Franconia Mennonite Conference (FMC) Historical Timeline

1675

1683 Thirteen Dutch Mennonite families settle in Germantown, PA, and begin the Germantown congregation.

1700

1702 Skippack congregation begins, followed by others mostly in the Montgomery and Bucks Counties of PA.

1725

1725 First Franconia “Confer”-ence by ordained Mennonite ministers is held.

1750

1775

1800

1825

1847 Eastern District Conference results from a schism within FMC largely around differing understandings of how to be the church in the world.

1850

1875

1900

1917 Eastern Mennonite (Souderton) Home is founded.

1917 Franconia Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities (FMBMC) is formed to provide “missions” program, hold property for church planting, etc.

1919 FMBMC begins “mission” congregation in Norristown; others follow in the ensuring decades in Vermont and New Jersey as well as Pennsylvania, highlighting the challenges and blessings of intercultural relationships.

1925

1950

1953 FMBMC begins missions in Cuba, and in 1958 in Mexico, beginning FMC’s formal efforts at developing international relationships.

1955 A farm on 40 acres along Indian Creek Road is purchased by FMBMC for “Mission of Mercy” for alcoholics from New York City, and would later birth several other ministries, including Indian Creek Foundation.

1970s FMC begins first formal “equipping” leadership formation efforts through Paul-Timothy mentoring relationships matching mature leaders with young adult men and women.

1971 FMC incorporates, Conference Council and commissions model begins (FMBMC effectively becomes the Mission Commission), non-ordained delegates join ordained ministers to form a “conference assembly,” congregational overseers begin replacing bishops.

1975

1980s FMC continues expanding staff and commissions model, investing heavily in church planting and international missions with the FMC budget reaching its peak in 1990-91.

1990 FMC offices move to its present location in the Souderton (Shopping) Center.

1996 Restructuring begins, Conference Board (CB) model replaces the Conference Council and commissions model, FMBMC becomes accountable to CB through CB Finance Committee, Mennonite Resources Network (MRN) begins as a way of transitioning away from FMC running programs.

1996 Yoder Road office campus is purchased by FMBMC following the dissolution of Franconia Mennonite Mutual Services and Franconia Mennonite Aid Plan.

2000

2000 Conference Ministry Team replaces overseers using existing cluster model.

2001 Souderton (Shopping) Center is purchased by FMBMC with generous assistance by five Mennonite businessmen.

2002 FMC becomes charter members of Mennonite Church USA by near-unanimous vote by delegates.

2002 Network of conference related ministries formalized by name of “Conference Related Organizations” (CRO) to strengthen their connections with the congregations and the collective FMC vision.

2003 MRN is acquired by Design for Ministry; 501(c)(3) organization reverts to FMC.

2005 Yoder Road office complex is sold to Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania.

2006 Proposed next phase of FMC vision implementation begins (see documents included in Section C).