

December 11, 2007

Leadership Team  
Milwaukee Mennonite Church  
3704 W. Allerton Ave.  
Greenfield, WI 53221

Board of Directors  
Central District Conference  
1015 Division St  
Goshen, IN 46528

Hello sisters and brothers on the Board of Directors of the Central District Conference,

Greetings on behalf of Milwaukee Mennonite Church! We are a newly-formed congregation, and this letter is our formal application to join the Central District Conference of Mennonite Church USA.

Our decision to pursue affiliation with Central District Conference was made by consensus at a congregational meeting November 18, 2007. The key factors driving this decision are:

- the importance of being accountable to and connected with other churches in the region—and thereby also connected nationally (through Mennonite Church USA), and internationally (through Mennonite World Conference) to other Mennonite churches and, through these, to Christians locally and worldwide.
- the strength and warmth of contacts with CDC in the past year—in particular visits with Lloyd Miller and most recently with John Heyerly.
- the vision of CDC: “Promoting a Christ-like community of hospitality where all are welcome and where grace-filled relationships flourish, and patience and generosity are practiced.”
- the tradition in CDC of allowing room for conversation on issues of faith
- the relative simplicity of the process of affiliation

Lloyd and John are aware of our history, but I’ll provide a summary version here. We first began meeting as a congregation in May 2006. Prior to that, several individuals and families had met on a bimonthly basis to sing and share about living in the Milwaukee area as Mennonites while attending various churches. Since making the decision to become a regular worshipping community, we have been blessed to have others join us, so that we now number 34 attenders—including 15 children ages 2-14. We’ve also been blessed with gifted lay leadership of all sorts: teaching, worship, music, mission, and administration. We meet for worship and Christian education Sunday afternoons at 4 PM, in the building of Martin Luther Lutheran Church in Milwaukee. Our hope is to connect with God’s work here in Milwaukee—and as such we are interested in connecting with other congregations locally to bridge racial, denominational, and social divides in our city.


I'll include the following documents as part of our introduction to you:

- Vision statement
- Decision-making process
- Leadership statement

These documents and other information about who we are can be found at our website:  
[www.milwaukeeannite.org](http://www.milwaukeeannite.org).

Please do not hesitate to contact us to continue this conversation. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Steve Hartman Keiser". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Steve Hartman Keiser, on behalf of the Leadership Team

cc: Leadership Team (Jenn Koop, Tim Marcy, Carmen Brubacher)

## VISION STATEMENT OF MILWAUKEE MENNONITE CHURCH

We are drawn together to follow Jesus Christ:  
to worship God,  
to serve the needs of our neighbors,  
and to pursue reconciliation with all.

We welcome others to join us and help us as we seek to  
nurture a community filled with grace, joy, and peace  
so that, by the power of the Holy Spirit,  
God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

*Adopted: September 2006*

## DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Milwaukee Mennonite Church makes significant decisions about congregational life by consensus. In choosing this model we have been guided by Article 16 ("Church Order and Unity") in the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective (1995):

Decision making by consensus is a way of coming to unity in the church (see Acts 15:22). Consensus means that the church has together sought for the unity of the Spirit. The church listens carefully to all voices, majority and minority. Consensus is reached when the church has come to one mind on the matter, or when those who dissent have indicated that they do not wish to stand in the way of a group decision. Consensus does not necessarily mean complete unanimity.

We recognize that achieving consensus requires a high level of trust, skillful leadership, and time. As a general guideline, we utilize a three-step process (which may necessitate three separate meetings) in order to:

1. Define the issue or problem and give background information.
2. Explore options, hear concerns and affirmations, and prioritize desirable solutions.
3. Move to a solution and implementation of the decision. Depending on the nature of the decision, a review process may be specified.

## LEADERSHIP STATEMENT

Love one another. (1 John 3)

The participants of Milwaukee Mennonite Church recognize each one's giftedness for serving the church and the world.

We recognize that leadership is one form of serving.

We acknowledge Jesus as our model: a servant leader, who gave up his life for his friends.

We recognize that leadership has many facets, and that no one person possesses all the gifts associated with leadership.

We seek to benefit from shared leadership and from diverse leadership styles.

We perceive that calling out a few people to a specified term of shared leadership in our congregation will help us live out our vision.

For these reasons we have a Leadership Team of 3-5 persons whose responsibilities are:

1. Keep the vision of MMC at the center of our life in worship, service, and decision-making. That is, discern what we need to do to join God's song.
  - (a) Pray for the congregation.
  - (b) Have regular contact and discussion with members of other teams.
  - (c) Discern what issues need prompt attention in organizing our life together.
  - (d) Call and run congregational meetings.
  
2. Provide spiritual care for the congregation.
  - (a) Pray for the congregation and for individuals.
  - (b) Keep the "pulse of the congregation."
  - (c) Give corporate and individual spiritual guidance, e.g., through presence, listening, encouragement, teaching, or preaching.
  - (d) Coordinate crisis care for individuals.
  
3. Serve as primary contact with the community, the conference, Mennonite Church USA, and the church worldwide.

These responsibilities are for the Leadership Team as a whole. Any one individual may be more or less gifted to accomplish any one or more of the above.

*Adopted: July, 2007*