



## 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: *Salem Mennonite Church*  
Address: *1045 Candlewood Dr NE Keizer, OR 97303*  
Church telephone: 503-390-2715 Email: [office@salemmennonitechurch.org](mailto:office@salemmennonitechurch.org)  
Website <https://www.salemmennonitechurch.org/>
2. Chairperson of search committee: *Juel Yoder Russell*  
Address: *715 S St Mary's Circle, Mount Angel OR 97362*  
Telephone: 503-871-3488 Email: [juelrussell@yahoo.com](mailto:juelrussell@yahoo.com)
3. Area church/conference: *Pacific Northwest Mennonite Church*  
Name of area church/conference minister assisting your church's search committee  
*Eric Massanari*  
Address: *PO Box 301036, Portland OR, 97294*  
Telephone: *316-212-6514* E-mail: [eric@pnmc.org](mailto:eric@pnmc.org)
4. Year in which the congregation first began meeting or was organized: *1961*

##### B. MEMBERSHIP

1. **Attendance July 2022 - July 2023**  
Highest: 119 on April 9, 2023 -- Easter Sunday (this is combined in-person and on Zoom)  
Highest In-person only: 99 also on April 9, 2023  
Lowest: 48 at church picnic on August 20, 2022  
Lowest for a "regular" church service: 55 total in-person and Zoom on December 22, 2022.  
In-person attendance was only 37.  
Average total attendance (counting in-person and Zoom): 85  
Average in-person attendance: 56
2. Active members (i.e. those that attend at least occasionally): 69  
Inactive members (don't attend but still have a membership): 62  
Non-members who are active attenders: 35  
Children and youth: 15

3. Age of members and children (includes active non-members). Give totals and percentage.

0-12	10	6%	31-45	28	17%
13-18	5	3%	46-64	34	20%
19-30	21	13%	65+	68	41%

4. Occupational profile: (ages 19 to 70). Give totals.

Business/manager/proprietor	9	Homemaker	4
Education/administration/teacher	9	Clerical/sales	2
Craftsman/laborer/operative	6	Student/VS	6
Medical: doctor/nurse/administration	8	Farmer/rancher	3
Church institution/administration/minister	3	Other professional	6
Retired	69		

5. Educational level of adults:

Up to and including high school	20%
Some college or college graduate	60%
Graduate school	20%

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

*Our congregation is majority Caucasian with two Latin American families (8 people total), four multi-racial families (combinations of Caucasians, Latin Americans, Nepalese, and Cambodian). Also includes internationally adopted youth from Guatemala, Nepal and India.*

### C. LEADERSHIP

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

2. Two previous persons in the above position:

Name: *Jerrell Williams*                      Dates of service *June 2019 – July 2023*  
Name: *Todd Lehman*                      Dates of service: *Aug 2013 – Jan 2017*

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

*Todd Lehman: Credentials revoked by PNW Conference. We had several part time interims including Bob Buxman and Craig Morton. It was a hard time for us. We had to work through our grief and anger.*

*Jerrell Williams: resigned after accepting a position at Shalom Mennonite in KS. We have hired Marlene Bogard (a member of SMC) as our part-time interim.*

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 *NA*

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

Title *Administrative Assistant* % of full time *10-25%*

Specific responsibilities *Bulletins, Directory, Order Supplies, etc.*      Years served *1*

Title *Custodian* % of full time *15%*      Specific responsibilities *Cleaning facility*      Years served *13*

Title *Youth Leader* (*This position is not currently filled*)

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

Is the person free to choose between these options? *NA*

## 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?

*Salem Mennonite Church holds a deep commitment to the Anabaptist/Mennonite faith. A large portion of the members have served with Anabaptist agencies in the US and around the world. A larger number have attended/graduated from Mennonite high schools and colleges. We use Mennonite Sunday School materials for adults and children. Members appreciate reading Anabaptist publications. Because of this background, we are aware of mission opportunities and contribute as a church and individually, financially and with our time to local peace and justice issues/organizations as well as MCC, MMN, Voluntary Service, SOOP, MDS and more.*

*At the same time, many people who have just recently joined the church have not previously, and might not currently, identify as Anabaptist/Mennonite. While the Anabaptist faith, particularly a tangible commitment to peace, justice, and community, is a big part of what brings people through our doors, the denominational label is likely not a priority for a growing number of regular attendees.*

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

*Salem Mennonite Church commits to hear and live God's call to be followers of Jesus Christ and to grow as a worshiping community of faith and reconciliation, where peace, joy and healing are experienced in the church and shared with others. Our prayer is that everyone who enters here may be received as Christ. We celebrate the image of God in all people and publicly affirm that persons of every gender identity and sexual orientation are welcome to participate in our life and ministry.*

*In 2021, a visioning team was formed which did listening sessions and surveys to work on who Salem Mennonite was in the past, who we are now, and what we envision for our future. That process identified four signs of the kingdom at SMC: engaging in celebrative worship; embracing Anabaptist faith formation; being a lively Anabaptist presence in the community and offering nurture and hospitality. We now use these four signs as the cornerstone to our church programs and outreach.*

- 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?

*It is important for our pastor to embody good leadership with organizational skills to guide and support the congregation in implementing the vision and mission of the church. We hope for someone who is personable and relates well to people "where they are." We feel good when our pastor takes interest in all the various ministries of the church and is encouraging to people in their roles. We are looking for a good speaker with sermons that challenge/encourage and make scripture, spirituality, and faith applicable to daily life.*

*We would like a pastor with strong Anabaptist belief and values who has an ability to bring together and work with people of differing views. It would be good for our pastor to have good listening and pastoral care skills. We would also expect our pastor to be motivated to work independently, but also to work well with others and in team situations. We expect our pastor to connect with the broader Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference, with the Southeast Keizer Community Center, and with other pastors and organizations in the broader Salem/Keizer community. Because of our connections with Vida Nueva and the SEKCC, it would be beneficial if our pastor was also a Spanish speaker.*

- 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.

*SMC is committed to Anabaptist theology and identity with an emphasis on peace and justice issues both in our local community and globally. Many of us view ourselves as global citizens in God's Kingdom. There is a strong emphasis on living a "Christ centered" lifestyle and sharing God's love and grace with others and interpreting scripture through the eyes and nature of Jesus.*

*A number of members have come to the Salem/Keizer area from different parts of the country over the years, thus bringing many diverse backgrounds, theology and some varying viewpoints to our*

congregation. Many are from traditional Mennonite, Mennonite-Brethren, or Anabaptist upbringing, but there are also many of us who have come with no Mennonite background. Most of us live in urban neighborhoods, while others live in rural areas. Without large concentrations of Mennonites in any area of the Pacific Northwest, those wishing to identify with a congregation committed to being an Anabaptist light in the community have the privilege and strain of being together even when some dearly held beliefs are at odds.

We have spent several years working together to discern our congregation's relationship to the LGBTQIA+ community. We are learning and growing into our welcoming statement: "...We celebrate the image of God in all people and publicly affirm that persons of every gender identity and sexual orientation are welcome to participate in our life and ministry." This commitment included many participating in an 8-session inclusion seminar led by a Gay community member this past Spring. There are others in the congregation that continue to struggle with this statement but maintain fellowship with us.

- 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, there is a positive outlook and a willingness to be involved in the work and ministries of the church. There is also a strong desire to be faithful in following Christ (discipleship) and to support each other as we strive to do that.*

*Relationships within the church are important to most of us and are largely shaped by our time together on Sunday morning and by involvement in small groups. Many attend SMC partly because of the friends and family who are involved in this church community - a community that is valued because we practice hospitality, share our joys and concerns, and offer care and support when needed. A few who do not have a long history with the church or a strong connection with Mennonite history and culture feel somewhat like outsiders; however, most of those people do have meaningful friendships within the church.*

*There is also a spirit of respect and trust for each other and especially for those who are involved in church leadership, in particular the elders and members of the leadership board. Most of us are very affirming of those who use their time and talents in both traditional and creative ways.*

*There is generally an openness to new ideas and to the different styles of teaching and worship leadership expressed in our congregation. Many also appreciate being challenged to think about faith and discipleship in new ways. Most of us are committed to the work of the church and working on the current church structure to keep programs and ministries vibrant by reorganizing our committees to better reflect our current commitment levels.*

*Our congregation celebrates the image of God in all people and publicly affirms people of every gender, identity and sexual orientation. We welcome everyone to participate in our life and ministry.*

- 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 of looking for new pastoral leadership?

*Salem Mennonite Church is gradually aging. And with that, we are seeing a future where many of our aging population are moving to nearby Mennonite retirement communities and attending church closer to them. At the same time, we have attracted a number of new people to our congregation, including families in this past year. Our service each week also has a Zoom option for attending, and this has allowed us to connect with people outside our community. There is interest in attracting more people in the next generations. A pastor who thrives on building and maintaining relationships will be helpful for the congregation.*

### III. Organization/Ministry

#### A. CHURCH STRUCTURE

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

Name: *Leadership Board* meets monthly # 8 avg. age 60 M – F 4 men – 4 women

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

Name *Elders* meets monthly # 3 avg. age 50 M – F 1 man- 2 women

Name *Facilities* meets as needed # 4 avg. age 70 M – F 4 men

Name *Faith Formation* meets 3-4 times a year # 6 avg. age 45 M – F 2 men- 4 women

Name *Worship* meets monthly # 2 avg. age 65 M – F 1 man, 1 woman

Name *Discernment* meets as needed # 3 avg. age 55 M – F 1 man, 2 women

#### B. Worship AND MUSIC

1. Describe your worship service

*The following is the general outline we use – but we are open to new ideas: We Gather and Prepare; We Hear God’s Word; We Respond; We Share; We Go Forth. Singing is an essential piece within each part of the service. We have a special time for children to come forward before the sermon, led by people in the congregation. We have a sharing time after the sermon where people share concerns and joys. At the end of the pastoral prayer, we join in saying the Lord’s Prayer.*

2. What role does music play in your congregation?

*Music is a vital part of our time together. Our primary singing is in four-part a cappella harmony, though we also sing choruses and have accompaniment. We will have special music from time to time - choirs or ensembles, children or adults, vocal or instrumental, though this has been less frequent since COVID. During the worship service, besides the times of singing, we have a prelude and offertory. Singing has also been an integral part of our annual church retreat.*

3. What song books/collections of music does your congregation use?

<i>Voices Together</i>	<i>Used every week</i>
<i>Hymnal – A worship book</i>	<i>Used less frequently at this point</i>
<i>Sing the Story</i>	<i>Used less frequently at this point</i>
<i>Sing the Journey</i>	<i>Used less frequently at this point</i>

4. Name the musical instruments used in worship and other events (piano, keyboard, organ, guitar organ, drums, handbells, violin, etc.)

*Piano (baby grand), organ (not a pipe organ), guitar  
Occasionally flute, mandolin, banjo, accordion, violin, cello, ukulele*

5. Identify choirs and/or music groups

*We have no regular choir – we are the choir. On special occasions a group may gather to form a choir.  
Age range: 35 to 80  
From time to time a small ensemble may contribute to the service.*

#### C. CHRISTIAN FORMATION- Describe your approach to Christian Formation

1. Number of children's classes *2 classes for grades K-6, Fall 2023* Average total attendance *7*

Number of youth classes *1 grades 7-12, Fall 2023* Average total attendance *4*

Number of adult classes *1* Average total attendance *10-15*

What curriculum resources are used by these classes?

- *MennoMedia Shine curriculum for K-6 classes*

- *Youth and Adult curriculum resources vary: Generation Why has been used. Menno Media Salt and Light Materials for Adults, Sometimes Book Studies, a focus topic with teachers using a variety of materials; often from Anabaptist publishers as well as other sources. Sometimes special presentations by someone involved in ministry and service.*

2. How does the congregation attend to the formation needs of persons of all ages?

*We have currently formed a faith formation committee to combine roles and responsibilities and work as a team to plan for traditional classes as well as other formation needs of the congregation.*

3. What other opportunities are there for growth and transformation?

*We've offered workshops and access to events to increase learning and participation for issues relevant to our community (LGBTQ+, peace and justice, etc.)*

*We support delegates in attending our local Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference events as well as the national MC USA Conventions. We keep people aware of opportunities for connecting with the conference.*

4. Describe the involvement of youth in the life of the congregation.

*There is a children's message in the worship service and children collect "My Coins Count" during the offering time. Children have been involved in the worship service by reading scripture, special music, etc.*

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

*We provide "camperships" for our youth to send them to Drift Creek Mennonite Camp each year. This year we sent 12 youth (ages 5-16) to Drift Creek. Additionally, many of our congregation (youth and adults) volunteer to support the camp each year. Many of our students go on to Mennonite colleges. Three graduated this spring and 4 will return this fall (to Mennonite schools).*

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

*We currently have 6 small groups (8-12 people) that meet at least monthly to support each other in a more informal and comfortable setting. These groups are overseen by the elders.*

6. What men's/women's groups are active?

- *Women's bible study*
- *Quilting Group*
- *Women's breakfast group*
- *Book club*
- *Sacred Circle*

7. What ministries do you have for children, youth and young adults over 18, etc.?)

*See above. Nothing specific for young adults over 18*

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

*Why? As mentioned above, there are several couples who have recently moved to a Mennonite retirement community nearby and anticipate attending church there in the future. There may be some who have left because of our welcoming stance.*

#### **D. OUTREACH AND EVANGELISM**

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

*Signage includes street signs at the two main turns to our building and a prominent sign on the property announcing the name and worship times.*

*The church supports the Southeast Keizer Community Center by hosting Friday evening events involving activities for adults and children, and a meal. Attendance ranges generally from 20-50 per event.*

*Salem Mennonite Church has had connections with Salem/Keizer Interfaith Network (SKIN) and Church at the Park. Salem Mennonite's status as an affirming church has brought new members in by being visible on our website and coming up in Google searches. Salem Mennonite also appears on a list of affirming congregations distributed by SKIN.*

2. Describe how you connect to seekers and make new disciples.

*New attendees can fill out an information card that allows the pastor to reach out to them. Visitors are also invited to introduce themselves to the congregation.*

*Invitations out in the community are often handled "word of mouth," though Salem Mennonite's presence as one of the churches that fully welcomes people of all sexual orientations and gender identities has increased its visibility among people who are seeking that kind of congregation.*

3. Describe your congregation's ministry in and with the community.

*Formal ministries with the community include the Salem Keizer Community Center, which is hosted at the church every Friday during the school year, and collaboration with the Church at the Park houseless ministry by volunteering time to serve meals or collecting donations of the most needed items.*

*Informally, many members are involved with various activities, including those associated with Oregon Fellowship of Reconciliation, Salem Keizer Interfaith Network, and participation in protests and demonstrations for justice in the city. While Salem Mennonite hasn't had a visible presence at protest events, many members attend these events as an expression of faith.*

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

*All worship services include a Zoom option. The Zoom link is sent out to the entire congregation and anyone who has expressed interest in attending online.*

*The church website includes our welcoming statement, worship times, PDFs of the bulletin, a pastor's blog, recordings of sermons, and other information about the church.*

*The church has online giving options that allow people to give to the general offering or specific funds. It also allows people to set up recurring payments.*

*Two large screens in the front of the sanctuary and one in the back are utilized to help Zoom attendees participate in the service and show videos and multimedia presentations.*

## 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 *183*
3. Date of construction of church building *Sanctuary 1964, Education wing and Fellowship Hall, 1979*
4. Date of last renovation. *2012* Describe what was done *Roof was replaced.*  
What if any building/renovation program is needed or projected? *Repaving the parking lot*
5. Describe the educational facilities.

*Five classrooms, a nursery and the Fellowship Hall. The adult Sunday school class meets in the Fellowship Hall.*

6. Describe the fellowship and/or recreational facilities.

*We have a fellowship hall that serves as a multifunctional area, we have used it as a meeting area and we have used it as a place for kids to run around in. There is a full kitchen next to the hall that serves well for potlucks, meals and other social events. There is a small lawn in front of the church that is used for various gatherings and games. We have a basketball hoop in the parking lot, and a picnic table near the road by a community garden.*

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

*The church office is equipped with a computer and printer. The office is located next to the church foyer. The pastor is supplied with a laptop and a study. We have a computer network along with a projector and various other equipment. Our sanctuary is equipped with three screens and equipment for providing a Zoom option each week.*

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

*The current situation of the church is very adequate for the needs of the church. We have some translation and hearing aid equipment that can be used on Sundays. Parking can become slightly limited on exceptionally busy days.*

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

*Church and Pastor Liability are through Mennonite Insurance Services (Policy underwritten by GuideOne Insurance). Property is through Mennonite Aid Plan/Mennonite Insurance Services. Workers Comp is through SAIF Corp.*

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

*Vida Nueva – Hispanic congregation that meets regularly at the church property for services and other events.*

*Southeast Keizer Community Center (SEKCC) – This program was started by Salem Mennonite as an outreach opportunity that has grown to include its own board and one employee. There are several church members that are a part of the Community center board and many that volunteer to help make it possible. Open on Friday evenings with meals and activities. It also has added a Little Library and Community Garden at the front of the parking lot. The program is heavily supported by the church.*

*Al-Anon – Regular weekly meetings.*

*Various other groups use the facilities for ad hoc meetings.*



## G. CHURCH STEWARDSHIP/FINANCES

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

### Local Church

Expenses	\$153,357
Local needs and outreach	\$26,299
Buildings and facilities	\$43,000
<b>TOTAL LOCAL CHURCH CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>\$69,299</b>

### Non Local Contributions

Area church/conference	\$7,868 (PNMC)
Denominational total	\$3,661 (MCUSA and MMN)
Mennonite institutions and agencies	\$20,774
Mennonite Central Committee	\$730
Other Mennonite causes	\$4,244 (MEA, Colleges, Drift Creek Camp)
Non-Mennonite causes	\$5,444
<b>TOTAL NON LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>\$21,291</b>

2. Church budget

Who makes recommendations regarding pastoral and staff salaries? *Treasurers/Finance Committee*

Who determines church budget or makes recommendations to the church? *Treasurers prepare a budget draft and work with the Finance Committee to recommend a budget to the congregation. The congregation votes on that recommendation each fall at the designated business meeting.*

What plan is used to challenge the church to Christian stewardship? *The church's goal is to push toward 25% of the budget being geared toward Christian Stewardship. We are below that goal at about 15%, but our goal post COVID is to work back toward 25%.*

Current total budget \$ \$173,882

3. Is there church indebtedness? *No*

How is it being reduced? *NA*

## IV. Relationships

### A. COMMUNITY

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

#### Salem

- Rural  Village (under 2500)  Town (under 10,000)  City (over 10,000)  
 Large city (over 100,000)  Metropolitan area (over 1,000,000)

#### Keizer

- Rural  Village (under 2500)  Town (under 10,000)  City (over 10,000)  
 Large city (over 100,000)  Metropolitan area (over 1,000,000)

2. Which best describes this community?

#### Salem

- Growing  Stable  Declining

#### Keizer

- Growing  Stable  Declining

3. Describe racial or ethnic composition of the community.

*Salem: 75.3% White, 1.4% African American, 1.0% Native American, 3.3% Asian, 1.8% Pacific Islander, and 10.2% two or more races. Those of Hispanic or Latino origin made up 22.4% of the population. Keizer: (2022 Census Bureau Estimates) 77% White, 0.8% Black or African American, 0.8% Native American, 1% Asian, 0.3% Pacific Islander, 12.1% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 25.4% of the population.*

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

*The largest employers in the area are the various levels of State and County government, the school district, and Salem Health. Other key industries include agriculture and food processing (Oregon is often called the "grass seed capital of the world", with most of the production in the Willamette Valley), manufacturing, and timber.*

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

*Comunidad Cristiana Vida Nueva currently meets in our building. Ebenezer is Spanish church plant in Keizer. Western Mennonite Church, located on the campus of Western Christian School (formerly Mennonite), is in rural northwest Salem. Kingwood Bible Church has Mennonite Brethren roots and is also located in West Salem. Kingwood Bible is also associated with establishing a school, Salem Academy.*

*To the north are Zion Mennonite in Hubbard, Pacific Covenant Mennonite in Canby, and Portland Mennonite in Portland. To the south are congregations in Albany, Eugene, and Corvallis. To the east there is a small congregation in Bend.*

What other churches and faith groups are in the community?

*Salem Alliance Church is probably the largest church in Salem, with average attendance ~2,600 (pre-COVID-19), located near downtown Salem and with a very large presence in the community, including a popular coffeeshop/community building and involvement in founding Salem for Refugees. Morningstar Community Church is another large church, near the size of Salem Alliance in attendance numbers, located in south Salem. St. Joseph's Catholic Church is a historical church that serves 3,500 families. There are many churches in Salem across a wide range of denominations.*

*Salem has one local mosque, the Salem Islamic Center. Eid Al-Fitr in 2023 brought in about 200 people.*

*Temple Beth Sholom is a local Jewish community that includes 174 "membership units" (families, seniors, couples, and singles). Salem Mennonite's most recent pastor was acquainted with Rabbi Eli Herb through SKIN.*

*The Salem Keizer Interfaith Network (SKIN) is a collection of community-minded faith leaders in the Salem/Keizer area with a focus on various social justice causes and peacemaking efforts. Several members of Salem Mennonite have attended SKIN-affiliated events.*

6. Name of nearest college or university

*Willamette University is a private Liberal Arts college in the heart of Salem. Chemeketa Community College is based in Salem with several campuses. Corban University is a private (Baptist) college outside of Salem.*

*Other nearby educational institutions include: Western Oregon University, George Fox University, Mt. Angel Seminary*

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

*Lectures and other public programs at Willamette University have been advertised to the church. Multiple regular attenders work or have worked at local colleges. Multiple members of SMC have attended local colleges and universities.*

*There are many ties to Mennonite institutions throughout the country, including many attendees and members who have attended these institutions. All college students with ties to SMC receive letters and other encouragement and support from the congregation.*

7. Identify significant issues confronting your community.

*The ongoing rise of homelessness, very visible in the heart and norther parts of the city, has led to increased debate and division around appropriate and effective community response.*

*Divisions around various "culture war" issues, including the role of police in communities, school curriculum and policies around equity and LGBTQIA+ rights, and lingering tensions around COVID-19 response.*

*Divisions, often related to politics, both between rural and urban areas, and within Salem itself.*

*Wealth and resource gaps between various neighborhoods, roughly between north/east Salem neighborhoods and west/south Salem neighborhoods.*

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

*Salem is the capital of Oregon which provides a rich history in the heart of the city. The capitol building and grounds are beautifully landscaped and decorated. It is easy to stay up to date on local political happenings with the close proximity to the state's government headquarters. The Salem-Keizer School District boasts an exceptional music program.*

*Salem is a growing city that includes many of the conveniences and perks of a city, including quality restaurants and entertainment options, while also being easy to get out of to the many nearby natural offerings.*

*The Willamette River runs through Salem. The valley of the Willamette River in western Oregon is the state's most densely populated area and is home to eight of the ten most populous cities. Oregon contains a diverse landscape including the windswept Pacific coastline, the volcanoes of the rugged and glaciated Cascade Mountain Range, many waterfalls, dense evergreen forests, and high desert across much of the eastern portion of the state. Mount Hood is the highest point in the state at 11,249 feet (3,429 m). Crater Lake National Park is the only national park in Oregon.*

*Salem's central location makes it easy to visit many Oregon sites with just a short drive. The coast is less than 60 miles away, as is Portland or Silver Falls State Park. One can reach beautiful Central Oregon in just a couple of hours. For those who love the out-of-doors, Oregon has an abundance of options in every direction, which is why tourism is a valuable industry for the state. Many are working to bridge the urban-rural divide and develop strategies for economic growth within the state in a manner that can both create jobs while protecting the area's wealth of natural resources.*

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

*The Southeast Keizer Community Center is hosted in Salem Mennonite's fellowship hall and is primarily run by SMC attendee volunteers. On Friday nights it provides activities, a meal, and a safe place for families.*

*SMC has partnered with Church @ the Park to provide resources to the houseless/housing insecure population they serve.*

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

*Salem Mennonite has collaborated with our interfaith neighbors in its work to support the refugee/immigrant community in Salem. Members of Salem Mennonite have also participated in the Salem Keizer Interfaith Network's meetings and events.*

## **B. AREA CHURCH/CONFERENCE**

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

*We actively participate in the structure and functioning of the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference (PNMC). We appreciate and recognize the perspective and oversight that membership in an organization outside our own church provides. Our budget supports both the local and national organizations and funds participation for delegates from our church to attend their conventions and meetings. Many members have been delegates as well as in leadership roles in the PNMC.*

### C. WIDER CHURCH

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

*We actively participate in the structure and functioning of MCUSA. We appreciate and recognize the perspective and oversight that membership provides. Our budget supports national organizations and funds participation for delegates to attend conventions and meetings. Every fall we put together School Kits to be distributed by MCC. We have high participation in organizing and attending the annual MCC Fall Festival in Albany. We collect coins for MCC each Sunday. Many members have served with MCC, MMN, MDS, Voluntary Service and/or have attended Mennonite colleges. We currently have 1 person serving with MCC and 4 young people attending Mennonite colleges.*

### V. Conclusion

A. Compile your congregation's response to the "Congregational and Pastoral Priorities" found here.

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: *Search Committee: Juel Russell, Marj Mobley-Oorthuys, Mitchell Daily, Debbie Pauls, Glen Oesch*

August 17, 2023

