

Knoxville Mennonite Church
4401 Sullivan Road
Knoxville, Tennessee 37921
elders@knoxvillemennonite.org

January 20, 2024

Doug Luginbill, Conference Minister
Central District Conference

Re: Acceptance of Knoxville Mennonite Church as member congregation

The congregation of the Knoxville Mennonite Church has voted to leave the Virginia Mennonite Conference and, by this letter, we request that the Central District Conference accept our congregation as a member.

Our church was established in 1917 by Mr. and Mrs. Charles B. Byers and for several years services were held in their home. In 1922 the Virginia Mission Board provided funding for a building in the downtown area. Later, in 1977, the church moved to our current location. We currently have around 45 members, though not all are active, with some having moved away but retaining their membership. On an average Sunday, we have 25-30 people in attendance. The church leadership consists of our pastor, Pat McFarren, and three elders who are elected for 3 year terms. The current elders are Melissa Mink, Judy Mink, and Reuben Budiardja.

Our church has deliberated the decision to separate from Virginia Conference for many years. We believe that God is calling our congregation to be more accepting of members of the LGBTQ+ community. For this reason, we believe that we can more fully reflect that calling as part of the Central District Conference.

Therefore we ask that you accept our congregation as part of the Central District Conference. Thank you very much for your consideration of our request and we ask for your prayerful support in this process.

Very sincerely,

Pat McFarren, Pastor
Melissa Mink, Lead Elder
Judy Mink, Elder
Reuben Budiardja, Elder