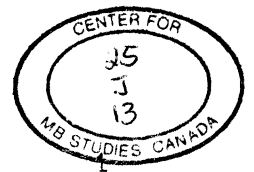


Rough Draft
of final findings



REPORT OF THE FINDINGS COMMITTEE
Consultation on Church Growth
Fraserview Church, Richmond, BC
April 2-4, 1991

We experienced a free and open, even confrontational, spirit and style of conversation.

WE ARE AGREED.

DISCIPLEMAKING

Evangelism defines our mission. We want to be a missionary church. We leave this Consultation as renewed witnesses of the good news of God's salvation in Jesus Christ. The Great Commission and the Great Commandment are one and cannot be separated.

Church growth and multiplication of congregations define our vision. We affirm the goals of the General Conference. We must grow to 550 churches and 65,000 members by the end of the century, and we commit ourselves and our churches to pray and work toward the achievement of these goals.

- * We must give freedom for diversity. We want to use various means in evangelism and church planting. We want to discern the positive and the negative in all church growth methods, including the Church Growth Movement.
- * Church leaders must model evangelism and multiplication of churches.
- * Churches and church leaders need to take risks.

Diversity in the size of our churches is good. God is building his church in different forms and cultures. He is present wherever his people gather in his name.

LEADERS

We affirm strong leadership in our congregations and conferences. We believe leaders are gifts of God to the church.

- * Leaders must be people called by God and legitimated by the discernment and call of the church.
- * There are diverse leadership models and styles.
- * All leaders must be missional and servant. They must also adapt their leadership to the setting of their congregations.
- * Leaders are accountable to God, their churches, and to the Conference.

CHURCH AND CULTURE

We are in the world, and the world is in us. The world also seeks to conform us to its ideologies and values. Therefore we must discern how to be both counter-cultural and missionary.

Biblical faithfulness calls us to confront our culture, evangelize pagan people, and disciple authentic Christian men and women.

WE ALSO AGREE THAT

- > Prayer & fasting
- > We experience tension between the practitioners and the theoreticians in the church.
- > Social sciences offer methods that help the church understand the world in which we live.

We want to better understand the implications of a Mennonite Brethren modified presbyterian polity.

WE NEED TO WORK ON

Managing healthy conflict in the church:

- * Many of us fear conflict.
- * Others of us believe that conflict is healthy, and can be managed openly and honestly.
- * We see evidence of conflict between practitioners and theoreticians in the church.

How we use the social sciences in the church

- * Some use the methods and data of the social sciences freely.
- * Others among us believe the church should use the social sciences carefully because these sciences are built on assumptions and world views that can be in conflict with our theology.
- * We need to discern the use of these sciences in a way that is appropriate to in the church.

Our church polity

- * We are confused about what a Mennonite Brethren modified-presbyterian polity looks like. Some of us are not certain that such a polity represents historic Mennonite Brethren polity.
- * There is a multiplicity of polities at the congregational level, and we have mixed thoughts about this diversity.

The relationship of local congregations to the Conference

- * How do we simultaneously build growing churches and churches loyal to the denomination?

The nature and use of power

- * Some are fearful of power. Both congregations and pastors either distrust power or have experienced the abuse of power.
- * We all exercise power in diverse ways.
- * How do we exercise power in the church and still remain servants?

Calling out leaders

- * We recognize that the church has not given itself to the prayerful discerning of leaders in recent years.
- * We need to give ourselves to prayer and fasting for the discernment of persons with leadership gifts in our churches.

Understanding Different Worldviews

- * We have people and churches with very different world views: pre-modern, modern, post-modern.
- * We need help to understand these different world views and how they impact our evangelism and experience of church.

Our pastoral attrition