

Reimagining Mennonite Church USA

Small Group Discussion Guide



Instructions for Small Groups

Thank you for joining Mennonite Church USA in this season of reimagining. Together, we are seeking to discern how God is calling us to live faithfully into the future. These small-group sessions are designed to help congregations reflect on who we are, what we value, and how we can grow together as a community of faith.

Each of the four videos featuring special guest **John Register** offers a short reflection to spark conversation about change, hope, and God's ongoing work among us. Use this discussion guide to help your group explore these themes and connect them to your own experiences as a congregation.

Our Goal

This process is not just about organizational change—it's about renewing our shared calling as followers of Jesus. Your participation will help shape the future of Mennonite Church USA, grounded in faith, community, and hope.

How to Use This Guide

1. **Gather your group** - Form a small group of 5–10 people. You may choose to meet in Sunday school classes, midweek gatherings, or as part of a leadership retreat.
2. **Watch one video at a time** - There are four short videos. After each one, use the corresponding reflection questions provided in this guide. Allow time for honest sharing, prayer, and listening.
3. **Encourage participation** - Everyone's perspective matters. Invite younger voices, long-time members, and newcomers alike to share their hopes for the church.
4. **Take notes** - As your group discusses, jot down key insights, recurring themes, and questions that emerge. These reflections will help us hear the collective voice of the church.
5. **Share your reflections** - Each congregation is invited to summarize its insights and responses from the four sessions. Send a short summary (no more than one page) to reimagine@mennoniteusa.org by **February 15, 2026**. These reflections will be shared with the **MC USA Structure Review Committee** and the **Executive Board** as part of our ongoing discernment.
6. **Tell your story** - We also encourage you to identify **one story of resilience or renewal** in your congregation—something that reflects God's faithfulness in your life together. Submit it (300 words max) by **February 15, 2026** to reimagine@mennoniteusa.org so we can share testimonies of hope across MC USA.

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Small-Group Discussion Guide — Part 1: Barriers and Hope

Opening Prayer

God of new beginnings, we thank you for your faithfulness through every season of change. Open our hearts to imagine your future for the church. Give us courage to listen, to speak honestly, and to walk together in hope. Amen.

Discussion Questions

1. Barriers to Imagination

What fears or habits make it hard for us, as a congregation, to imagine new ways of being church?

2. Lessons from John Register's Story

John talked about resilience and re-imagining purpose after loss. How might that apply to MC USA's current season?

3. Change vs. Continuity

What traditions or values do we need to carry forward no matter what changes come?

What might we need to release?

4. Our Common Purpose

The bylaws say our purpose is to "join in God's activity in the world." How do we live that out today? What's getting in the way?

5. A Hopeful Horizon

If we picture MC USA in 2035, what does a healthy, Spirit-led denomination look like? What steps could start that journey now?

Small-Group Discussion Guide — Part 2: Courage and Connection

Opening Prayer

Spirit of wisdom, teach us to see your hand at work in both our challenges and our hopes. Help us stay connected as one body even when the road ahead is uncertain. Amen.

Discussion Questions

1. **Unexpected Change**

John talks about how his life changed in ways he couldn't control. When has our church or community faced unexpected change? How did we respond—with fear, faith, or both?

2. **God's Vision, Not Just Ours**

How can we tell when a new idea or direction is truly from God and not just our own preferences or comfort?

3. **Courage to Try**

John said courage isn't the absence of fear, it's acting despite it. Where might our denomination need that kind of courage right now?

4. **Community Over Comfort**

What does it mean to stay connected to one another even when we disagree about the future of the church?

5. **Hope as a Practice**

Where do you see signs of hope in our congregation or in the wider church? How can we nurture that hope together?

6. **God's New Thing**

Isaiah 43:19 says, "See, I am doing a new thing; now it springs up—do you not perceive it?" What new things might God be inviting us to notice and join?

Small-Group Discussion Guide — Part 3: Purpose and Possibility

Opening Prayer

Lord, help us listen for your voice and recognize your leading. Shape our hearts to serve faithfully in a changing world. Amen.

Discussion Questions

1. **Shifting Focus**

John talks about how his purpose changed after loss. How has your understanding of God's call shifted over time? How might Mennonite Church USA's purpose be shifting too?

2. **Redefining Success**

John had to reimagine what "winning" meant. What does "success" look like for a faithful church today?

3. **The Power of Story**

How can sharing our stories of faith and struggle help us imagine a new future for MC USA?

4. **Listening for God's Voice**

What helps us hear God's direction in the middle of many competing voices—inside and outside the church?

5. **Generosity of Spirit**

In what ways might God be calling us to make room for new people, new ideas, or new expressions of faith in our church?

6. **From Individual to Collective Hope**

What's one hope you have for your own spiritual life—and how might that connect to a larger hope for our denomination?

7. **Resilience and Grace**

When things don't go as planned in church life, how can we respond with grace instead of frustration?

Small-Group Discussion Guide — Part 4: Faithful Futures

Opening Prayer

Creator God, you have led your people through wilderness and promise. Lead us now into the future with faith that overcomes fear. Amen.

Discussion Questions

1. **Faith Over Fear**

When the future feels uncertain, what helps you trust God's plan instead of giving in to fear or nostalgia?

2. **Reclaiming Purpose**

John found new purpose after loss. What gives our congregation purpose right now and does that purpose need refreshing?

3. **Faith That Adapts**

How can we hold on to our core beliefs while also being open to new ways of expressing and living them out?

4. **Witness in a Changing World**

What do people in our neighborhood need to see or experience from the Church right now to know that God's love is real?

5. **God's Story, Our Part**

John said each of us has a story worth sharing. What's one way our congregation can tell its story of faith and hope more boldly?

6. **A Church for the Next Generation**

What kind of church do we want to leave for those who come after us—and what will it take to begin building that future today?