

# Community Mennonite Church of Lancaster

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## PART I – INFORMATION

### A. BASIC INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

**Affiliation:** Atlantic Coast Conference of Mennonite Church USA

**Name of Conference overseer:** Warren Tyson

Office address: 2257 Old Philadelphia Pk., Lancaster, PA 17602

**Year congregation first began meeting or was organized:** Fall 1984, organized January 1985

### B. MEMBERSHIP

1) Average Sunday worship attendance during the last 12 months: 215

Highest attendance during that time: 290

Lowest attendance during that time: 130

2) Total current members:

Resident members 174

Non-Resident members 37

Children (non-members) 128

3) Age of members and children - Totals and Percentage

|       | Total | Percent |
|-------|-------|---------|
| 0-12  | 84    | 21%     |
| 13-18 | 43    | 11%     |
| 19-30 | 8     | 2%      |
| 31-45 | 90    | 23%     |
| 46-64 | 138   | 35%     |
| 65+   | 30    | 8%      |

4) Occupational Profile: (from 2006)

|  | Totals |
|--|--------|
| Business/manager/proprietor                | 18     |
| Education/administration/teacher           | 43     |
| Craftsman/laborer/operative                | 10     |
| Medical: doctor/nurse/administration       | 27     |
| Other Professional                         | 34     |
| Homemaker                                  | 15     |
| Clerical/sales                             | 10     |
| Student/VS                                 | 21     |
| Farmer/Rancher                             | 1      |
| Church institution/administration/minister | 19     |
| Retired                                    | 23     |
| Social Work                                | 36     |

5) Educational level of adult attenders (estimate)

|                                  |     |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| Up to and including high school  | 5%  |
| Some college or college graduate | 70% |
| Graduate School                  | 25% |

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

The majority of the congregation is Caucasian, with fewer than twenty that are African/American, Hispanic, East Indian in origin or bi-racial.

**C. COMMUNITY**

1) Character of community your church serves or in which it is located: City of 60,000 that draws from much larger outlying areas, including neighboring counties of York, Lebanon, and Dauphin.

2) Which best describes this community: Growing

3) Describe racial or ethnic composition of the community served by your church: A mixture of traditional Swiss/German population combined with significant pockets of African/American, Hispanic, Jewish, Asian, and other ethnic groups.

4) List two or three primary industries in the community

- \* Armstrong World Industries
- \* High Industries
- \* cnh (Case-New Holland)
- \* R. R. Donnelly Printing
- \* Lancaster General Hospital (growing health care community)

5) Identify other Mennonite/Anabaptist churches in the community: Lancaster city and county has a high concentration of many different such churches. The predominant churches are Lancaster Conference affiliated Mennonite, Church of the Brethren, Brethren in Christ, Old Order Amish, Amish Mennonite, Friends and Atlantic Coast Conference affiliated Mennonite.

6) Name of nearest college or University:

- \* Franklin and Marshall College (F&M)
- \* Lancaster Bible College
- \* Millersville University
- \* Lancaster Theological Seminary
- \* Harrisburg Area Community College
- \* Various extension programs through Eastern Mennonite University, Penn State University, etc.

**In what way does your church relate to this academic community?** A number of attendees are on academic staffs of these institutions. Many persons are involved in degree or continuing education programs.

7) Identify significant issues confronting your community

- \* Land development issues
- \* Increasing traffic congestion
- \* Racial/ethnic relations
- \* Social spending needs vs. minimizing taxation levels
- \* Development in downtown Lancaster

8) Describe what you believe to be distinctive assets of your community

- \* Strong work ethic and low unemployment
- \* Sense of history & community pride
- \* Relatively speaking, a vibrant economy with a diverse business base of manufacturing, agriculture and tourism
- \* The productiveness and beauty of the land
- \* The "the cultural stew"; unique mixture of cultural heritages

- 9) How does your church participate in community affairs and inter-church programs? We work with other area churches in providing "Dinner Out," a monthly special meal for low-income and homeless persons in the city. Pastors relate to ecumenical cluster in our quadrant of the city. We are a member of the Lancaster County Council of Churches. CMCL partners with neighboring Covenant United Methodist Church to provide a before-school program (MOOS—Mornings On Orange Street) for community children whose parents leave for work before school buildings open. CMCL connects with families through Bridge of Hope, a program that brings together professional staff and trained church-based mentoring groups to empower homeless and at-risk single mothers to attain permanent housing and financial self-sufficiency. CMCL has also assisted families referred by Church World Services to find housing and home furnishings.

#### **D. CHURCH ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRAM**

- 1) Identify the primary governing body which represent the congregation.

- \* Congregational Council - meets monthly, 11 members

- 2) Identify five significant leadership/programming bodies

- \* Program Commission – consists of committee chairs who meet bi-monthly. 10 members
- \* Staff Relations – meets as needed, 3 members
- \* Pastoral Team – meets bi-weekly, 4 members plus pastors
- \* Worship Committee – meets monthly, 6 members
- \* Facilities – meets monthly, 6 members
- \* Children & Youth Christian Education – meets as needed, 6 members
- \* Justice & Spirituality (JAS) Committee - meets monthly, 8 members
- \* Small Group Committee – meets monthly, 5 members
- \* Hospitality Committee – meets as needed, 9 members
- \* Adult Christian Ed Committee – meets as needed, 4 members

- 3) Christian Education

Number of Children's Classes: 8  
Number of Youth Classes: 4 (grades 6–12)  
Number of Adult classes: 1–2 (varies, usually elective based)  
Total Christian Ed enrollment: 127 (children & youth)  
Average Total Attendance: 40–70 (adult), 95 (children & youth)

What Curriculum resources are used by these classes?

- Elementary – story telling/activity program developed by staff
- Junior Hi – Fast Track from Mennonite Publishing House
- Senior Hi – Developed by staff
- Electives for the adults – developed by Adult Christian Ed Committee and volunteer leaders

- 4) Describe your youth fellowship: There is a rapidly growing youth group (grades 9–12) and junior youth group (grades 6–8). When young people reach their twelfth birthday, they are assigned to an adult mentor for two years. Mentor pairs and the youth groups are involved in many social and service-oriented activities.

**Does your congregation support and send young people to Mennonite camps, conferences & colleges?** Yes. Youth attend conference-wide activities, camps and service activities. Financial support is available for youth in Mennonite colleges. About half of the youth enroll in Mennonite colleges.

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

Small groups provide socialization and pastoral care for about half of the congregation. Currently 19 small groups are active.

- 6) What men's/women's organizations are active?

- \* Mennonite Men meet monthly and for a spring weekend retreat.
- \* Mennonite Women meet 6–8 times a year and gather for a spring weekend retreat.

7) Other special groups or programs

- \* Junior Youth (grades 6-8) have monthly activities
- \* Senior Youth meet weekly and for special events, retreats, service projects and church-wide conventions.
- \* Venture Club (grades 3-5) meets monthly
- \* Mentoring program; 12 yr. olds are matched with adult mentors for two years.
- \* Knitting group meets regularly to make prayer shawls for persons as a gesture of care.
- \* Monthly GLBT potluck luncheon.

8) What programs designed for outreach to the community does your congregation support and participate in?

- \* Dinner Out—monthly meal for the homeless coordinated by CMCL and 4 other urban churches
- \* See also programs listed in C-9

**In the next five years, do you anticipate a membership increase? Yes**

**Why?** History has shown an increase. Since the sanctuary was filled to capacity on Sunday mornings, we moved to two morning services beginning fall of 1997. CMCL’s ministry is unique in the Lancaster area and has growing attraction to persons of both Mennonite and non-Mennonite backgrounds.

9) Music

Identify Choirs

- \* Jazz Ensemble (one Jazz Sunday per year)
- \* Periodic ad-hoc adult vocal/ instrumental ensembles adult 3-15 participants

Identify musical instruments

- \* George Stein grand piano
- \* Rhythm instruments, drums, maracas, etc.

10) Are there community programs or groups who also utilize your church facilities? Who are they and how often?

- \* Local peace and justice groups hold periodic public meetings.
- \* Lancaster Mediation Center conduct training workshops twice per year.
- \* One musician uses classroom space during the week to give private music lessons.
- \* Philhaven uses facility for an eight week summer day camp program for special needs children.

**E. CHURCH BUILDING AND PROPERTY**

- 1) Seating capacity of sanctuary or worship area - 210
- 2) Date of construction of church building - 1877
- 3) Date of last renovation - 1991

Purchased row house adjacent to church on Orange Street, 1986?

Christian Education wing completed January, 2000

Christian Education ground level finished plus installation of new elevator, 2006

Purchased Grant St. building and parking lot— 2006

**Describe what was done.** The interior of the sanctuary was gutted and remodeled, balcony added, elevator added, air-conditioning installed during 1991 renovation. The row house adjacent to the church on Orange Street was renovated for office use and an upstairs apartment. In 2000, a Christian Education wing was added which provides ten large classrooms. In 2006 the large basement area under the Christian Education wing was finished and provides a significant amount of additional space for Senior and Junior Youth activities as well as general multi-purpose use by the wider congregation. The installation of a new elevator was required prior to our usage of this basement space.

**What if any building/renovation program is needed or projected?** A task force is working on proposals for the use and renovation of the Grant Street building. Many ideas have been discussed ranging from arts-related uses to low-income housing to health-related possibilities..

- 4) Describe the educational facilities. Ground level of main building consists of a large gathering space for coffee hour and conversation (Parrot Café) between the worship services, as well as a newly renovated library area. The Christian Education wing provides 7 classrooms, two offices and a childcare area plus storage areas and restrooms.
- 5) Describe the fellowship and/or recreational facilities. The ground level area of the main building serves as the main dining/fellowship area. The kitchen facilities are in an adjoining room. There is a second small kitchen in the basement level multi-use space.
- 6) Describe the church office location and equipment. The row house next to the church (referred to as the annex) has three first floor rooms for office space and a second story 1-BR apartment that is currently occupied by a sexton. Office equipment includes 3 computers and a photo-copier, miscellaneous desks, chairs, files etc. The lead pastor currently has an office in the classroom in the Christian Ed wing.
- 7) Are building and equipment adequate for an effective program? Describe any special assets or liabilities of the building. Kitchen space and space for fellowship meals is quite small for the size of the congregation. Office space is limited.
- 8) Name the insurance company and describe the coverage for church liability, property, pastor's liability, etc. for the church. The insurance policy is covered by Goodville Mutual. Property coverage: Church building and Christian Ed wing: \$1,267,300; Annex: \$94,300. General Liability Coverage: \$2,000,000; Pastoral counseling professional liability insurance: \$250,000 each occurrence, \$500,000 annual aggregate

## F. CHURCH FINANCES

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

|                           |         |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Christian Education       | 7250    |
| Local Relief and Mission  | 10,500  |
| Worship Committee         | 3,900   |
| Church-wide support       | 32,000  |
| Building and Facility     | 62,000  |
| Debt reduction            | 80,000  |
| Staff salary and benefits | 160,000 |
| Congregational Retreat    | 10,900  |
| Pastoral Care/Crisis Fund | 1,600   |
| Hospitality               | 2,350   |
| Congregational Resource   | 400     |
| Scholarship               | 10,500  |

- 2) Church Budget

**Who makes recommendation regarding pastoral and staff salaries?** Staff relations committee following MC – USA guidelines..

**Who determines church budget or makes recommendations to congregation?**

Budget Committee prepares proposal that is approved by Congregational Council and then recommended to congregation for approval.

**What plan is used to challenge the congregation to Christian stewardship and to raise the budget?** Periodic stewardship sermons. Annual appeal for members and attenders to submit planned giving for upcoming fiscal year. Newly formed Stewardship Committee writes periodic articles in newsletter and prepares Sunday morning input on various aspects of giving to the church.

Current total budget \$415,000

- 3) Is there church indebtedness? Yes. Amount? \$581,000

**How is the budget being reduced?** Annual payments of \$80,000

## G. STAFF

- 1) Identify the present staff positions for which you are seeking a candidate. Lead pastor..
- 2) Name two previous persons in the above position

Pam Dintaman  
Katherine Pitts

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

See Part 2, E-2, Pastoral Transitions.

- 3) Financial support of previous person in the above position. Financial support followed guidelines of Mennonite Church USA.

Projected changes for new positions: Mennonite Church USA guidelines will be used with appropriate adjustments for living in the Lancaster area. .

- 4) Identify other staff

Title: Associate Pastor (f/t)  
Title: Director of Children and Youth (1/2 time)  
Title: Administrative Assistant (1/4 time)-  
Title: Administrative Assistant (1/2 time)-

- 5) Describe housing options for the above position: Is there a parsonage or a housing allowance? Is the person free to choose between these options? A housing allowance for pastor positions has been negotiated in the past.

## PART II INTERPRETATION

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

In early years, many CMCLers came from Anabaptist/Mennonite traditions. In the last 15 years, an increasing number come from other denominations such as Presbyterian, Catholic, Baptist, Lutheran, etc. as well as no church background. Some express surprise to find themselves being active participants in a church. Peace and social justice issues are deemed central to following the way of Jesus and are addressed in worship and congregational life. We affirm the Anabaptist tradition of interpreting scripture in the context of the community of faith.

CMCL strives to be a welcoming place for everyone, regardless of gender, sexual orientation or age. We hope to become a place where individuals of diverse race, ethnic and class backgrounds feel welcome. Many people have come to CMCL out of painful experiences with religious institutions. CMCL attempts to be a safe place for people to worship and grow in their faith. Over the years there has been some movement beyond saying what we don't believe towards claiming what we can now embrace.

**Does your congregation cooperate with and participate in:**

Denomination program: Yes

Area Conference program: Yes, Atlantic Coast Conference

- 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?**

CMCL is a 24-year-old congregation, originally planted by Akron Mennonite Church. CMCL tends to attract individuals who have been exposed to a variety of cultures and care about the larger world community as well as

our local community. Individuals are involved in contributing financially to various ministries as well as giving time and energy in neighborhoods, schools and local agencies. We participate in a monthly Dinner Out program along with other city churches offering a meal to anyone in downtown Lancaster. “Mornings on Orange Street” (MOOS) is in its second year—a before-school safe place for elementary students run jointly with Covenant United Methodist Church. This work brings together a mix of CMCL volunteers across our normal groups of relating.

Interest in the neighborhood surrounding the church is growing. We visited many neighbors this summer and participated in a jointly-planned block party. Buying the “Grant Street building” two years ago has increased our curiosity and the amount of conversations with neighbors.

In recent years we have hosted a Colombian and a Somalian refugee family. Currently we sponsor a Burmese refugee family and a Palestinian mother and her two children through Church World Service. We have a Bridge of Hope group who mentors a single mother living in Lancaster. <http://www.bridgeofhope1cc.org/>

Our youth program includes times of fellowship as well as spiritual nurture and ways we live out our Christian faith. Our teens attend the denominational youth convention every 4 years and are involved in service projects or cross-cultural awareness events at other times. In 2008, 14 youth and 8 adults participated in the SWAP (Sharing With Appalachian People) program. This summer we have 27 youth attending Mennonite Youth Convention. Beyond CMCL youth programs, numerous youth have participated in Witness for Peace summer trips to Nicaragua offered by a member of the congregation.

Two years ago we became a Jubilee Church <http://www.jubileeusa.org/> advocating for the cancellation of debt of impoverished countries. We contribute to this work and write to government leaders expressing our concerns and hopes.

We did an in-depth process of goal-setting in 2001. Out of that process we created the role of Director of Children and Youth Programs responding to the desire for an overall vision and care for CMCL children and youth. In 2007 we began working with David Brubaker, consultant from Eastern Mennonite University. He related to CMCL’s Council and helped the Council move ahead with some minor structural changes. We began working on core values of the congregation and are now bringing that work to conclusion.

**C. What is your view of the pastors’ role in the congregation? Are there special gifts in ministry which you hope to see fulfilled? How do you expect the pastor to be a representative of the congregation?**

Preaching, leadership in worship, leadership in spirituality and developing lay ministry are the primary roles and functions that CMCL expects of its pastors. Short-term counseling and pastoral care, particularly in times of crisis, are also expected. The CMCL structure provides other persons to share in administrative tasks.

There is an expectation that the pastor will support broad based ministry by the laity, helping to empower and release gifts within and beyond the community. CMCL began as a small church where everyone was active in shaping direction and details along with carrying out the work of the church. It is an evolutionary process to grow and have leaders become more central than in early years. We have many people who are leaders in their workplace with skills and ideas, along with being increasingly stretched in their own available time. A pastor or staff person is expected to lead, along with incorporating many good ideas coming from the congregation. Flexibility and listening skills are helpful. The congregation values a pastor who can lead in collaborative work. Proposals become changed and often enriched as others weigh in on the process.

The congregation expects a pastor to value and foster both the inner and outer aspects of the faith journey. The pastors are expected to represent the congregation in denominational, conference and ecumenical areas along with other designated congregational delegates.

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

CMCL is a community of believers called to follow Jesus. In this call we believe the care of and attention to our relationships with each other is an integral part of our faith. Care, concern and encouragement of each individual’s

faith and life quest is important. We believe we are called to respond to human need on both global and local levels. Peace and justice for all is a primary emphasis and we believe this to be a significant part of God's call to Christians. We renew our membership commitments annually.

People value wrestling with questions and acknowledging paradox as part of our Christian faith without needing to come to agreement on every issue. CMCL combines a deep commitment to Christian faith along with respect for and appreciation of other faith traditions. There is a diversity of beliefs in the congregation ranging from those who continue to embrace overtly Christ-centered and Anabaptist beliefs and language, to those who are searching for new religious metaphors and whose theology explores the border spaces of Christian faith.

A high level of congregational participation in worship is valued. Congregants share the roles of worship leader, reading scripture, bringing music and art into our worship times. There are congregational members who participate in preaching. We also plan worship services that integrate stories from congregants.

## **E. Church morale**

### **1. 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?**

In general, communication patterns are good. The congregation is open about concerns/pain, joys and areas of conflict as we strive to respect and value other perspectives and experiences. There are some tensions or polarities that have been acknowledged. (We have a list of those polarities in the congregation out of a 2001 listening exercise.) One of the recurring tensions is between those who want stability and those who like things to change.

In early years, CMCL had a more reactive, oppositional stance to some of the rigidity of past religious backgrounds; more recently we are moving to a more thoughtful stance of identifying who we are as a faith community and what we value together. We try to have intentional conversations with each other; finding settings for those conversation becomes challenging as we grow. We have one congregational meeting annually that has no agenda but is for open conversation. We have also integrated a "dialogue and deliberation" process when we have issues emerge among us or for decisions that call for further discussion.

There is increasing interest in deepening one's personal spiritual life, and more attention has been given to passing on faith to children. Strong friendships and support systems are in place throughout the church. Community is an important part of our theology. Some new attendees report difficulty breaking into the congregation; others say the church is inviting to newcomers. Our annual weekend retreat is well attended and a highlight for fun, discussion and worship.

### **2. Pastoral Transitions**

Vernon Rempel was the first pastor and was at CMCL for ten years. Ron Adams from within CMCL provided a year of interim leadership and then became pastor of East Chestnut Street MC. Michael Chandler came as pastor in 1997 and resigned in 1999 after a complaint of misconduct was investigated and confirmed by the conference. A congregational Recovery Team fostered the healing process by individual conversations, congregational listening meetings, and bringing in outside resource persons. Although there were some varied responses to the process (whether the conference should have been involved, whether Michael was treated fairly in the elongated process) the congregation was able to move forward.

Ann Showalter served as an interim pastor the following year. With several pastoral changes and gaps between pastors, the pastoral team of elders was active in providing lay pastoral leadership. Katherine Pitts and Pam Dintaman served as co-pastors beginning in 2001. Katherine resigned in May of 2004 and left in late June of 2004. The congregation reviewed Katherine's concerns including congregational identity questions. Eighteen months later the congregation confirmed Pam Dintaman as lead pastor. Pam worked as a solo pastor until Chad Martin was hired in June of 2007 as Associate Pastor. Pam gave notice in November of 2008 and is leaving at the end of August 2009.

**F. What changes or trends do you envision for the congregation over the next 5 years? Do you have any other comments significant in the process of looking for new pastoral leadership?**

We have two worship services because of the limited size of our sanctuary. In the first few years this was difficult for people who experienced grief at not knowing everyone anymore. Many people now identify with a particular worship service. Having two services presents challenges. We lose some of the organic mutual care; people don't know if someone has been missing for weeks or months, assuming they may be in the other service. With increased fluidity in Sunday attendance, it becomes more challenging to find worship leadership for a particular Sunday. Sundays become full for pastoral staff—being involved in two worship services as well as some participation in Christian Education classes.

We regularly have new people coming but with the increasingly sporadic attendance of many people our numbers for worship stay somewhat steady. We have an increasing growth in numbers of people participating in small groups. Many in the congregation have noted that the spiritual vitality of the congregation continues to thrive and grow.

There is an increasing sense and understanding of spiritual nurture being integrated with peace and justice concerns. Our ways of reaching out beyond ourselves are increasing in number.