

2020 ACC Leadership Slate Bios



Jon Carlson, Assistant Moderator (3rd term)

Jon Carlson serves as Lead Pastor of Forest Hills Mennonite Church, exploring how the witness of God's word, the example of Jesus, and the energy of the Holy Spirit empower people to faithfulness in every facet of life. He and his wife, Lyn, are raising three young children in Lancaster County, PA. When he's not chauffeuring the kids around, Jon enjoys distance running. (OK, fine: "enjoys" is a stretch.)



Brenda Martin Hurst, Exec. Comm. Member- at-Large (3rd term)

Brenda Martin Hurst fully retired on May 31, 2020 after serving as the director for the "Thriving in Ministry" Lilly Grant for Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, VA and as a part-time professor there. She is an ordained minister who served as pastor for two congregations: Tabor Mennonite in rural Newton, KS (1986-1997) and Frazer Mennonite in Frazer, PA (2007-2017). Brenda volunteers for the Food Pantry with CrossNet Ministries in New Holland, Pa and with the Sprouts for Peace Garden at her church, New Holland Mennonite. She lives in Fivepointville, PA with her husband, Ray. They are parents of one living son, a daughter-in-law and grandparents to three delightful grandchildren, ages 5 and under.



Jen Sauder, Exec. Committee Member-at-Large (2nd term)

Jennifer Bowman Sauder grew up in Harrisonburg, Virginia and studied English at Eastern Mennonite University. She wrote science curriculum for several years in Hershey, Pennsylvania, and that role cemented her love of collaboration. Jen and her family moved to Lancaster County eight years ago from Charlottesville, Virginia, and they attend Landisville Mennonite Church. Jen serves in various roles at Landisville, where she also enjoys singing and playing violin. She likes to spend her time reading and writing, preparing and eating food, doing projects at their home, and growing and tending things – vegetables, flowers, their three children, their dog and their rabbit."



Bill Parson, Gift Disc. Comm. Member (1st and only term)

Bill Parson lives in the city of Lancaster and is a member of James Street Mennonite Church. He has been employed with Everence for 28 years with a background in insurance. Bill serves as Treasurer on the board of directors of Mennonite Home Communities and also serves on the board of the Lancaster Downtowners. Bill and his wife Beth are the parents of two adult children.



Bruce Campbell-Janz, Missions Comm Chairperson (1st term)

Bruce Campbell-Janz is a member at East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster city since 2006. He and his spouse and two children have been active there and Bruce served for several years as Chair of the congregation's Mission Commission. Bruce has worked for Mennonite Central Committee for more than 20 years including eight years living and working in DR Congo, more than five years as Director of MCC's Africa Department, and currently serving as Executive Director of MCC's East Coast regional office since January 2012.



Rod Yoder, Finance & Stewardship Comm Chairperson (1st term)

Rodney Yoder is a graduate of Eastern Mennonite University with a degree in Business Administration. He has been employed at Fulton Bank in Lancaster for 30+ years, and is currently a Senior Vice President in the Credit Administration Department. Rod is married to Sheri Yoder, and attends East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church, where he serves as chair of the Stewardship Commission. When not at work, he enjoys tending the yard, playing tennis and riding bike.



Nancy Benignus, Gift Disc. Comm. Member (1st and only term)

Nancy Benignus is a member of Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship. She was first drawn to the Mennonites and their vision of Biblical social justice when she was researching Christian Community options. She served in MVS in Seattle for three years and then moved to New York City. In nearly 40 years of living in NYC, Nancy has been actively involved with various churches, activities, and programs of the New York City Council of Mennonite Churches. Professionally, her work has included working for a Mennonite foster care organization, administrative work with regional Witness for Peace, community organizing, counseling, and formal and informal education. Nancy completed her PhD in anthropology in 2004 and now focuses on needs assessment and program evaluation research. She is also a visual artist who exhibits and teaches others to create. Travel is one of Nancy's passions and in addition to three WFP delegations to Central America, she has also traveled in Africa, India, Southeast Asia and Europe.



Elaine Shirk, Mennonite Women Chairperson (1st term)
Elaine Shirk grew up in the Oley Valley area and attended Boyertown Mennonite Church. She has a 2-yr associates degree in Business from EMU. Elaine served in VS in Cleveland, OH where she met her husband Larry. They now have 2 grown daughters, 4 grandchildren, and 3 great-grandsons. Elaine retired from Stauffers of Kissel Hill and is now living at Calvary Homes. She is a member of Ridgeview Mennonite and has served on various committees and helps with worship music. Elaine is currently the Historian for ACC Mennonite Women and has served as MW Secretary in the past.