

Proposed Membership Resolution

The Leadership Team is submitting to Ohio Conference the attached *revised* draft resolution to be presented to Ohio Conference delegates for action at the 2016 ACA.

The resolution emphasizes steps to aid in alleviating recent tensions around issues with MC USA for some Ohio Conference congregations.

- This resolution is designed primarily as a “stabilizing” approach to the sense of tensions.
- The document will hopefully aid some congregations with internal issues over how to deal with such tensions among members/attenders.
- Hopefully some congregations will find sufficient “space” in opting for an “Ohio Conference Only” membership approach to feel enabled to remain as member congregations of Ohio Conference.

Also, the resolution calls for clarification of our commitments to and expectations from each other as members, pastors, leaders, and churches of Ohio Conference.

- Such clarification would hopefully strengthen our relationships and enable us all to move forward together with hope and confidence.
- This relational emphasis holds the most promise for those remaining in Ohio Conference to establish and pursue a promising and vitalizing future together.
- This aspect of the resolution is being addressed as a separate endeavor in establishing a **One-Year Covenant for Ohio Conference Congregations**

Numerous activities have shaped the formation of this resolution and this revision:

- The Ohio Conference All Pastors meeting held on Sept. 2, 2015
- Observations and recommendations from the review performed by the Five-Year Plan Task Force
- Pastor-Peer groups in discussions with Ralph Reinford and George O’Reilly
- Extended discussion by the Leadership Team members
- Interactions at fall and spring cluster meetings across Ohio
- Interactions at the Jan. 13, 2016, All Pastors Meeting

The Leadership Team has included considerable prayer in this process, and encourages us all to continual prayer as we move forward together.

May the Holy Spirit guide and empower in this significant process of discernment and decision.

The Leadership Team of Ohio Conference

Ohio Conference Proposed Membership Resolution

In light of the changes happening within Mennonite Church USA, Ohio Conference wants to encourage each member congregation to examine how they can best be faithful to scripture.

We recognize that within Ohio Conference we are closely aligned theologically and have had strong internal relationships.

However, we have been experiencing tensions in Ohio Conference around certain issues and what difference in these areas means for relating with each other.

Particularly with regard to relating to those in other MCUSA conferences and with MCUSA itself, questions have arisen about retaining connection with MCUSA and whether Ohio Conference should withdraw from MCUSA. This question has precipitated the possibility itself of splitting or splintering Ohio Conference.

In lieu of this less than desirable result it is proposed that the Ohio Conference constitution be amended to create two distinct forms of membership within Ohio Conference. Both forms of membership would be equal in all facets of internal conference workings.

Actions Steps:

- adopt any necessary constitutional amendments
- create two separate funding streams. One funding stream where no donations will go to Mennonite Church USA, its member conferences or organizations
- call all Ohio Conference member congregations to renew their covenantal commitments to Ohio Conference as a mutual endeavor with each other for discipleship, discernment, mission and fellowship, seeing Conference as an extended expression of the Body of Christ.
- call all Ohio Conference member congregations to commit to giving substantive* financial support for the operational functioning of Ohio Conference
- (*appropriate to the financial capacity of each congregation)