

LEAD PASTOR ROLE



Mount Joy
MENNONITE CHURCH

MOUNT JOY MENNONITE CHURCH

MINISTRY DESCRIPTION 2024

4.1.1

Lead Pastor

TITLE: Lead Pastor

TIME COMMITMENT: Full time

TERM LENGTH: Initial term of three years; a long-term pastorate is assumed

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: To provide spiritual oversight of the congregation (worship, preaching, pastoral care, and equipping members for ministry), and leadership of the Pastoral Staff and Ministry Team consistent with the church's mission statement, vision, and goals.

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Spiritually mature and committed to following and serving Jesus as Lord and Savior.
2. Committed to Mount Joy's congregational covenant and the faith and practice of LMC - a fellowship of Anabaptist churches (LMC).
3. Committed to team ministry as a leadership style
 - a. Leadership, supervisory and organizational ability with good communication skills.
 - b. Prior experience in leading a multi-staffed congregation preferred.
 - c. Strong in coaching, mentoring, and team building.
4. Biblical and theological commitment to an Anabaptist faith perspective. M.Div. degree preferred.
5. Strong communicator with preaching gifts.
6. Skilled in pastoral care, such as having clinical pastoral education training.
7. Committed to a Missional awareness of the church, along with a commitment to creating congregational awareness of the global church.
8. Ability to unite persons with diverse experiences and viewpoints.

VISION

1. Lead the congregation with the Ministry Team to discern God's Missional call for Mount Joy Mennonite Church at this time.
2. Develop and implement strategies that will fulfill the mission, vision and goals of the congregation in collaboration with the Church Board.
3. Promote the congregation's vision among the membership.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Administration
 - a. Provide for the ongoing development, evaluation, and implementation of agreed upon mission, vision and goals of the congregation. Specifically, equip and enable the

congregational leadership to carry out the nine areas for development identified in the Congregational Information Form, Part II. B.

- b. Provide leadership for the Ministry Team.
 - c. Develop agenda for regular Pastoral Staff and Ministry Team meetings; chairing meetings and supervising individual team leaders as needed.
 - d. Meet regularly with each Ministry Team leader to discuss their performance in accordance with their ministry description. Provide for regular written performance reviews.
 - e. Give oversight to the church office staff.
 - f. Represent the Ministry Team on the Church Board.
 - g. Represent the congregation to the Landisville District and Lancaster Mennonite Conference. Attend monthly District meetings, Conference Leadership Assemblies, and, when possible, LMC Celebration of Church Life.
 - h. Work with the Ministry Team in planning for involvement in community activities such as the local Ministerium.
 - i. Serve on national/international church boards and or committees as approved by the Ministry Team and Landisville District Bishop.
2. Preaching/Teaching/Worship
- a. Give oversight to the ministry of the Word preached.
 - b. Preach regularly; generally two to three times per month.
 - c. Collaborate with the Associate Pastor of Worship and Ministry Team in worship planning.
 - d. Give leadership to planning and implementing resourcing opportunities for the congregation in areas of felt need.
 - e. Be available for teaching and leading Bible studies.
3. Pastoral/Congregational Care
- a. Be available to officiate or participate in special services and ceremonies such as weddings, funerals, anointing, communion, child dedications, and baptisms.
 - b. Collaborate with the Associate Pastor of Care in responding to special pastoral care needs and crises.
4. Discipleship Training
- a. Encourage the congregation toward spiritual growth, and to seek and follow God's purposes for Mount Joy Mennonite Church.
 - b. Plan and give leadership to baptism/membership classes as needed.
 - c. Oversee the equipping of others for ministry, giving particular attention to the development of lay and professional leaders.
 - d. Plan for and coordinate supervision of seminary or college interns.

ACCOUNTABLE TO: Landisville District Bishop and the Church Board. Credentials are held by Lancaster Mennonite Conference.

Congregational Information Form

Purpose of this form

This form is to assist a congregation to present information concerning itself to prospective candidates for a pastoral leadership position. Completing the form will also assist the pastoral search committee in self-understanding as they assess the strengths and weaknesses which may exist at the time of pastoral transition.

I. Part One - Information

A. BASIC INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

1. Name of congregation Mount Joy Mennonite Church (hereafter – MJMC)
Address 320 Musser Road, Mount Joy, PA 17552-9043
Church telephone 717-653-5660
Email mjmenno@mjmc.org website www.mjmc.org
2. Chairperson of search committee Gerry Keener
Address 325 Richland Dr, Lancaster, PA 17601
Telephone 717-575-7958
Email gerryh2012@gmail.com
3. Area conference LMC – a fellowship of Anabaptist churches (hereafter – LMC)
Name of conference minister/overseer/bishop assisting your church's search committee:
Bishop Keith Blank
4. Year in which the congregation first began meeting or was organized :
Began meeting in homes in 1799, built the first meetinghouse building in 1812

B. MEMBERSHIP

1. Average Sunday worship attendance during the last 12 months (May 2023 - April 2024):
203 in person + 76 YouTube views = 279

Highest attendance during that time: 297 in person + 140 YouTube views = 437
3/31/2024 - Easter

Lowest attendance during that time: 162 in person + 27 YouTube views = 189
5/28/2023 Memorial Day
2. Total current members 221 Non-resident members 2
Resident members 219 Children (not members) 50 (15 years old or less)
3. Age of members and children. Give totals and percentage. Total = 289

NOTE: This excludes adherents 18 and older who are not members.

0-12	45	16%		31-47	38	13%
13-18	20?	7%		48-64	58	20%
19-30	37	13%		65+	91	31%

4. Occupational profile: (ages 19 to 70). Give totals.

NOTE: These data are from the 2009 profile. They need to be updated but still provide some approximation in 2024.

Business/manager/proprietor	20	Homemaker	83
Education/administration/teacher	6	Clerical/sales	13
Craftsman/laborer/operative	47	Student/Short term missions	51
Medical: doctor/nurse/administration	7	Farmer/rancher	15
Other professional	5	Other church institution/ administration/minister	11
Retired	24		

5. Educational level of adults:

NOTE: These data are from the 2009 profile. They need to be updated but still provide some approximation in 2024. Our impression is that the educational level has increased significantly since 2024.

Up to and including high school	<u>85%</u>
Some college or college graduate	<u>26%</u>
Graduate school	<u>6%</u>

6. Describe the racial or ethnic composition of the congregation:

We match the predominately Caucasian make-up of our community.

8/13/2021 LNP newspaper article: Lancaster county's racial and ethnic makeup continues to diversify.

- The 2020 Census data show white people make up 82% of the county's population, compared with 89% in 2010 and 92% in 2000.
- In other race categories, those who only identify as Black or African-American ticked up to 4% of the county's population in the most recent Census, and
- people who claimed they were only Asian grew to 3% of the county.
- The data also show far more people claimed two or more races, 6% of the county's population, compared with 2% 10 years ago.
- The Hispanic/ Latino population increased to 11% in 2020, compared with 9% a decade ago. The Census uses Hispanic or Latino origin as an independent category from race.

C. COMMUNITY

1. Character of community your church serves or in which it is located:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Town (<10,000)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Large city (100,000+)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Village (<2500)	<input type="checkbox"/>	City (10,000+)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Metropolitan area (1,000,000+)

2. Which best describes this community?

X	Growing		Stable		Declining
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3. Describe racial or ethnic composition of the community served by your church.

95% White	3 % Hispanic	2% African American
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4. List two or three primary business/industries in the community:

An assortment of agri-businesses, electrical components, wire products, chocolate production, various food services, pewter products.

5. Identify other Mennonite/Anabaptist churches in the community, if any.

Crossroads Brethren in Christ, Mount Pleasant Brethren in Christ, Florin Church of the Brethren, numerous other Mennonite congregations within 10 miles.

6. Name of nearest college or university: Elizabethtown College

7. In what way does your church relate to this academic community? We have no formal interaction.

8. Identify significant issues confronting your community. Population growth, affordable housing.

8/13/2021 newspaper article: The numbers released by the Census Bureau show the county's population grew to 552,984 in 2020, a 7% increase over the last 10 years. That's the slowest pace of growth here since the 1910s.

9. Describe what you believe to be distinctive assets of your community:

While the percentage of those who actively attend Christian churches isn't significantly different than the country as a whole, the community is nonetheless still very much influenced by Christian values. There is also a strong work ethic among many, and great pride is taken in one's work, home, and community. Our proximity to large urban areas means goods and services are readily available.

10. How does your church participate in community affairs and interchurch programs?

We participate in interchurch programs planned by the local ministerium, and support various local relief/ assistance and evangelistic ministries.

D. CHURCH ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRAM

1. Identify the primary governing body (council, board, elders, deacons) which represents the congregation.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Meets</u>	<u># members</u>	<u>avg.age</u>	<u>M-F</u>
Church board directs the governance	≥4X yr.	11	50	6-5
Ministry Team directs our ministry.	1X mo.	10	50	5-5

2. Identify five other significant leadership/ programming bodies:

Name	Meets	Leaders	Average Age	M - F
Youth ministry team	4x/mo	8	35	3-5

Pioneer Clubs (age 4-grade 5)	Weekly (Sept – Feb)	28	45	4-14
Women's Ministry team	Varies	6	60	0-6
Men's Ministry team	Varies	6	55	6-0
Stewardship Team	2x/ yr	4	53	3-1

3. Next Steps: (Christian education after the Sunday worship hour)

- 4 children's classes, 2 youth classes, toddler/preschool, nursery
 - During the Sunday worship services we have nursery and toddler classes.
- About 100 adults in 5 classes

4. Describe your youth fellowship. Does your congregation support and send young people to Mennonite camps, conferences and colleges?

We have an active group of approximately 20 youth in grades 6-12, most of whom have made commitments to Christ. They meet three times a month on Sunday evenings, which includes two evenings that combine teaching, small groups, a game, and food, and another evening where they meet for worship or a social activity. The senior high group has mission/ service trips each summer. The seniors have a fall kickoff retreat and there are separate junior high and senior high winter spiritual emphasis retreats.

Our congregation is very supportive of our youth, and readily gives money to enable them to go on mission trips or to conferences. We subsidize a week of summer camp at Camp Hebron for children up through age 18.

We do not emphasize Mennonite conferences or colleges since about 2015 when LMC began to distance itself from MC USA, although some of our young people have attended both.

5. Does your congregation have an active small group organization? Describe.

Before COVID, we had about 10 small groups meeting, including about 30% of our adult members. The groups varied in size from 4-16 persons. The groups had considerable autonomy regarding curriculum and format, but we gathered leaders each September for an orientation (training) session. Some small groups continued to meet by zoom during the COVID pause, but some disbanded.

We have not yet fully or formally relaunched small groups since Covid, although some have continued to meet or have resumed meeting. One challenge we face in ministry planning is that for some people their Next Steps classes function somewhat like small groups. We have not resolved whether or not to treat them like small groups. At least three of the Next Steps classes and two or more of our small groups are structured around sermon discussion.

6. What men's/ women's organizations are active? Other special groups or programs?

There is a very active women's ministry, a men's ministry, prayer ministry, sewing circle, youth group, and Pioneer Clubs. Volunteers organize volleyball and basketball nights in the gym during the winter and a number of groups regularly play pickleball there.

Pioneer Clubs is our Wednesday evening clubs program for children age 4 through grade 5 that meets weekly from mid September to the end of February. This program provides quality experiences of education, moral and spiritual training, and relationship building with peers and adults by providing positive adult role models who direct games, life skills activities, Bible teaching, and Bible memory work in a fun environment.

Women's Ministry includes numerous Bible Study groups held at the church on Wednesday

mornings and evenings with childcare provided. Women attend from the congregation and from the community. The studies are available for rent and are used by women in other churches and in other groups. Other occasional activities for women have included a retreat, sewing circle, support groups, and special events and projects for MCC and other missions.

Men's ministry includes 2 or more short series of Wednesday night Bible studies each year, periodic men's retreats, prayer breakfasts, providing an annual dinner for the women of the church and annual/semi-annual picnic at Garber's pond in the summer.

7. What programs designed for evangelism/ outreach to the community does your congregation support and participate in?

Helping Hands is a monthly ministry offering a free hot meal and fellowship for anyone who would benefit from a free meal or who usually eats alone. Vacation Bible School, Pioneer Clubs, Women's Bible studies, Women's ministries events, men's ministries events, and our small groups all reach out into our community. We have an annual Community Picnic and schedule prayer walks on an occasional basis.

8. In the next five years, do you anticipate a membership increase or stability?

We anticipate stability or continued growth, based on past trends, community demographics, and congregational goals.

9. Worship Teams	Age	Number of Participants
Instrumentalists and vocalists	15-60s	27
Event choirs	30s-80s	about 20
Audio/video/media operators	13-60s	11

Musical Instruments: Used regularly: acoustic guitar, electric guitar, bass guitar, drums, synthesizer, piano, French horn. Used occasionally: Flute, clarinet, violin, saxophone, trumpet, harmonica, ukulele, hand percussion

10. Are there community programs or groups who also utilize your church facility? Outside groups rent our facilities approximately 20 times per year. The most frequent use is for weddings and funerals, but we have also hosted leadership conferences, choirs and concerts, fund raising banquets, and the local 4-H program.

E. CHURCH BUILDING AND PROPERTY

1. **Seating Capacity:** 450 plus room for 100 chairs
2. **Date of construction of church building:** 2006
3. **Date of renovation:** NA
4. **Describe the educational facilities:** We have 22 individual classrooms. Several can be opened up with adjacent rooms to provide large spaces. We also have separate nursery and toddler facilities.
5. **Describe the fellowship and/or recreational facilities:** We have a 4265 sq. ft. Fellowship Center. We use this for banquets, volleyball, half-court basketball, pickleball, etc.
6. **Describe the church office locations and equipment:** printing/copy machine, computers, we use Powerchurch data management software to manage our finances.: We have an office suite with 5 adjacent offices. Each office has phone and office furniture. Most staff use a laptop for computing. We have two photocopy machines, a folder, and a laminator.
7. **Are building and equipment adequate for an effective program? Describe any special assets or liabilities of the building.** Building and equipment are adequate. Our greatest facility need is for storage space. Our sanctuary could be doubled in size, additional classrooms and offices could be built, all to provide for future growth.

8. **Name the insurance company and describe the coverage for church liability, property, pastor's liability, etc. for the church.** We are insured with Goodville Mutual Casualty Company. Under liability coverage we have \$ 2 million general aggregate, \$ 2 million products/completed work aggregate, \$ 1 million personal/advertising injury, \$100,000 fire legal liability, and \$ 5,000 medical payments. Property is insured for \$ 7.5 million, business and personal property for \$262,000. We have pastoral counseling liability insurance in the amount of \$1,000,000 per claim, \$2 million annual and sexual acts coverage at \$1,000,000 per occurrence, \$2 million annual aggregate.

F. CHURCH FINANCES

1. **Based upon your last report, identify the previous year's giving of your congregation.**

Total Giving for the year ending September 2023

General Fund	\$ 749,750
Building Fund	\$ 1,500
Solar Project	\$ 91,300
Benevolence	\$ 10,507
Other Funds	<u>\$ 34,337</u>
	\$ 887,394

2. **Church Budget**

Who makes recommendation regarding pastoral and staff salaries?

Our Pastoral Development Team (similar to a PCRC) makes recommendations to the Stewardship Team based on MCUSA salary guidelines.

Who determines church budget or makes recommendation to congregation?

In collaboration with the Pastoral Team the Stewardship Team prepares a proposed budget for the Church Board, which then reviews, amends, and approves the budget. The approved budget is reported to the congregation in the annual congregational meeting.

What plan is used to challenge the congregation to Christian stewardship and to raise the budget?

Awareness: We email out a monthly update on general fund income and expenses, noting a cash surplus or deficit, along with reference to the annual budget and giving to date a year ago.

Teaching: Occasional stewardship sermons encourage Biblical stewardship.

Challenge: Each week our worship service hosts are asked to mention the offering box by the back door. Occasionally the Stewardship Advocate or a church board member will give a challenge to the congregation.

Current General Fund total budget \$ 737,350

3. **Is there church indebtedness?** Yes. As of April 5, 2024 MJMC has a \$135,764.02 Loan from Eastern Mennonite Missions for the 2023 Solar Panel installation.

G. STAFF

1. **Identify the present staff position for which you are seeking a candidate.** Lead pastor
2. **Two previous persons in the above position.**

Joel Smith (transitional) Oct 2023 to present); Karl Landis (2010-2023); Will Shertzer (interim 2009-2010)

Comment on the transitions experienced by the above staff persons. What were the reasons for termination? By whom and how were decisions made.

Will Shertzer served as interim for about 18 months between two long term lead pastors. Karl Landis decided to step down after 13 years as lead pastor when his ministry agreement ended in September 2023. His sense was that the congregation is ready for a new season of ministry (the next 10 years or so) and wanted to give room for the congregation to articulate a vision for that season unencumbered by his influence since he would not plan to serve another 10 years. This also allowed the congregation an opportunity to consider what gift mix in a lead pastor will best serve that vision. Joel Smith is currently serving the congregation in a Transitional Lead Pastor role to guide the congregation through a self-study and discernment process in an effort to refresh the congregation’s identity and mission focus.

3. Financial support of previous person in the above position:

We follow Mennonite USA guidelines, setting pastoral salaries at or above the recommended amounts.

4. Identify other staff: (assistant/associate minister, lay ministers, office secretary, custodian, musicians, etc.)

Title	% of full time	specific responsibilities	years served
Associate Pastor Worship	1.0 FTE	Worship planning and leadership, coordinate technology, also small groups, preaching	3/2019 to present
Associate Pastor Youth Ministries	1.0 FTE	Christian formation, nurture – youth, also young adults, preaching	1/2021 to present
Director of Children’s Ministries	0.5 FTE	Christian formation, nurture - children	1/2024 to present
Director of Women’s Ministries	0.25 FTE	Oversees women’s ministries; helps with pastoral care	10/2014 to present
Administrative Assistant /Financial Secretary	1.0 FTE	Administrative support, accounting, facility management	6/2015 to present

5. Describe housing options for the above position: Is there a parsonage or a housing allowance?

There is no parsonage. Full-time pastors may designate a portion of their salary as housing allowance.

II. PART TWO – INTERPRETATION

The answers to the questions in this section are more difficult but probably more important in determining the qualifications needed by pastoral leadership. Use a small group to test for consensus on the answers given in this section.

A. Describe the commitment of our congregation to Anabaptist/Mennonite faith. What issues in that faith heritage are important to you?

Mount Joy Mennonite is firmly rooted in the Anabaptist/ Mennonite expression of Christian faith. Like many congregations, we are diverse and in some ways becoming more so. The core of the congregation and its leaders embrace the distinctives of Anabaptism. Of particular importance to

us is the understanding that Jesus' model and teaching are to be lived out by all Christians, especially the way of love manifested by peace and reconciliation, the call to take the gospel to the unreached, the significance of community, and the value of discipleship.

Does your congregation cooperate with and participate in: Mennonite Church USA and Area Conference? MJMC is very actively involved in Lancaster Mennonite Conference (LMC) and its agencies. As of January 2018, the congregation discontinued membership in Mennonite Church USA.

B. What is the mission of your congregation? Describe any particular focus or special emphasis which characterizes the church's ministry such as overseas mission, evangelism, peace and justice issues, special ministry to aging, students, families, etc. Has the congregation worked recently at goal setting and with what results?

Our mission statement is: Enjoying God, Loving each other, Blessing our neighbors

We want to be a growing community of Jesus followers whose way of living out this mission statement offers hope to the people around us and draws them to join us in surrendering their lives to Jesus as well.

MJMC has a long history of commitment to missions, in sending people out, supporting them, and in providing resources to enable the work to be done. In the last 8-10 years, we have given priority to impacting our neighbors and our local community. In 2021, we articulated a focus on the people who live within a one-mile radius of our church building. We have focused outreach attention and attempted to bless folks living or working in "our one-mile radius" since then. This circle includes about 2000 households and about 3000 people.

Members and adherents of MJMC are more diverse than they may appear. Probably only about half of us grew up in a Mennonite context. We have members from Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, and other denominational backgrounds. Some of us, including some who grew up in Mennonite settings, are pushing away from our roots and others of us would like to see MJMC retain Mennonite/Anabaptist theological roots and practices. The congregation includes people from newborns to seniors in their 90s, people with graduate degrees and people with GEDs, and people who do a wide variety of types of work.

As the congregation is now preparing for a new long-term Lead Pastor, the board and ministry team, led and coached by our Transitional Lead Pastor, has engaged in a self-study [called PEAK] during 2023 & 2024 to facilitate the congregation to refresh their **identity** as a body of Jesus followers, and to better understand who God has called them to be at this time.

From the 2023 PEAK self-study core themes emerged as follows:

- Christ-centered
- biblically based from an Anabaptist perspective
- community
- outreach (inclusive of diversity)
- service
- peacemaking/reconciliation

Further articulation of the MJMC identity and core values is a work in process.

Additionally, this included intentional discussions around the MJMC **mission**, and to identify several specific goals for our ministry as a congregation over the next 3 to 5 years that will help us sharpen our ministry focus.

Through the PEAK self-study and coaching process the Board and Ministry Team discerned the need for development in five areas that will require a fully developed plan to accomplish:

1. Form a Mission Team
2. Develop an Onboarding Process for Newcomers
3. Determine Mission Critical Ministries
4. Design a Discipleship Pathway
5. Design a Leadership Pipeline

They also noted areas of ministry that need some attention but do not require fully developed plans per se:

6. Orient Congregation in How the Church Works
7. Pastoral Care and Congregational Care
8. Address Worship Style Challenges
9. Clarify Strategic Vision in Light of Our Mission

The Board and Ministry Team have embarked on the development of Ministry Action Plans (MAP) for the top 5 areas for development. For the 4 additional areas they are identifying 'Champions' to address those items. Since the list of development areas is robust, it will take time to implement these plans over time (perhaps 3-5 years?).

C. What is your view of the lead pastor's role in the congregation? Are there special gifts in ministry which you hope will be fulfilled? How do you expect the pastor to be a representative of the congregation?

MJMC views members of the Staff Team as equippers, people eager to encourage others to know Christ more intimately and to help them discover and develop their gifts for serving with God. We expect each member of the Staff Team to be growing in their relationship with Christ and to live a life based on the principles of God's Word. High on the list of expectations is the ability to love, listen to and care for people, and a heart eager to serve others for Jesus' sake and for His glory. Staff Team members are expected to be collaborative, team players. Regular staff meetings facilitate working together in healthy ways.

The lead pastor promotes the congregation's vision among the membership, equips and enables the congregational leadership to carry out the nine areas identified above (Part II. B.) that need development, and supervises and reviews the performance of the staff.

See the MJMC by-laws and Ministry Descriptions for more formal descriptions of the roles of the lead pastor and staff.

D. Recognizing our differing theological orientations as persons and as congregations, make a brief statement about your congregation and the overarching theological commitments important to you.

The by-laws say: Members shall be persons who know and love Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord. They are committed to live for Jesus Christ in all aspects of their life and recognize the authority of the Holy Bible as the guide for their life. Members should have an understanding of the Christian faith and strive for a consistent application of these principles in such a way that is in harmony with those of the overall Mennonite Church and those of MJMC and LMC, as detailed in the MJMC Covenant of Membership and the 1995 Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective.

CONGREGATIONAL COVENANT (2008)

I have accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord and have received believers' baptism. With God's help and through the power of the Holy Spirit, I commit myself to strive to fulfill the following expressions of my loyalty to Christ and the church

1. Continue a life of discipleship, learning and living the teachings of Jesus.
2. Accept responsibility for my personal spiritual growth through regular Bible study and prayer, viewing the Bible as God's Word and guide for life.
3. Attend our services regularly and participate actively in the worship, life, ministry, and discipline of the congregation.
4. Nurture and encourage people of all ages in our congregation to grow in Christ.
5. Continually give witness of the Good News of Jesus, in word and in deed, both locally and globally.
6. Give to our congregation in a manner which is regular and in proportion to my resources, viewing this as my first commitment out of my income.
7. Value all people and commit myself to the way of love, even for personal or national enemies, bringing all of life under the rule of Christ.
8. Commit myself to life standards based on scripture, rather than conforming to the world.
9. Nurture healthy family relationships as I honor my commitments to wholesome singleness or marriage.

In return I anticipate the joy of acceptance and belonging, and of being loved and cared for by this congregation. I look forward to receiving help in both discerning and developing my gifts, so I may serve Christ joyfully, and build up others. As a covenant community, we will encourage one another in growth, and forgive and restore each other in failure. Our desire is "to grow up in every way to Christ, who is the Head." (Ephesians 4:15)

E. Church Morale: assess the spiritual and emotional health of the congregation. Are relationships among members wholesome and harmonious? Is there openness to new ideas and ways of doing things? Would everyone agree with your answers?

Church morale is generally high. There is still some lingering uncertainty about "how we're doing" since COVID, largely because our in-person Sunday attendance is lower than it was before COVID. But we continue to welcome new adherents and new members, and the people who participate in Sunday classes or who serve in various ministries do so with passion, with energy, and with enthusiasm. We're ready for a new season of ministry.

F. What changes or trends do you envision for the congregation over the next five years? Do you have any other comments significant to the process of looking for new pastoral leadership?

More energy and resources will be invested in ministering to people in our own community. In the last 10-20 years we have become more of a community church, one which ministers to and appeals to people whose backgrounds may be quite different than that of one born and raised Mennonite or even Christian. Just a few of the implications of that are:

- fewer assumptions can be made about what people are familiar with or understand about the Bible or Christian faith or the Anabaptist/ Mennonite stream of Christian faith
- long term members will continue to find new people being given leadership opportunities
- new people will bring new ways of doing things
- counseling needs will grow as we encounter more struggling marriages and families
- we want to be more intentional about providing discipling for young believers
- the general sense of enthusiasm for and allegiance to a Mennonite heritage has weakened as we have become more of a community church. We want to distinguish cultural from theological

components of that heritage so that we preserve what's essential rather than simply what we've been used to.

- Individualism, consumerism, and affluence, along with social media, will continue to be major forces impacting everyone's discipleship journey and our life together as a congregation.
- We have been fairly effective and effectively united in resisting political polarization within the congregation, but that requires vigilance and regular public and private statements and guidance as social media, news, national politics, and other Christians around us all exert significant pressure to polarize along political lines.

Date of Completion: June 18, 2024 by the Church Board