

Ohio Conference Discernment Process

March 2017: The Annual Conference Assembly affirmed a Resolution that required a review of Ohio Conference affiliation if the MC USA Membership Guidelines changed.

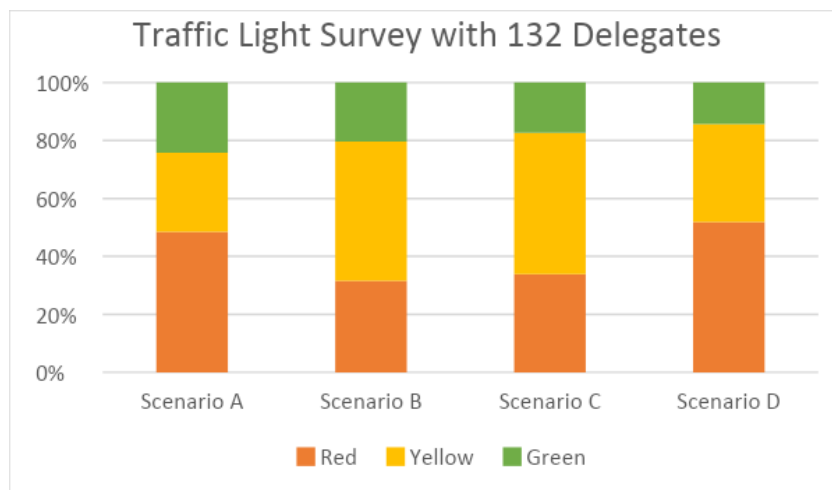
March 2022: The Annual Conference Assembly approved hiring a process consultant to work with Ohio Conference on a two year strategic planning process.

April 2022: The Leadership Team met for an all-day retreat to begin the strategic planning process.

May 2022: The MC USA Delegate Assembly voted to rescind the membership guidelines. This meant that the review of affiliation became the first focus of the strategic planning process.

May 2022-

January 2023: A total of 21 meetings for discernment with active participatory engagement with the Leadership Team, credentialed leaders, Ministry Development Team, delegates, and the Strategic Planning Team were held. These meetings revealed strong appreciation for Ohio Conference and the support and connections that it brings. The meetings generated 85 options for the question of affiliation. These options fell into seven general approaches. The Strategic Planning Team sought additional information and further narrowed the affiliation options to four scenarios. The Leadership Team and 132 Delegates in five clusters considered and evaluated the four scenarios. A survey of delegates revealed no strong leader among all the options.



Scenario A- Stay as is

Scenario B- Remain in MC USA as a Blended Family

Scenario C- Leave MC USA and Become Temporarily Independent

Scenario D- Leave MC USA and Join LMC

Green: I am excited about pursuing this option.

Yellow: I'm OK pursuing this option.

Red: I cannot support pursuing this option.

- Feb 2023 Based on delegate questions and feedback, and an interview with MC USA leaders, the Strategic Planning Team recommended to the Leadership Team narrowing the options to two scenarios:
- Scenario 1: Affiliate with MC USA As Is.
Scenario 2: Withdraw from MC USA and Become Temporarily Independent, and begin an intentional 2–3-year discernment process to seek new partner(s) of affiliation, networking and/or collaboration.
- The Leadership Team met on Feb. 2 and voted to present these two options to the delegates at the Annual Conference Assembly.
- Feb 2023 Delegates seek feedback from their congregations on the two scenarios to support them, as Delegates, in their discernment role.
- March 2023 Delegates gather at the Annual Conference Assembly to continue to discern together in the review of Ohio Conference affiliation.
1. At the opening of the Assembly, delegates will have the opportunity to ask questions of clarification about the two scenarios.
 2. Before beginning table discussions, delegates will take an unofficial straw vote to provide a baseline. For each of the two scenarios, Delegates will respond with Green (I fully support this option.), Yellow (This is not the option I would choose, but I would stay with Ohio Conference if this were chosen.) or Red (I cannot accept this option.) The straw vote will be counted and reported to the delegates.
 3. Delegates will engage in table discussions. The goal is to reach 2/3 for one or the other of the two options. A second round of straw voting will be taken, and the results reported to the delegates. Based on the second round of straw voting, the Leadership Team will decide whether Scenario 1 or Scenario 2 will become the Resolution for the official vote.
 4. The delegates will vote. A 2/3 majority is needed for the Resolution to pass. If 2/3 is not reached, by default, Ohio Conference will have no clear mandate for affiliation. If the Resolution passes with 2/3 or more, Ohio Conference will have a clear mandate for affiliation.