



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 *Souderton Mennonite Church*
Address *105 West Chestnut St, Souderton, PA 18964*
Church telephone *215-723-3088* Email churchoffice@soudertonmennonite.org
Website *SoudertonMennonite.org*
2. Chairperson of search committee *Ron Alderfer*
Address *87 W. Hamlin Ave., Telford, PA 18969*
Telephone *215.723.5455* Email ralderfer@verizon.net
3. Area church/conference *Mosaic Mennonite Conference*
Name of area church/conference minister assisting your church's search committee
Randy Heacock
1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446
T *267-884-2984* E-mail rheacock@mosaicmennonites.org
4. Year in which the congregation first began meeting or was organized *1879*

B. MEMBERSHIP

1. Average Sunday worship attendance during the last 12 months: *300*
Highest attendance during that time *489, Easter* Lowest attendance during that time *232, July 4*
2. Total current members: *371 active members, 504 including children and youth. 80 active non-members*
Non-resident members *50*
Resident members *321* Children (not members) *52*
3. Age of members and children. Give totals and percentage.

0-12: <i>52; 10%</i>	31-45: <i>37; 7%</i>
13-18: <i>64; 13%</i>	46-64: <i>137; 27%</i>
19-30: <i>59; 12%</i>	65+: <i>155; 31%</i>

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

Business/manager/proprietor	25	Homemaker	30
Education/administration/teacher	25	Clerical/sales	10
Craftsman/laborer/operative	50	Student/VS	10
Medical: doctor/nurse/administration	40	Farmer/rancher	1
Church institution/administration/minister	15	Other professional	95

5. Educational level of adults:

Up to and including high school	40%
Some college or college graduate	40%
Graduate school	20%

6. Describe the racial or ethnic composition of the congregation. *95% Caucasian, 5% Asian, African Americana, Hispanic, African or other. There are several immigrant and refugee families who are regular attendees at SMC*

C. LEADERSHIP

1. **Identify the present staff position for which you are seeking a candidate.** *Pastoral Team Leader*

2. **Two previous persons in the above position:**

Name *Timothy Bentch, Executive Lead Pastor; Dec. 2015 – Nov., 2019*

Name *Gerry Clemmer, Executive Lead Pastor, 1988-2014 (co-pastor with Dave Grieser 1995-2006)*

Comment on the transitions experienced by the above staff persons. What were the reasons for their assignments ending? How were the transitions handled? *Gerry Clemmer's long tenure as lead pastor completed when Gerry opted to step back from a lead role and into a support role for his next season of ministry. An interim pastor (Alan Miller) carried the congregations through 2015, addressing some leadership issues. Timothy Bentch assumed the role of Senior Pastor in December of 2015, bringing a directive leadership style and much change to the congregation and the leadership team, including the resignation of all associate pastors. For the most part, the congregation adapted well to a vast amount of change in a short period of time. In September of 2019, after hiring a new youth pastor, Pastor Tim submitted his resignation in order to pursue an opportunity in Lancaster, PA where his wife had recently taken a job. Pastor Tim leaves behind a competent, talented team of pastors and ministry leaders, who are well-loved by the congregation.*

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 Variance would have come in the form of grace extended for Tim to continue to occasionally sing professionally, sometimes working remotely or missing Sundays.*

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

Title *Care Pastor* 100% of full time; Years served: 3

Specific responsibilities: *Oversee Congregational care needs, prayer initiatives, and preaching*

Title *Pastor of Mission and Formation* 100% of full time; Years served: 3

Specific responsibilities: *Oversee community outreach, Discipleship, worship, and preaching*

Title *Youth and Young Adult pastor* 100% of full time; Years served: .5

Specific responsibilities: *Oversee senior high youth ministry, young adult ministry, Vocation as Mission program, and preaching*

Title *Children's Ministry Director* 50% of full time; Years served: 3.5

Specific responsibilities: *Oversee children's ministry programs, ministry to parents/families, worship dance initiatives*

Title *Jr. High Youth Director* 50% of full time; Years served: 2

Specific responsibilities: *Oversee Jr. youth ministry and volunteers*

Title *Office Manager/Worship Coordinator* 100% of full time; Years served: 6
Specific responsibilities: *Oversee office functions, including pastoral support, and coordinate worship elements*

Title *Facilities Manager and events coordinator* 100% of full time; Years served: 2.5
Specific responsibilities: *Oversee facility maintenance, including custodial staff, and coordinate events, including various community groups using the building on a long term basis.*

Title *Bookkeeper (two positions)* % of full time 25% total Specific responsibilities *One individual handles accounts receivable/budget and another handles accounts payable* Years served approximately 10, currently seeking to replace one position (accounts payable)

Title *Office Assistant* % of full time 25-50% Specific responsibilities *Provide assistance in ongoing office tasks* Years served This is an open position which may not be needed.

5. **Describe housing options for the above position:** Is there a parsonage or a housing allowance (US) or housing credit (Canada)? *A housing allowance is available, with the amount subject to the individual's salary and housing allowance, per IRS regulations.*

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?** *SMC was founded as a Mennonite congregation of the Franconia Mennonite Conference in 1879 and has remained in this governing body and the Anabaptist faith tradition ever since. We are active participants in the conference and various denomination ministries including MCC, MMN, MDS, MRC, and others. Our beliefs are expressed through our desire to bring the Gospel to our community and beyond through meaningful service. Our roots and perspective are Anabaptist, but we are increasingly diverse in terms of our membership. As we reach out to our community we find ourselves enhanced and challenged by believers from various faith backgrounds and no faith background at all. A great example of this would be a local Jewish family who regularly serves with us on Wednesday Community nights.*
- B. **What is the vision for your church? What are your priorities that shape the church's ministry?** *Our newly adopted Vision statement is "Strengthening Meaningful Connections with Christ, Church, and Community." This statement reflects our commitment to the individual's growth as a believer, our commitment to build strong relationships with one another, and our collective commitment to do the same in the larger community. A key word here is "Meaningful," in that we recognize a societal shift towards more shallow forms of relating that we seek to combat with face-to-face honest conversations.*
- 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?** *The ideal Pastoral Team Leader will be passionate about Anabaptist faith, an empowering and collaborative team leader, a competent administrator, a good communicator, and a visionary leader*
- 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.**

It is generally understood that the following are the distinctives of our Mennonite faith:

- 1. That the essence of being a Christ-follower is discipleship – doing Jesus. Christian faith is not just the inward experience of Grace. It is the outward application of God's Grace to all humanity and also in our relationships with one another.*
- 2. Making the commitment to follow Jesus is personal and voluntary. It is a choice we make as individuals, and it is a gift. (i.e., a conscious, informed and faith-based decision to receive baptism)*
- 3. Our Lord stated clearly there are just two great commandments: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind; and, love your neighbor as yourself – unto death.(expressed as non-resistance and in the command to "love your enemies")*

While generally supportive of them in principle, our congregation is less familiar with the articles of faith as stated in the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective (1995). It is fair to say that in regard to the role of non-

violence in our culture and world, our congregation would be marked by its diversity of opinion. The same could be said for other culturally-sensitive issues that mark this moment in history. It would also be accurate to note that our congregation is characterized by its tolerance to this diversity. We have yet to develop fully the art of listening to one another regarding divisive issues, however.

- 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.** *SMC is a deeply spiritual congregation committed to prayer, to reflective Bible study, to personal and corporate growth and to service in many forms. The congregation is marked by mostly strong positive relationships. In a church of this size there are always exceptions and occasional conflicts or disagreements, but overall the church is healthy. The congregation has experienced a tremendous amount of change in the last six years and has generally adapted very well. Moving from a long-standing, relational, collaborative pastor to a more directive, visionary-style pastor was a tough transition for many, yet overall the congregation has weathered these changes well and has embraced a wide variety of new initiatives in recent years. Though the congregation is accustomed to change, they are now looking forward to a season of unity and vision with some stability.*
- 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?** *Over the next five to ten years we hope to build a church that is ready to minister in a new generation of believers and in a changing community and cultural context. The challenge is to maintain our core beliefs, yet present the Gospel in ways that resonate with a new generation. Over the last two decades or so SMC has been transitioning from a traditional family-centric Mennonite congregation to a more dynamic community-oriented Mennonite congregation. We would expect this trend to continue.*

III. Organization/Ministry

A. CHURCH STRUCTURE

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

Name *Church Board*

Meets monthly

Total #: *varies from 6-11 avg. age 55 currently 5M/3F*

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

Name *Pastoral Leadership Team* meets weekly # of avg. age: 45-50 M – F 3-3

Name *Worship Planning Team* meets monthly # of avg. age 50 M – F 3-3

Name *Mission Engagement Team* meets quarterly # of avg. age 55 M – F 4-2

Name *Prayer Team* meets quarterly # of avg. age 65 M – F 6-13

Name *Human Resources Team* meets as needed # of avg. age 45 M – F 2-2

B. Worship AND MUSIC

1. **Describe your worship service** *Worship services are often planned around themes or sermon series. We intentionally include a variety of music and a variety of ages of participants. Direction for the services comes from our pastoral team and is fleshed out by the worship coordinator in conjunction with music and other leaders.*

2. **What role does music play in your congregation?** *The congregation enjoys a wide variety of music from traditional hymns to contemporary music to special music from choir, hand bells, children's music and more. The Congregation successfully merged two services (traditional and contemporary) into a blended worship experience in 2015.*

3. **What song books/collections of music does your congregation use?** *We use Hymnal: A Worship Book, Sing the Journey, Sing the Story, and a variety of contemporary music from groups like Getty and Hillsong.*

4. **Name the musical instruments used in worship and other events (piano, keyboard, organ, guitar organ, drums, handbells, violin, etc.)** *Piano, electric keyboard, organ (occasionally), drums, guitars of varying types, hand bells, and featured instruments such as flute, trumpet, saxophone, etc.*

5. Identify choirs and/or music groups

Name <i>Adult and Youth Choir</i>	Age range <i>Teen–Adult</i>	Number of participants <i>25-35</i>
Name <i>Glory Ringers</i>	Age range <i>Teen-Adult</i>	Number of participants <i>12+</i>
Name <i>Worship Teams</i>	Age range <i>Teen-Adult</i>	Number of participants <i>12+ on several teams</i>
Name <i>Children’s choir/bells</i>	Age range <i>pre-K-4th grade</i>	Number of participants <i>12+</i>

C. CHRISTIAN FORMATION- Describe your approach to Christian Formation

1. Number of children's classes 4 Total Sunday school enrollment: 200+ (*Attendance, not enrollment*)
Number of youth classes 2 Average total attendance: 165 (*adults and children*)
Number of adult classes 9
What curriculum resources are used by these classes?

Children’s Sunday school uses “The Gospel Project” through 5th grade. Youth and young adult classes use a variety of biblical resources, selected as appropriate. Adult Sunday school topics and curriculum are chosen by classes with the help of the formation pastor as needed. Adult classes are strongly encouraged to do an annual unit of study on a book of the Bible, Anabaptist History/Theology. Curriculum ranges from sermon discussion, Menno Media’s quarterly series, and in-depth studies on a book of the Bible to topics or social issues that are relevant to the class.

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

In addition to Sunday school:

- *6 Bible Studies are offered for Women 3 are year round.*
- *2 Bible Studies are offered for Men 1 is year round.*
- *There are two Bible studies that meet Sept-April for women and men with differing abilities and we collaborate with Peaceful Living, a local non-profit, to have a monthly Bible study and time of worship for people with differing abilities.*
- *Table Church – a time of fellowship, prayer and Bible study while sharing a meal is offered in 3 month intervals three times a year.*

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

- *At least twice a year we have a Sunday school elective class. In the summer this class focuses on a book of the Bible. In 2019/20, the electives were on Mental Illness and Community Conversations (guests from the community came and presented on current events and topics that effect our community such as addiction, loss of funding for children’s programs, immigration, etc.)*
- *The Senior Citizens hold a luncheon every other month. These serve as a time of gathering and fellowship and host a guest speaker.*

4. Describe the involvement of youth in the life of the congregation. Youth serve in many ministry areas including worship, children’s ministry, worship teams, service projects, youth leadership, and more.

Does your church support and send young people to Mennonite camps, area church/conference and colleges? *Yes – SMC financially supports Spruce Lake. Work teams annually go to Spruce Lake and Bethany Birches. We offer scholarships to all children who attend Spruce Lake and Camp Menno Land. One of our Youth is on the Conference’s youth leadership team.*

5. Does your congregation have active small groups? If so, describe the number of groups, focus of the groups and how often they meet. This is an area we intend to grow. But currently...

- *4 small groups who meet monthly for prayer, support and Bible Study. Three groups are intergenerational and one is for young adults.*
- *Sports teams that meet weekly at different times throughout the year – Women’s Volleyball, Men’s over 40 Basketball, All ages Pickleball.*
- *Mom’s in conversation group.*
- *Support groups such as Divorce Care and Grief Share and Alzheimer/Dementia serve as small groups.*
- *Bible Studies.*

- *Groups such as Choir, Helping Hands, Worship and other leadership teams often take on the role of small group as people get to know each other deeply as they work, worship and pray together.*

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

- *The women's ministry is very active. The team supports the women's Bible Studies, plans monthly events, hosts an annual brunch and organizes opportunities for groups to attend concerts and retreats.*
- *The Men's ministry hosts quarterly breakfasts and supports men's Bible Studies.*

7. What ministries do you have for children, youth and young adults over 18, etc.?) *We offer Sunday school for all ages, seasonal weekly Kids clubs, VBS, MYF, an active mentor program, young adult groups, service opportunities, and more*

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

Why? Our membership has been stable, but we'd hope to see growth as we live more fully into our mission to reach our community.

D. OUTREACH AND EVANGELISM

1. Describe how you cultivate the visibility of your church in the community. *SMC has a physical location within the borough of Souderton, providing a wonderful opportunity for us to live into our mission to reach the community with the Good News. We recognize the significant resource we have in the form of a well-appointed building and seek to intentionally use this gift to serve our community in many ways. Up to 50 or more events per week bring the community into our building. Besides using the building in various ways described below, we intentionally get involved in community events from the annual parade to various programs in the school district to our community "worship in the park" held in conjunction with other Souderton churches.*

2. Describe how you connect to seekers and make new disciples. *Our vision is to "Strengthen Meaningful Connections with Christ, Church, and Community." With this in mind, we provide multiple entry points into our fellowship, allowing for seekers to join in ways that are comfortable to each individual. Souderton Mennonite is regularly described as a friendly, welcoming body. We do have an official "hospitality team" who works to make the facility a friendly place and to be sure visitors have a personal connection on Sunday mornings and at other events. Beyond that, it is common for visitors to be introduced to various "next step" opportunities, such as Sunday school, table church, or small groups. When new friends are ready to learn even more about our fellowship, they may attend a "new members" class to learn our history and Mennonite theology or a "gifts discernment" class to find ways they can best join our mission. Several of our Sunday school classes are not age-group specific, and we sometimes run special classes focused more on seekers.*

3. Describe your congregation's ministry in and with the community. *We currently provide space for Keystone Opportunity Center's weekly ESL and Family Literacy classes, the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit classes, recovery groups such as AA and NA, support groups such as Grief Share, Divorce Care, Dementia Support group, and various groups that use our gym, among others. In addition, the Bridge of Hope Bux/Mont chapter has recently moved their office space into our facility. Our generous building use is an expression of our mission to serve the community with the resources we have. One major congregational effort is a weekly Wednesday night community meal, followed by activities for all ages (Fall and Winter). This weekly event draws people from a wide circle into our building, where we pray they feel welcomed and cared for as we share a hot meal together. Peaceful Living participants join us one Wednesday each month and then hold their own Bible study in the fellowship hall.*

Our newly-formed Missional Engagement Team, under the direction of our Pastor of Missions and Assimilation, seeks to find ways our church can meet specific needs in our community. Several recent examples include the church providing funding and volunteers to run the Keystone Opportunity Center's Family Literacy Program for a full year when state funding fell through. Other examples include funding the showing of Screenagers at our local school, funding and volunteers for the Girls on the Run program, and more recently several tangible responses to the Covid-19 crisis including support for needy families and appreciation gifts for first responders.

Beyond these efforts, we have held many other "outreach" types of events, such as "worship in the park," concerts, block parties, Easter egg hunts, summer camps, VBS, children's story times, and more.

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

We are pleased to broadcast our worship services via live stream with multiple camera angles, thereby allowing many to attend who would not otherwise be able to. This service was begun in 2018 and has served us very well during the current covid-19 crisis. In addition we maintain a dynamic website, social media outlets, and have two screens at the front of the sanctuary for multi-media visual content during Sunday worship. Newly installed information screens are in our various lobbies allowing for visual announcements to be scrolling any time. Our staff has become known for our highquality visuals that communicate sermon series or various

events and opportunities. These are sometimes made into physical signs that are displayed on our property. Our building has Wifi and various comfortable spaces that are accessible to community members during some times of the week.

F. CHURCH BUILDING AND PROPERTY

1. **Do you own or rent your facility? If rent, describe the type of space.** *We own our property*
2. **Seating capacity of sanctuary or worship area** *600*
3. **Date of construction of church building** *1914 (current fellowship hall); 1984 (Sunday school and office wing); 1999 (Sanctuary, children's wing, community center/gym)*
4. **Date of last renovation.** *1999-2000* **Describe what was done** *Addition of sanctuary, Children's department, Community Center/gym, and adult SS classrooms. New kitchen, renovation of old sanctuary into fellowship hall, renovation of old children's SS space into youth center*

What if any building/renovation program is needed or projected? *Roofing, HVAC units, Parking lot repaving, sidewalk replacement, and potential lobby renovation.*

5. **Describe the educational facilities.** *A large number of well-appointed classrooms for children, youth, young adults and adults. Many include TVs and some have ready access to kitchenettes. A welcoming desk is central to our children's area, along with a parent lounge and children's library. The Youth area is large and comfortable and includes a game room and kitchen space.*
6. **Describe the fellowship and/or recreational facilities.** *We have a professional kitchen adjacent to our fellowship hall that seats 300 at tables and includes a stage and A/V abilities. The West Street Community Center has a full-size basketball/volleyball court, equipment closet, restrooms, and a utility kitchen. This space can also be used to seat 300 people at tables when needed.*
7. **Describe the church office location and equipment: Computers, phones, other.** *The offices are centrally located inside the front entrance, off the main lobby. The reception area includes two work spaces, a kitchenette, copier, fax, folding machine, printers, etc. The adjacent hallway leads to a conference room and six private offices used by pastors, ministry leaders and facility manager.*
8. **Are building and equipment adequate for the needs of the congregation? Describe any special assets or liabilities of the building.** *The building is well-equipped, handicap accessible with an elevator, well-maintained, and an asset to SMC and the community. The Fellowship Hall/Kitchen and the West Street Community Center are frequently rented for community functions.*
9. **Name the insurance company and describe the coverage for church liability, property, pastor's liability, etc., for the church.** *Mercer Insurance Company through Franconia Insurance and Financial Services (FIFS)*
10. **Are there community programs or groups who also utilize your church facilities? Who are they and how often do they use the building?** *Many outside groups use the building on a daily and/or weekly basis. Some pay rent, some reduced rent, and some use it for free. Examples include Keystone Opportunity Center, Montgomery county intermediate unit, Bridge of Hope Bux/Mont offices, AA, NA, sports groups (Volleyball, basketball, pickle ball), Chinese student outreach, and more. Our building is also rented by families or individuals for events such as parties and wedding receptions. It is not uncommon to have 50 or more events per week. In addition, SMC owns a property across the street that is used to house single mothers and their children as part of Bridge of Hope Bux/Mont's ministry.*

What interaction do you have with them? *Groups work primarily with our facilities manager to make arrangements. We've provided volunteers in the past for Keystone programs and have also held ethnic food fairs with participants. We invite the Got Strings? group to share music during worship. Our members are also involved with Bridge of Hope ministry as board members, volunteers, and "neighboring volunteers" for participant families. Members lead various support groups such as Divorce Care, Dementia Care, and Grief Share that tend to draw a number of community members. Members also lead sports groups such as "men's over 40 basketball." A member runs the highly successful "Chinese student outreach" meeting twice a month for the school year. This program ministers to exchange students with a taste of home, fellowship across school boundaries, and an introduction to the Gospel.*

G. CHURCH STEWARSHIP/FINANCES

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

Local Church

Expenses	\$611,133
Local needs and outreach	\$10,363
Mennonite Education Plan	\$568,413
Buildings and facilities	\$153,262

TOTAL LOCAL CHURCH CONTRIBUTIONS \$1,439,754*

Note: Denomination refers to either Mennonite Church USA or Mennonite Church Canada

Non Local Contributions

Franconia Mennonite Conference	\$51,268
Mennonite Mission Network	\$15,777
SMC Mission Engagement Fund	\$30,050

TOTAL NON LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS \$97,093*

*Totals do not include \$27,550 of additional monies given outside of budget for projects including, but not limited to, MAMA, service projects, Deacon's Fund, etc.

2. Church budget

Who makes recommendation regarding pastoral and staff salaries? *Recommendations made by senior pastor in conjunction with the Human Resources Team and approved by the Church Board chair.*

Who determines church budget or makes recommendation to the church? *Pastors and ministry leaders submit requested budget to the finance team. Finance team prepares a proposed budget which is then processed with the Church Board. The final budget is approved by the congregation in December for the following year.*

What plan is used to challenge the church to Christian stewardship? *No specific plan is in place, but the finance team communicates monthly via our weekly e-mail, and updates are giving at congregational meetings. In recent years the church has cleaned up our designated funds and created a reserve fund that allows us to weather changes in giving over summer months or other times. The church has been blessed to maintain its long history of being adequately equipped to respond to financial needs.*

Current total budget \$1,500,028

3. Is there church indebtedness? No

IV. Relationships

A. COMMUNITY

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

Town (under 10,000 in the borough of Souderton)

2. Which best describes this community?

Growing XStable Declining

3. **Describe racial or ethnic composition of the community.** *According to 2010 US census, Souderton is 86.8% white, 1.9% African American, 6.5% Asian, 12.3% Hispanic/Latino*

4. **List two or three primary business/industries in the community.** *Hatfield Quality Meats, Bergey's Incorporated, Univest, Living Branches (Meat packing, Banking, Pharmaceutical research)*

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

What other churches and faith groups are in the community? *Lutheran, Independent Bible, United Church of Christ, Methodist, Greek Orthodox, Seventh Day Adventist, Non-denominational*

6. **Name of nearest college or university:** *None are very close, but these are some in the county: Gwynedd Mercy, Ursinus, Montgomery County Community College*

In what way does your church relate to this academic community? *We do not have a formal relationship with any of these colleges. Our students tend to attend Messiah, EMU, Eastern University and a variety of other schools, both Christian and non-Christian.*

7. **Identify significant issues confronting your community.** *The Souderton community struggles with drug addiction, unemployment and food insecurity, single parent households, teenage depression/suicide, assimilation of immigrants and refugees into schools and society. A recent Sunday school series highlighted these and other significant issues in our community and the broader society, along with ways we as individuals can be part of the solution.*

8. **Describe what you believe to be distinctive assets of your community.** *Strong community-minded business and civic groups, excellent school system, excellent private/faith-based school system, a variety of non-profits designed to address community needs, a network of faith communities that work together to address needs*

9. **Describe your congregation's ministry in the community.** *See responses to question III D and F-10*

10. **How does your congregation work with ecumenical and interfaith efforts?** *SMC is part of the Indian Valley Ministerium. The Souderton area churches together sponsor a social worker position through Keystone Opportunity Center, to help address community needs and reduce duplication of services. Souderton area churches join together each summer to hold "Souderton Alive," a Worship in the Park joint worship experience. In recent years, SMC has worked with Lutheran Children and Family Services to assist in refugee resettlement. One way we've addressed the Covid-19 crisis is to give funds to Emmanuel Lutheran Church's free lunch program and to Zion Mennonite Church's backpack food program. Pastors in the Souderton Borough know each other and work well together to address community needs as they arise. In addition, SMC is represented in interfaith efforts to support the community such as the annual Hope Festival, and the Indian Valley Character Counts coalition.*

B. AREA CHURCH/CONFERENCE

1. **Describe your relationship with and your participation in the area church/conference.** *We are active participants in Mosaic Mennonite Conference, with delegates attending the annual assembly (held in our facility for the last two years), pastors participating in appropriate learning circles, a member currently serving on the conference board, and a youth currently serving on the conference youth leadership team..*

C. WIDER CHURCH

1. **Describe your relationship with and your participation in Mennonite Church Canada/Mennonite Church USA.** *We send delegates to the biannual convention, with youth also going to some conventions. In the past we've had a member serve on the Executive Board of MC/USA.*

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: *Dawn Moore, board chair, Ron Alderfer, board secretary, Leon Moyer, board vice-chair, with help from pastors and staff.*

Date of completion *July, 2020*