

## PREVENTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY RESOURCE FROM MENNONITE CHURCH USA

**What is this?** Attached are resolutions that append the bylaws of Mennonite Church USA that MC USA delegates will be discerning on July 12, 2025. Also attached is a brief summary of the *Prevention and Accountability Resource (PAR)* that all conferences of MC USA are committing to utilize. This *PAR* has been reviewed and supported by conference ministers, the Constituency Leaders Council, and the MC USA Executive Board. It has also gone through legal review. The *PAR* is lengthy (86 pages) and is available for review at [mennoniteusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Prevention-Accountability-Resource.pdf](https://mennoniteusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Prevention-Accountability-Resource.pdf) The *PAR* will be a “living document” in that the MC USA Executive Board can update this periodically with input and support of conference ministers.

**Why is this important?** Mennonite Church USA and CDC are committed to providing safe congregations, minimizing the potential for abuse in the church, and holding those accountable who engage in abusive behavior in the church. As the *PAR* states,

*God is a refuge for those who are abused, and God does not ignore the cry of the one who is abused (Psalm 9:9, 12). Therefore, Mennonite Church USA is called to be a place of refuge for those who are abused. We will do all we can to protect the vulnerable, care for those who are survivors, and hold abusers accountable. (p. 6)*

**Is this new?** MC USA has provided resources and guidance to congregations and conferences regarding Safe Sanctuary or Safe Church practices for many years. MC USA has also provided a Ministerial Sexual Abuse Policy and Procedure since 2002 which was updated in 2015. MC USA has also provided resources for responding to abuse by lay people in the congregational setting. *PAR* is updating these resources and combining them into one document.

**Is this a mandate from on high?** Mennonite Church USA operates primarily with a congregational polity meaning that congregations have a great deal of autonomy and independence. The denomination serves primarily as a resource, support, and collaborating organization for our congregations and conferences. Congregations and conferences are part of MC USA because we choose to do so. MC USA calls wise and experienced leaders with expertise in various areas in order to serve the broader church. When denominational leaders bring resolutions for delegate discernment, they have consulted with and received feedback from conference leaders. The resolutions to append the bylaws to include *PAR* as a guiding document for all conferences (and thus, the churches), has strong support from conference ministers Doug Luginbill and Matt Prichard, as well as the CDC board and ministerial committee.

**How are we addressing this at our CDC Annual Meeting?** We will have about 40 minutes to hear more about this and to discuss this among table groups during our business session at 10:15 on Friday morning. CDC delegates will not be asked to vote on this. However, we value your collective wisdom, questions and concerns and want to hear from you prior to MennoCon in July.

**What should we tell our MC USA delegates?** Please feel free to share anything from this packet and from table group feedback with MC USA delegates from your congregation.