

**Moderator Report – Assembly 2024**

At the 2023 annual meeting we announced there would be an open meeting to discuss options for IMC credentialing practices (probably after Menno Haven’s busier summer months). We announced that a period of canvasing congregations would take place a few months later. For various reasons that open meeting took place in November at Menno Haven.

We were pleased Malinda Berry was available to facilitate our discussions at the Menno Haven. meeting. Malinda gave us important and very helpful input. In retrospect we would have planned our time differently, as we did not spend a great deal of that time talking to each other.

This past January (2024) the MLT agreed to present to churches a credentialing option we might identify as “*at variance*” (This is explained on another sheet.). After congregations have had this information for a few months, individual congregations will be contacted for their responses. These responses will be the basis for determining our credentialing practice.

Grants

Last spring one of our pastors faced the serious possibility of losing their visa to remain in the U.S. Martin Navarro and others networked with other Mennonite groups on this matter. IMC eventually worked with immigration attorneys to secure this pastor’s current immigration status. IMC has currently loaned $21,000 for legal fees. MLT also approved $7,000 in church Mutual Aid. IMC continued to support Nepali Outreach Ministry with $12,000 a year.

IMC Teams

Over 2020 – 2022 Gifts Discernment and MLT had unsuccessfully invited 16 people to serve on IMC teams. It is not uncommon to hear from other area conferences that it is hard to find individuals to serve on conference teams. And conferences do not want to take any leaders away from serving in their own congregations. Some conferences have cut back on the number of positions they need to operate.

As the constitution allows for nominations from the floor at delegate meetings, MLT invites nominations at the annual meeting of individuals who have agreed to serve. Contacting the MLT with the names of interested individuals ahead of the meeting is also appreciated.

Martin Navarro left his position as Associate Conference Minister in September.

Transitions

As was mentioned last year, in November 2022 St Louis Mennonite Fellowship decided to move their affiliation to Central District. In May of this year IMC sent SLMF our blessing for their transition. This is something Central District requests for congregations coming from a sister conference:

*Illinois Mennonite Conference affirms St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship as they move from a long-time member congregation of Illinois Mennonite Conference to a new member congregation of Central District Conference. There are, similarly, many congregations moving their associations with area conferences all across MCUSA.*

*Many of us in IMC value warm memories of past relationships and service together over many years. Illinois Mennonite Conference trusts that SLMF’s connections with Central District Conference will serve their witness and service to Christ’s kingdom in their St Louis context, and we bless your steps to that end.*

In 2003 MMN, IMC, SLMF, and Bethesda Mennonite Church partnered together to form a *City on a Hill* committee for planting a Mennonite church in the St Louis area. IMC held and administered the funds for that committee. The committee has been inactive for many years.

We had talked to Doug Luginbill and SLMF about these funds. MLT agree to move the funds to SLMF. This *City on a Hill* account, now $20,875, has been held in an IMC Certificate of Deposit separate from IMC funds.

Bequest

Illinois Conference has received a generous and thoughtful gift of $40,567 from the family of Ted and Jo Sommer. Their son, Jim Sommer, was married to Susan Sommer. Many of us remember Susan’s winsome and capable leadership in Illinois Conference. She served as executive administrator in Illinois Conference from 1996 – 2006.