



Bylaws for Mennonite Church USA

Approved by Delegates July 7-8, 2023

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1 **BYLAWS OF**

2
3 **MENNONITE CHURCH USA, INC.**

4
5 **ARTICLE I**

6
7 **GENERAL**

8
9 1. Name. The name of this organization is MENNONITE CHURCH USA, Inc. which is
10 commonly known as Mennonite Church USA.

11
12 2. Scope. This organization is established with particular reference to the area conferences
13 of Mennonite Church USA (and their congregations, associate groups, and member organizations)
14 in the United States.

15
16 3. Seal. Mennonite Church USA may have a seal which shall have impressed upon it the
17 name "Mennonite Church USA" and the word "Seal" in the middle thereof; provided, however, that
18 no seal shall be necessary to bind Mennonite Church USA or for any other purpose with respect to
19 documents executed by or on behalf of Mennonite Church USA.

20
21 4. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of Mennonite Church USA shall begin at the beginning of the
22 first day of August and end at the close of the last day of July next succeeding.

23
24 **ARTICLE II**

25
26 **PURPOSE**

27
28 1. Purpose. The purpose of Mennonite Church USA (sometimes referred to herein as "the
29 church" or "the denomination") is to participate fully in God's work of setting things right in a
30 broken world, redeeming and restoring all things in Christ to God's intended design as we live into
31 God's new future that has already begun. Joining in God's activity in the world, we develop and
32 nurture missional Mennonite congregations of many cultures. The mission of Mennonite Church
33 USA is to share with others the gift of God's love through our worship, witness and life together. To
34 this end, we claim Jesus as the center of our faith, community as the center of our lives and
35 reconciliation as the center of our work.

36
37 The role of Mennonite Church USA is to:

- 38
39 a. Share the good news of Jesus Christ through word and deed, calling people to
40 salvation in Christ, and to form Christian communities of love and service to others.
41
42 b. Establish, teach and promote the core values and beliefs of the church based on
43 scripture as expressed in the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, as
44 updated from time to time.
45
46 c. Tell the story of God's faithfulness in our journey as an Anabaptist people.
47
48 d. Encourage and enable congregations to actively engage in God's mission in the
49 world.
50

- 51 e. Confront forces of the world which work against God’s intent for all creation.
52
53 f. Be a channel for dialogue and witness to other church bodies and to governing
54 authorities.
55
56 g. Provide a sense of larger community, creating a common identity for ourselves and
57 recognized by those with whom we come in contact.
58
59 h. Call and train leaders who know how to apply the Gospel in our time.
60
61 i. Encourage teamwork and effective partnerships between all parts of the church.
62
63 j. Combine resources to do together what we cannot achieve alone.
64
65 k. Be anti-racist in all areas of church life and program.
66

67 **ARTICLE III**

68 **CONGREGATIONS**

69
70
71 1. **Basic Unit.** The local congregation is the basic organizational unit of area conference
72 members of Mennonite Church USA. The congregation is God’s people with a common confession
73 of Christ uniting in worship, nurture, fellowship, proclamation, service, discernment, reconciliation,
74 and mutual care and discipline. It is a local group of believers whose commitment to Christ and to
75 each other and whose proximity to each other make it possible to experience these activities on a
76 regular and continuing basis.
77

78 2. **Common Vision and Commitments.** Congregations, and the area conferences to which
79 they belong, shall maintain a membership roster and shall share the following commitments as
80 endorsed by the delegates of Mennonite Church USA:
81

- 82 • Common vision statement for Mennonite Church USA,
- 83 • Common mission statement for Mennonite Church USA,
- 84 • Common Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, as updated from time to
85 time, as their “statement of faith for teaching and nurture in the life of the Church,”
- 86 • Commitment “to seek to understand and interpret Scripture in harmony with Jesus
87 Christ as we are led by the Holy Spirit in the Church,”
- 88 • Commitment to participate in discerning and living out statements of Christian faith
89 and life made by Mennonite Church USA,
- 90 • Commitment to participate in the denomination’s life and mission through delegate
91 representation and financial support.
92

93 3. **Congregational Derived Membership in Mennonite Church USA.** Congregations
94 automatically derive and attain membership in Mennonite Church USA through their membership
95 in an area conference member of Mennonite Church USA. Unless expressly stated otherwise in
96 these Bylaws, all references to member congregations of Mennonite Church USA herein mean this
97 derived membership.
98

- 99 a. Congregations may hold membership in only one area conference of Mennonite
100 Church USA. However, in those situations where a congregation at the time of
101 adoption of these Bylaws is already a member of two or more area conferences,

- 102 such multiple area conference membership may be retained as long as agreeable to
103 the area conferences and the congregation.
104
- 105 b. No congregation shall separate or be separated from one area conference and
106 subsequently be accepted by another area conference without prior consultation
107 among the area conferences involved and the congregation.
108
- 109 c. The congregation shall relate to the Delegate Assembly directly through delegates,
110 and through the area conference with which it affiliates.
111
- 112 4. Rights and Privileges. The congregation shall retain or be given certain rights and
113 privileges as a member of the Mennonite Church USA.
114
- 115 a. The congregation shall have the authority to determine the criteria and the
116 responsibility to implement the process for membership of persons joining their
117 congregation, and which shall be done in consultation with their area conference
118 and in consideration of expectations for membership in Mennonite Church USA.
119
- 120 b. The congregation shall retain the right to manage its own affairs, including but not
121 limited to its organization, personnel, program and management of property.
122
- 123 c. The congregation shall retain the privilege of withdrawing from an area conference,
124 and in so doing from Mennonite Church USA.
125
- 126 d. Through its representatives (delegates) to the Delegate Assembly, the congregation
127 shall participate in the planning and decision making of the larger body.
128
- 129 e. A congregation shall have no rights to any property of an area conference, or
130 Mennonite Church USA, by virtue of its membership in either an area conference or
131 Mennonite Church USA.
132
- 133 5. Duties. As a member of the Mennonite Church USA, the congregation shall have a
134 responsibility to be loyal to and support the work of the church. Specifically:
135
- 136 a. Each congregation is expected to send delegate(s) to every session of the Delegate
137 Assembly and shall actively seek to further the interests of the church during and
138 between sessions.
139
- 140 b. Each congregation shall, insofar as it is possible, call ministers that are certified or
141 registered by a member area conference of Mennonite Church USA under the
142 provisions and procedures defined by its own area conference as a credentialing
143 body of MC USA.
144
- 145 c. Each congregation shall make provisions to contribute financially to the work of the
146 denomination. The congregation retains the right to determine the method of its
147 support and the designation of its contributions.
148
- 149 d. Each congregation is to take seriously the need to be in open dialogue with members
150 and leaders of Mennonite Church USA, to share concerns with the church and to
151 receive representatives that come to share the programs and the perspectives of

152 the church. If there is serious disagreement, either party may initiate discussion to
153 seek a resolution.

154
155 6. Membership Procedures. Membership procedures, withdrawal procedures, dismissal
156 provisions, and other matters involving the membership of a congregation in an area conference
157 shall be governed by requirements of the particular area conference.

158
159
160 **ARTICLE IV**

161
162 **AREA CONFERENCES**

163
164 1. Area Conferences. The area conference is the basic membership unit of Mennonite
165 Church USA, and through which the member congregations of the area conference also are
166 members of Mennonite Church USA. The area conference is an affiliation of congregations that join
167 together in common life and mission. In coming together, congregations recognize their
168 interdependence and their need for mutual exhortation and admonition, and their strength to fulfill
169 the church's mission in the world. The area conference should function in the following ways:

- 170
171 a. Provide oversight and resources to help create and maintain healthy congregations.
172
173 b. Provide for discernment, mutual accountability, and consultation among
174 congregations on issues of faith and life.
175
176 c. Provide programs and leadership for lay and pastoral programs, cooperation for
177 mission and witness, to include church planting, and for the peaceful resolution of
178 conflicts.
179
180 d. Provide strong ministerial leadership through encouragement, support,
181 accountability and credentialing by area conferences, including validating,
182 recording, and transferring ministerial credentials.
183
184 e. Provide programs, guidelines and services to assist with ministerial placement which
185 matches the needs of congregations with gifts of pastors.
186
187 f. Provide regular assemblies for effective involvement of all congregations in
188 determining priorities and goals for their life and faith, nurture and mission, and to
189 strengthen relationships between and among congregations, the area conference,
190 and the denomination.
191
192 g. Appoint delegates to the Delegate Assembly and to the Constituency Leaders
193 Council to provide a link of communication for matters of mutual concern and for
194 effective church wide decision making.

195
196 2. Rights and Privileges. Each area conference shall retain or be given certain rights and
197 privileges as a member of the Mennonite Church USA.

- 198
199 a. Each area conference shall have the authority to determine the criteria and
200 responsibility to implement the process for membership of congregations within
201 their area conference, including procedures for withdrawal and dismissal.

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250
- b. Each area conference shall retain the right of final decision to manage its own affairs of its organization, personnel, program and management of property.
 - c. Each area conference shall retain the privilege of withdrawing from the Mennonite Church USA, and in so doing shall withdraw all of its member congregations from Mennonite Church USA, provided that a withdrawing area conference shall discharge its financial commitments to Mennonite Church USA as part of such withdrawal.
 - d. Each area conference shall participate in the planning and decision making of the larger body through its representatives (delegates) to the Delegate Assembly.
 - e. An area conference shall have no rights to any property of Mennonite Church USA by virtue of its membership in Mennonite Church USA.
3. Duties. As a member of the Mennonite Church USA, each area conference shall have a responsibility to be loyal to and support the work of the church. Specifically:
- a. Each area conference shall be represented at every session of the Delegate Assembly and shall actively seek to further the interests of the church during and between sessions.
 - b. Each area conference in its organizational arrangements shall provide for committees or in other ways represent and promote among its membership the various Mennonite Church USA church service areas, such as mission, education, service and finances.
 - c. Each area conference shall establish provisions and procedures for the credentialing of ministers.
 - d. Each area conference shall make its own determinations as to membership of congregations, taking into account the common vision, commitments, and membership guidelines of Mennonite Church USA.
 - e. Each area conference will develop and utilize experienced leadership to help attain continuity in relationships with congregations and the denomination.
 - f. Each area conference shall assume its share of the responsibility for promotion and support of the Mennonite Church USA resolutions and programs of service. Congregations and area conferences should provide adequate funding and support for the agencies they have founded and sponsored as part of their mission, including those agencies which are jointly founded or sponsored with other church bodies.
 - g. Area conferences should strive to work in harmony and cooperation with the total denomination, as well as with their member congregations. If there is serious disagreement, either party may initiate discussion to seek a resolution through the denominational office or the Constituency Leaders Council (CLC).

- 251 1) The principle of mutual servanthood and accountability in giving and
252 receiving counsel shall characterize all intercongregational relationships,
253 whether in area conferences or in the Delegate Assembly.
254 2) The area conferences, Delegate Assembly, churchwide boards and
255 agencies, all of which exist to serve the congregations, shall be guided by
256 and accountable to the congregations which they serve. The congregations
257 in turn shall seek the wisdom, direction, gifts and resources that come in
258 mutual servanthood and accountability through these relationships.
259 Channels shall be maintained for consultation and communication of
260 concerns between congregations, area conferences, and churchwide
261 agencies.
262 3) In the event of unresolved conflict between area conferences, the area
263 conferences involved may work with the Mennonite Church USA Executive
264 Board, which shall determine procedures to be followed in resolving such
265 dispute.
266

267 4. Membership List. Area conferences shall maintain a permanent record containing the
268 names and addresses of all member congregations, promptly supplying written copies of the same
269 to the Executive Director of Mennonite Church USA along with continuously updating the record
270 for changes. With respect to any notice given or action taken, Mennonite Church USA may rely
271 upon the last record supplied to it fourteen (14) days prior to such notice or action.
272

273 5. Admission/Termination. New area conference members may be admitted, or existing
274 area conference members terminated, through action of the Delegate Assembly. Prior to such
275 action and following counsel by the Constituency Leaders Council to the Executive Board, the
276 Executive Board must recommend the action of admission or termination to the Delegate Assembly
277 and written notice of the recommendation must be given to the members six (6) months in advance
278 of the meeting of the Delegate Assembly. Any action of admission or termination must be approved
279 by two-thirds majority vote of those delegates present and eligible to vote at the Delegate
280 Assembly.
281

282 ARTICLE V

283 DELEGATE ASSEMBLY

- 284
- 285 1. A Delegate Assembly shall be constituted as a denominational body representative of
286 the constituency through area conference and congregational delegations. The Delegate Assembly,
287 as a representative of the church, shall function in the following ways:
288
- 289 a. Provide opportunity to assemble for worship, fellowship, prophecy, acquaintance,
290 and understanding, and to deepen Christian commitment.
 - 291 b. Discuss and decide major issues of policy for the national conference and discern the
292 voice and the Spirit in the midst of the Delegate Assembly.
 - 293 c. Provide opportunity to speak to the establishment of general policies and the
294 development of programs to carry out those policies.
 - 295 d. Receive reports from the Executive Board, its committees, program boards, and
296 councils. Reports shall be presented in writing and shall include financial accounting.
- 297
298
299
300
301

- 302
303 e. Review current programs and act on program priorities as presented by the
304 Executive Board.
305
306 f. Elect the following:
307
308 1) Moderator, if the position is vacant, and a Moderator Elect.
309
310 2) Half of the members of the Leadership Discernment Committee as
311 nominated by the Constituency Leaders Council.
312
313 3) Other members of program agency boards and committees as needed
314 under the organizational structure of the same.
315
316 4) Executive Board members to fill new terms and vacancies.
317
318 2. The membership of the Delegate Assembly shall be chosen as follows:
319
320 a. Each congregation of the Mennonite Church USA is eligible to send one (1) delegate
321 for each one hundred (100) congregational members, or fraction thereof. Also,
322 congregations may send an additional youth delegate (ages 16-21).
323
324 b. Each area conference of the Mennonite Church USA is eligible to send one (1)
325 delegate for each one thousand (1,000) area conference members, or fraction
326 thereof. Also, conferences may send an additional two youth delegates (ages 16-21).
327
328 c. Each Racial/Ethnic group which has been officially recognized by the Executive
329 Board, may send three (3) delegates plus one (1) delegate for each one thousand
330 (1,000) members of such recognized Racial/Ethnic group. Also, Racial/Ethnic groups
331 may send an additional two youth delegates (ages 16-21).
332
333 d. Each member of the Executive Board is automatically a delegate.
334
335 e. Each Executive Board or Delegate Assembly appointee to a program agency board is
336 automatically a delegate.
337
338 f. Subject to the limitations contained herein, each appointing body shall itself
339 determine the criteria and term of its delegate(s), by what method its delegates are
340 selected and whether and how it wishes to achieve continuity through its delegates.
341 Each area conference delegate to the Delegate Assembly shall be a member of a
342 congregation in that area conference. All delegates shall be members of
343 congregations which are members (through area conferences) of Mennonite Church
344 USA.
345
346 g. Member area conferences shall be responsible to notify the denominational offices
347 of the identity of area conference delegates.
348
349 3. Officers. The officers of the Delegate Assembly and their duties shall be:
350

- 351 a. The Moderator shall preside at all sessions of the Delegate Assembly and shall give
352 leadership to the interests and spiritual welfare of the Delegate Assembly and serve
353 as its official representative. The term of office shall be two (2) years.
354
355 b. A Moderator Elect shall be elected every two (2) years and after serving a two-year
356 term shall succeed to the office of Moderator for a two-year term. At the request of
357 the Moderator, or in case of the absence or disability of the Moderator, the
358 Moderator Elect shall exercise all rights and duties of the Moderator.
359
360 c. The term of office of the Moderator and Moderator Elect begin with the close of the
361 biennial meeting of the Delegate Assembly.
362

363 4. Meetings.
364

- 365 a. The Delegate Assembly shall meet every two (2) years in regular session.
366
367 b. The time and place of meetings shall be determined by the Executive Board, with
368 consideration given to any invitation of an area conference, congregation, or a group
369 of congregations.
370 c. Special sessions of the Delegate Assembly may be called by the Moderator or
371 Moderator Elect with the consent of the Executive Board.
372
373 d. In the case of a special meeting, written notice of the special meeting (which will
374 include the time, date, and place), and the purpose for the meeting, along with the
375 proposed action to be taken, shall be submitted to area conferences and to member
376 congregations at least ninety (90) days in advance of the date of the meeting. Area
377 conferences shall keep the Executive Board notified of congregational members and
378 any changes thereof.
379
380 e. Both regular and special meetings of the Delegate Assembly may be held remotely
381 by electronic means whereby all members participating may simultaneously hear
382 each other during the meeting or as otherwise required by Indiana law.
383

384 5. Decision Making.
385

- 386 a. Normally floor privileges are granted first to all delegates, Delegate Assembly
387 committee members, and members of the program boards and committees. Floor
388 privileges will be extended to others during a discussion at the Moderator's
389 discretion.
390
391 b. Each Assembly delegate shall be eligible to cast one vote. There is no provision for
392 proxy voting.
393
394 c. A majority of votes cast shall determine any matter, except when the Assembly
395 agrees otherwise or when otherwise provided in these Bylaws.
396
397 d. A quorum for conducting official business of the Assembly shall be those delegates
398 to the Assembly who appear for any duly called meeting.
399

400 6. Standing Committees. The Assembly may establish standing or ad hoc committees as
401 deemed advisable for its work and may appoint the same as is necessary for ongoing work with the
402 church. The following shall be standing committee(s) of the Delegate Assembly:

403
404 a. Leadership Discernment Committee.

405
406 1) Duties. It shall be the responsibility of the Leadership Discernment
407 Committee to prepare slates of nominees for the boards of churchwide
408 program agencies and the Executive Board.

409
410 2) Membership. The committee shall consist of up to eight members, subject
411 to the criteria identified in section 4 below, half of whom are appointed by
412 the Executive Board and half of whom are nominated by the Constituency
413 Leaders Council and elected by the Delegate Assembly.

414 a) Executive Board appointees may serve one four-year term, with
415 possible reappointment.

416
417 b) Delegate Assembly electees are eligible for re-election for one
418 additional four-year term.

419
420 c) Individuals appointed by either the Constituency Leaders Council or
421 the Executive Board to complete unexpired terms are eligible for one
422 additional term.

423
424 d) The Executive Board shall appoint the Chair of the committee from
425 among the Leadership Discernment Committee members.

426
427 3) Procedure. The committee shall be responsible for the following in carrying
428 out its duties:

429
430 a) To exercise judgment in choosing nominees whose spiritual
431 qualifications, experience, and competence fit them for the position
432 for which they are being named.

433 b) To assure that the slates provide broad representation of the life and
434 composition of the Mennonite Church USA.

435
436 c) To make available a description of each nominee's experience,
437 background, training, and present involvement so that the Assembly
438 is adequately informed and acquainted with all nominees.

439
440 d) To secure from each nominee a commitment to take the assignment
441 seriously, if elected.

442
443 e) To emphasize the finding of new leaders, with careful attention to
444 broadening participation in church leadership.

445
446 f) To develop appropriate lists of potential nominees by soliciting from
447 each area conference and associate group a full slate of suggestions.
448 Suggestions shall also be sought and welcomed from the churchwide
449 program agencies, committees, and constituency.

- 451 4) In developing nominees for elected and appointed positions, the
452 committee shall operate on the following assumptions to the extent
453 reasonably attainable and appropriate in their judgment:
454 a) 50/50 women to men ratio;
455 b) 30/70 BIPOC to White.
456

457
458 **ARTICLE VI**

459
460 **EXECUTIVE BOARD**

461
462 1. Executive Board. An Executive Board shall be organized to give leadership and to act on
463 behalf of the denomination when the Delegate Assembly is not in session. Executive Board
464 members, with accountability to their appointing/electing bodies, are not expected to be
465 representatives of specific constituencies, but are to act in the best interests of Mennonite Church
466 USA as a whole. The Executive Board shall function as follows:
467

- 468 a. Serve as the Board of Directors of Mennonite Church USA, as chartered by the State
469 of Indiana, and exercise full legal responsibility for Mennonite Church USA.
470
471 b. Provide leadership and spiritual oversight in articulating the vision of Mennonite
472 Church USA.
473
474 c. Review for coordination purposes the activities of the churchwide program agencies,
475 entities, and committees, including program priorities, annual budgets, fundraising
476 procedures, and major innovations and modifications of church programs.
477
478 d. Ensure a safety net for small area conferences.
479
480 e. Maintain and promote communication channels between and with area
481 conferences, congregations, and other denominations.
482
483 f. Ensure that anti-racist and culturally competent principles are practiced throughout
484 church structures and programs.
485
486 g. Give leadership to coordinate the generation and allocation of resources for
487 programs and activities of the church.
488
489 h. Foster partnerships with Mennonite Church Canada, other Mennonites worldwide,
490 and with other denominations.
491
492 i. Receive counsel from the Constituency Leaders Council.
493
494 j. Report biennially to the Delegate Assembly the status of current program priorities
495 and budgets. Present to the Delegate Assembly program projections for counsel,
496 direction, and acceptance.
497
498 k. Provide leadership in carrying out the policies and programs authorized by the
499 Delegate Assembly.
500

- 501 l. Appoint members to the churchwide program agencies and committees as provided
502 by the Bylaws; appoint members to standing and ad hoc committees as needed and
503 as provided in the Bylaws; appoint the Executive Director.
504
- 505 m. Approve the appointment, reappointment, or dismissal of the chief executive officer
506 of each churchwide agency, program, board and committee.
507
- 508 2. Membership. The membership of the Executive Board shall be comprised of up to
509 twenty-one (21) people selected as follows:
510
- 511 a. Two members shall be the Moderator and Moderator Elect. One seat shall be
512 reserved for the immediate past moderator, who may serve for a period of two
513 years, subject to mutual agreement with the Executive Board. The Executive Board
514 appoints up to four (4) additional members. The four recognized Racial/Ethnic
515 groups—African American Mennonite Association (AAMA), Iglesia Menonita
516 Hispana (IMH), Native Mennonite Ministries (NMM), and the network of Asian
517 Mennonite Church USA congregations shall each appoint one member. The
518 remaining members shall be elected/affirmed by the Delegate Assembly from a slate
519 developed by the Leadership Discernment Committee. At least five (5) of the
520 Executive Board seats shall be filled by persons from Racial/Ethnic groups including
521 the four (4) of whom will be appointed by the four recognized Racial/Ethnic groups
522 named above. Specific skills, age, gender and geographic representation should be
523 considered in the Executive Board member nomination and appointment process.
524 The Leadership Discernment Committee shall take responsibility for coordinating
525 these various requirements and sources such that an appropriate slate is presented
526 to the Delegate Assembly for approval for election/affirmation.
527
- 528 b. Except for the Moderator and Moderator Elect and immediate past Moderator,
529 whose terms are controlled by the terms governing their office, the term of office
530 for other Executive Board members shall be four (4) years, with possible
531 reappointment for one (1) additional term. Individuals appointed to complete
532 unexpired terms are eligible for one additional full term. The Executive Board shall
533 arrange that half of those members elected/affirmed are so selected in each
534 biennium. Members shall serve a maximum of two (2) full consecutive terms. The
535 terms of membership on the Executive Board shall begin with the first meeting
536 following the close of the biennial meeting of the Delegate Assembly.
537
- 538 c. All Executive Board members shall be members in good standing of a member
539 congregation of the Mennonite Church USA.
540
- 541 3. Meetings.
542
- 543 a. Regular meetings of the Board shall be held at least three times a year and/or at
544 such times as determined by the Board.
545
- 546 b. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the Moderator on five (5) days notice
547 to each member, either personally by mail, or by E-mail, utilizing in each case the
548 last address of the board member registered with the Executive Board. Special
549 meetings shall be called by the Moderator or Executive Director in like manner and
550 on like notice on the written request of a majority of the members of the Executive
551 Board.

- 552
553 c. A majority of the members of the Board shall be necessary to constitute a quorum
554 for the transaction of business.
555
556 d. A majority vote or a declared consensus of the members present at a meeting of
557 which a quorum is present shall be required to transact official business.
558
559 e. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.
560

561 4. Action Without Meeting. Any action required or permitted to be taken at any meeting
562 of the Executive Board may be taken without a meeting if prior to such action a written consent
563 (which may be by electronic means) to such action is agreed upon by all members of the Executive
564 Board and such written consent is filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Executive Board.
565 To the extent permitted by law, a written consent shall be deemed to exist when the E-mail address
566 from which the affirmative response is E-mailed corresponds to the address registered for the
567 Board member who is making the response. Written copies of such E-mail responses shall be filed
568 with the minutes of the proceedings of the Executive Board.
569

570 5. Conference Call Meetings. Any or all of the members of the Executive Board may
571 participate in a meeting of the Executive Board by means of a conference telephone or similar
572 communications equipment by which all persons participating in the meeting can communicate
573 with each other. Such participation in this matter constitutes presence in person at the meeting.
574

- 575 6. Appointments. The Executive Board is responsible for the following appointments:
576 a. The Executive Director.
577
578 b. Board members for the various program agencies as identified in Article X.
579
580 c. Half of the Leadership Discernment Committee.
581
582 d. Additional appointments as needed from time to time to provide for various
583 projects, committees, offices, and boards to carry out the work of Mennonite Church
584 USA.
585
586 e. Any vacancy in positions elected by the Delegate Assembly for the interim until the
587 normal expiration of the term so filled. Such interim appointments are then eligible
588 for service for one additional term at the will of the delegates.
589

590 In the event it becomes necessary to fill a vacancy in the office of Moderator Elect, the appointment
591 of a replacement shall be by the Executive Board who shall consult with the Constituency Leaders
592 Council.
593

594
595 **ARTICLE VII**

596
597 **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

598
599 1. Executive Committee. The Executive Board shall have an Executive Committee which
600 shall consist of the Moderator, Moderator Elect, Secretary, and such other members as determined
601 by the Executive Board from time to time. The delegation of authority herein granted shall not

602 operate to relieve the Executive Board, or any member thereof, of any responsibility imposed on it
603 or such member by law. The Executive Board shall have the power at any time to increase or
604 decrease the number of members of the Executive Committee, to fill vacancies thereon, to change
605 any member thereof (other than the Moderator and Moderator Elect), and to change the functions
606 or terminate the existence thereof subject to governing statutes.

607
608 2. Power of the Executive Committee. During the intervals between meetings of the
609 Executive Board, and subject to such limitations as may be required by law, these Bylaws, or by
610 resolution of the Executive Board, from time to time, the Executive Committee shall have and may
611 exercise all authority of the Executive Board in the management of Mennonite Church USA except
612 for those matters described in Article VI 1(l) and (m), Article XI, and hiring and terminating the
613 Executive Director. The Executive Committee may also from time to time formulate and
614 recommend to the Executive Board and/or the Delegate Assembly for approval general policies
615 regarding the management and the affairs of Mennonite Church USA, including the procedures and
616 policies relative to meetings of the Delegate Assembly.

617
618 3. Meetings. Meetings of the Executive Committee may be held at any time, place and
619 upon such notice as may be from time to time determined by the Executive Committee. The
620 Executive Committee shall meet at least three (3) times a year except as the Executive Committee
621 may decide any such meeting is unnecessary. The Executive Committee shall also meet upon call
622 by the Moderator, Moderator Elect, or the Executive Director as provided herein.

623
624 4. Waiver of Notice. Notice of any meeting of the Executive Committee may be waived in
625 writing either before or after the meeting or by attendance in person.

626
627 5. Quorum. A majority of the Executive Committee shall be necessary to constitute a
628 quorum for the transaction of business at any properly called meeting of the Executive Committee.

629
630 6. Proxy. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.

631
632 7. Action Without Meeting. Any action required or permitted to be taken at any meeting
633 of the Executive Committee may be taken without a meeting if prior to such action a written
634 consent (which may be by electronic means) to such action is agreed upon by all members of the
635 Executive Committee and such written consent is filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the
636 Executive Committee. To the extent permitted by law, a written consent shall be deemed to exist
637 when the E-mail address from which the affirmative response is E-mailed corresponds to the
638 address registered for the Board member who is making the response. Written copies of such E-
639 mail responses shall be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Executive Committee.

640
641 8. Conference Call Meetings. Any or all members of the Executive Committee may
642 participate in a meeting of the Executive Committee by means of a conference telephone or similar
643 communications equipment by which all persons participating in the meeting can communicate
with each other. Such participation in this matter constitutes presence in person at the meeting.

644
645 9. Joint Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall join with the Executive
646 Committee of Mennonite Church Canada General Board to form a joint executive committee,
647 meeting at least annually to foster relationships between Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite
Church Canada and to oversee binational partnership programs.

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651 **ARTICLE VIII**

652 **OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES**

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654
655 1. Officers of Mennonite Church USA. The officers of Mennonite Church USA shall consist
656 of a Moderator, Moderator Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and the Executive Director, and such other
657 officers as the Executive Board may designate.

- 658
659 a. The Moderator shall serve as the Chairperson of the Executive Board and shall
660 preside at all meetings of the Executive Board and of the Delegate Assembly.
661
662 b. The Moderator Elect shall serve as the Vice Chairperson and shall serve in the
663 Moderator's place on request or in the absence or disability of the Moderator and
664 shall also serve as the chair of the Constituency Leaders Council.
665
666 c. The Secretary and Treasurer shall be selected biennially by the Executive Board.
667 Their duties shall include those duties provided in these Bylaws, those duties which
668 usually pertain to said respective officers, and those duties which are specifically
669 assigned by the Executive Board from time to time. Any duties specifically assigned
670 by the Executive Board are subject to limitations imposed by the Executive Board.
671 Unless otherwise determined by the Executive Board, the Secretary's duties shall
672 include recording the minutes of the Delegate Assembly, the Executive Board, and
673 the Executive Committee. The Secretary and Treasurer may be removed by the
674 Executive Board at any time, with or without cause. Unless otherwise provided
675 herein, the Secretary and Treasurer will serve for a term of two (2) years and until
676 their successors are elected and shall qualify, unless removed earlier by the
677 Executive Board. In the case of any vacancy in the office of Secretary or Treasurer,
678 the vacancy shall be filled by the Executive Board unless otherwise provided in these
679 Bylaws. No two offices shall be held by the same person at the same time.

680
681 2. Executive Director.

- 682
683 a. The Executive Board shall select and employ an Executive Director as a primary
684 administrative officer who shall be its principal agent in the management of
685 Mennonite Church USA. The Executive Director shall have such qualifications and
686 such general and specific duties as the Executive Board shall assign to the Executive
687 Director from time to time.
688
689 b. The Executive Director shall conduct the administrative affairs of the Executive
690 Board, serve as an officer, and supervise employees of Mennonite Church USA. The
691 Executive Director shall provide oversight for the various offices of the Executive
692 Board which may be established from time to time to carry out the work of
693 Mennonite Church USA.
694
695 c. The Executive Director may give notice of any meeting, either of the Delegate
696 Assembly or the Board, when called in accordance with the provisions of these
697 Bylaws and shall also perform such duties as are customary incident to the office of
698 chief administrative officer and such other duties as shall be directed by the
699 Executive Board.
700

701 3. Associate Executive Directors. The Executive Director may appoint Associate Executive
702 Directors. Such Associate Executive Directors, if any, shall perform in the order established by the
703 Executive Board, the duties of the Executive Director in the case of death, absence, or inability of
704 the Executive Director to act for any cause. The Associate Executive Directors shall further carry out
705 those duties and responsibilities specifically assigned to them by the Executive Board and/or the
706 Executive Director.

707
708 4. Administrative Assistance. Administrative duties consistent with responsibilities of the
709 office may be delegated by the Secretary and the Treasurer to the Executive Director or to various
710 personnel hired by Mennonite Church USA.

711
712 5. Committees. In addition to the Executive Committee, and the Leadership Discernment
713 Committee, the Executive Board may from time to time appoint such standing and special
714 committees as may be necessary and advisable to carry out the work of Mennonite Church USA.

715
716 6. Signature of Documents. For legal purposes, either the Moderator or the Executive
717 Director of Mennonite Church USA, or any other officer or person so authorized by the Executive
718 Board, may sign documents requiring an official signature on behalf of Mennonite Church USA.

719
720
721 **ARTICLE IX**

722
723 **CONSTITUENCY LEADERS COUNCIL**

724
725 1. Constituency Leaders Council. A Constituency Leaders Council shall be organized to
726 serve the Mennonite Church USA as follows:

- 727
728 a. Serve as a council of denominational “elders,” discerning and advising the Executive
729 Board, the Delegate Assembly, and the Mennonite Church USA on issues confronting
730 each of them relative to faith and life.
731
732 b. Engage and promote dialogue between area conferences, recognized constituency
733 groups, and program agencies.
734
735 c. Voice collective aspirations and concerns to denominational leadership.
736
737 d. Provide opportunity for communication between and among program leaders.
738
739 e. Provide counsel to the Executive Board on the admission to or termination of an
740 area conference member of Mennonite Church USA.

741
742 2. Membership. The membership of the Constituency Leaders Council shall be comprised
743 as follows:

- 744
745 a. Up to three (3) representatives appointed by each area conference. Where possible
746 one of these representatives should be an area conference minister.
747 Representatives should be selected to encourage gender/age/Racial/Ethnic balance.
748
749 b. Two (2) representatives appointed by each of the recognized constituency groups of
750 Mennonite Church USA, as determined by the Executive Board from time to time.
751

- 752 c. Each designee by an area conference or associate group shall continue in such role
753 at the pleasure of the appointing body.
754
755 d. All designees to the Constituency Leaders Council shall be members in good standing
756 of a member congregation of Mennonite Church USA.
757
758 e. The Executive Board may, in its discretion, identify new constituency groups and
759 determine the number of representatives therefrom to the Constituency Leaders
760 Council.

761
762 3. Staff and Leadership.
763

- 764 a. The Moderator Elect of the Mennonite Church USA shall preside at all meetings of
765 the Constituency Leaders Council; provided, that if the Moderator Elect is
766 unavailable then the leadership shall be provided by such other person as the
767 Constituency Leaders Council may determine from time to time.
768
769 b. The Chief Administrative Officer shall be the Executive Director, or designee of the
770 same. The Executive Director shall further see that such additional staff as is required
771 by the Constituency Leaders Council is made available to it. Other persons or entities
772 may be invited in accordance with guidelines established by the leadership of the
773 Constituency Leaders Council.
774

775 4. Meetings.
776

- 777 a. Regular meetings of the Constituency Leaders Council shall be held at least once a
778 year and/or at such other times as determined by the Constituency Leaders Council.
779
780 b. Constituency Leaders Council meetings may take place in any physical location or
781 remotely via telephone or other remote communications equipment. The official
782 meeting location will be designated by the Executive Director, or designee of the
783 same.
784
785 c. The Constituency Leaders Council may be called for regular meetings by the
786 Moderator Elect on thirty (30) days notice to each member, either personally by U.S.
787 mail or electronic mail. Addresses for notice shall be those last on file with the
788 Executive Director. Special meetings may be called by the Moderator Elect or
789 Executive Director in a like manner on like notice, and also by written request of a
790 majority of the members of the Constituency Leaders Council.
791

792 **ARTICLE X**
793

794 **CHURCHWIDE PROGRAM AGENCIES AND OTHER PARTNERING ENTITIES**
795

796 Various churchwide program agencies and other designated entities shall assist the
797 Executive Board in providing leadership and resources for carrying out the purposes of Mennonite
798 Church USA. As of the effective date of these Bylaws, the churchwide program agencies of
799 Mennonite Church USA are as identified in this article.
800

- 801 1. Role. The task of the churchwide program agencies and other designated partnering
802 entities is to arrange for the delivery of programs and services that carry out specific churchwide
803 goals. They cooperate and network with other parts of the church around common goals.
804
- 805 2. Governance. Churchwide program agencies and other designated churchwide programs
806 may establish separate governing boards, and such governing boards shall be accountable to the
807 Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA.
808
- 809 a. Accountability. Board members, with accountability to their appointing/electing
810 bodies, are not expected to be representatives of specific constituencies, but are to
811 act in the best interests of Mennonite Church USA as a whole.
812
- 813 b. Collaboration and Coordination. To facilitate communication and collaboration, the
814 agency chairpersons and the agency executive directors meet as necessary in a
815 Governance Council, chaired by the Moderator, with the Executive Director of
816 Mennonite Church USA, to coordinate their work under the leadership of the
817 Executive Board.
818
- 819 3. Churchwide Agencies and Programming.
820
- 821 a. Mennonite Publishing Agency. There shall be a Mennonite Publishing Agency,
822 known as MennoMedia, responsible to both the Executive Board of Mennonite
823 Church USA and the Joint Council of Mennonite Church Canada through the
824 combined Executive Committees of those two bodies. Its purpose is to publish
825 resources for living the faith from an Anabaptist perspective.
826
- 827 b. Mennonite Education Agency. There shall be a Mennonite Education Agency
828 responsible to the Executive Board, its purpose is to:
829
- 830 1) develop and maintain the vision and mission for the short-term and the
831 long-term interests of Anabaptist-Mennonite education.
832
- 833 2) Advocate for the vision and mission of Anabaptist-Mennonite education in
834 church and school.
835
- 836 3) Dismantle systems of racism and oppression in Mennonite Education
837 Agency and the schools.
838
- 839 4) Encourage and enable schools to collaborate in ways that ensure that the
840 common good of Mennonite education.
841
- 842 5) Facilitate cooperation, collaboration, and coordination among Mennonite
843 Church USA, its affiliated education institutions and between these
844 institutions and other MC USA programs.
845
- 846 6) Provide services in support of the missions of the education institutions
847 and Mennonite Church USA.
848
- 849 7) Provide for the establishment and maintenance of accountability and
850 support relationships between the schools and Mennonite Church USA.
851

- 852 c. Mennonite Mission Agency. There shall be a Mennonite Mission Agency, known as
853 Mennonite Mission Network, responsible to the Executive Board. It shall seek to
854 lead, mobilize, and resource Mennonite Church USA to participate in holistic witness
855 to Jesus Christ, so that every congregation and all parts of the church will be fully
856 engaged in God’s mission, reaching from across the street to around the world. In
857 order to accomplish this purpose, the mission agency will:
- 858 1) engage in U.S. and international ministries that show a holistic, Anabaptist
859 approach to mission;
 - 860
 - 861 2) provide vision, skills, and resources for cultivating and starting missional
862 congregations;
 - 863
 - 864 3) call, train, and mobilize leadership for mission;
 - 865
 - 866 4) offer motivation, inspiration, information, theological reflection, and
867 formation for mission; and
 - 868
 - 869 5) generate and distribute financial resources for mission.
 - 870
- 871 d. Mennonite Church USA Stewardship Programming. The Executive Board or its
872 designated ministry partners shall develop programming to lead members of
873 Mennonite Church USA toward greater practice of biblical principles of holistic
874 stewardship. The Executive Board or its designated ministry partners carry out this
875 responsibility by providing programs to assist members in the stewardship of
876 money, health, time, and talents. These will include various educational services,
877 insurance, financial, and charitable programs, and additional stewardship and
878 mutual aid programs and services to be developed in the future.
- 879
- 880 e. Health and Human Services Programming. The Executive Board or its designated
881 ministry partners shall develop programming:
- 882 1) to promote the potential of a Christian community for healing, within
883 Mennonite Church USA and the communities it serves;
 - 884
 - 885 2) to carry out the biblical injunction to enable people toward health,
886 wholeness, and hope; and
 - 887
 - 888 3) to foster new opportunities of service in the arena of Anabaptist health
889 care and human service institutions and programs.
 - 890
- 891 4. Establishment or termination of Churchwide Program Agencies. Churchwide program
892 agencies may be established or terminated as the Executive Board determines from time
893 to time and on such terms and conditions as the Executive Board determines, with the
894 counsel and advice of the Delegate Assembly.
- 895
- 896 5. Requirements for Board Membership.
- 897
- 898 a. Common requirements for the board of directors of each churchwide program
899 agency or appointments to other designated entity include:
 - 900 1) Issues of balance (gender, Racial/Ethnic, expertise) will be respected to the
901 extent feasible in the composition of each board.
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- 2) Each board member shall be elected or appointed for a term of four years and may serve a maximum of three full consecutive terms. Approximately half of the elected members and half of the appointed members shall be chosen every two years.
 - 3) All board members shall be members in good standing of a member congregation of Mennonite Church USA except in cases where board members represent other participating denominations named in bylaws.
- b. The size and selection of the board of the Mennonite Publishing Agency (MennoMedia) shall be as follows:
- 1) The size of the board shall be between six and eleven members. Expansion in the number of members subsequently will be by action of the board of the Agency.
 - 2) Two or three members shall be elected by the Mennonite Church USA Delegate Assembly.
 - 3) Two members shall be appointed by the Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA or its designee.
 - 4) Two or three members shall be appointed by the Joint Council of Mennonite Church Canada, or its designee.
 - 5) All of the above appointments shall be made after consultation with the board of directors and the executive officer of the Mennonite Publishing Agency.
 - 6) Up to three additional members may be selected by the members of the board of the Mennonite Publishing Agency, subject to confirmation by the Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA, or its designee (for persons from MC USA) or by the Joint Council of Mennonite Church Canada, or its designee (for persons from MC Canada).
- c. The size and selection of the board of the Mennonite Education Agency shall be as follows:
- 1) The size of the board shall be not less than five and not more than seven directors.
 - 2) One member shall be appointed by the Executive Board after consultation with the Mennonite Education Agency Board of Directors and Executive Director.
 - 3) One member shall be elected by the Mennonite Church USA Delegate Assembly of Mennonite Church USA.
 - 4) Additional appointments shall be made in accordance with the bylaws of Mennonite Education Agency.
- d. The size and selection of the board of the Mennonite Mission Agency (Mennonite Mission Network) shall be as follows:

- 954 1) The size of the board shall be between thirteen and fifteen members.
955 Expansion in the number of members subsequently will be by action of the
956 board of the Agency.
957
958 2) Seven members shall be elected by the Delegate Assembly.
959
960 3) Six members shall be appointed by the Executive Board after consultation
961 with the board of directors and the executive officer of the Mission Agency.
962
963 4) Up to two additional members may be selected by the elected and
964 appointed members of the Mennonite Mission Agency, subject to
965 confirmation by the Executive Board.
966

967 The memberships of the boards of such other churchwide program agencies or other program
968 entities as the Executive Board may authorize or create shall be determined by the Executive Board
969 from time to time.
970

971 6. Procedures.
972

- 973 a. The boards of churchwide program agencies may be incorporated, unless otherwise
974 approved by the Executive Board. Incorporated boards shall operate under their
975 own articles and bylaws, subject to the qualifications set forth in this article. All
976 articles and bylaws, including amendments, are subject to approval by the Executive
977 Board.
978
979 b. Each board shall meet regularly as a committee of the whole.
980
981 c. Each board shall employ an executive officer subject to policies approved by the
982 Executive Board. Further, any such executive officer shall be approved by the
983 Executive Board before being so appointed and may be removed by the board at any
984 time, with or without cause, upon the approval of the Executive Board.
985
986 d. Each board shall elect in addition to the executive officer appropriate officers in line
987 with its bylaws, where the same exist. Any such additional officers are subject to
988 removal, with or without cause, by the board. However, the Chairperson may be
989 removed, with or without cause, by the Executive Board.
990
991 e. Any board member appointed or elected by the Executive Board or the Delegate
992 Assembly may be removed, with or without cause, by the Executive Board. Any
993 board member selected by the elected and appointed members of the board and
994 confirmed by the Executive Board, may be removed, with or without cause, by the
995 board, upon the approval of the Executive Board.
996
997 f. Each board shall establish and supervise such committees, commissions, task forces,
998 and departmental subdivisions as deemed necessary for the effective and efficient
999 administration of its functions and programs.
1000
1001 g. Unincorporated boards shall operate in accordance with directives and charters as
1002 approved by the Executive Board and which may be amended from time to time by
1003 the unincorporated program agency, subject to approval by the Executive Board.
1004

1005 7. Establishment or termination of Churchwide Program Entities.

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- a. Churchwide program entities may be established or terminated as the Executive Board determines from time to time and on such terms and conditions as the Executive Board determines, and as agreed to in signed agreements between Mennonite Church USA and the program entity to respond to the immediate needs of the members of Mennonite Church USA.

- b. A list of partnering entities shall be determined biennially by the Executive Board, and a list of those entities shall be made available via Mennonite Church USA official channels such as websites, electronic mailing lists, or Executive Board reports to the Delegate Assembly.

ARTICLE XI

AMENDMENTS

- 1. These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of delegates voting at any regular or special session of the Delegate Assembly, upon prior recommendation by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Board, provided a notice setting forth the substance of such amendment has been given in writing to all delegates two months in advance.

- 2. These Bylaws may be amended at any regular session of the Delegate Assembly without prior notice by unanimous vote of delegates present.

- 3. The Secretary may correct the Bylaws for non-substantive errors in the Bylaws, such as errors in spelling, grammar, name changes, or numbering without amendment. These changes are subject to approval of the Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA. Changes that do not materially affect how the Bylaws operate will be considered as non-substantive.

Approved by Nashville Delegates July 2001
Revised by Atlanta Delegates July 2003
Revised by Charlotte Delegates July 2005
Revised by Phoenix Delegates July 2013
Revised by Kansas City Delegates July 2019
Revised by Virtual Delegate Assembly July 10, 2021
Revised by Kansas City Delegates July 2023