

CONGREGATIONAL ISSUES COMMISSION
REPORT TO PRESBYTERY
FEBRUARY 27, 2024

The Congregational Issues Commission (CIC) has begun 2024 thinking about “preventive health,” actions congregational leaders can take to prevent problems and conflicts that can disrupt ministry. In the spirit of preventive health...

...We are in early stages of exploration with the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center (LMPC) to sponsor a *Healthy Congregations* workshop for congregational leaders. One of LMPC’s regular program offerings, the *Healthy Congregations* workshop “is designed to equip leaders to respond to the presence or potential threat of anxiety in a congregational system in ways that prevent destructive conflict and help the church stay focused on its unique mission and purpose.” Watch for more details and let us know of your interest and possible willingness to help.

...We are encouraging congregations to conduct **annual ministry reviews** with their pastors/congregational leaders. Regular and intentional review conversations with congregational leaders can provide encouragement, support, and guidance for ministry, as well as help prevent misunderstandings, frustration, and conflict. To support congregations that do not already have a practice of annual reviews, we are working to gather resources that can be used in local ministry settings. If your congregation has such resources and would be willing to share them, please contact the CIC.

...We are offering two scholarships for persons who would be interested in attending an online webinar on May 16 titled *Restorative Conversations*. One of LMPC’s regular programs, the *Restorative Conversations* webinar “introduces church leaders to the key concepts of circle processes and ways in which circles can be used within their congregations. Restorative conversations are useful when working through difficult or polarizing topics, processing shared painful experiences, building community, and dealing with certain levels of conflict in the church setting.” Contact Mike Ward for more details.

Preventive health measures notwithstanding, ministry disruptions and conflicts can happen. As in many types of relationships, early attention to a problem can lead to a better outcome for all concerned. Congregational leaders are encouraged to reach out to the CIC regarding potentially disruptive issues in your congregations. We will come alongside in a confidential way, offering resources and support to help your congregation, its leaders, and your ministry return to health and wholeness.

Respectfully Submitted,
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