

## **THE ROLE OF THE BISHOP BOARD AND THE CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

### **Bishop Board**

The bishop board serves as the executive body for the Lancaster Mennonite Conference. Because of the size and representative nature of the board, we often act as the final authority for the conference. Nevertheless, on important matters, we make recommendations to be approved by the conference assembly, the gathering of the ordained and licensed persons in the conference.

The board worships and prays together at the beginning of our board day. For many, this is the highlight of our day. We occasionally meet in small groups to share in a more intimate fashion. In addition, the board:

- makes decisions regarding various aspects of conference life, including the conference's annual budget.
- gives counsel to individuals, congregations, and districts, particularly as requested by those groups. When the board sees a serious matter, we may offer unsolicited counsel or express concern.
- Serves as accountability group for agencies of conference.

### **Conference Executive Council**

In their February 25, 2011 meeting, bishops took action to approve the implementation of a Conference Executive Council. This Council would expand the current Bishop Board Executive Committee to include five additional credentialed persons who represent the diversity (gender, culture, race, language, age) of LMC. These additional persons would be nominated by congregational representatives in the 2011 Celebration of Church Life meeting. A key qualification for the additional five members is that these persons have interest in and care for the whole of Lancaster Mennonite Conference.

Expanding the Bishop Board Executive Committee grew out of the desire for:

- increasing representation in decision-making and leadership of the conference.
- more clearly differentiated roles for bishops (some have stronger gifts for governing functions and others prefer to attend to vision, values, and mission).
- the changing role of bishops as the conference focuses on missional priorities.

The five additional members will be selected to enrich and enhance the quality of work done by a diverse group for and on behalf of the Board of Bishops. Work of this group will be approved by the Board of Bishops as consent agenda.

This Conference Executive Council will be a three-year experiment evaluated annually. Conrad Kanagy will gather base-line data on the work and function of the current Executive Committee and help track the performance and function of the Conference Executive Council.

The additional five members for the Conference Executive Council will be nominated by Congregational Representatives at the Celebration of Church Life meeting, processed by the current Executive Committee, and approved by the Board of Bishops. These persons will be full, voting members of the Conference Executive Council. They will also be invited to attend Bishop Board

meetings with voice but no vote. Current terms of Conference officers and members-at-large will be honored with reappointments or new appointments. The Moderator will chair the Conference Executive Council during this three-year period.

**Focus Bishop Board Agenda**

During this three-year experiment, the agenda for meetings of the Board of Bishops will focus on the spiritual oversight of the conference with a focus on vision/mission, theological reflection, core values, issues of identity, etc. retooling bishops for missional church priorities