MENNONITE CHURCH USA
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Approved by the Executive Board, February 12, 2016

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MENNONITE CHURCH USA
Policies for the Executive Board
February 12, 2016

CATEGORY I: ENDS (policies that answer these three questions: (1) what good? (results, outcomes, difference), (2) for which people? (recipients), (3) at what cost?)

1.0 Global Ends Statement

The purpose of our Missional Church: Joining in God’s activity in the world, we develop and nurture missional Mennonite congregations of many cultures. (Eph. 3:1-13; Article 9 Confession of Faith)

All parts of Mennonite Church USA, united in vision and purpose, are committed to the ENDS that are stated in the document titled “Desiring God’s Coming Kingdom: A Missional Vision and Purposeful Plan for Mennonite Church USA.” This document, which may be updated from time to time by the Executive Board and the delegates to the biennial convention, is hereafter referred to as the Purposeful Plan. The Purposeful Plan clearly states the desire of Mennonite Church USA to become a missional church, and names seven priorities that the church will pursue across all levels of the church. Further, the 13 congregational outcomes or signposts of a missional church are most clearly delineated on pages 5-7 of the February 2012 version of the Purposeful Plan.

The Purposeful Plan functions as the Executive Board’s most complete statement of the strategic outcomes and goals it pursues on behalf of the whole of Mennonite Church USA. Therefore, the Executive Board will give focused attention to maintaining the Purposeful Plan as a current document, and to monitor the performance of the Executive Director in achieving the ENDS stated therein.

CATEGORY II: GOVERNANCE PROCESS (policies that establish standards of group and individual behavior)

2.0 Global Governance Commitment

The purpose of the Executive Board, on behalf of Mennonite Church USA, is to see to it that Mennonite Church USA (1) achieves appropriate results for appropriate persons at an appropriate cost and (2) avoids unacceptable actions and situations.

2.1 Governing Style

The Executive Board will govern with an emphasis on (1) outward vision rather than internal preoccupation, (2) encouragement of diversity of viewpoints with a clearly stated core of beliefs, (3) strategic leadership more than administrative detail, (4) clear distinction between board and Executive Director executive roles, (5) collective rather than individual decisions, (6) future rather than past or present orientation and (7) proactivity rather than reactivity.
2.1.1 Board members will recognize that the external organization for which the board provides leadership and networking is a spiritual organism that calls for spiritual perspectives and disciplines. The Executive Board operates with a spiritual center.

2.1.1.1 The Executive Board will function as a community of faith that provides spiritual leadership by blending biblical-theological reflection, Anabaptist perspectives, prayerful discernment and a vision of God’s redemptive intent for the world.

2.1.1.2 As a faith community, the Executive Board will regard the Spirit of God to be central to all that is planned, done and said.

2.1.1.3 Since the Executive Board functions as a community of faith within the larger Mennonite Church USA community of faith, the mission of the larger church becomes the board’s mission: “Joining in God’s activity in the world, we develop and nurture missional Mennonite congregations of many cultures.”

2.1.2 Policy will be informed by every part of the church, but the final product will promote the vision and mission of the whole church.

2.1.3 All members of the Executive Board will cherish diversity and value disagreement among themselves, encouraging a safe environment for vigorous discussions of issues on the agenda.

2.1.4 The Executive Board will cultivate a sense of group responsibility. Individual expertise, perspectives, values and representation linkages will be respected, but ultimately all the individual contributions must be dedicated to enhance the ability of the board and the church as a whole. The board and the staff will collaborate to produce excellence in governing. In order to encourage creative thinking, members of either board or staff may initiate a policy to be considered by the full board. The board will not allow any officer, individual, or committee of the board to hinder the fulfillment of board commitments.

2.1.5 The Executive Board will direct, control, and inspire Mennonite Church USA through the careful establishment of broad written policies reflecting the vision, mission and core values of the church. The board will seek to maintain a careful distinction between means and ends, and give its primary attention to ends while also monitoring means as needed. Since it is a leadership board rather than a management or representative board, the board will focus on the identification of intended long-term effects on the whole of Mennonite Church USA, rather than the administrative or programmatic means of attaining these effects.

2.1.6 The Executive Board will enforce upon its members whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. Discipline will apply to matters such as attendance, preparation, policy-making principles and respect of roles in order to ensure continuance of governance capability. Continual board development will include orientation of new board members in the board’s governance process and periodic discussion of process improvement.

2.1.7 The Executive Board will monitor and discuss the board’s process and performance at each meeting. Self-monitoring will include comparison of board activity and discipline to policies in the Governance Process and Board-Executive Director Linkage categories.
2.2 Board Job Description

The job of the board is to represent Mennonite Church USA in determining and enabling appropriate organizational performance.

2.2.1 The Executive Board will serve as the link between Mennonite Church USA and its members. In doing so it will:

2.2.1.1 Gain a clear understanding of members’ interests as owners so that their expectations are considered as ends policies are developed. To do this effectively, the board will strive to develop appropriate attitudes, data sources, and levels of personal involvement.

2.2.1.2 Provide for collaboration between all parts of the church, encouraging and enabling initiatives in many different settings, achieving results for the whole church.

2.2.1.3 Give its energies to support the well-being of each part of the church and create opportunity for interdependence between all parts, to achieve the ends for Mennonite Church USA.

2.2.2 The Executive Board will expect its individual members to make the following commitments to assure that the board as a whole can govern well:

2.2.2.1 Support the mission, vision and values of Mennonite Church USA

2.2.2.2 Regularly attend board meetings and other board events as scheduled

2.2.2.3 Prepare for meetings and be informed on issues and agenda items

2.2.2.4 Contribute skills, knowledge and expertise as appropriate

2.2.2.5 Participate in board decision-making

2.2.2.6 Maintain confidentiality as appropriate

2.2.2.7 Support the organization financially according to their means

2.2.2.8 Assume leadership roles in board activities as needed

2.2.2.9 Represent the organization to external constituencies as appropriate, and stay in communication with the area conference to which they belong

2.2.2.10 Keep up to date with the organization and its services

2.2.2.11 Take advantage of learning opportunities and resources related to the fields of board development and governance

2.2.2.12 Abide by the Code of Ethics and Conduct for Board Members

2.2.2.13 Pray regularly for the Executive Board and the broader church, with its mission and services

2.2.2.14 Exercise legal and fiduciary responsibilities

2.2.3 The board will produce written governing policies that, at the broadest levels, address each category of organizational decision.

2.2.3.1 Ends: Outcomes/results, recipients, relative worth. What good, for which recipients, at what cost? (Example: Healthy congregations.)

2.2.3.2 Executive Limitations: Constraints on executive and agency authority that establish prudent and ethical boundaries within which all executive activity and decisions must take place.
2.2.3.3 **Governance Process**: Specification of how the board conceives, carries out, and monitors its own task.

2.2.3.4 **Board-ED/Agency Linkage**: How power is delegated and its proper use monitored; the Executive Director role, authority, and accountability; the Program Agency role, authority, and accountability.

2.2.4 The board will produce assurance of Executive Director performance particularly in relation to **Ends and Executive Limitations** policies. The board will produce assurance of churchwide program agency performance in relation to Agency Ends.

2.2.5 The board will direct its primary energies towards a future orientation through the determination of organizational philosophies and priorities. The board monitors organizational performance at the macro level for consistency with board-determined policies and philosophies, but does not spend substantial portions of time receiving and processing reports which are properly delegated to executive staff oversight.

### 2.3 Agenda Planning

To accomplish its leadership role in Mennonite Church USA with a governance style consistent with board policies, the Executive Board will follow an annual agenda that (1) re-explores Ends policies and (2) continually improves board performance through board education that enriches input and deliberation.

2.3.1 The agenda cycle of biennial Executive Board meetings will begin with the first meeting following the delegate assembly. The board will agree on the general framework of its agenda for the biennium at its first meeting. The board will ultimately determine the agenda in a collaborative engagement with staff. Board members may feel free to suggest items for discussion to the Moderator. The board will organize its agenda to obtain sufficient input and feedback from owners to revise and update the Purposeful Plan at the end of each biennium, based on feedback or action by the delegates in the assembly.

2.3.1.1 The board will arrange for consultations or other methods of gaining ownership input with selected groups in Mennonite Church USA during each biennium. These consultations will then be implemented during the balance of the biennium.

2.3.1.2 Also in the first six months of the biennium, the board will arrange for education related to governance and Ends determination.

2.3.2 Throughout the biennium, the board will expeditiously attend to consent agenda items, such as personnel issues, affirming initiatives, and other matters where it is anticipated there is broad consent without discussion.

2.3.3 Executive Director monitoring will be included on the agenda if monitoring reports show policy violations or if policy criteria are to be debated.

### 2.4 Record keeping

To monitor the progress of the board toward its stated ENDS and to monitor its decision-making processes, the board shall keep a careful record of its deliberations.

2.4.1 The board shall designate a secretary to keep minutes of all its meetings, both of the Executive Committee and the full board. These minutes may be maintained and
distributed at the discretion of the Executive Director. The board secretary shall serve as a member of the Executive Committee. The minutes of the Executive Committee shall generally be shared with the full board as soon as they can be made available. When meetings of the Executive Committee take place during a meeting of the full board, their actions or deliberations may be reported orally. At times, the Executive Committee may choose not to share its minutes with the board, e.g. when they deal with sensitive personnel issues. In such cases, the board secretary shall be the official record keeper of the minutes.

2.4.2 The board shall keep appropriate records of any deliberations or actions taken while meeting in an Executive Session of the board. These records shall be maintained in the same way as regular board meetings, except when the board meets without any staff and deals with personnel matters. Such minutes may be maintained in a separate place by the board secretary. When an executive session or closed session is deemed necessary, the board will:
a) act on a motion during an open meeting to go into an executive or closed session, or if the session appears in the printed agenda, no motion will be required.
b) report the results of the session immediately following its conclusion and record them in the minutes.

2.4.3 The board may empower the Executive Director to communicate the highlights of board meetings to staff and others who would benefit by receiving a more detailed account than is normally conveyed by media agencies.

2.4.4 To encourage transparency and to signal its accountability to the church and the broader public, the board may invite church media representatives to observe and report on full board meetings. The board reserves the right to review the reports of church media before they are published to assure that they honor the board’s policies regarding the quoting of individual board member opinions versus the stating of explicitly stated board decisions.

2.5 Moderator’s Role

The moderator (board chair) assures the integrity of the Executive Board’s process and, secondarily, occasionally represents the board to outside parties.

2.5.1 The job result of the moderator is that the board behaves consistently with its own policies and those constraints legitimately imposed upon it from outside the organization.

2.5.1.1 Meeting discussion content will be generally limited to those issues which, according to board policy, clearly belong to the board to decide, not the Executive Director. However, the Executive Director may bring matters to the board for counsel, particularly matters of sensitivity across the church.

2.5.1.2 Deliberation will be fair, open, and thorough but also timely, orderly, and focused on the issue at hand.

2.5.1.3 To encourage greater participation, the Moderator may divide the board into smaller units for parts of the board discussion. The Moderator may choose to draw other attendees into the discussion as appropriate.

2.5.1.4 The moderator may draw upon the expertise of individuals or groups on the board by inviting them to prepare materials for discussion by the full board.
2.5.2 The authority of the moderator consists in making decisions that fall within topics covered by board policies on Governance Process and Board-Executive Director Linkage, except where the board specifically delegates portions of this authority to others. The moderator is authorized to use any reasonable interpretation of the provisions in these policies.

2.5.2.1 The moderator is empowered to chair board meetings, with all the commonly accepted power of that position (for example: ruling and recognizing). When necessary, the moderator will conduct business in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order.

2.5.2.2 The moderator has no authority to make decisions about policies created by the board within Ends and Executive Limitations policy areas. Therefore, the moderator has no authority to direct the Executive Director.

2.5.2.3 The moderator receives grievances, in accordance with staff personnel policies, and assures that they are adequately addressed.

2.5.2.4 The moderator may represent the board to outside parties by explaining board-stated positions and by interpreting chair decisions within the area delegated to her or him.

2.5.2.5 The moderator may delegate authority as deemed appropriate but remains accountable for the results of such delegation.

2.6 Board Members’ Code of Conduct

The Executive Board commits itself and its members to upholding the core values of Mennonite Church USA and to conducting its affairs in ethical, businesslike, and lawful ways, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as board members.

2.6.1 Board members must demonstrate strong loyalty to the overall purpose and interests of the membership of Mennonite Church USA. This accountability supersedes any conflicting loyalty such as that to advocacy or interest groups and membership on other boards or staffs. It also supersedes the personal interest of any board member acting as a recipient of the services of Mennonite Church USA agencies and programs.

2.6.2 Board members must avoid conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility.

2.6.2.1 When the board is to decide upon an issue about which a member has an unavoidable conflict of interest, that member shall absent herself or himself from not only the vote but also from the deliberation. This may include situations where a member of the board has a relationship (blood kinship, marriage, family connections, or business partnership) with a member of the staff that would compromise impartiality in the deliberations. Board members are encouraged to alert the board chair when there appears to be a conflict of interest, either for themselves or others.

2.6.2.2 Board members must not use their positions to obtain employment within the organization for themselves, family members, or close associates. Should a member be invited to accept such employment, he or she must first resign from the board.
2.6.2.3 There must be no self-dealing or any conduct of private business or personal services between any board member and the organization except as procedurally controlled to assure openness, competitive opportunity, and equal access to inside information.

2.6.2.4 Annually board members will disclose their involvements with other organizations, vendors, or any other associations that might produce a conflict. Members of the Executive Board are not eligible to simultaneously serve on the board of a program agency.

2.6.3 Executive Board members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization except as explicitly set forth in board policies.

2.6.3.1 In their interaction with the Executive Director or with staff, board members must recognize that they lack board authority as individuals except when explicitly board-authorized. Board members will not interfere with the Executive Director’s duties, in day-to-day management, or undermine his or her authority with staff members.

2.6.3.2 Members’ interactions with the public, the press, or other entities must recognize the same limitation and the inability of any board member to speak for the board except to repeat explicitly stated board decisions.

2.6.3.3 Board members will not speak publicly against fellow board members, the Executive Director, the staff, or the decisions made by the Executive Board as a body.

2.6.4 Members will respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature, and will not discuss the confidential workings of the board outside the boardroom.

2.6.5 Participation in regular board meetings is one of the most important responsibilities of a board member. Therefore, the board expects that all board members will arrange to attend all regularly scheduled meetings from beginning to end. Those who miss more than three board meetings within a four-year period will not be considered for reappointment. The only exception to this policy shall be by prior arrangement with the board chair or in circumstances beyond the board member’s control, such as serious illness or the death of a family member.

2.6.6 The Board Development Committee is responsible to monitor and respond to issues related to board members’ compliance with this code of conduct.

2.7 Executive Board Member Qualifications

Executive board members must agree to adhere to the Code of Conduct. They are selected with the expectation that they will work toward improving their board performance based on the following qualifications:

2.7.1 Commitment to the owners of Mennonite Church USA.

2.7.1.1 Board members recognize God as the ultimate owner, and commit to discern both what God is doing in Mennonite Church USA and what God is calling Mennonite Church USA to become.

2.7.1.2 Board members are agents of the owners, and must be committed to that trust.

2.7.1.3 Board members will find ways to involve owners in shaping expectations for Mennonite Church USA.
2.7.2 Ability to make decisions in the best interests of the entire ownership rather than a single constituency. Board members must not publicly work against the board’s decisions even though they may personally disagree with it.

2.7.3 Skills, expertise, and experience in areas that add value to the Executive Board’s work. As board members provide effective leadership and governance for all parts of Mennonite Church USA, skills and experience in the following areas will be especially useful: organizational leadership, theology, business ownership and management, education, mission, finance, pastoral ministry.

2.7.4 Ability and eagerness to deal with values, vision, and the long term. Board members should be able to tolerate dealing with issues that cannot be settled quickly.

2.7.5 Capacity to think in terms of systems and context. Board members should be drawn naturally to the harmony of the whole rather than focusing their attention on parts.

2.7.6 Ability to participate assertively and intelligently in deliberation.

2.7.7 Willingness to delegate; allowing others to make decisions.

2.7.8 Appreciation of the diversity among board members. Mennonite Church USA’s diversity includes age, gender, geographical location, ethnicity, skills, and experience.

2.7.8.1 Members listen to and respect the contribution of each board member.

2.7.8.2 Members share convictions, advice, and opinions based on personal experience and skills.

2.7.9 Membership in good standing in a congregation belonging to Mennonite Church USA.

2.7.10 Commitment to ongoing learning activities to build skills and understandings enabling a greater contribution to the board’s work.

2.8 Board Committee Principles

*Board committees, when used, will be assigned so as to reinforce the wholeness of the board’s job and so as never to interfere with delegation from board to the Executive Director.*

2.8.1 The purpose of board committees is to help the board do its job, not to advise or assist the staff. In keeping with the board’s broader focus, board committees will not normally deal with current staff operations. Committees will ordinarily assist the board by preparing policy alternatives and implications for board deliberation. In so doing, board members with special expertise direct their skills toward helping other board members gain a better understanding of policy options without interfering in the responsibilities of staff.

2.8.2 Board committees may not speak or act for the board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Such authority will be carefully granted so as not to conflict with authority delegated to the Executive Director.

2.8.3 Board committees may not exercise authority over staff. Because the Executive Director works for the full board, he or she will not be required to obtain approval from a board committee before taking an executive action.

2.8.4 Board committees must avoid over-identification with organizational parts rather than the whole.

2.8.5 Committees will be used only for the duration of usefulness to the board.

2.8.6 This policy applies to any group that is formed by board action, whether or not it is called a committee and regardless whether the group includes board members. It does not apply to committees formed under the authority of the Executive Director.
2.9 Board Committee Structure

The initial committees of the Executive Board will have responsibilities as defined below. From time to time, the board may create other committees with limited life and mandate. The Executive Director is responsible to assign staff to facilitate the work of each committee.

2.9.1 Executive Committee

The Executive Committee empowers the board to understand, engage and discern ends that need to be determined to advance the Purposeful Plan and the vision/purpose of Mennonite Church USA. It facilitates the work of the board as a committee of the whole, to the end that all board members take full ownership for the issues before the board and engage in the discernment of direction. The Executive Committee will arrange for small group discernment during board meetings around appropriate agenda items. It will also appoint an audit task force and a task force to counsel with the Leadership Discernment Committee on behalf of the board. Both of these task groups will report their work to the board so the whole board owns the work they have done outside of board meetings.

Further, the Executive Committee prepares and prioritizes agenda items for the board’s attention, attends to detail not requiring full board deliberation, acts for the Executive Board as necessary between regular meetings of the board, and meets at least annually with the Executive Committee of Mennonite Church Canada to oversee binational partnership programs.

2.9.1.1 Composition. The Executive Committee consists of the Moderator, Moderator Elect, and three other members, named by the Moderator Elect shortly before the biennium in which they would serve, and approved by the remaining members of the Executive Board. One of those three shall be designated as the board’s Secretary. (Note: While the bylaws give the Executive Board latitude to appoint one of its own members as Treasurer, the Board has chosen to ask the Executive Director to appoint a staff member to serve as Treasurer, with accountability to the board through the Executive Director.) Executive Committee terms are for two years, and, except for the positions of Moderator and Moderator Elect, may be renewed by action of the Executive Board for as long as the member is otherwise eligible to serve on the Executive Board. The Moderator chairs the Executive Committee.

2.9.1.2 Duties

a. To give advice/counsel to the Executive Director as requested (e.g. dealing with sensitive personnel issues)

b. To assist in board agenda formation and planning

c. To initiate search procedures in the appointment of the Executive Director and procedures for the evaluation of the performance of the Executive Director

d. To work with the task force relating to the Leadership Discernment Committee to review the list of candidates for Executive Board appointment to seats on agency boards.

e. To appoint or propose to the full board a list of candidates for search committees, task forces or other special appointments
To authorize joint ministries with Mennonite Church Canada and to foster relationships with Mennonites worldwide.

g. To monitor educational and strategic efforts among board and churchwide activity to achieve the priority of anti-racism and inter-cultural transformation as part of every board meeting.

h. To oversee the monitoring and reporting plan regarding compliance with the board’s Executive Laminations policies.

i. To engage the board to identify special talents and perspectives needed on the Executive Board and recommend potential board appointees to the Leadership Discernment Committee.

j. To insure that owners are heard through various means.

k. To recommend to the board external vendors (accounting firm, legal counsel, etc.)

l. To plan, facilitate and report regular self-assessment exercises by the full board and by individual members of the board, and to monitor and respond to the Board Members Code of Conduct.

m. To insure that the board is engaged in capacity building/training activities/teachings.

n. To recommend changes in policies or new policies for board consideration.

o. To organize and manage the monitoring systems for Ends, most particularly the Purposeful Plan so that performance reporting is provided for the board in a timely basis and to engage the board in making changes in the Ends statements to more fully meet the expectations of the owners.

p. To design and implement an orientation process for new board members, which may be accomplished through the appointment of a task group.

2.9.2 Audit Committee Charter

2.9.2.1 Committee Role

The committee’s role is to act on behalf of the Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA (EB) and oversee all material aspects of the organization’s financial reporting, internal control and audit functions. The Audit Committee reviews the work of the finance department and reports to the Executive Board the fiscal condition of the EB staff managed finances. It shall also recommend any fiscal controls or changes in the finance office that should be considered to insure the fiscal sustainability of the EB staff managed finances.

2.9.2.2 Committee Membership

This committee consists of members of the EB and may also include a community member. The committee membership is approved by the Executive Committee of the Board. No committee member shall be an employee of the organization. At least one member, preferably the chair, should be literate in nonprofit accounting and financial reporting, risks and internal controls, knowledge of nonprofit tax and regulatory requirements, and should have the past or current employment experience in finance or accounting, or other comparable experience or background.

2.9.2.3 Committee Operating Principles

Principles specific to audit committee responsibilities include:
a. **Communications.** The Chair and others on the committee shall, to the extent appropriate, maintain an open avenue of contact throughout the year with senior management as applicable, to strengthen the committee’s knowledge or relevant current and prospective organization issues.

b. **Meeting Agenda.** Committee meeting agendas shall be the responsibility of the committee chair, with input from the committee members. It is expected that the chair would also ask management and key committee advisors to participate in this process.

c. **Meeting attendees.** The committee shall request members of the finance staff and external auditors, as applicable, to participate in committee meetings, as necessary, to carry out the committee’s responsibilities.

d. **Meeting frequency.** The committee shall include at least once a year specific audit committee agenda in their meeting at regularly schedule meetings of the EB. Additional meetings shall be scheduled as considered necessary by the EB, the committee, or the chair.

e. **Reporting to the board of directors.** The committee, through the committee chair, shall report periodically, as deemed necessary, but at least once a year, to the full board. In addition, summarized minutes from committee meetings shall be available to each board member prior to the subsequent meeting of the board of directors.

### 2.9.2.4. Committee Responsibilities

#### a. Financial Reporting

- Review and assess the financial statements before they are released to the public or filed with funders or regulators.
- Review and assess the key financial statement issues and risks, their impact or potential effect on reporting financial information, the processes used by management to address such matters, related auditors’ views, and the basis for audit conclusions.
- Recommend a decision on acceptance of the Audit Report to the Board of Directors.

#### b. Risks and Controls

- Review and assess the organization’s operating and financial risk management process.

#### c. External Auditors

- Approve the selection of the external auditors.
- Approve audit procedures and scope of audit.
- Instruct the external auditors that they are responsible to the EB and the audit committee as representatives of the organization. Review the performance of the external auditors.
- Review audit preliminary audit results with management and the external auditors.
- Provide a medium for the external auditors to discuss with the audit committee their judgments about the quality, not just the acceptability, of accounting principles and financial disclosure practices used or proposed to be adopted by the organization.
d. Other

- Review and update the committee’s charter
- Conduct or authorize investigations into any matters within the committee’s scope of responsibilities.

2.10 Relationship to Agencies and Entities Accountable to the Executive Board

Because the Executive Board is charged with giving leadership to and acting on behalf of the denomination when the Delegate Assembly is not in session, it has accountability for the results of all entities of Mennonite Church USA organized at the denominational level. In order to foster denominational unity of vision and mission, and to effectively coordinate the whole of denominational actions, the Executive Board carries out its mandate with other entities of the denomination in the following ways:

2.10.1 Governance Council

2.10.1.1 The Moderator of the Executive Board calls together and chairs the Governance Council, a meeting comprising at least the following individuals: 1) the Moderator-Elect of the Executive Board, 2) the Executive Director and appropriate staff, and 3) the chairs and CEOs of the churchwide agencies/organizations.

2.10.1.2 The Governance Council shall meet at least annually for the purpose of coordinating the work of the agency boards with the overall work of the Executive Board. Such meetings may be held in conjunction with the Executive Board as appropriate.

2.10.1.3 The meetings of the Governance Council shall include at least the following: 1) times of open sharing by the various persons and entities regarding personal and corporate concerns, 2) clarification of inter-agency expectations and relationships as set forth in each board’s governance procedures, 3) discussion of insights gained through interaction with owners, 4) giving and receiving of mutual counsel, and 5) coordination of communication efforts in order to present one voice to the church, such as joint reporting to churchwide assemblies.

2.10.2 Constituency Leaders Council (CLC)

2.10.2.1 The Moderator-Elect of the Executive Board serves as the Chair of the CLC and through this role represents Executive Board interests in the CLC agenda formation process. The Moderator-Elect speaks on behalf of the Executive Board at CLC meetings only to the extent that the Executive Board has taken a position on an issue through its policies or other board-owned statements (e.g., as documented in Executive Board minutes).

2.10.2.2 Groups sending representatives to CLC meetings are responsible to meet their own representatives' travel expenses. As staff to CLC, the Executive Director will include provision for CLC expenses in the Executive Board budget, in consultation with CLC leadership.
2.10.3.1 Beyond those elected directly by the Delegate Assembly, the Executive Board appoints members to churchwide program agency/entity boards and establishes the expectations for accountability to the Executive Board. This is done according to bylaw provisions, in consultation with each of the respective program agency/entity boards with assistance from the Leadership Discernment Committee as requested by the Executive Board. The Executive Board also confirms the additional board members co-opted by the program agency/entity board itself, as identified by bylaw provisions.

2.10.3.2 The Executive Board’s Executive Director or his/her designee holds ex officio status as a non-voting participant in all program agency/entity board meetings, but not including executive sessions, and functions as the official Executive Board point of connection to the Program Agencies/Entities. The Executive Director or designee of each program agency/entity holds ex officio observer status at Executive Board meetings, but not including executive sessions.

2.10.3.3 Agency Board accountability is described in policy 3.5. Communication between boards is expected to occur on a regular basis. The main benefit of board-to-board communication is to enhance synergy through shared information related to Ends and owner expectations. This communication takes place through the Governance Council, and through the presence of Agency representatives (generally Agency Executive Director or agency board chair) meeting with the Executive Board.

2.10.3.4 The Executive Board participates in the search process for a new program agency/entity chief executive officer by naming member(s) to participate in the search process. In addition, the Executive Director of the Executive Board is an ex officio member of each such search process. The full Executive Board shall carry the responsibility for final confirmation of program agency/entity CEO hiring decisions, upon recommendation from the program agency/entity boards. Executive Board confirmation shall occur prior to any public announcement of a new CEO selection.

2.10.3.5 The Executive Board sees to it that there are periodic performance reviews of program agency/entity chief executive officers through its Executive Director or designee, who is an ex officio member of each such review process. The primary purpose of the board’s involvement is to assure that a regular and healthy process of review is conducted, confirmed by an official report of such reviews.

2.10.3.6 Each of the churchwide program agency/entity boards carries responsibility for the internal operations of its program, except for the following powers reserved for the Executive Board:

a) to approve the appointment or dismissal of the chief executive officer of each agency/entity, and

b) to review the agencies/entities, including program priorities, annual budgets, fundraising procedures, and major innovations and modifications of church programs and policies regarding the incurring of debt.
2.10.3.7 A complete copy of each program agency/entity’s audited financial reports, plus the auditor’s management letter, shall be provided to the Executive Board annually.

2.10.4 Leadership Discernment Committee

The Executive Board carries out its nominating functions in coordination with the Leadership Discernment Committee. Executive Board member appointments will be processed through the Leadership Discernment Committee, who will evaluate the candidates according to agreed upon criteria.

The Board Development Committee will work with the Leadership Discernment Committee in the appointment of the Executive Board members appointed by the Executive Board itself as outlined in 2.9.3. Staff shall be responsible for determining how and when to release and publicize such information.

In the selection of the Moderator-elect, the Leadership Discernment Committee shall submit the candidate’s name to the Moderator for Executive Board approval. The Executive Board shall then seek the affirmation of the Constituency Leaders Council before making a public announcement. If in its judgment after such a process the Executive Board does not consider the nominee to be well suited for the role for any reason, it may request the Leadership Discernment Committee to submit a different name for consideration.

2.11 Cost of Governance

Poor governance costs the organization more than learning to govern well, so the board will invest in its governance capacity. Accordingly,

2.11.1 The board will seek sufficient skills, methods, and supports to assure that it can govern with excellence.

2.11.2 Training and retraining will be used liberally to orient new members and candidates for membership, as well as to maintain and increase member skills and understandings.

2.11.3 Outside monitoring assistance will be arranged so that the board can exercise confident control over organizational performance. This includes but is not limited to fiscal audit.

2.11.4 Outreach mechanisms will be used as needed to ensure the board’s ability to listen to the wider church membership’s viewpoints and values.

2.11.5 Costs for board development will be prudently incurred, yet in sufficient amounts to assure the development and maintenance of superior capability.

2.12 Board Interaction With Media

2.12.1 To demonstrate its accountability to the delegate body, the board shall conduct its meetings in an open manner, consistent with an understanding of the church as a discerning Christian community.
2.12.2 Most meetings of the board shall be open to church members, invited guests, staff, media, and other visitors who wish to attend and observe the work of church leaders. This is particularly true where the board meets in a community where there are constituent congregations of Mennonite Church USA in the near vicinity.

2.12.3 Apart from its open meeting, the board may choose to meet in a brief executive session to address personnel and legal issues. An executive session includes Executive Board members and others whom the board chooses to invite.

2.12.4 Again, apart from its open meeting, the board may occasionally call for a closed session when its members wish to address sensitive issues in a more secure forum. Closed sessions are called for discussion only, not for decisions or actions. Like executive sessions, closed sessions will include only Executive Board members and others the board chooses to invite. The board may determine that all or certain matters discussed in the closed session be deemed

• Off the record (no news reporting), or
• For background purposes only (contents of the meeting reported for news purposes in a general way but without specific attribution)

2.12.5 The role of *The Mennonite* and other denominational-related periodicals in this setting is to communicate the work of the Executive Board to church members. Other media outside the church – both broader religious and secular – may at times be present to help the public see the church in action.

### CATEGORY III: EXECUTIVE BOARD-ED/AGENCY CONNECTION
(policies that describe how delegation occurs from the board to the Executive Director)

#### 3.0 Global Governance Connection

The Executive Board’s sole official connection to the operating organization, its achievement, and conduct will be through the Executive Director. The Executive Board’s official connection to Churchwide Program Agency Boards (AB), their achievement and conduct will be through the person designated by each respective AB, presumably the chair.

#### 3.1 Unity of Control – Executive Director

*Only the decisions made by the Executive Board acting as a body are binding on the Executive Director.*

3.1.1 Decisions or instructions of individual board members, officers, or committees are not binding on the Executive Director except in rare instances when the board has specifically authorized such exercise of authority.

3.1.2 The Executive Board will protect its group authority by discouraging individual members from requiring information from the Executive Director other than at board meetings or authorized committee meetings. However, the Executive Director may, at his or her own discretion, inform the Moderator and/or Moderator Elect of matters that facilitate healthy communication between the staff and the board and that enable the board in its work.
3.2 Accountability of the Executive Director

The Executive Director is the only official connection to operational achievement and conduct, so that all authority and accountability of Executive Board staff, as far as the board is concerned, is considered the authority and accountability of the Executive Director.

3.2.1 The Executive Board’s role in staff appointments to the Executive staff team is limited to confirmation of candidates selected by the Executive Director, although such confirmation is not required.

3.2.2 The Executive Board will not give instructions to persons who report directly or indirectly to the Executive Director.

3.2.3 The Executive Board will refrain from evaluating, either formally or informally, any staff other than the Executive Director.

3.2.4 The Executive Board will view Executive Director performance as identical to organizational accomplishment of board-stated Ends as stated in the Purposeful Plan. Successful Executive Director performance will be judged by organizational accomplishment of board-stated Ends and adherence to Executive Director Limitations.

3.3 Delegation to the Executive Director

The Executive Board will instruct the Executive Director through written policies that prescribe the organizational Ends to be achieved and describe organizational situations and actions to be avoided. The Executive Director will be allowed any reasonable interpretation of these policies that are stated from the broadest, most general level to more defined levels. The Executive Board sets forth the following broad Responsibilities for the Executive Director:

3.3.1 Inspire Mennonite Church USA through a compelling articulation of the vision, mission and priorities of the church

3.3.2 Form and lead a national staff team that empowers Mennonite Church USA to join in God’s activity in the world and achieve outcomes established by the Executive Board

3.3.3 Serve as the Chief Executive Officer, primary public spokesperson and fundraiser of Mennonite Church USA

3.3.4 Provide leadership so that all parts of the church focus together to achieve measurable progress on our churchwide priorities of Christian Formation, Christian Community, Holistic Christian Witness, Stewardship, Leadership Development, Undoing Racism and Advancing Intercultural Transformation, and Church-to-Church Relationships.

3.3.5 Perform such other responsibilities as specifically requested by the Executive Board

3.3.6 The Executive Board will develop Ends policies instructing the Executive Director to achieve certain results for the Mennonite Church USA at a specified cost.

3.3.7 The Executive Board will develop Limitations policies that limit the latitude the Executive Director may exercise in choosing organizational means.
3.3.8 As long as the Executive Director uses any reasonable interpretation of the board’s list of Responsibilities, and of Ends and Executive Limitations policies, the Executive Director is authorized to establish all further policies, make all decisions, take all actions, establish all practices, and develop all activities.

3.3.9 The Executive Board may change its Ends and Executive Limitations policies, thereby shifting the boundary between board and Executive Director domains. By doing so, the Executive Board changes the latitude of choice given to the Executive Director. However, as long as any particular delegation is in place, the Executive Board will respect and support the Executive Director’s choices. The only exception to this rule is when the Executive Board, because of unusual circumstances, deems it necessary to take action based on an exception to a written policy without changing the policy itself.

3.3.10 The relationship between the Executive Board and the Executive Director is characterized as two team members working together, with each member having clearly differentiated responsibilities.

3.4 Monitoring Executive Director Performance

The board will systematically and rigorously monitor the Executive Director’s job performance based on the expected Executive Director job outputs: organizational accomplishment of board policies on Ends and organizational operation within the boundaries of board policies and Executive Limitations.

3.4.1 Monitoring is designed solely to determine the degree to which board policies are being met. Data that do not do this will not be considered to be monitoring data.

3.4.2 The Executive Board will acquire monitoring data by one or more of three methods:

a. By regular reports in which the Executive Director 1) discloses compliance information to the board, 2) reports progress by staff and agencies toward achievement of the Purposeful Plan, and 3) informs the board about developments in the church that merit the board’s attention.

b. By external report in which an external disinterested third party selected by the board assesses compliance with board policies.

c. By direct board inspection in which a designated member or members of the board assess compliance with the appropriate policy criteria.

3.4.3 In every case, the standard for compliance shall be any reasonable Executive Director interpretation of the board policy being monitored.

3.4.4 All policies that instruct the Executive Director will be monitored at a frequency and by a method chosen by the board. The board can monitor any policy at any time by any method, but will ordinarily depend on a routine schedule. Details of the monitoring method and schedule for Ends and Executive Director Limitations are included in the Appendix.

3.5 Evaluating Churchwide Program Agency Performance

The Executive Board will periodically evaluate the work of each churchwide program agency. The purpose of the evaluation will be to determine the degree of churchwide
program agency alignment with the Purposeful Plan of Mennonite Church USA as established by the Executive Board.

3.5.1 The Executive Board will evaluate churchwide program agency performance through:

a. Reporting gathered by or generated through the designated staff of Mennonite Church USA about progress on the Purposeful Plan and how these are supported by alignment of communication, development and operations among agencies and in inter-agency work.

b. Annual financial reports to the church resources committee of the Executive Board through the staff, or more often as deemed appropriate.

c. A regular assessment of each churchwide program agency’s priorities and stated ends as they relate to the Purposeful Plan of Mennonite Church USA. This assessment will generally involve a review with the board chair and executive director of each agency at least every two years.

d. Gathering responses from delegates with the active participation of each agency (at biennial gathering).

e. Assessing the level of cooperation, collaboration and alignment of each agency, as determined by the Executive Board, with the other parts of Mennonite Church USA, particularly with area conferences, on behalf of Mennonite Church USA congregations.

3.5.2 A Statement of Expectations developed by the executive director of Mennonite Church USA with the executive director of each churchwide program agency will serve as a starting point for describing the expectations between the staff of Mennonite Church USA and the staff of each agency.

3.5.3 The Governance Council of Mennonite Church USA will confer regularly on churchwide initiatives as determined by the Executive Board.

CATEGORY IV: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LIMITATIONS
(Policies enabling the board to withdraw safely from most details of operation.)

4.0 Global Executive Constraint

The Executive Director shall bring to the attention of the board any practice, activity, decision, or organizational circumstance by persons or groups accountable to him/her in a direct line of reporting that is either unlawful, imprudent, or in violation of standards of behavior that uphold the core values and beliefs of Mennonite Church USA. These standards, values and beliefs are identified in various statements of the church including the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective and the Purposeful Plan.

4.1 Relationships with the constituency of Mennonite Church USA, including area conferences, constituency groups, special committees and congregational leaders.

With respect to interactions with various members of Mennonite Church USA in leadership positions, the Executive Director shall not cause or allow conditions,
procedures, or decisions that are unsafe, undignified, unnecessarily intrusive, or that fail to provide appropriate confidentiality or privacy.

Accordingly, he or she shall not:

4.1.1 Maintain facilities that fail to provide a reasonable level of privacy for confidential discussions.
4.1.2 Show favoritism by valuing the work of one congregation (area conference) over another.
4.1.3 Fail to establish with church leaders a clear understanding of what may or may not be expected from the services offered by Mennonite Church USA.
4.1.4 Make specific requests for information for which there is no clear necessity.
4.1.5 Use methods of collecting, reviewing, transmitting, or storing information that fail to protect against improper access.
4.1.6 Fail to provide for a grievance process to address those who feel their rights have not been respected under this policy.

4.2 Relationships with Churchwide Program Agencies

With respect to interactions with the executive directors of each program agency, the Executive Director shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions that are unsafe, undignified, unnecessarily intrusive, or that fail to provide appropriate confidentiality or privacy. The following points are in addition to points in policy 4.1 above.

Accordingly, as the official Executive Board-designated connection to the program agencies, he or she shall not:

4.2.1 Fail to communicate Executive Board ends policies in a timely fashion as these are updated from time to time.
4.2.2 Fail to meet (personally or through the appointment of a designee) with the program board or its representatives in person on a regular basis for the purpose of sharing information about the well-being of each part of the church and hearing about program initiatives and ideas for consideration by Mennonite Church USA.
4.2.3 Withhold information about the financial expenditures of Mennonite Church USA, and the funding expectations for each program agency.

4.3 Relationships with Staff

With respect to the treatment of staff, the Executive Director may not cause or allow conditions that are unfair or undignified.

Accordingly, he or she shall not:

4.3.1 Operate without written personnel policies that clarifies personnel rules for staff, provides for effective handling of grievances, and protects against wrongful conditions such as nepotism and grossly preferential treatment for personal reasons.
4.3.2 Fail to recruit a diverse Racial/Ethnic, gender-balanced staff.
4.3.3 Discriminate against any staff member for expressing an ethical dissent.
4.3.4 Prevent staff from grieving to the board when (1) internal grievance procedures have been exhausted and (2) the employee alleges either that (a) board policy has been violated to his or her detriment or (b) board policy does not adequately protect his or her human rights.
4.3.5 Fail to acquaint staff with their rights under this policy.

4.4 Financial Planning/Budgeting

Financial planning for any fiscal year shall not deviate materially from the board’s Ends priorities, risk fiscal jeopardy, or fail to be derived from a longer-range plan.

Accordingly, the Executive Director shall not allow budgeting that:

4.4.1 Plans for the expenditure of more funds in any fiscal year than are realistically projected to be received in that period.

4.4.2 Allows cash to drop below a safety reserve of less than 10% of the annual budget at the beginning or end of each year.

4.4.3 Contains too little information to enable credible projection of revenues and expenses, separation of capital and operational items, cash flow, and disclosure of planning assumptions.

4.4.4 Provides less for board prerogatives during the year than is set forth in the Cost of Governance policy.

4.4.5 (For single estate/bequests gifts greater than $50,000) disburses more than 25% of the original receipt in any one fiscal year.

4.5 Financial Condition and Activities

With respect to the actual, ongoing financial condition and activities, the Executive Director shall not cause or allow the development of fiscal jeopardy or a material deviation of actual expenditures from board priorities established in Ends policies.

Accordingly, the Executive Director shall not:

4.5.1 Expend more funds than have been received in the fiscal year to date, unless the debt guideline is met. A line of credit shall be established not to exceed 20% of the annual budget.

4.5.2 Fail to make payroll and settle debts in a timely manner.

4.5.3 Commit denominational resources to unfunded mandates unless approved or mandated by the Executive Board.

4.5.4 Fail to aggressively pursue receivables after a reasonable grace period.

4.6 Executive Director Succession

In order to assure continuity, and to protect the Executive Board from sudden loss of Executive Director services, the Executive Director may have no fewer than two other staff members who are familiar with Executive Board and Executive Director issues and processes.

4.6.1 Mennonite Church USA Executive Board will maintain key person life insurance on the Executive Director in the amount of no less than approximately three times the Executive Director’s annual base salary, with Mennonite Church USA Executive Board as the beneficiary.

4.7 Asset Protection

The Executive Director shall not allow the assets of Mennonite Church USA to be unprotected, inadequately maintained, or unnecessarily risked.

Accordingly, he or she may not:
4.7.1 Fail to insure against theft and casualty losses to at least 80 percent of replacement value and against liability losses to board members, staff, and the organization itself.

4.7.2 Unnecessarily expose the organization, its board, or staff to claims of liability.

4.7.3 Fail to protect intellectual property, information, and files from loss or significant damage.

4.7.4 Receive, process, or disburse funds under controls that are insufficient to meet the board-appointed auditor’s standards.

4.7.5 Invest or hold operating capital in insecure instruments, including uninsured checking accounts and bonds of less than AA rating, or in non-interest-bearing accounts except where necessary to facilitate ease of operational transactions.

4.7.6 Endanger the public image or credibility of Mennonite Church USA, particularly in ways that would hinder carrying out its mission and goals.

4.8 Compensation and Benefits

With respect to employment, compensation, and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers, and volunteers, the Executive Director shall not cause or allow jeopardy to fiscal integrity or constituency image.

Accordingly, he or she may not:

4.8.1 Change his or her own compensation and benefits.

4.8.2 Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.

4.8.3 Establish compensation and benefit levels that are materially greater than levels reflected in the geographic or professional market for the skills employed, or fail to administer compensation and benefit levels in accordance with the following criteria for employees of Mennonite Church USA:

a. provide consideration for past experience, skills, and education.

b. establish responsibility levels for each position giving consideration to responsibilities for decisions, relationships, leadership, and performance.

c. provide compensation within the range of a 4:1 ratio from the highest paid to lowest paid full time employee.

4.8.4 Create compensation obligations over a longer term than revenues can be safely projected.

4.8.5 Establish or change retirement benefits so as to cause unpredictable or inequitable situations, including those that:

a. Incur unfunded liabilities.

b. Provide less than a basic level of benefits to all full-time employees.

c. Allow any employee to lose benefits already accrued from any prior plan.

4.9 Communication and Support to the Board

The Executive Director shall not permit the board to be uninformed or unsupported in its work.

Accordingly, he or she shall not:

4.9.1 Neglect to submit monitoring data required by the board in a timely, accurate, and understandable fashion, directly addressing provisions of board policies being monitored.
4.9.2 Fail to alert the board regarding relevant trends, anticipated adverse media coverage, material external and internal changes, particularly changes in the assumptions upon which any board policy has previously been established.

4.9.3 Fail to advise the board if, in the opinion of the Executive Director, the board is not in compliance with its own policies on Governance Process and Board-Executive Director Connection. This is particularly important in the case of board behavior that is detrimental to the work relationship between the board and the Executive Director.

4.9.4 Fail to collect and present for the board as many staff and external points of view, issues, and options as needed for fully informed board choices.

4.9.5 Present information in unnecessarily complex or lengthy form.

4.9.6 Fail to provide a mechanism for official board, officer, or committee communications.

4.9.7 Fail to deal with the board as a whole except when (a) fulfilling individual requests for information or (b) responding to officers or committees duly charged by the board.

4.9.8 Fail to report in a timely manner an actual or anticipated non-compliance with any policy of the board.
Appendix to Executive Board Policies

Appendix 1

Monitoring Schedule for Executive Limitations

The following policy statement completes policy number 3.4.4.

All policies that instruct the Executive Director will be monitored at a frequency and by a method chosen by the board. The board can monitor any policy at any time by any method, but will ordinarily depend on a routine schedule. The chart below identifies the schedule and method for monitoring Executive Director Limitations.

Method: (1) Internal Report (ED), (2) Direct Inspection (Board), (3) External Report

Frequency: quarterly, semiannual, annual, every two years, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executive Director Limitations Policies</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Schedule (report due date)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[2 year cycle starting Fall 2017]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0 Global Executive Constraint</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>Spring 2018 and 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Relationships with Mennonite Church USA constituency</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>Spring 2018 and 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Relationships with Program Agencies</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Every meeting</td>
<td>Every meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Treatment of Staff</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>Fall 2017, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Financial Planning and Budgeting</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>Spring 2017, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Every meeting</td>
<td>Every meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 Financial Condition and Activities</td>
<td>External (Audit)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>Winter 2017, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6 Executive Director Succession</td>
<td>Internal (Oral)</td>
<td>Annual (to Exec. Comm.)</td>
<td>Winter 2017, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7 Asset Protection</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>Winter 2017, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8 Compensation and Benefits</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>Fall 2017, 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9 Communication and Support to the Board</td>
<td>Internal</td>
<td>Every Meeting</td>
<td>Every Meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Notes: These Executive Director reports are compliance reports. The reports are directly referenced to particular policies formulated by the Executive Board.

Lengthy written reports are not necessary. The degree of detail desired must be determined by the Executive Board. The Executive Director should verify compliance or lack of compliance with a “yes” or “no” and make the necessary comments to support the answer.
Appendix 2

Executive Board Plan for Linkage with Constituency 2011-2021

Linking with owners is a primary responsibility of the board in our governance system. The board’s job description states:
“The Future Church Committee facilitates the work of the Executive Board by strengthening the capacity of the board to fulfill its responsibility in linking with owners. This is achieved by developing a two-year plan and methodology for engaging owners, recommending additions and modification to Ends policies, and by overseeing the reporting system for monitoring progress on Ends.” (MC USA Board Policy 2.9.4)

The Future Church Committee carries out its work in monitoring our Ends policy (now known as the Purposeful Plan) through two primary means: 1) to process the counsel received from the CLC and 2) by creating a means of linking with our “owners” (from now on referred to as “constituency”). The purpose of linking with our constituency is to assure that their expectations are being carried out through appropriate Ends. In order to do this, the FCC needs to record, summarize, and interpret the feedback from our constituency in a format that is useful for the full board to review in connection with evaluating Ends policies.

We acknowledge that our process for linking with our constituency has not been adequate. That means that our process for assessing the progress of our ends has also been inadequate. In an attempt to strengthen these processes we are working to develop a new broad policy that will describe the purpose, constituent groups, methods, the content of our encounters, and the means of processing the data we collect as we engage our constituency. The following material is step toward the development of such a policy.

1. Purpose:

The main reason that we regularly connect with the various parts of our constituency is to assure that their expectations are being carried out in keeping with the vision and mission of Mennonite Church USA as articulated through the Purposeful Plan. This may have several aspects:

a. Accountability. Reporting to constituents about progress toward or achievement of the goals articulated in the Purposeful Plan.

b. Articulating Values. Having heartfelt and honest conversations about constituent aspirations and challenges in their own communities, so that we can best discern God’s will for the broader church as we make specific decisions about priorities or ends.

c. Education. Linking with our constituents as a way for us to learn from them how to better do our work and to help them better understand and embrace the missional basis, priorities and goals articulated in the Purposeful Plan.

d. Relationships. Deepening relationships through many-faceted interactions that develop a deeper sense of belonging to each other and greater support for the mission and purpose of the church through mutual sharing and commitment.

e. Creating the future. Using the insights and counsel that we receive through various interactions with constituents to improve our policies and practices as a board, and to update the Purposeful Plan to become the best expression of God’s intent for our church.

2. Constituent Groups

Mennonite Church USA is made primarily of congregations, who in turn are members of conferences or other constituent groups, all of whom are served by the staff and agencies of the
national conference as “supportive communities.” Therefore, we will attempt to stay in touch with various constituent groups, such as:

- Congregations and their pastors/congregational leaders
- Area/district conference leaders
- Racial/ethnic constituent groups
- Mennonite Men and Mennonite Women
- Leaders of organizations/institutions that are served by our churchwide agencies
- Additional segments identified by specific demographic characteristics:
  - (1) Youth and young adults
  - (2) Seniors
  - (3) Pastors of large and growing churches
  - (4) Church Planters
  - (5) Members of discipleship communities

3. **Approach**

The following methods may be used in engaging with our constituent groups:

- Expert informant(s) from constituent groups who meet with Executive Board.
- Individual board members who participate in the activities of constituent groups.
- Board-to-board dialogue with church-wide agencies.
- Survey of constituents. (The board’s role is to identify what it wants to learn, and who to ask. Staff assists with development, administration, and analysis of surveys.)
- Staff reporting on constituent contacts.

The Executive Board may consider working in collaboration with other boards, such as our church-wide agencies, especially if they have close connections with the same constituent groups. This could be particularly beneficial if a survey of constituents is being planned.

The plan for linking with specific owners will include the following components:

- The content of the owner dialogue. (What questions should we invite constituents to address that may provide helpful input about their expectations?)
- The constituent groups to gather information from and relate to.
- The method of relating to each constituent group.
- A plan based on points a – c above, with a time frame for each.
- A system of recording and summarizing key findings from each contact with a constituent group so that they can be reviewed and considered in the Board’s cycle of reviewing and updating the Purposeful Plan.
- A method of communicating back to constituents so that they are aware of our response to their input.

4. **Content of Owner Dialogue**

*What would Executive Board members like to know from constituents?*

The nature of the dialogue will depend on the characteristics of the constituents or their organizations, and the relationship of this constituent group to specific Mennonite Church USA Ends. Constituents may need information or education about Mennonite Church USA before beginning the dialogue. To prepare for dialogue with constituents, questions may be selected from the following list and modified according to specific objectives.

- As a constituent, how would you measure the success of Mennonite Church USA as a church with many parts?
- How should the national conference of Mennonite Church USA be helping to strengthen the church of the future?
c. What outcomes do members of your congregations expect from the national conference?
d. How does the national conference add value to you, your agency, congregation or denomination?
e. What suggestions do you have for improvement of the national conference? From your experience, what advice would you give the national conference?
f. “If we were meeting 5 years from now, looking back, what would be the things you could point to in your group or other parts of the church that would cause you to say that the church has reached new levels of faithfulness to the call of Christ?”
g. What is the most challenging issue currently affecting your group and how could the national conference play a role in helping you deal with this issue?
h. What expectations do you have of the national conference in helping you carry out the mission of your group or organization?
i. What is the perception of the national conference among your group (institution, board)?
j. How can the national conference leverage its resources to empower your organization to better serve your community in more meaningful ways as we partner together?
k. For those of your group that don’t relate to the national conference, why don’t they?
l. What is your advice on how the national conference could better serve the needs of racial-ethnic populations in the Anabaptist community?

5. Proposed Objectives/Activities:
The usefulness of the information gathered from owners will likely be no better than the quality of the plan and content of the owner dialogue. We will allocate up to two hours in each board meeting for the board to plan for constituent dialogue and/or review our Purposeful Plan based on constituent input.

In addition to conducting dialogues with representatives of church institutions and denominations, the board will plan for dialogue directly with individuals or groups that have certain demographic characteristics, as noted in section 3. We will also consider factors such as age, generation, ethnicity, income (especially lower income), and geography (urban vs. rural).

Each year Mennonite Church USA will host an “all Boards” event, or Leaders Forum, which provides opportunity for board interaction with leaders of other Mennonite Church USA programs and agencies. The board may also choose to meet in conjunction with another church-sponsored meeting. These interactions with constituents may take the place of board meeting time for constituent dialogue.

Proposed Steps for Improving the Usefulness of Owner Input
The following steps will be followed in order to improve our Purposeful Plan.

1. We will start by selecting a constituent group with a specific purpose, knowing why we chose to invite them to talk to us.
2. We will take into account the level of understanding of these particular owners about Mennonite Church USA and give them essential background information so that they can best relate to the issues for which we want their response. We will do this before we begin the dialogue.
3. We will prepare specific questions for the dialogue well in advance of the session, choosing questions that clearly relate to the ends we seek on behalf of Mennonite Church USA. The questions could be limited to one primary issue for discernment.
4. We will conduct the dialogue in a manner that assures complete responses to the issue(s) the board is interested in hearing about, so that the board will have clarity about what the owners prefer.

5. We will record the key ideas and responses that the constituents provided during the dialogue, develop a summary highlighting what the constituents said, and send this back to them with a note of thanks.

6. We will continue recording comments from subsequent constituent dialogues until we are satisfied that a sufficient number of responses to particular questions or issues have been catalogued. We will then use this document during the Board’s annual review of the Purposeful Plan.

8. We will rely on the Future Church Committee to study the information collected from constituents, and identify several alternatives for how the Purposeful Plan might be improved in light of their input. This committee will prepare relevant materials and a suggested process for the board to use to make decisions about changing the Purposeful Plan.

9. As the biennial assembly, we will tell the delegates what has happened as a result of the board’s dialogue with constituents.

The following chart shows the historical record of dialogue with constituents and may serve as a guide for planning future events. If and when we implement the plan outlined in this document, we will need much more detailed and focused record keeping.

**Executive Board Linkage with Owners**  
2002 - 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Owner Segment</th>
<th>Method &amp; Objective</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>2011</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>Western District and South Central conferences</td>
<td>Met with conference leaders and heads of local institutions.</td>
<td>Seemed to lack sufficient orientation, but produced a few good insights.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| April 15   | Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference Met at Portland Mennonite Church | Met with a wide range of conference leaders and pastors. Divided into groups of three and then groups of six around specific questions related to the proposed seven priorities | - There is the need for leadership development for pastors and lay leaders  
- Our congregations are ready to do service, but we need a stronger Christ centeredness behind that action or witness. We’re weak in how deep our evangelism goes.  
- Worship needs to be more central in the priorities.  
- Our church’s first priority is Christian formation. They affirmed “intercultural transformation.” |
<p>| January 7  | Southeast Mennonite Conference Met at College Hill Church | Shared meal at College Hill Church; worship; leaders shared about SE conf.        | Much community outreach.                                                |
| <strong>2010</strong>   |                                                   |                                                                                    |                                                                         |
| June       | Central Plains Mennonite Conference. Met at Iowa Mennonite School and Lower Deer Creek Church| Got acquainted over a meal. Communicated MC USA priorities, discussed relationships, listen to their concerns about MC USA and/or the struggles they experience within their conference. | They look to the denomination for more leadership development and missional church theology training. |
| February   | Virginia Mennonite Conference. Met at Calvary Community Mennonite Church | Got acquainted over a meal. Communicated MC USA priorities, discussed relationships, listened to their | Sharing the peace message in a military-based area is a challenge. They look to the denomination for |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 21</td>
<td>New York Mennonite Conference.</td>
<td>Got acquainted over a meal. Communicated MC USA priorities, discussed relationships, listened to their concerns about MC USA and/or the struggles they experience within their conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 17</td>
<td>Met at Rochester Mennonite Fellowship</td>
<td>On the fringe; long for connectedness; appreciated this face-to-face time with the board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 22</td>
<td>Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conf.</td>
<td>Got acquainted over a meal. Communicated MC USA priorities, discussed relationships, listened to their concerns about MC USA and/or the struggles they experience within their conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Met at Trinity Mennonite Church, Phoenix</td>
<td>Very diverse; restructured; feel isolated; difficult to connect with denomination; coaching culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 19</td>
<td>Kingdom Builders (Philadelphia area</td>
<td>Got acquainted over a meal. Communicated MC USA priorities, discussed relationships, listen to their concerns about MC USA and/or the struggles they experience within their conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mennonite leaders). Met at Philadelphia Mennonite High School</td>
<td>They would like more diverse resources and more networking of relationships. They are urban peacemakers but face many risks in neighborhoods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 8</td>
<td>Leaders from San Antonio Mennonite Church and Iglesia Menonita Comunidad de Vida. Met at San Antonio Mennonite Church.</td>
<td>Meal at San Antonio Church; worship; sharing from local pastors A longing to foster the tie to MC USA but not sure how to do it. They would like more materials in Spanish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>September 29</td>
<td>Western District Conference and South Central Conference. Met at Faith Mennonite, Newton. Kan.</td>
<td>Got acquainted over a meal. Communicated MC USA priorities, discuss relationships, listen to their concerns about MC USA and/or the struggles they experience within their conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 19</td>
<td>Gulf States Mennonite Conference.</td>
<td>The “seamless web” MC USA refers to in our witness statements seems to be broken. Funding is a struggle. MC USA must develop good leaders. Convention attendance from WDC is low.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 30</td>
<td>Mountain States Mennonite Conference Met at Peace Mennonite, Aurora, Colo.</td>
<td>Got acquainted over a meal. Communicated MC USA priorities, discuss relationships, list of their concerns about MC USA and/or the struggles they experience within their conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Several area pastors/leaders joined the board for an hour. We listened to their concerns about MC USA and/or the struggles they experience within their conference. Phil Ebersole invited us to his home for a meal.</td>
<td>They yearn to be more welcoming, especially to Racial/Ethnic groups. Identity pieces provided by the denomination are very important and ground them in community. They want more relational accountability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 3</td>
<td>Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference. Met in an L.A. hotel.</td>
<td>Fish fry with congregation. Communicate MC USA priorities, discuss relationships, we listened to their concerns about MC USA and/or the struggles they experience within their conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EB and MMN joined PSMC for the evening pastor’s appreciation meal and worship service.</td>
<td>Recovery efforts after Katrina have become an opportunity for ministry and outreach. Bigger systemic question: How can we find better collaboration between MCC, MDS, MC USA and area conferences?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>April 16</td>
<td>Central Plains Mennonite Conference. Met at Good Shepherd Mennonite Church.</td>
<td>Got acquainted over a meal. Communicated MC USA priorities, discussed relationships, listened to their concerns about MC USA and/or the struggles they experience within their conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seven leaders/pastors joined the board for an hour of interchange.</td>
<td>They yearn to be more welcoming, especially to Racial/Ethnic groups. Identity pieces provided by the denomination are very important and ground them in community. They want more relational accountability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Globalization, urbanization and large agri-businesses are undermining rural communities. CPMC can demonstrate for MC USA the re-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Duration and Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 16</td>
<td>Ohio Mennonite Conference. Met at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church.</td>
<td>Two hours with several Ohio conference pastors/leaders. Discussion on MC USA priorities; their evangelism efforts, and reflecting on the Columbus convention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Virginia Mennonite Conference and EMU Board of Directors. Met at Park View Mennonite Church</td>
<td>Lunch at EMU campus with their board of directors. Five Virginia Conf leaders/pastors joined the board for one hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 30</td>
<td>Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference. Met at Portland Mennonite Church.</td>
<td>13 pastors/leaders joined the board for an hour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Western District Conference. Met in Newton.</td>
<td>5 leaders joined the board for lunch and a time of sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 3</td>
<td>Lancaster Mennonite Conference, Atlantic Coast Conference, and Eastern District Conference. Met at MCC office, Akron, Pa.</td>
<td>9 leaders joined the board meeting for an hour interchange.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Dallas area pastors. Met at Peace Mennonite, Dallas.</td>
<td>Several Dallas pastors joined the board for a time of sharing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3
Agency Ends Statements

EVERENCE ENDS
October 27, 2017

1.0 Global Ends Statement.

Persons integrate Anabaptist values with financial stewardship decisions.

1.1 Financial Stewardship.
   a. Persons increase their understanding of biblical stewardship through education.
   b. Persons make financial decisions that fulfill their stewardship goals.

1.2 Community and Mutual Aid.
   a. Persons make financial decisions that include mutual aid and compassionate sharing.
   b. Persons leverage resources to meet identified needs.
   c. Persons are equipped to face economic challenges that arise and to respond with generosity when those challenges affect others.

1.3 Organizational Sustainability
   a. Everence practices faithful generosity.
   b. Everence invests for growth to extend its reach.
   c. Everence manages risk and optimizes profit to ensure sustainability.

MENNONITE EDUCATION AGENCY

Outcomes
People touched by MEA-affiliated schools, institutions and programs grow intellectually, spiritually and strengthen the life, witness and identity of Mennonite Church USA.

1. Church Relations. MEA, its institutions and the wider church support one another in discerning educational needs.

Mennonite Church USA area conferences, congregations, and members support the institutions by sending students and providing resources; the institutions provide intellectual and spiritual training for individuals to serve the church and its mission at home and in the world. MEA maintains accountability for strong relationships between church and school, promoting the long-term interests of Anabaptist-Mennonite education—interests that transcend specific institutional goals.

2. Transformational Leadership. MEA and its institutions develop the vision of Christ-centered, servant leadership in those who attend, support and serve Mennonite Church USA schools.

Mindful of Mennonite commitments to an “upside down” kingdom, MEA advocates a transformational approach to dismantling racism, restorative justice, peace building, and community empowerment. MEA and its institutions support programs, scholarship, and recruitment practices that address these visionary endeavors.
3. Support Services. MEA provides services in support of the missions of its schools. Working with the schools and their statements of arrangements with the agency, MEA provides assistance in the form of consultation, counseling, staffing, research, sponsorships, appointments, etc. in helping schools achieve their missions.

4. Viable Access. Students seeking Christ-centered Anabaptist-Mennonite education have viable access to Mennonite Church USA schools. Working with the schools on issues related to location, delivery system, cost, transfer and outreach to the under-served, MEA envisions and supports programs and initiatives that facilitate ready accessibility.

Ends Policies – MennoMedia

2015

1.0 Global Ends Statement

Congregations and individuals are inspired to engage the gospel through the Anabaptist resources provided by MennoMedia’s sustainable business model.

1.1 Equipping a Missional Church:

1.1.1 The conferences, congregations, and individuals of Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA use resources from MennoMedia to strengthen their life and witness as they follow Jesus and join God’s work in the world.

1.1.2 Individuals seeking to engage the Gospel from an Anabaptist perspective are inspired by MennoMedia resources.

1.2 Anabaptist Theology: MennoMedia resources are grounded theologically in the radical reformation of the 16th Century and are guided by Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective.

1.3 A Network of Resources:

1.3.1 A network nurtured by MennoMedia enables access to resources beyond the scope of what can be accomplished independently.

1.3.2 MennoMedia solicits, publishes, markets, and distributes both original resources and resources developed by others.

1.3.3 MennoMedia resources extend beyond traditional print materials, including diverse forms of media.

1.4 A Sustainable Business Model:

1.4.1 Revenue received from product sales and constituency donations fund MennoMedia’s operations and provide adequate cash reserves.

1.4.2 Human resource policies equip and motivate staff.

MENNONITE MISSION NETWORK ENDS POLICIES

October 2014

SECTION I: ENDS POLICIES

1.0 Global Ends Statement

People of all cultures are transformed by Jesus Christ to experience spiritual, social and physical wholeness.
1.1 Across the street, and around the world, people of all cultures encounter Anabaptist expression of the whole gospel of Jesus Christ.

1.1.1 People hear, see and receive God’s good news in Jesus proclaimed through the power of the Holy Spirit in both word and deed.

1.1.2 People experience God’s intended reconciliation and fulness of life through ministries characterized by compassion, peace, justice and anti-racism.

1.2 Partnering with conferences, congregations, and others, missional congregations and leaders are established and equipped to engage their culture and world with the whole gospel of Jesus Christ.

1.2.1 Congregations and leaders are missional in identity (centered on mission) and in practice (a center of mission)

1.2.2 New missional congregations emerge across the street and around the world.

1.2.3 Congregations, leaders, and partners are equipped with the understanding, commitment, skills, resources, and opportunities to participate in mission.

1.2.4 Congregations and leaders experience ongoing change and transformation because of their commitment to and engagement with the whole gospel of Jesus.