



A Men's Organization for God's Shalom

Mennonite Men—as the men's organization of Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada—includes all persons who identify as men in these church bodies. Our mission is *engaging men to grow, give, and serve as followers of Jesus for God's shalom*.

We promote an Anabaptist way for men that focuses on following Jesus, forming community, and building peace with a model that is more whole and life-giving than our culture's dominant version of masculinity. From our Christian faith perspective based on the way of Jesus, we seek to engage in men's work that affirms men, supports their personal growth, forms healthy relationships, transforms social problems, and cares for the Earth—all to bring about God's shalom. We do this by providing events and resources for men, participating in social action, and funding building projects for new churches and tree planting for climate action.

The following vision for men guides our work:

Aims	Description
Our vision is of men enjoying and extending God's abundant life by...	Our purpose is to enjoy and extend God's abundant life. ¹ This is the why of our life and work. We believe that God intends for us to live life with individual and collective well-being. We are meant to enjoy the gifts of this life not just for ourselves but also to extend them to others. We experience this together and have meaningful, life-giving work as we seek the following ten aims.
1. Respecting themselves and all people as beloved children of God	All people are beloved children of God created in the Divine image. Because all people are created in God's image, all are God's beloved regardless of culture, creed, or deed. By respecting one another, we honor our God-given identity and dignity. This truth influences how we look at and relate to others and is the basis for living in love, nonviolence, and peace. ²
2. Following Jesus, the image of God and model human	Jesus revealed in the flesh what God is like and how to be fully human. We follow his model for how to be men—expressing tenderness, confronting wrongs, feeling grief, respecting all genders, having close friends, crossing social divides, caring for the marginalized, resisting the use of force, serving rather than dominating, and embracing all with love. ³
3. Becoming strong, loving, and wise in the Spirit	As we realize our identity as God's beloved children, follow the way of Jesus, and are formed by the Spirit, we become strong, loving, and wise. We value these traits and seek to be men of integrity. And as we mature in character, our gendered distinctions diminish. We become more alike than different, reflecting our true selves in the image of God. ⁴
4. Practicing love across the range of our relationships	Satisfying our longing for love, we embrace God's unconditional love for us and extend this to others. We express love in affection, care, and service and more fully experience love in empathy, vulnerability, and mutuality. In receiving and giving love we are fully alive. We believe living in love brings about healing, peace, and joy. ⁵

5. **Using power with and for rather than over and against others** We recognize that power coming to us from various sources can be used to dominate, control, or violate others. In a culture where men too often use their power over and against others, we follow the way of Jesus, using power with and for others. Rather than exploiting power to (seemingly) benefit ourselves, we use power to serve the world's collective well-being.⁶
 6. **Sharing resources with generosity to meet human needs** We acknowledge that everything is ultimately God's and that we are stewards of what we have. Aware of greed and that what we take can take us, we are not tight-fisted, clinging to things, but openhanded, freely sharing our resources with others. As God has been generous toward us, we are generous toward others, so we all have enough and more to experience God's abundance.⁷
 7. **Standing with marginalized people for diversity and inclusion** Against cultural supremacy and domination where some groups are excluded and oppressed based on difference, we embrace diversity—believing all people are created in the Divine image and are part of one human race with rich expressions of manifold differences. Honoring the dignity and equality of all people, we practice loving inclusion so all may fully participate in society.⁸
 8. **Transforming oppressive systems for freedom and justice** We recognize that God's shalom requires social justice—the public expression of love and right ordering of societal relationships. We deconstruct patriarchy, sexism, racism, classism, and other social systems that privilege some and oppress others. We work to transform systems like these to establish freedom and justice for all in our global village.⁹
 9. **Relating to all creatures as kin in the community of creation** Aware that we are not above but part of the natural world, we take our place as members in God's community of creation, and, as stewards, we serve and protect its well-being. We recognize that all living things are our kin and play an important part in an interconnected web of life. We all live together in ways where all resources, plants, and animals flourish in a life-giving balance.¹⁰
 10. **Caring for Earth to sustain its beauty, biodiversity, and abundance** In response to environmental degradation and the climate crisis, we protect and restore our planet's ecosystems upon which all life depends. We care for the Earth, manage resources sustainably, and live in ways that preserve the beauty, biodiversity, and abundance our Creator intended not only for ourselves but also for the global community and future generations.¹¹
- All to live into God's shalom so abundant life flourishes throughout creation from generation to generation.** As we do these things in the power of the Spirit, we live into God's shalom—a peaceable order with freedom, security, and justice for all, and well-being throughout the community of creation from generation to generation.¹² Aligning ourselves with God's great project of establishing shalom, we realize our lives matter and that we are part of something bigger than ourselves. Knowing and serving this gives our life focus, meaning, and joy.

Our approach to men's work

Because men historically have been largely responsible for constructing patriarchy and because we continue to benefit from systems that privilege males, men have a responsibility for the transformation of these systems. Following the Appreciative Inquiry model for social change, we approach this and other social problems from

within a positive framework. The highest forms of cooperation depend upon not a push but an invitation, calling people to respond more from aspiration than confrontation to bring about social change. Blaming, scolding, and shaming people tend to provoke resistance rather than cooperation and mutual growth.

We promote what we're for as we denounce what we're against. To transform patriarchy, for example, we focus on God's shalom, which calls us to build respect, equity, and justice for all genders. While dismantling is part of constructive work, we want to focus on a vision of God's shalom and to practice its values for changing ourselves and society.

For knowing where and how to engage in our work for social change, we seek a posture of listening and learning, especially toward marginalized and oppressed people.

Motivating men to be their best selves for a better society, we seek to inspire action with vision. As we do so, we call forth positive change for greater well-being with abundance, freedom, love, and justice for all—the fruits of God's shalom.

¹ John 10:10; 15:1–16; 20:21.

² Genesis 1:26–27; 9:5–6; James 3:9; Galatians 3:26; Romans 8:16; 1 John 3:1–2.

³ Colossians 1:15; Philippians 2:5–8; Luke 9:23; see many references in the Gospels on how Jesus related to people.

⁴ 2 Timothy 1:7.

⁵ Matthew 22:37–40; Mark 12:30–32; John 13:34–35; 15:9–13, 17; Romans 12:9–21; 13:8; James 2:8.

⁶ Philippians 2:5–8; 1 Peter 3:8–18.

⁷ Psalm 24:1; Deuteronomy 15:4–15; Tobit 4:7–11; Sirach 35:6–12; Matthew 19:16–26; 2 Corinthians 8:1–9:15.

⁸ Leviticus 19:34; Isaiah 1:17; Proverbs 31:8–9; Matthew 25:31–45; Mark 7:24–30; John 4:1–30; Galatians 3:28.

⁹ Isaiah 2:2–4; 11:1–9; Amos 5:15, 24; Micah 6:8; Luke 4:18–19; Ephesians 2:11–18.

¹⁰ Genesis 1:1–2:20; 9:11–13; Psalm 24:1–2; 104.

¹¹ Genesis 2:15.

¹² Isaiah 11:1–9; Ezekiel 34:25–31.