

Scenario 1: Affiliate with MC USA As Is

Scenario 2: Withdraw from MC USA and Become Temporarily Independent

<p>1. <u>Affiliation:</u></p> <p>The Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA is a member conference of Mennonite Church USA.</p> <p>Ohio Conference continues to follow its 2017 Constitution revision allowing individual congregations to opt out of MC USA membership.</p> <p>Ohio Conference congregations that opt out of MC USA do not participate in MC USA decision-making or include individuals who represent MC USA on boards.</p> <p>Ohio Conference does not report non-MC USA congregations as part of the MC USA census of congregations.</p> <p>MC USA cannot legally step away from its obligation to provide derived membership benefits (see “Support” below) to every congregation in Ohio Conference unless a resolution is passed to change the MC USA Bylaws. MC USA continues to consider those congregations a member of MC USA through the derived benefits.</p> <p>Ohio Conference and its congregations are members of Mennonite World Conference through MC USA.</p>	<p><u>Affiliation:</u></p> <p>Ohio Conference withdraws and disaffiliates from Mennonite Church USA over a one-year period to allow for all legal changes and to end the relationship well. effective immediately. (Note: This change reflects information received from Mennonite Church USA on March 2 which stated that a vote to leave the denomination would be effective immediately.)</p> <p>“Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA” legally changes its name to Ohio Mennonite Conference (OMC) and confirms the legality of the Conference to hold ministerial credentials as an entity independent of Mennonite Church USA.</p> <p>OMC allows individual congregations wishing to remain in MC USA to dually affiliate with an MC USA conference such as Central District, Indiana/Michigan or Allegheny.</p> <p>Ohio Mennonite Conference immediately enters an intentional two- to three-year discernment and design process to clarify God’s calling for the Conference. A part of this design process is to connect with other conferences or entities that may be open to exploring a network of collaborative relationships that further the mission of the Church. This could include groups that are not affiliated with MC USA (i.e. Evana, and LMC — formerly Lancaster Mennonite Conference) or other current conferences of MC USA that are in different stages of discerning affiliation (i.e. Mosaic and Virginia Mennonite Conference) or other further options. Exploration builds on initial conversations that the Strategic Planning Team had with each of the groups listed.</p>
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<p>2.</p>	<p><u>Confession of Faith:</u></p> <p>Mennonite Church USA continues to use the 1995 Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective. MC USA leadership have no plans to amend the Confession of Faith or to write a new one. Drafting a new Confession of Faith would require a resolution by a group within MC USA directing the Executive Board to launch a lengthy process in collaboration with MC Canada. (as per Strategic Planning Committee meeting with MC USA Staff and Moderator Team, Jan. 31, 2023)</p> <p>Ohio Conference continues to highlight the Ohio Conference resolution passed at the Annual Conference Assembly in 2015, fully supporting all articles of the 1995 <i>Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective</i>.</p>	<p><u>Confession of Faith:</u></p> <p>Ohio Conference continues to highlight the Ohio Conference resolution passed at the Annual Conference Assembly in 2015, fully supporting all articles of the 1995 <i>Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective</i>.</p>

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3.	<p><u>Credentialing and Autonomy:</u></p> <p>Ohio Conference determines its own policies, credentialing guidelines, budget, structure, staff, and congregational membership. Unless specified, resolutions passed by MC USA’s delegates are not binding on conferences and/or their congregations.</p> <p>Ohio Conference exercises its authority and autonomy within MC USA according to the MC USA Bylaws:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Each area conference shall establish provisions and procedures for the credentialing of ministers.”</i> Ohio Conference uses Ohio Conference credentialing guidelines. • <i>“Each congregation shall, insofar as it is possible, call ministers that are certified or registered by a member area conference of MC USA under the provisions and procedures defined by its own area conference as a credentialing body of MC USA.”</i> Ohio Conference holds the credentials for all ministers in Ohio Conference. • Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada have been having important conversations about pastoral misconduct and abuse, including how investigations into allegations are handled. Conference Ministers and denominational leaders have been in dialogue about lines of authority for credentialing decisions pertaining to misconduct. 	<p><u>Credentialing and Autonomy:</u></p> <p>Ohio Mennonite Conference determines its own policies, credentialing guidelines, budget, structure, staff, and congregational membership. OMC would need to decide whether a pastor could hold credentials in both OMC and another entity.</p> <p>Ohio Mennonite Conferences uses Ohio Mennonite Conference’s credentialing guidelines.</p> <p>Ohio Mennonite Conference holds the credentials for all ministers in Ohio Mennonite Conference.</p>

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4.	<p><u>Support:</u></p> <p>Ohio Conference and its congregations continue to relate to Everence, Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Education Agency, MennoMedia, and Mennonite Health Services.</p> <p>Derived membership benefits include access to MC USA’s MennoData, which is a national database for all previous and current credentialed ministers of MC USA. MC USA has staff persons who oversee the Ministerial Leadership Information (MLI) process and provide a monthly listing of pastoral candidates. The database includes detailed information, reference summaries, work history, and a background check. Mennonite Church USA provides guidelines for pastoral misconduct and legal coverage.</p> <p>Ohio Conference congregations that opt out of MC USA do not have access to MC USA assistance in cases of pastoral searches or pastoral misconduct.</p> <p>Ohio Conference negotiates with MC USA to maintain access to the Corinthian Plan for insurance for congregations that have opted out of MC USA.</p>	<p><u>Support:</u></p> <p>Congregations continue to have the option of using publicly available MC USA resources and supporting Everence, Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Education Agency, MennoMedia, and Mennonite Health Services. Ohio Mennonite Conference is no longer represented on MC USA boards or committees.</p> <p>Ohio Mennonite Conference does not use MC USA databases to assist with pastoral searches. OMC commits energy and resources to develop its own process to assist with pastoral searches, credentialing, church discipline, and congregational support.</p> <p>Ohio Mennonite Conference negotiates with MC USA to maintain access to the Corinthian Plan for insurance for Conference and congregational staff following the precedent set when LMC withdrew from MC USA.</p>