



Congregational Information Form

To be completed by congregations seeking new pastoral leadership.

Purpose of this form

This form is to assist a congregation to present information concerning itself to prospective candidates for a pastoral leadership position. Completing the form will also assist the pastoral search committee in self-understanding as they assess the strengths and weaknesses which may exist at the time of pastoral transition.

I. Information

A. BASIC INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

1. Name of church *Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship*
 Address *2509 Berkey Avenue, Goshen, IN 46526*
 Telephone *574-534-2398* Email *office@berkeyavenue.org*
 Website *www.berkeyavenue.org*

2. Chairperson of search committee *Randy Horst*
 Address *300 Kansas Drive, Goshen, IN 46526*
 Telephone *574-971-8400* Email *randyph@goshen.edu*

3. Area church/conference *Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference*
 Name of area church/conference minister assisting your church's search committee
Doug Kaufman
 Address *212 South Main Street, Goshen, IN 46526*
 Telephone *574-534-4006* E-mail *doug@im.mennonite.net*

4. Year in which the congregation first began meeting or was organized *1979*

B. MEMBERSHIP *approximations*

1. Average Sunday worship attendance during the last 12 months: – *185*
 Highest attendance during that time – *225* Lowest attendance during that time – *90*

2. Total current members – *210* Non-resident members – *25*
 Resident members – *185* Children (not members) – *40*

3. Age of members and children. Give totals and percentage.

0-12	<i>35</i>	<i>14%</i>	31-45	<i>20</i>	<i>8%</i>
13-18	<i>30</i>	<i>12%</i>	46-64	<i>80</i>	<i>32%</i>
19-30	<i>45</i>	<i>18%</i>	65+	<i>40</i>	<i>16%</i>

4. Occupational profile: (ages 19 to 70).
 Business/manager/proprietor *15* Homemaker *20*

Education/administration/teacher	35	Clerical/sales	5
Craftsman/laborer/operative	5	Student/VS	15
Medical: doctor/nurse/administration	20	Farmer/rancher	1
Church institution/administration/minister	15	Other professional	10

5. Educational level of adults:

Up to and including high school	10%
Some college or college graduate	55%
Graduate school	35%

6. Describe the racial or ethnic composition of the congregation.

85% Caucasian. Others represented include Hispanic, African-American, African (Maasi), Laotian, Vietnamese, Indian, Asian.

C. LEADERSHIP

1. Identify the present staff position for which you are seeking a candidate. *Third Pastor*

2. Two previous persons in the above position:

Name *Lois Mast* Dates of service *2005–2014*

Name *Cindy Baker* Dates of service *2005–2009 (shared with Lois)*

Comment on the transitions experienced by the above staff persons. What were the reasons for their assignments ending? How were the transitions handled?

LM – She felt her 25 years of doing Youth work had come to an end and is ready for a new challenge

CB – She left to go back to school

3. Did your congregation follow the Pastor Salary Guidelines recommended by the denomination for the previous pastor? *yes* If not, describe how you varied from the Guidelines

4. Identify other staff: (assistant/associate minister, lay ministers, administrative assistant, custodian, musicians, youth)

Pastor 85% Years served 12

Specific responsibilities: Vision/mission/direction, preaching/direction, administrative oversight

Pastor 65% Years served 2

Specific responsibilities: Pastoral care/small groups, Stephen Ministry, missions, preaching/worship

Communications & Office Manager 50% Years served 3 months

Specific responsibilities: Receptionist & office management, tasks include bulletin & newsletter, minutes, website & social media, maintaining files & attendance records, etc.

Custodian 10-12 hrs per week Years served 8

Specific responsibilities: Cleaning and set of building

5. Describe housing options for the above position: Is there a parsonage or a housing allowance (US) or housing credit (Canada)?

We do not have a parsonage, but the congregation does allow pastors to designate part of their salary as a housing allowance according to IRS guidelines.

Is the person free to choose between these options? *Not applicable*

II. Interpretation

The answers to the questions in this section are more difficult but probably more important in determining the qualifications needed by pastoral leadership. Use a small group to test for consensus on the answers given in this section. (Would recommend that the governing board of the congregation review and sign off on this section)

- A. Describe the commitment of your church to Anabaptist/Mennonite faith. How does this contribute to strengthening your ability to join God's mission in the world?

The congregation is a supporting and participating member of IN-MI Conference and Mennonite Church USA. We are deeply committed to an Anabaptist/Mennonite faith perspective. There is high value placed on intimacy with God and with the community of faith and we extend welcome to persons who choose to join us. Our commitment is to follow Jesus, extending peace and justice, hope and forgiveness, grace and healing to all.

- B. What is the vision for your church? What are your priorities that shape the church's ministry?

God is richly blessing our congregation by calling out a people of diverse backgrounds, perspectives, abilities, and gifts to share our lives together as a congregation. We witness that God calls us to be faithful in all things and is teaching us about the people we are meant to be.

In the words of our Vision Statement, "As a congregation, Berkey Avenue is called to live Christ's loving, caring, healing presence in the world. In carrying out this vision, we will embrace intimacy and invitation as primary values. This means we will: 1) Stress the importance of deepening our personal relationships with God and with each other... (Intimacy) and 2) Strive to be an inviting, welcoming, hospitable congregation, seeking to share our faith in Jesus Christ with other people, while also inviting God into our lives in new ways. (Invitation). We also commit to participate in meaningful, vibrant worship; continue a high level of involvement in mission, both local and global; conduct dynamic children, youth, and adult nurture activities; and encourage spiritual growth. We recognize that the foundation of our life together is Jesus Christ. We further acknowledge that any growth as a church body will come as a result of building on this foundation in the power and wisdom of the Spirit."

A specific goal we had in the last few years has been to appeal to people in the first half of life. This goal was in response to the fact that we had few families with very young children. Through the work of the visitation committee and broader congregational welcoming, we now have a number of families with young children and our nursery is full.

- C. What is your view of the pastor's role in the church? Are there special gifts in ministry which you hope will be fulfilled? How do you expect the pastor to be a representative of the congregation beyond the congregation?

Berkey Avenue's pastoral leadership model is a team. Continuing team members serve at .85 and .65 FTE and will carry the primary preaching/teaching role and overall visioning work with the elders and congregation. The position that we are looking to fill will be a team member serving generally in the area of faith formation from infancy through young adulthood, giving particular attention to the crucial formation that happens during the teen years.

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

Our congregation is committed to:

- meaningful worship and spiritual growth*
- nurturing healthy Christian community*
- being Christ-centered*
- welcoming the diversity, sharing, & participation of all God's people*
- equipping one another to carry out God's call to discipleship in our lives*
- Biblical teaching*
- peace and justice*
- being globally informed & globally connected*

- E. Church morale: Assess the spiritual and emotional health of the congregation. Are relationships among members wholesome and harmonious? Is there openness to new ideas and ways of doing things? Would everyone agree with your answers?

Generally, the congregation is a healthy growing community of faith with relatively high morale. The congregation has experienced growth in young families with children.

The congregation has changed and evolved over the years by allowing the Holy Spirit to move in new and unexpected ways, leaving room for new ideas and ways of being. Despite the fact that we don't agree on every issue, our sense of community allows us to safely share both doubt and belief.

We see the congregation as a center of caring and support, reaching out to those in crisis.

In 2013 the Elders conducted an Appreciative Inquiry to allow members to express what they perceived as the congregation's strengths and areas the congregation could improve upon or expand into.

Many in the congregation see their professional involvement as engagement in their mission and therefore look for congregational experience to be a place for support and sustenance.

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

The congregation has a history of both support, financial and otherwise, for formal education at Bethany Christian Schools and our Mennonite colleges and seminaries. Our worship services, nurture hour classes, and Sunday dinners have attracted many college students.

III. Organization/Ministry

A. CHURCH STRUCTURE

1. Identify the primary governing body (council, board, elders) which represents the church.

Name *Elders* meets monthly avg. age 60 3M – 2F

2. Identify five other significant leadership/programming bodies: e.g. trustees, deacons, elders, commissions, councils, boards, committees, etc.

Name *Christian Education Commission* meets monthly avg. age 52 1M – 3F

Name *Fellowship & Caring Commission* meets monthly avg. age 52 1M – 4F

Name *Mission Commission* meets monthly avg. age 53 3M – 1F

Name *Stewardship & Finance Commission* meets monthly avg. age 49 3M – 0F

Name *Worship Commission* meets monthly avg. age 50 1M – 4F

Name *Caregiving Commission (Deacons)* meets monthly avg. age 71 2M – 2F

Note: Pastors are not included in the above counts

B. WORSHIP AND MUSIC

1. Describe your worship service – *We are a congregation that welcomes a wide range of worship experiences, with variety in who plans and leads, as well as variety in form and subject matter and is coordinated by the Worship Commission. Our worship services lean toward an informal traditional experience that encourages individual sharing.*
2. What role does music play in your congregation? – *Musical variety is embraced and celebrated; the congregation is blessed with numerous vocal and instrumental musicians who regularly provide prelude, offertory, and special music.*
3. What song books/collections of music does your congregation use? – *The Hymnal Worship Book, Sing the Journey, & Sing the Story*
4. Name the musical instruments used in worship and other events (piano, keyboard, organ, guitar organ, drums, handbells, violin, etc. – *baby grand piano, African drums, misc. rhythm instruments, guitars, violins, acoustic bass, trumpet*
5. Identify choirs and/or music groups – *No standing choirs, only occasional seasonal assembled groups*

C. CHRISTIAN FORMATION- Describe your approach to Christian Formation

1. Number of children's classes 3 + nursery Average total attendance 20

Number of youth classes 2 Average total attendance 25

Number of adult classes 5

Total Sunday school enrollment 80

What curriculum resources are used by these classes?

Children and youth: Mennonite Publishing Network materials. Adults: Uniform series, book study, Bible study, sermon discussion, current issues

2. How does the congregation attend to the formation needs of persons of all ages? *Strong encouragement to participate in one of the Sunday School class, Sermon Series, Mentor program for youth, Junior youth program (JYF) and MYF, College age Sunday School class, a young adult Sunday school class, partnering with Waterford Mennonite Church to offer marriage retreats 1-2 times a year*

3. What other opportunities are there for growth and transformation? *Retreats and special programs; community formation activities (such as church picnics and folk dances), opportunities for the congregation to volunteer in the community, Missions Commission has organized intergenerational evenings at The Depot, The Window and Center for Healing and Hope.*
4. Describe the involvement of youth in the life of the congregation. – *Sunday School, JYF/MYF activities, retreats, service trips, participation in worship activities, committee involvement*

Does your church support and send young people to Mennonite camps, area church/conference and colleges?
yes

5. Does your congregation have active small groups? If so, describe the number of groups, focus of the groups and how often they meet.

Yes, we have 15 active small groups that have administrative oversight by the Small Group Coordinating subcommittee. Small groups are not programmed and participation is voluntary. Groups have freedom to choose agenda/content, meeting time and frequency. Some meet weekly, some bi-monthly, and others just monthly. Many are intergenerational, but some are only young families, retired people, or only women. Some focus primarily on Bible/book study, some for sharing and prayer, and some for fellowship.

6. What men's/women's groups are active? *A men's and women's group meet regularly*
7. What ministries do you have for children, youth and young adults over 18, etc.?)

Junior Youth Fellowship, Mennonite Youth Fellowship, Peace Club (for elementary ages), a College-aged Sunday School class & weekly Sunday group meals provided by members the congregation, a Post-College young adult Sunday School class

8. In the next five years, do you anticipate a membership: *stable*

Why? Historically we have fluctuated between 170 and 220 members within a facility that can hold up to 225. Our current emphasis is on hospitality.

D. OUTREACH AND EVANGELISM

1. Describe how you cultivate the visibility of your church in the community.

Our membership is involved in community affairs at many levels. Our members are employed at, volunteer at, or serve on the boards of Goshen College, Everence, Bethany Christian Schools, the Community Relations Commission, the Center for Healing and Hope, Goshen Hospital, our local Ten Thousand Villages, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Mennonite Mission Network, MDC Goldenrod, MCC Relief Sale, an auxiliary for a neighborhood elementary school, a friends Montessori group, and Oaklawn. The church also offers community garden spaces for both members and others in the wider Goshen community.

2. Describe how you connect to seekers and make new disciples. *Membership classes routinely offered, baptism service, gardening space made available to local community, neighborhood social activities*
3. Describe your congregation's ministry in and with the community.

Within our congregation Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship provides support to the community in the following ways:

- **Community Discretion Fund:** *emergency assistance for local needs.*
- **Goshen Interfaith Hospitality Network:** *four times a year we host families who are experiencing homelessness for one week in our church building. This involves providing a place to sleep, and evening and morning meals.*
- **the Window:** *an agency of Church Women United of Goshen, Inc. that provides services to help meet basic needs of the elderly and anyone with limited income.*
- **Auxiliary for Model Elementary School:** *host thank you reception, provide 'care packages' for teachers*

We provide representatives to the following organizations:

- **LaCasa of Goshen:** *an organization that addresses issues of housing and neighborhood development.*
- **Habitat for Humanity:** *provides housing assistance for first-time home buyers.*
- **MCC Great Lakes**
- **Mennonite Disaster Service**
- **Mennonite Disabilities Representative**
- **Mennonite Economic Development Associates**

*We also have a **Mission Bulletin Board Coordinator** to keep us updated on mission workers and work related to our congregation, a **Peace and Justice Representative**, and **MCC Relief Sale Coordinators**, who coordinate our booth (cheese) at the local relief sale.*

E. HOW DOES THE CHURCH UTILIZE TECHNOLOGY IN WORSHIP, IN TEACHING, AND IN OUTREACH IN THE COMMUNITY?

The church maintains a web site and a Facebook page; there is a computer projection system in the sanctuary; building is Wi-Fi enabled; maintain a database of sermons that can be streamed; sanctuary sound booth and assisted hearing devices available in sanctuary

F. CHURCH BUILDING AND PROPERTY

1. Do you own or rent your facility? If rent, describe the type of space. *Own*
2. Seating capacity of sanctuary or worship area *225*
3. Date of construction of church building *Originally built in 1884; first addition in 1980*
4. Date of last renovation. *2013* Describe what was done *Remodeled classrooms, offices, kitchen, & nursery*
What if any building/renovation program is needed or projected? *None at this time*
5. Describe the educational facilities. *Individual classrooms for children and adults, relatively spacious youth rooms, and a library that can be used for meetings and classes*
6. Describe the fellowship and/or recreational facilities.

Two inside gathering places—one immediately upon entering front doors (fellowship hall) and one in Sunday school wing (Jubilee Hall). Total capacity about 200. Outdoor children's playground, basketball hoop, large open field adjoining parking lot—currently with community gardens.

7. Describe the church office location and equipment: Computers, phones, other.

Church office is located to right of main entrance and has its own outside entrance. The office area contains three offices plus a reception area. Office equipment: typewriter, computers, printing/copying machine, phones, laser printer, tape copying machine, adding machine.

8. Are building and equipment adequate for the needs of the congregation? Describe any special assets or liabilities of the building.

For the current size of the congregation the building is adequate. However, there is little room for growth.

9. Name the insurance company and describe the coverage for church liability, property, pastor's liability, etc., for the church.

Mennonite Mutual Insurance Company (Ohio)

*Church Building: \$1,200,000
Director and Offices Liability: \$1,000,000
Pastoral Counseling Liability: \$1,000,000
Non-owned, non Hired Auto liability: \$1,000,000
Sexual Misconduct: \$300,000*

10. Are there community programs or groups who also utilize your church facilities? Who are they and how often do they use the building?

Goshen Interfaith Hospitality Network: Four to five times a year our church hosts homeless families as part of a schedule with other area churches. Other groups also use our facilities for meetings including a Down Syndrome Support Group, GIHN Board meetings, a friends Montessori group, Stephen Ministry training, MDC Goldenrod and IN-MI Mennonite Conference staff meetings and other events. We also make our facilities available to other organizations as requested or as the church schedule permits.

What interaction do you have with them? Most of the above groups include congregational members

G. CHURCH STEWARDSHIP/FINANCES

1. Based upon your last report, identify the previous year's giving of your church.

Local Church	
Expenses	\$200,976

Local needs and outreach	*
Buildings and facilities	\$52,853
TOTAL LOCAL CHURCH CONTRIBUTIONS	\$253,829

* outreach is below as is all budget for needs outside church

Non Local Contributions	
Area church/conference	\$14,990
Denominational total	\$1,030
Mennonite institutions and agencies	\$13,350
Mennonite Central Committee	\$1,160
Other Mennonite causes	\$1,000
Non-Mennonite causes	\$10,000
TOTAL NON LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$42,511

2. Church budget

Who makes recommendation regarding pastoral and staff salaries? *Elders (SLT)*

Who determines church budget or makes recommendation to the church?

The Stewardship and Finance Commission tabulates requests, negotiates with commissions and presents a proposal to the congregation for approval.

What plan is used to challenge the church to Christian stewardship? *There is no formal plan*

Current total budget – \$296,340

3. Is there church indebtedness? Yes (*we bought the house next door to provide future options*)

Amount – \$30,000

How is it being reduced? *Through rent income and from budgeted amount within the annual church budget*

IV. Relationships

A. COMMUNITY

1. Character of community your congregation serves or in which it is located:

City (over 10,000)

2. Which best describes this community? *Stable*

3. Describe racial or ethnic composition of the community.

White Non-Hispanic (68%)

Hispanic (24%)

Other races (.5%)

Two or more races (2%)

Black (4%)

American Indian (0.3%)

4. List two or three primary business/industries in the community.

Our local economy has a strong core identity around recreational vehicle manufacturing. Additional strong manufacturing exists with boats, trucks, ambulances, manufactured housing and other non-car vehicles. Many small businesses also enrich the economic and social life of the community. As one of a few Mennonite centers, we are influenced by several Mennonite institutions including Goshen College, Bethany Christian Schools, Everance, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Church USA offices, The Mennonite, MDC Goldenrod, Anabaptist Disability Network, and probably others. Our local community is surrounded by larger cities involved in biomed and medical devices.

5. Identify other Mennonite/Anabaptist churches in the community, if any.

There are 28 Indiana-Michigan Conference churches in Elkhart County. There are also an additional six Central District Conference Mennonite churches in the county, all affiliated with MC USA. The county also includes a wide spectrum of Amish and Mennonite congregations, including Wisler Mennonite, Holdeman Mennonite, Conservative Mennonite Conference, and Beachy Amish Mennonite. There are well over a hundred Old Order Amish congregations.

What other churches and faith groups are in the community?

All mainline churches are represented along with numerous other religious groups although area faith groups are predominantly Christian in their orientation.

6. Name of nearest college or university

Goshen College is located within three miles and the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary is located within 10 miles from the church.

In what way does your church relate to this academic community?

Approximately 10 of our members/attendees are employed at Goshen College. During the college school year between 15 and 30 students attend BAMF on a Sunday morning. We have a Sunday school class for college age students and provide a meal for college age students each Sunday.

7. Identify significant issues confronting your community.

Elkhart Co. continues to need to develop greater economic diversity coupled with 'smart community growth'

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

Known as the Maple City, Goshen offers many diverse cultural, educational, industrial, and recreational opportunities. Goshen supports a strong industrial base and retail area. Our school system is excellent with emphasis placed on life-long learning. Goshen College, a small Mennonite liberal arts institution, draws students from across the country and internationally and provides numerous educational and cultural programs to the community. Goshen offers a thriving Farmer's Market and a monthly 'First Friday' program that draws people from surrounding communities to our downtown. Goshen has exceptional parks and recreational facilities, numerous service organizations and clubs, and a variety of churches supporting 33 different religious denominations.

9. Describe your congregation's ministry in the community.

- **Community Discretion Fund:** emergency assistance for local needs.
- **Goshen Interfaith Hospitality Network:** four times a year we host families who are experiencing homelessness for one week in our church building. This involves providing a place to sleep, and evening and morning meals
- **Auxiliary for Model Elementary School:** host thank you reception, provide 'care packages' for teachers
- **Stephen Ministry**

10. How does your congregation work with ecumenical and interfaith efforts?

One of the pastors meets with the Goshen Ministerial Association, a monthly, ecumenical gathering of pastors. This group also manages a fund that disperses emergency funds, through the Goshen Interfaith Hospitality Network, to people from the community who are in need.

Berkey also participates in the Goshen Interfaith Hospitality Network by housing homeless families in the church building for a week at a time, up to 5 times a year.

Many members volunteer their time in local organizations that offer aid and support for people in the community. Our Missions budget also gives monetary support to many of these organizations: The Window, Habitat for Humanity, Center for Healing and Hope, etc.

B. AREA CHURCH/CONFERENCE

1. Describe your relationship with and your participation in the area church/conference.

We are a member of and have a good working relationship with the Mennonite Church USA and the Indiana-Michigan Conference. Pastors, as their schedule allows, participate in the Goshen Mennonite Ministers' Council, which meets monthly for mutual support and accountability. The congregation sends delegates to Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference regional meetings and annual sessions, as well as supporting them in our budget. We are a congregation that is supportive of the work of the conference.

C. WIDER CHURCH

1. Describe your relationship with and your participation in Mennonite Church Canada/Mennonite Church USA.

We are supportive of Mennonite Church USA, sending delegates to Convention, the youth to the youth convention, and supporting the work of MC USA through our budget. This past year, one of our members inquired about inviting Ervin Stutzman to preach at our church, and in June 2014, he came and preached. He was very well received, and his presence strengthened our connection to the wider church.

V. Conclusion

- A. Compile your church's response to the "Twenty Pastoral Areas" found at <http://manygifts.org/20pastoralareas/> and include summary of the results.
- B. Send a copy of this form to your area church/conference minister. You may also use copies to send to prospective candidates whom you may wish to interview.

Name of group or persons responsible for completion of this form: *Roy Bergey, Abbe Buller, Randy Horst, & Deb Williams*
Date of completion *8/05/2014*

Revised November 2012
N Kauffmann, Leadership Development, Mennonite Church USA