of the relationships between these agencies. The language in these responses  
921 indicates that perhaps cooperation between RMM and CMC didn’t always exist at the level that  
922 it does today.

923  
924 In spite of these positive comments, others shared a need for greater leadership by CMC. For  
925 example, some noted competitiveness between RMM and CMC in several areas; financial  
926 resources, dissimilar messaging, at times a lack of unified vision, and an absence of  
927 encouragement for outreach from CMC to local congregations. Several respondents shared,  
928 “Conflict results from a lack of unified vision or overlapping vision (confusing responsibility); if  
929 all three agencies can be unified (under CMC) and continue to work together, conflict will  
930 decrease.” Others responded by saying, “If CMC office provides top level vision – it provides an  
931 avenue for RMM to move forward.”

932  
933 This “mixed bag” of responses indicates that progress through vision unification has been  
934 initiated, but greater vision development is needed. For those within RMM, what would it look  
935 for CMC to offer greater leadership and a unified vision for the conference agencies? How can  
936 RMM create space for CMC to lead in a way that leads to greater unity between all the  
937 conference agencies?

938

### 939 **RBC**

940 Through the responses, it is clear that members of RBC’s leadership experience both conflict and  
941 competitiveness within the mission of CMC. The competitiveness is portrayed in the relationship  
942 with RMM (Reach) and the struggle to recruit young people from the “same small pond”.  
943 However, respondents also shared a sense of collaboration with RMM, with the question being  
944 raised of “possibly making one agency?” Efforts to collaborate between RBC and RMM have  
945 been made in the past through the Bridge program. However, tensions continue to remain. What  
946 would it look like to pursue discussion of the possible merger between RMM and RBC? The  
947 organizations are targeting a similar audience, each is looking to develop leaders to serve the  
948 church both domestically and abroad.

949

950 **What does CMC and/or your agency need to do differently to become more fully aligned**  
951 **with its identity in Christ?**

952

### 953 **CMC**

954 When addressing this question, the CMC leadership identified several areas that could become  
955 more fully aligned with its identity in Christ. These focal points included, church planting within  
956 the United States, building on the strong foundation and heritage, creating space for young  
957 leaders, and be more intentional in engaging with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

958

959 Within these focal points, some expressed specific concerns that need to be addressed. For  
960 example, the group shared that the desire for church planting in the United States is present, but  
961 there has been a lack of action and intentional effort in engaging these activities. Another  
962 example is within maintaining the spiritual foundation and heritage is the need to continually  
963 train and inspire new pastors. Connectedly is the need to allow young persons the space to  
964 engage in leadership roles that develop their spiritual gifts.

965 **RMM**

966 Themes of identity, vision, and cultural relevance were part of the responses shared by  
967 participants. The apparent belief among respondents is that the agency’s identity should not be  
968 based on tradition or cultural, but rather in Christ. Others shared, “Excessively communicate our  
969 identity in Christ and therefore find our purpose.” Another group stated, “Live in the authority  
970 of Christ (pray boldly and expect great things from God).” The need for a “compelling vision”  
971 and the clarity of identity were raised as a ways to seek greater “buy-in” for engagement with the  
972 agency. Several respondents described CMC as a cargo ship, slowly moving in a general  
973 direction without much purpose. In contrast, the respondents expressed a desire for CMC to act  
974 more as a “spiritual battleship,” fast moving with a clear objective(s).

975  
976 The theme of cultural relevance was also raised as an aspect of the agency’s identity in Christ.  
977 Participants believe the focus should not be on cultural relevance, but recognize that RMM and  
978 its missionaries are aliens, not members of today’s culture and society. What does it look like for  
979 a missional agency to remain engaged in the culture without focusing on a need for relevance?

980 **RBC**

981 Several themes came out of the responses to this question. The first theme is one of engagement,  
982 as one respondent stated, “how to live ‘in the world’ but not ‘of the world.’” Persons shared a  
983 need to engage society for the further advancement of the kingdom of God. One group reflected,  
984 “Learn to engage our culture as strangers and pilgrims, not just be strangers and pilgrims.” This  
985 is an excellent statement that gets to the heart of what many faith-based organizations struggle  
986 with, how does RBC interact in a secular society without compromising our mission and values?  
987 What does it look like for RBC to engage the culture as strangers and pilgrims?

988  
989 A second theme focused on the diversifying of RBC’s board of directors and the key  
990 stakeholders. The suggestion was made of inviting women to serve on the board of directors  
991 and/or allowing a student(s) to observe the board meetings as methods for engaging with the  
992 organization’s entire faith community. A group shared that women may bring a different set of  
993 perspectives to the board, providing diversified insight on decisions. The need to invite feedback  
994 from a “wide variety of stakeholders” was raised as a possible method to become increase  
995 greater engagement with the faith community. For example, allowing space for students, alumni,  
996 staff, faculty, and other key stakeholders to be empowered to become more involved in providing  
997 feedback to the RBC board of directors. Is there space for diversity on the RBC board of  
998 directors?  
999

1000  
1001 **Young Adults**

1002  
1003 **Where do you find yourself most connecting with the mission and identity of CMC? What**  
1004 **excites you about CMC’s mission and identity?**

1005  
1006 Participants shared themes of connecting most with the mission and identity of CMC through  
1007 missional and Anabaptist values, discipleship, conference agencies (RMM, RBC, and REACH),  
1008 and the new church plants. In particular, RBC and REACH were mentioned on several occasions  
1009 as significant attractions to engaging with CMC in a broader context. Several of the comments  
1010 were, “RBC is the connecting factor to CMC” and “Lots of outsiders are drawn in by RBC-



1011 REACH. These are huge vehicles of growth.” It is important to recognize the positive feedback  
1012 directed towards RBC by the young adults in their responses to this question. In spite of some of  
1013 the discouragement experienced by RBC leadership, it is clear there is appreciation and a sense  
1014 of connection that many of the young adults feel towards RBC. Yes, RBC may not be where it  
1015 needs to be, but it is evident that the institution is having an impact on the lives young adults  
1016 both within and outside of the conference.

1017  
1018 Perhaps not surprisingly, many of the young adults connect with CMC over missional and  
1019 Anabaptist ideology. The statements “Anabaptist values,” “theological standpoint (peace  
1020 position), and “love the mission focus” were used to describe the aspects within CMC’s ideology  
1021 that young adults resonate with most. Relatedly is the appreciation for the emphasis placed on  
1022 discipleship both within local congregations and conference agencies. One respondent shared,  
1023 “CMC and its agencies seem to emphasize discipleship more than other churches I’ve gone to, I  
1024 like this.” Again, these points of connection for young adults are important to recognize and be  
1025 continually developed and strengthened moving forward. This generation of young adults will be  
1026 the next set of leaders within the conference, so that maintaining these points of connection and  
1027 engagement is critical to the sustainability of this conference.

1028  
1029 **Where do you find it difficult to connect with CMC’s mission and identity? What makes**  
1030 **this difficult?**

1031  
1032 Several key points were addressed by participants when responding to the aspects of CMC’s  
1033 mission and identity that are the most difficult to connect with. Participants identified the  
1034 absence of a visible mission and vision as a hindrance to their ability to be more engaged in the  
1035 conference. One group shared, “There is not a clear vision and mission. If there is, it isn’t cast or  
1036 shared.” Another group asked, “What is the mission statement?” As respondents shared, there  
1037 seemed to be a sense of frustration over the lack of clarity regarding the mission and vision of  
1038 CMC, and the disconnect between CMC as a conference and local congregations. This lack of  
1039 clarity over the mission and vision of CMC is a repeated theme that appears to be a problem for  
1040 both conference agencies and congregational members. Without a clear mission, young adults  
1041 will not feel empowered to engage in the conference because of a sensed lack of purpose and  
1042 energy.

1043  
1044 Relatedly, respondents shared an absence of awareness about who CMC is and its role as an  
1045 agency. For example, a group stated, “You don’t know CMC unless you’re a part of RBC or  
1046 RMM.” Another group said, “There is a lack of awareness of what CMC is in individual  
1047 churches.” This is an issue similar to the lack of clarity over the mission of CMC in that young  
1048 adults, the future of this conference, don’t understand who CMC is unless they are fully engaged  
1049 in a conference agency or institution. The expectation cannot be for young adults to actively  
1050 engage with an entity that does not clearly communicate its own purpose and desired outcomes.  
1051 How can CMC create better lines of communication that provide understanding for its purpose  
1052 and desires within local congregations?

1053  
1054  
1055

1056 **As you think about your future, can you imagine remaining a part of a CMC**  
1057 **congregation? Why or why not? As you think about your future, can you imagine**  
1058 **becoming a leader in CMC, its agencies, or congregations?**

1059  
1060 Overwhelming, young adults answered “yes” to both of these questions. Many of the positive  
1061 responses were driven out of an appreciation for the theological beliefs and practices of the  
1062 conference. Other reasons for remaining a part of a CMC congregation included the sense of  
1063 community, family ties, location, and historical commitments.

1064  
1065 In answering “yes” to the second question, respondents shared similar answers that were focused  
1066 on “being led” by the Holy Spirit to accept a position in leadership. One young adult shared,  
1067 “Yes, I could imagine becoming a leader if the opportunity arose and if I felt it was what God  
1068 was calling me to.” Other young adults stated the CMC’s understanding of the Bible and the  
1069 Kingdom of God as reasons to consider leadership within the conference.

1070  
1071 For the few who were reluctant to respond with “yes” to either of the questions, their reasons  
1072 included location, lack of opportunities for women in leadership, and a deficiency of diversity  
1073 within local congregations. One respondent shared, “Not sure, not necessarily sure I see  
1074 something I want to be a part of, but also not sure I see a better option.” Another person asked,  
1075 “How do you become a leader?” These statements raise several concerns and questions. How  
1076 does CMC create “buy-in” for its young adults, eliminating “I’ll stay if there aren’t any better  
1077 options” mentalities? Additionally, if a young adult desires to become a leader within CMC, are  
1078 the avenues for exploring those possibilities visible? Perhaps these avenues are clear for persons  
1079 enrolled in RBC or REACH, but what about for those outside of those programs?

1080  
1081 **As a young adult, what areas of CMC’s mission and identity (if any) do you particularly**  
1082 **resonate with? What do you find difficult to connect with (if anything)?**

1083  
1084 Areas of CMC’s mission and identity which young adults most readily identify with are  
1085 Anabaptist values, strong community, and the peace position. Within CMC, young adults find it  
1086 easier to connect with RBC’s and RMM’s missions, in particular because they identifiable. The  
1087 groups were able to identify the mission statements for both RBC and RMM, however were  
1088 unable to identify the mission statement for CMC. One young adult explained, “As a young  
1089 person I am well versed with RBC and RMM’s mission but CMC’s mission isn’t clear besides  
1090 being an organization that oversees the church.” This statement received several notes of  
1091 agreement from participants. This again reiterates the reoccurring theme of a lack of clarity over  
1092 the mission of CMC, clearly an issue that needs to be addressed. It would be important that as  
1093 CMC leaderships seeks to bring clarity to its mission and vision it requests the input of young  
1094 adults.

1095  
1096 The lack of diversity within the conference is an aspect that has become difficult for the young  
1097 adults to connect with. As one respondent shared, “At CMC’s annual meetings, the conference is  
1098 very white even when I know that there is more racial diversity than what is represented at  
1099 conference. Where are the people from different cultures that RMM reaches?” Other difficult  
1100 aspects include the absence of discussion and interaction between youth and adults, not enough  
1101 space provided to discuss difficult topics, and the culture within CMC. How does CMC seek to

1102 address these areas of difficulty? What would it look like to provide structured space for young  
1103 adults to engage over relevant and challenging topics?

1104

1105

## Women

1106

1107 **To what extent do you personally feel connected to CMC? Describe reasons for your**  
1108 **connection or lack of connection.**

1109

1110 For those women who feel the most connected to CMC, much of their connection derives from  
1111 intentional interaction in conference wide events, conference agencies, and with CMC's  
1112 theological beliefs. One woman described the women's retreats as a source of connection for her  
1113 to the conference, but also to the other women. Another participant shared, "Those who come to  
1114 the annual conference seem to be more connected." Several women mentioned the REACH  
1115 program as a point of connection for their own congregation.

1116

1117 In contrast, it was evident that several of the participants do not share in the same sense of  
1118 connection that others have experienced. For example, one of the women stated, "I'm not sure  
1119 how much of what happens in CMC actually affects the doctrine, practice, or daily life in the  
1120 individual churches." Someone else shared, "People feel connected to people, not organizations."  
1121 The lack of connection experienced by a few of the women could be driven by the absence of  
1122 connection that their own congregation feels to CMC. Are there ways in which CMC is able to  
1123 foster greater connection with those women who may be on the fringes of the conference?

1124

1125 **In what ways, if any, do you sense that the gifts of women are restricted within the context**  
1126 **of CMC, its agencies, and congregations?**

1127

1128 Overwhelmingly, women shared that they do not experience freedom to express their gifts within  
1129 the context of CMC, its agencies, and congregations. In particular, women feel inhibited from  
1130 partaking in leadership roles either in the conference or in a local congregation. As an example,  
1131 several mentioned there are no females serving on the board for RBC, RMM, or CMC.  
1132 Additionally, no females serve on the church leadership team as elders, only as the wives of  
1133 elders. Women who do possess leadership gifts feel restricted and lack a voice. One woman  
1134 shared, "There is freedom to exercise gifts in an overseas mission setting, but the same things  
1135 may not be acceptable in N. American churches."

1136

1137 These comments correlate directly with earlier discussion over the need to diversify the RBC  
1138 board of directors. This is an opportunity to invite and discern several women to serve on the  
1139 board of directors for RBC, but also RMM, and possibly CMC. How is CMC as a conference  
1140 able to create space that empowers women to use their spiritual gifts within the conference,  
1141 agencies, and local congregations?

1142

1143

1144

1145

1146

1147 **In what ways, if any, do you sense that the gifts of women are valued and their use**  
1148 **encouraged within the context of CMC, its agencies, and congregations?**

1149  
1150 In responding to this question, many of the responses shifted away from how women feel valued  
1151 to ways in which they do not feel valued. One way in which women do feel valued is through the  
1152 invitation for women to be on conference wide teams focusing on questions of leadership,  
1153 partnership, and discipleship. Others acknowledged that there has been positive movement  
1154 towards empowering women to use their gifts in the recent years. Several participants shared  
1155 feeling greater value from particular agencies within CMC, such as RMM. For example, one  
1156 woman stated, “I feel leadership gifts are valued at RMM, but in broader CMC I feel that people  
1157 don’t know how I fit in the system.” This is again reiterates the lack of connection experienced  
1158 by many women in the conference.

1159  
1160 **How, if at all, would you like to be more connected with CMC? Do you think your**  
1161 **congregation has a desire for a stronger connection to CMC? What might strengthen you**  
1162 **or your congregation’s connection to CMC?**

1163  
1164 In responding to these questions, participants tended to answer only the final question. There  
1165 were no responses directed towards either how women desire to be more connected with CMC,  
1166 or if they believe their congregation desires a stronger connection to CMC.

1167  
1168 The responses to the third question identified a range of suggestions that may help to strengthen  
1169 both the women’s and their congregation’s connection to CMC. Women suggested several  
1170 possible ways that the connection may be strengthened, including greater communication  
1171 between CMC and local congregations, incorporate CMC into local church names, connect  
1172 virtually, and intentionally explain the concept of CMC to new church members.

1173  
1174 A theme that was repeated several times was the need to make the purpose of CMC known both  
1175 to new members of CMC congregations and to the congregations themselves. One respondent  
1176 shared, “Excessively communicate who CMC is to local churches.” Another woman added,  
1177 “Explain CMC to new members so that there is a better understanding of what they are joining in  
1178 a broader sense.” Again, these themes of improving communication between CMC and local  
1179 congregations are ones that have been reiterated throughout the listening sessions.

### 1180 **Prayer Intercessors**

1181  
1182  
1183 The following are reflections from a group of intercessors who have been asked to pray about  
1184 this mission and identity discernment process. Many of the responses focused on Jesus as the  
1185 center of CMC:

- 1186 • Change is uncomfortable so I am trying to keep myself open to it. What does God want to  
1187 change and not want to change?
- 1188 • Deep desire for Jesus to be at the center. Jesus has to be at the head.
- 1189 • If CMC is to move forward it must awaken its evangelism outreach.
- 1190 • That CMC would be a revealer of the true Jesus.
- 1191 • With Christ at the center, CMC is capable of more.

- 1192 • I cringe when Mennonites get labeled as being “good cooks” and hospitable...desire for  
1193 us to be known as bringing people to Christ.

### 1194 **Apostolic Group**

1195  
1196 In response to the question of “What has God called CMC to?” we heard the following from a  
1197 group of “apostolic” leaders:

- 1198 • The need for whoever is leading the congregation to not simply give a message  
1199 intellectually, but provide a message that speaks to the heart. Provide a message that is  
1200 anointed by the Holy Spirit and changes lives.
- 1201 • Continue to focus on developing leaders within the conference.
- 1202 • Let’s be a movement instead of conference. Movement sends message of going  
1203 somewhere and discipleship.
- 1204 • Have a vision for CMC churches to be engaging with unreached people groups that come  
1205 to our local communities.
- 1206 • If we attempt to keep the same structures the future seems very challenging. If we plan to  
1207 be gatekeepers and only let “correct doctrine” in we have already lost. There is a cultural  
1208 change to move away from denominations.
- 1209 • The more CMC conference is more like a family reunion, the less we want to bring  
1210 outsiders here.
- 1211 • We are missing an inspiring vision that creates a burning desire. If that is not instilled,  
1212 young leaders threaten to leave.
- 1213 • Our name isn’t what we are. What does conservative mean? Conservative what? We are  
1214 called by what we used to be, not what we are.
- 1215 • Jesus gave the disciples the word of God, which was sufficient, nothing else is needed.

### 1216 **Pastors**

1217  
1218 **When you think of CMC, what characteristics or qualities come to mind – including of its**  
1219 **agencies and congregations?**

1220  
1221 Many themes were used to describe the characteristics and qualities of CMC, its agencies, and  
1222 local congregations. Several of the themes included commitment to scripture, diversity,  
1223 missional focus, strong community, discipleship, servanthood, and a lack of direction. Within  
1224 these themes, several in particular became focal points for responses.

1225  
1226 The commitment to scripture was repeated throughout the responses, indicating a unified and  
1227 dedicated view of scripture. Several responses included, “A commitment to the Word of God”  
1228 and “A high view of scripture.”

1229  
1230 As has been a theme throughout many of the listening session groups, the lack of direction and  
1231 vision was shared as an identifiable characteristic of CMC. One pastor described the lack of  
1232 direction as an “identity crisis” and stated, “I would love to know what’s driving RBC or RMM.”  
1233 Another pastor shared, “CMC is an agency that doesn’t know why it exists – lacking direction.  
1234 Where does the blame land?” It’s clear that as CMC continues to discern its future and next steps

1235 for the conference, beginning the discernment process to identify a relevant mission and purpose  
1236 is an important piece of that process.

1237  
1238 The strong sense of community was praised as a positive aspect of CMC and one which lends  
1239 itself to conference wide stability. One pastor described this sense of community as, “A strong  
1240 feeling of brotherhood/family.” At the same time, there was concern that an overwhelming sense  
1241 of community may at times discourage “non-traditional” CMC church attenders from  
1242 participating in a CMC congregation. One participant explained, “Because we are a family, we  
1243 don’t need other people...broken people don’t feel welcome...don’t fit in if you don’t have a  
1244 Mennonite background.”

1245  
1246 **In your mind, what defines a typical CMC congregation? To what degree does your**  
1247 **congregation “typify the typical”?**

1248  
1249 Many of the characteristics that were shared for CMC overlap with what typically defines a  
1250 CMC congregation. Pastors more readily answered what defines a typical CMC congregation  
1251 and less so whether or not their congregation is “typical”. Some of the aspects that define a  
1252 typical CMC congregation are family oriented, welcoming, commitment to scripture,  
1253 servanthood, a majority of members are “ethnic Mennonite,” fellowship, and diversity.

1254  
1255 There seemed to be some variation over the perceptions that CMC congregations are mostly  
1256 comprised of “ethnic” Mennonites verses “non-traditional” Mennonites. One pastor stated,  
1257 “Perception is that most CMC congregations are made up of a majority of “ethnic” Mennonites,  
1258 but that has changed.” In contrast, another pastor shared, “Typical congregation is 80-90% of  
1259 members are of ‘ethnic’ Mennonite background.” These variations in perceptions may be driven  
1260 out of the geographical location of the respondent’s congregation—urban verses rural and even  
1261 the region of the United States in which the congregation is located.

1262  
1263 Among those pastors responded to the second question, there was a range in the varying degrees  
1264 to which their congregation is a “typical” CMC congregation. Several pastors expressed a sense  
1265 that their congregations are moving away from the “typical” CMC congregation. This shift is  
1266 being seen in the range of dress, contemporary worship, and diversity both ethnically and  
1267 theologically. Questions were raised over how easy it is to define a “typical” CMC congregation,  
1268 and that some congregations may believe they are “typical”, but are not any longer “typical”  
1269 CMC congregations.

1270  
1271 **To what extent do you personally feel connected to CMC? Describe reasons for your**  
1272 **connection or lack of connection?**

1273  
1274 A majority of the pastors expressed a sense of connection to CMC and their appreciation for its  
1275 support. Pastors shared feeling a sense of respect, love, safety, and comfort in their relationship  
1276 with CMC. In spite of the connection experienced by pastors, many believe that their  
1277 congregations do not share the same level of connection. These beliefs would seem true based on  
1278 the feedback heard throughout the listening sessions. As one pastor shared, “As a pastor, I’m  
1279 well connected and believe in CMC. As a congregation from the Midwest – who is CMC and  
1280 what for?” Others expressed feeling greater connection when involved in leadership compared to

1281 as a lay member. A pastor stated, “Not when I was a lay person, but much more now that I am a  
1282 leader.”

1283  
1284 It’s clear that CMC is connecting with its pastors and congregational leaders. This is encouraging  
1285 but must be seen within a greater context. Where does the responsibility fall for fostering greater  
1286 connection between the local congregations and CMC? It would seem, that pastors, as the gate  
1287 keepers for their congregations, must take responsibility for ensuring that their congregations  
1288 remain connected to CMC. Likewise, CMC needs to identify ways in which it may empower its  
1289 pastors to be able to foster the healthy connection between their congregations and the  
1290 conference. Again, much of this work is easier after a clear mission and purpose have been  
1291 established.

1292  
1293 The conference’s agencies, RMM, RBC, and REACH have played an important role in helping  
1294 pastors to feel connected to the conference. Others identified Choral Camp, City Challenge, and  
1295 annual conference as avenues that provide connection for pastors. One pastor noted when  
1296 describing points of connection, “I appreciated the institute for pastoral studies, as well as my  
1297 wife’s background with RMM.” It is important to recognize the role that the conference agencies  
1298 have in connecting pastors with CMC and to ensure that this role isn’t overlooked when  
1299 evaluating the agencies.

1300  
1301 Those who described a lack of connection pointed to issues with geographical distance between  
1302 their congregation and the CMC office. As several pastor described, “CMC’s geographical  
1303 spread makes connecting difficult, especially with bi-vocational pastors.” Others described a  
1304 sense of isolation and lack of connection with both CMC and other pastors. For pastors that do  
1305 not feel connected due to geographical placement or distance, what are other avenues that CMC  
1306 could pursue in connecting with these pastors? Are their monthly or bi-monthly sessions that can  
1307 occur virtually to foster greater community and connection between regional pastors?

1308  
1309 **To what extent do you believe your congregation connects with the mission and identity of**  
1310 **CMC? Can you name specific places that you see that connection?**

1311  
1312 The connection that pastors sense their congregation experiences with CMC varies from being  
1313 very connected, to no connection at all. When rating the connectedness of their congregation on  
1314 a scale from 1-10, with 1 being no connection and 10 very connected, several pastors rated their  
1315 congregation at 2 or below. The highest number received was 9, with most of the ratings falling  
1316 in the range of 4-7. For the congregations that are connected, much of the connection seems to  
1317 come out of engagement with conference agencies.

1318  
1319 When expressing a lack of connection, pastors often cited the lack of a central mission/identity  
1320 and theological differences. One pastor shared, “My congregation feels like they are more  
1321 conservative and that CMC is not conservative enough.” Another pastor responded, “The  
1322 average congregation member is not connected and does not think much about CMC.”  
1323 Geographical distance was not shared as a reason for the disconnect of congregational members,  
1324 but for those congregations who do feel less connected it would be interesting to know where  
1325 they are at. Does there seem to be a correlation in the geographical distance that a congregation

1326 is from Rosedale and the connectedness it feels with CMC? Likewise, if there are other CMC  
1327 congregations nearby, does that increase the connection felt by those churches?

1328  
1329 For congregations that do experience a connection with CMC, often the connection is with a  
1330 conference wide agency. Both RMM and RBC were repeatedly seen by pastors as points of  
1331 connection for their congregations. Other points of connection include REACH, Brotherhood  
1332 Beacon, and internship opportunities through Bridge. One pastor noted, “Our congregation is  
1333 connected more with RMM and RBC, not CMC as an agency.” It’s important to recognize the  
1334 connections facilitated by these conference agencies, and the significant role these agencies have  
1335 played and will continue to play in the future. It seems that at times their impact in the  
1336 conference, in particular RBC has been underestimated, but it is clear in these responses that  
1337 RBC is still a vital part of CMC.

1338  
1339 **How engaged are your members in RBC and in RMM – do they attend RBC as students or**  
1340 **participate in RMM programs or support RMM missions?**

1341  
1342 Not surprisingly, the responses to levels of engagement by church members in RBC and RMM  
1343 varied greatly depending upon the congregation. For those congregations engaged in RBC and  
1344 RMM, engagement is often seen through financial investment, youth participation in RMM or  
1345 RBC, members who served or have served for RMM, and members who have served in  
1346 leadership roles for either agency. There was not a clear divide to whether more members attend  
1347 RBC or participate in RMM missions, again the levels of engagement seemed to be broken up by  
1348 each congregation.

1349  
1350 For congregations with low levels of engagement in either agency, but in particular RBC,  
1351 cultural and language barriers are hindrances for non-English speaking congregations. One  
1352 particular Hispanic congregation expressed concern over the lack of the engagement by its  
1353 members due to the language barriers.

1354  
1355 Pastors expressed the concern that both RMM and RBC are losing out on member engagement to  
1356 non-CMC agencies. Several mentioned YWAM and EMM as competitors to both RMM and  
1357 REACH. One pastor stated, “YWAM is the preferred option to reach.” In addition, there is the  
1358 sense that RBC is losing its appeal to church members due to financial and educational  
1359 constraints. As a pastor explained, “People are professionally focused. A 2-year from a Bible  
1360 college does not aid in that higher education goal. More core courses allow transferring could be  
1361 beneficial.”

1362  
1363 **Do you think your congregation has a desire for a stronger connection with CMC? What**  
1364 **might strengthen your or your congregation’s connections to CMC?**

1365  
1366 There is a clear sense from pastors that their congregations either do not desire to have a stronger  
1367 connection with CMC or see no need for a stronger connection. Several respondents mentioned  
1368 the lack of understanding of who CMC is behind the absence of desire for a stronger connection  
1369 with CMC. One pastor shared, “The congregation does not have a strong desire for connection  
1370 mainly because of not knowing what CMC is.” Another pastor explained, “The differences in  
1371 vision, philosophy, etc. are too great; the lack of visionary leadership, and the name needed



1372 changing for so long that it may be too late.” Others expressed busy schedules and other  
1373 commitments as obstacles to hindering their congregation’s desire for a stronger connection.

1374  
1375 Several possible avenues for strengthening a congregation’s connection to CMC were shared,  
1376 including, connecting through media on Sunday mornings, better communication of the value of  
1377 engaging with CMC, and creating leadership buy-in within each congregation. Pastors raised the  
1378 idea of the conference regularly producing mini videos that could be played on a Sunday  
1379 morning – highlighting various events, agencies, and other notable news from the conference. By  
1380 being a more consistent presence on Sunday mornings through media sources, CMC has an  
1381 opportunity to engage with congregations in a new way. By connecting through media,  
1382 congregations that typically felt excluded from CMC due to geographical distance and location  
1383 may begin to feel a greater sense partnership with the conference.

1384  
1385 **Can you articulate the mission of CMC? What is the purpose of CMC?**

1386  
1387 Many pastors seemed comfortable articulating their perceptions of the mission of the CMC, with  
1388 only a few unsure. Most see the mission of CMC as being a body of support for local  
1389 congregations and conference agencies. This body of support is identified through fellowship,  
1390 disciplining and equipping leaders, evangelism, and maintaining a high view of scripture. In spite  
1391 of the majority who perceived the core aspects of the mission, there were still a number of  
1392 pastors who were unclear on the concrete mission of CMC. One pastor stated, “We have a vague  
1393 idea, but can’t quote the mission statement. It’s not on the website in a clear manner.” Again this  
1394 points to a lack of a clarity surrounding who CMC is and its mission as a conference. How is  
1395 CMC able to create a mission that is clearly articulated not only by pastors, but by members as  
1396 well?

1397  
1398 The purpose of CMC is seen by many pastors to serve a support for congregations and their  
1399 leaders. Several mentioned the important role that CMC must play in supporting its  
1400 congregations and pastors through both good and bad times. Others believe the purpose of CMC  
1401 is to bring accountability and structure to its congregations and agencies. Respondents also  
1402 expressed a belief that the both the mission and purpose of CMC are similar, if not the same  
1403 thing.

1404  
1405 **Conclusions: Describing the Table**

1406  
1407 In praying about this report, Conrad saw a picture of table being reset, and with it various  
1408 questions emerged related to CMC’s discernment of mission and identity: Who will be at the  
1409 center of the table? What does the current table look like? Who is the table being reset for? Who  
1410 is setting the table? What will be served at the table? What function will the table have? Are new  
1411 folks coming to the table? How will people at the table interact? The following conclusions and  
1412 recommendations address some of these questions as a way of answering our original questions  
1413 about CMC’s mission and identity with which we began this discernment process.

1414  
1415 We also suggest that discernment about these conclusions and the recommendations that follow  
1416 be done within a context of prayer and listening to Spirit speak through the three Scriptures that  
1417 guided this process.

- 1418 **What does the current table look like? There is much to celebrate about the CMC table.**
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- 1463
- CMC is a relatively stable conference and appears to be on solid footing as a fellowship of congregations. There are no major dividing issues that we can see. CMC is in a unique position to be intentional about identity and mission at this time in its history.
  - CMC is a healthy conference. We picked up a bit of an inferiority complex among leaders in our listening sessions, but this can be overcome by clarifying the mission and core commitments of CMC, and by recognizing the valuable gifts that God has given to CMC. CMC is in a strong position relative to many conferences and denominations today.
  - CMC has a high degree of theological cohesiveness. By and large, the conference is not divided by the theological and practice tensions that are major sources of conflict within many other conferences and denominations.
  - The major social issues tearing at the unity of other churches are not revealing themselves within CMC—there is near total unanimity on the Bible’s teaching with regard to sexuality and marriage. In addition, there is relatively little debate in the conference over the roles of women in the church (this is not to suggest that this issue should not receive more careful discernment).
  - CMC is consistently known for its Biblical orthodoxy and commitment to mission. CMC has remained strong, perhaps in large part, because it has remained faithful to these formative commitments that shaped its birth.
  - Most respondents identify with being in a “typical” CMC congregation. This suggests that more members than not see themselves as being part of CMC and may indicate less distance from CMC than is sometimes assumed to be the case.
  - Both a strength and a weakness, CMC is a relatively homogenous conference sociologically, particularly by measures of race/ethnicity and education. Homogeneity can support identity formation and sustainability but can be a barrier to mission and outreach. Indeed, homogeneity can be a measure of mission failure in a diverse culture.
  - CMC members are largely committed to a Mennonite/Anabaptist identity. However, there is disagreement among members about key historic indicators of Anabaptist identity. Members want to be Anabaptist, but they do not agree as to what that identity includes.
  - Congregations see themselves as welcoming of new persons but recognize that they have trouble creating a sense of belonging for all persons. In addition, members acknowledge that their congregations are very reticent to change. Congregations also have work to do in being more engaged in their local communities.
- **What is the purpose of the table?** The mission and purpose of CMC are unclear to many people. While there remains deep appreciation for CMC, the reasons for its continued existence are need clarifying. Leaders express a considerable disconnect between their congregations and CMC and that their congregations lack awareness of CMC. This lack of clarity undoubtedly affects many aspects of CMC including its ability to raise funds to support its ministry and mission. The lack of mission and connectedness threaten the current strength of CMC.

1464 In addition, the identity of CMC is unclear. Who is CMC? Who should CMC become?  
1465 We heard much anxiety about the broader culture, with congregations and members  
1466 asking questions and offering suggestions about how to engage their culture. How is  
1467 CMC going to assist its congregations in negotiating a rapidly changing culture and how  
1468 will it assist them in remaining faithful to the call to follow Jesus generation after  
1469 generation in that culture? Failure to clearly define its identity also threatens to  
1470 undermine CMC's current strengths.

- 1471
- 1472 • **Who is not at the table?** Several groups are largely missing from the table, including  
1473 women, racial/ethnic leaders and congregations, and young adults. CMC leadership is  
1474 largely white male. While we do not see much evidence of restlessness about this  
1475 (outside of the listening sessions with women leaders), we do wonder if the homogeneity  
1476 of CMC's leadership will serve it well in the long-run. How can CMC include the gifts of  
1477 women, young adults, and racial/ethnic leaders in creative ways that affirms the  
1478 individuals and groups within whom these gifts reside?
  - 1479
  - 1480 • **What is happening at the table?** We heard quite a bit of ambivalence around this  
1481 question—again, it relates to the mission and identity of CMC. We heard some calling for  
1482 greater spiritual vitality with CMC, more openness to the Holy Spirit, and more energy  
1483 for church planting and local community engagement.

### 1484 **Recommendations: Resetting the Table**

1485

1486 We offer the following recommendations for the continued spiritual discernment of CMC  
1487 leaders:  
1488

- 1489
- 1490 • **Make sure Jesus is in the center of the table.** As CMC takes next steps in clarifying its  
1491 mission and identity, be sure that such discernment occurs in the presence of Christ,  
1492 asking for his wisdom. We also encourage such discernment to be done patiently. In a  
1493 world where the church is being pushed toward accommodation and assimilation and  
1494 where interfaith dialogue and multiculturalism can discourage us from accepting and  
1495 offering the exclusive claims of Christ's lordship, continually reaffirming Jesus as Savior  
1496 and Lord is perhaps more important than any other step to be taken. Certainly it is a  
1497 prerequisite for any others. A presence-based leadership approach will help to insure that  
1498 Jesus stays central to CMC.
- 1499
- 1500 • **Communicate, communicate, communicate why the table exists.** Develop a clear  
1501 mission statement that can be communicated easily, putting forth sufficient energy and  
1502 resources to communicate the mission broadly. This statement should communicate that  
1503 CMC understands that it exists to bear the good news of salvation and should clarify to  
1504 whom CMC is sent with that news (local and global).
- 1505
- 1506 • **Be clear about what is being served at the table.** Create a set of core commitments that  
1507 reaffirm who CMC has been since its birth and which respondents clearly continue to  
1508 affirm today: Biblical faithfulness, careful discernment about how to live in the world  
1509 without being of the world, and a commitment to God's mission. Other values that we

1510 heard may relate to community, Anabaptist commitments, and understandings of  
1511 marriage and family life. And certainly, it should be reaffirmed that Jesus is central to  
1512 CMC’s core commitments.

1513  
1514 We recommend that this mission statement and the core commitments be shared by  
1515 CMC, RBC, and RMM as the mission and identity statements of all three. You might  
1516 also encourage every congregation to own these statements, and develop online sermons  
1517 or curriculum to support the diffusion of these statements in congregations.

1518  
1519 In clarifying your mission and identity (core commitments), you are positioning  
1520 yourselves to be a church that will face the pressures of the culture and society in coming  
1521 years and that continues to have the answers in Jesus Christ. We caution you against any  
1522 inferiority complex about the “conservative” nature of who you have been—the only  
1523 Anabaptist churches growing in North America are the conservative churches and the  
1524 racial/ethnic churches. Your conservative tendencies have positioned you well for what  
1525 God has for you next—acknowledge this and build upon it. And, continue to cast a  
1526 critical eye toward formal education, professionalism, and upward mobility that takes you  
1527 away from your historic centering on Jesus and the mission and identity He has given to  
1528 you.

1529  
1530 **How can the agencies support the table?** RMM is deeply appreciated for its clear focus  
1531 on reaching the unreached. But this vision has not necessarily made congregations and  
1532 members more oriented to the mission of God in their local communities. Can RMM  
1533 reposition itself to resource local congregations in reaching their communities for Christ?

1534  
1535 RBC is an undervalued and underutilized resource, and in our minds fails to recognize its  
1536 own value. This is not the time to accept the status quo or to believe the naysayers or to  
1537 decrease support and the profile of RBC. RBC is a gem for training young people,  
1538 missionaries, congregational leaders, and emerging leaders for faithful discipleship in a  
1539 post-Christian world. Can CMC invest greater resourcing in RBC as it repositions itself  
1540 to prepare a new generation of leaders in a world that is post-Christian and where  
1541 educational institutions (including Christian ones) are being coopted by modernity and a  
1542 progressive/liberal narrative that too often leads our youth away from the church rather  
1543 than back into it?

1544  
1545 • **Strengthen the relationships at the table.** Strengthen relationships among CMC and its  
1546 two agencies. While language of merger is probably too strong or inadequate, we  
1547 recommend that the relationships among CMC, RBC, and RMM be strengthened and that  
1548 the three be more unified and collaborative in their efforts. To some degree (based on  
1549 what we heard), CMC is best known by its agencies even as its agencies very much need  
1550 the support of CMC. To the extent that the interests of the three can increasingly serve  
1551 each other—all in the conference will benefit.

1552  
1553 Clearly, many members are unsure about the relationships among CMC, RBC, and  
1554 RMM—greater work needs to be done to raise awareness of the value of collaboration  
1555 among these three. This collaboration could extend to the way budgets are designed,

1556 Board meetings are held, fundraising occurs, staff are hired, facilities are shared, and  
1557 communication to the constituency occurs.

1558  
1559 • **Reposition the table.** Even though CMC has congregations distributed across the U.S., it  
1560 remains perceived by some as more regional and parochial than national. We recommend  
1561 that CMC begin to imagine and present itself as a broader national presence. CMC’s  
1562 geographic spread has grown over the decades, but our sense is that its infrastructure and  
1563 identity have not kept pace with this change. Remaining identified with Rosedale and  
1564 with certain historic CMC families has provided strength to CMC, but how might God be  
1565 calling CMC to expand its range in this season?

1566  
1567 Our recommendation comes at a time when other Anabaptist affiliations are doing the  
1568 same. On the one hand, the expansion of these other groups means greater “competition.”  
1569 But the harvest field is limitless, and we believe there is great opportunity for the kinds of  
1570 resources that the agencies of CMC have to offer. Because of the dismantling of  
1571 traditional networks and affiliations, and the creation of new ones, the opportunities for  
1572 collaboration across groups is greater than ever before. We recommend continued  
1573 conversations with other networks of Anabaptist congregations over how RMM and RBC  
1574 can resource these networks of congregations and their leaders, resourcing that they are  
1575 not prepared to offer in the same way that CMC is.

1576  
1577 • **Change the name of the table.** We recommend a name change. We see much support  
1578 for this in the questionnaire and no obvious resistance from members. In doing so we  
1579 suggest that you keep in mind the following:

- 1580 ○ A name that reflects Jesus as central to CMC.
- 1581 ○ A name that reflects a broader national presence.
- 1582 ○ A name that reflects the desire of most members to be seen as  
1583 Mennonite/Anabaptist.
- 1584 ○ A name that communicates the historic foci on Scripture and mission.
- 1585 ○ A name that retains the “conservative” position of CMC relative to the broader  
1586 culture.

1587  
1588 • **Enlarge the table.** Be intentional about connecting with younger cohorts, racial/ethnic  
1589 members, and women. Doing so will model for congregations the possibilities of greater  
1590 “belongingness.” In addition, develop a new initiative in church planting and local  
1591 community engagement among CMC congregations. There are relatively few “new  
1592 believers” among CMC congregations—expanding community engagement will also  
1593 enlarge the table.

1594  
1595 • **Make the table more mobile.** Strengthen relationships with congregational leaders—  
1596 they are far and away your greatest asset. How can the agencies assist?

- 1597 ○ Raise the profile of RBC as a center for training and discipling the next generation  
1598 of church leaders, missionaries, church planters, and congregational members.  
1599 Focus very specifically on key areas of church life, mission, and leadership—do  
1600 not become a liberal arts college. This is too expensive and you will be coopted  
1601 by accreditation and federal regulations.

- 1602                   ○ RBC and RMM should collaborate in developing a mobile training unit(s) that
- 1603                    meets congregations and leaders where they are. There were also numerous calls
- 1604                    for online education among respondents.

1605  
1606 In conclusion, we believe that CMC and its agencies are in a strong position to discern the  
1607 critical questions of mission and identity. We affirm the proactive nature of CMC’s leadership in  
1608 discerning these questions at this time in its history. And we know that Christ will be faithful in  
1609 leading as CMC’s leaders listen closely to what the Holy Spirit is saying. We offer this report as  
1610 one component of that discernment process.

1611

## Appendix A: Regional codes

- 1612  
1613  
1614 **Delaware**  
1615 Gateway Fellowship  
1616 Greenwood Mennonite Church  
1617 Maranatha Fellowship – DE  
1618  
1619 **Florida, Sarasota**  
  
1620 Abundant Life Church and Ministries - FL  
1621 Bethel Mennonite Church  
1622  
1623 **Indiana, Northern (and Southern Michigan)**  
1624 Maple City Chapel  
1625 Mt. Joy Conservative Mennonite Church  
1626 North Wayne Mennonite Church  
1627 Riverview Christian Fellowship  
1628 Siloam Fellowship  
1629 Townline Mennonite Church  
1630  
1631 **Indiana, Southern**  
1632 Bean Blossom Mennonite Church  
1633 Berea Mennonite Church  
1634 First Mennonite Church  
1635 Providence Mennonite Church – IN  
1636  
1637 **Iowa, Kalona**  
1638 Fairview Mennonite Church – IA  
1639 Upper Deer Creek Mennonite Church  
1640  
1641 **Kansas, Hutchinson**  
1642 Maranatha Mennonite Church – KS  
1643 Plainview Mennonite Church  
1644  
1645 **Kentucky**  
1646 Bowlings Creek Mennonite Church  
1647 Caney Creek Mennonite Church  
1648 Little Buckhorn Creek Mennonite Church  
1649 Oasis Community Church  
1650 Panco Community Fellowship  
1651 Turners Creek Mennonite Church  
1652  
1653 **Maryland/PA, Grantsville Area**  
1654 Cherry Glade Mennonite Church  
1655 Maple Glen Mennonite Church  
1656 Oak Dale Mennonite Church  
1657

- 1658 **Michigan, Upper**  
 1659 Fairhaven Community Church  
 1660 Fairview Mennonite Church – MI  
 1661 Maple Grove Community Church Mennonite  
 1662 National City Mennonite Church  
 1663 Pigeon River Mennonite Church  
 1664 Pineview Mennonite Church  
 1665 River's Edge Community Church  
 1666 Riverside Mennonite Church  
 1667  
 1668 **New York, Upstate**  
 1669 Carthage Mennonite Church  
 1670 Christian Community Center  
 1671 Croghan Mennonite Church  
 1672 Naumburg Conservative Mennonite Church  
 1673 Pine Grove Mennonite Church  
 1674  
 1675 **Ohio, Columbus Area**  
 1676 Agape Community Fellowship of Hilliard  
 1677 Columbus Network of Microchurches  
 1678 Iglesia Cristiana Hispana  
 1679 Lighthouse Mennonite Fellowship  
 1680 London Christian Fellowship  
 1681 Maranatha Community Fellowship – OH  
 1682 Mechanicsburg Christian Fellowship  
 1683 Shiloh Mennonite Church  
 1684  
 1685 **Ohio, Hartville**  
 1686 Bethany Mennonite Church  
 1687 Cornerstone Mennonite Church  
 1688  
 1689 **Ohio, Holmes & Wayne Counties**  
 1690 Berean Community Church  
 1691 Fairlawn Mennonite Church  
 1692 Grace Mennonite Church – OH  
 1693 Light In The Valley Chapel  
 1694 Mennonite Christian Assembly  
 1695 Pleasant View Mennonite Church  
 1696 Trinity Christian Fellowship  
 1697  
 1698 **Pennsylvania, Central**  
 1699 Allensville Mennonite Church  
 1700 Barrville Mennonite Church  
 1701 Boyer Mennonite Church  
 1702 Buffalo Mennonite Church  
 1703 Lauvers Mennonite Church



- 1704 Locust Grove Mennonite Church
- 1705 Manbeck Mennonite Church
- 1706 Mountain View Mennonite Chapel
- 1707 Otelia Mennonite Church
- 1708
- 1709 **Southwest USA**
- 1710 Grace Mennonite Church – AZ
- 1711 Abundant Life Christian Church - TX
- 1712 Iglesia Cristiana Vida Abundante
- 1713 Iglesia Dios Con Nosotros
- 1714 Crossroads Christian Fellowship
- 1715 Living Word Christian Outreach
- 1716 Ministerio Manantiales de Vida
- 1717 Mision Iglesia Cristiana Siloé
- 1718 Paradise Valley Mennonite Church
- 1719 Templo Vida Abundante
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