

***Our faith in a God of love leads us, by the power of the Spirit, to follow Jesus
in doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God.***

BCMC Common Purpose Statement,
adopted by congregation on January 27, 2019

On Sept 8, 2018, around 40 commission, committee, Church Board, and staff members met around tables to discuss our congregation's common purpose, as well as opportunities and priorities that lie before us. Specifically, table groups were asked to **identify 3 priorities that seem most important for our congregation to focus on over the next three years.**

Following the retreat, the Church Board read through the responses, consolidated them, and heard the following three priorities emerging, as well as ideas about what pursuing those priorities could look like (see below).

After sharing these priorities with BCMC commissions and committees and inviting feedback, the Church Board adopted the following priorities: [not sure if there was official action on this or simply consensus after working at this together during Nov and Dec 2018 Church Board meetings].

These priorities were shared with the congregation on January 27, 2019.

1. Focus on issues related to our congregation's commitment to provide safe space for children and vulnerable people among us. Action ideas:

- Learn more about trauma and abuse and their impacts on victims and survivors
- Create a clear policy for how to provide care and accountability for sexual offenders among us
- Practice healthy conversation around tender issues, particularly when we see things differently
- Explore theological themes related to justice, love, and forgiveness, particularly as it relates to issues of abuse.
- other? (as it relates to the work of your committee/commission)

2. Expand and deepen our congregation's outreach in our community. Action ideas:

- Support efforts to welcome the stranger in our midst, e.g, Shalom Mennonite's Sanctuary efforts and the ministry of Casa Betania
- Seek ways to walk alongside those on the margins, e.g., support New Hope Shelter, Circles of Hope, Community Playschool, etc.
- Increase congregational involvement at community events

Section 3 Discernment

- Seek ways to bear witness to God's peace, justice and loves in the midst of polarization
- other? (as it relates to the work of your committee/commission)

3. Nurture vibrant faith and participation of children, youth, young families in our worship and community life. Action ideas:

- Practice inclusiveness in worship (leadership and participation) across generations
- Provide spaces for conversation and education about relevant issues and challenges confronting young people
- Provide opportunities for intentional Intergenerational connection
- Seek after and practice new faith formation concepts, avenues, partnerships, approaches
- Seek ways to support Bethel College, its students, faculty, and staff
- other? (as it relates to the work of your committee/commission)