

# BISHOP TEAM

## Hammercreek—Bowmansville/Reading—Weaverland

The Bishop Discernment Team is proposing that these 18 congregations work together as one district under the oversight of the team of three bishops. We are grateful to the Lord for the leadership gifts that are already present within our circle of churches and for the willingness of our three brothers named below to serve our congregations in an oversight role. Although most of you already know these three brothers, it is our pleasure to introduce them to you again.

~The Bishop Discernment Team



**James Weick**

Born and raised in New York, Jim has served as a pastor or assistant pastor for 33 years. Jim was radically saved as a young man, working then as a Contracting Officer for the Department of the Army. Several years later, after Bible School, he and his wife, Alison and their two young girls planted a church in Hackensack, NJ. Over the next 20 years, he pastored at different churches in New England, usually in urban settings. He was also a certified high school History and English teacher, working primarily in inner city schools.

Jim came to Bethlehem and LMC in 2011. His passion for inspiring young leaders has been blessed by the Lord and BCF is full of high-capacity, committed young men and women. Two young couples have planted a church in Stroudsburg and another work is in its infancy, but already showing promising results just 5 minutes from BCF!

Jim is eager to help pastors to connect with, and develop, a new generation of leaders; and to encourage the people in their congregations who feel the pull of Holy Spirit to launch out and start Jesus communities of all shapes and sizes.

Jim and Alison have 2 adult daughters and a 16 year old son, Joshua, who lives with them in Bethlehem.



**Eric Marshall**

Born in Reading, Pennsylvania, Eric grew up in the little town of Gibraltar, PA, with his grandparents. Baptized as an infant at Robeson Lutheran Church (Plowville), Eric later, at age sixteen, chose to follow Jesus as his Lord and Savior, being baptized at Gingrich Mennonite Church in Annville, PA. There he was greatly influenced by Pastor John G. Landis and remained good friends with him to this day. He met his wife Cheryl while working at Good's Greenhouse in Bowmansville, PA. He has three adult children, and values watching them grow into the people God wants them to be.

When he and Cheryl were first married, they were part of Buttonwood Mennonite Church in Reading, where they served as youth leaders. A short time later, they moved to Reinholds and started attending Blainsport Mennonite Church, where Eric was eventually licensed as Associate Pastor on February 12, 1995, and ordained in that position on June 13, 1999. At that time, he worked at G. Earl Martin, Inc., a wall and ceiling contractor, as an installer and estimator. After serving the church bi-vocationally for eleven years, Eric became the first full-time pastor at Blainsport on October 8, 2006, and continues serving in that role today.

Eric graduated from Twin Valley High School in 1990, STEP (EMU) in 2009, with a certificate in Pastoral Ministry, Lancaster Bible College in 2015, with a BA in Biblical Studies, and Capital Seminary in 2019, with an MA in Ministry with a Pastoral Studies concentration.

In addition to J.C. Wenger and Harold Bender, Eric has been influenced by the writings of D.A. Carson, Timothy Keller, Craig Blomberg, and Paul Tripp, to name a few. Fly-fishing, golfing with his sons, and dabbling at cooking are some hobbies Eric enjoys. His life verse and centering point for ministry is 1 Corinthians 15:58, "Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain."



**Brian Martin**

As a lifelong Lancaster County resident, Brian was raised south of New Holland and has lived in the Elanco area his entire life. Following graduation from Garden Spot High School, Brian began a twenty-three career in the dairy industry. During this time, he worked as a herdsman for Mar-Cly Farms in East Earl, for Atlantic Breeders Cooperative in dairy genetics for thirteen years, and then served as vice-president of the agriculture division at Triple H Construction for seven years.

In 1997, Brian was called and ordained as deacon at Weaverland. In 2005, the church called again. Brian left the marketplace to serve as the first full-time lead pastor at Weaverland, a role which he continues today.

In 2007, Brian graduated from STEP and began to pursue graduate studies. In 2016, he earned a Master of Arts in Church Leadership from Eastern Mennonite Seminary.

Brian currently serves on several boards. He serves as board chair for Eastern Mennonite Missions, and is vice-chair for CrossNet Ministries in New Holland. Brian also serves as a volunteer chaplain for the New Holland Police Department.

Brian is married to Shirley Nolt for thirty-six years and they reside in Narvon. Together they have four adult children and enjoy their ten grandchildren. For hobbies he enjoys hunting, walking, and reading.

Brian's greatest joy in ministry is to see persons utilize their gifts to the glory of God in the church, marketplace, and home. His favorite authors are N.T Wright, Phillip Yancey, and Max Lucado. Brian's life verse is Romans 8:1.

Final Proposal for Bishop Team  
June 26, 2020

The Bishop Discernment Team prayerfully considered how bishop oversight can be provided for the Bowmansville-Reading District, the Weaverland-Northeast District, and the Hammer Creek congregation.

We propose that the 18 congregations identified below will work together as one district under the oversight of the team of three bishops named below. We propose that each bishop will serve part-time, working together to provide spiritual oversight for these leaders and congregations. We believe that calling a team brings a wider range of complementary spiritual gifts and will better position the district for growth, especially for congregational revitalization and multiplication. The Bishop Team will be encouraged to make use of the gifts residing in the credentialed leaders across the districts, all working together to strengthen the life and ministry of the church in mission.

While all congregations will benefit from the gifts that each team member brings, we propose that each congregation be assigned a primary relationship to one member of the team, as follows:

James Weick:	Eric Marshall:	Brian Martin
Benders Mennonite	Bowmansville Mennonite	Alive Church Ephrata
Bethlehem Community Fellowship	Gehman Mennonite	Blainsport Mennonite
Casa Cristiana Jesús Es Rey	Green Terrace Mennonite	Goodville Mennonite
Hampden Mennonite	Red Run Mennonite	Hammer Creek Mennonite
Maranatha Family Christian Fellowship	Weaverland Anabaptist Faith Community	Ministerios Peniel Internacional
Nanticoke Christian Fellowship		
Stroudsburg Community Fellowship		
WayLife Community		

We propose that the bishop team share one full-time equivalent (FTE) position with the following percentages and roles:

- Jim Weick – 50% FTE            Outreach, New Church Development
- Eric Marshall – 25% FTE        Pastoral Care, Mentoring New Leaders
- Brian Martin – 25% FTE        Team Leader, Administrator

We recognize that flexibility will be needed over time regarding both the FTE allocation and the primary congregational relationships. The Bishop Team will work with the Bishop Support Team to make needed adjustments.

To help make a smooth transition in oversight and at the request of the Bishop Discernment Team, Bishop Carl Sensenig has agreed to adjust his retirement timeline by serving all 18 congregations through September 30, 2020. At that time, Carl will retire from his role as bishop and the new team will begin serving on October 1, 2020.

The Discernment Team is encouraging Carl to take the time off with his family in July as was planned before this adjustment to his retirement timeline. Carl has graciously agreed to be available to consult the new Bishop Team beyond September 30 as they request.

A District Bishop Support Team will be created to manage and oversee the Bishop Compensation Package. With the affirmation of this proposal, this Bishop Support Team will be considered fully authorized by the credentialed leaders of the districts to make decision regarding the salary and benefits for the bishops. Congregations will be notified of their fair financial share of the Bishop Support package.

The Bishop Discernment Team suggests the following timeline for processing this proposal:

<b><u>Action Step:</u></b>	<b><u>Completed by:</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Proposal Review Period</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Send draft proposal to all credentialed leaders, along with brief introductions to the three candidates, inviting feedback and clarifying questions.</li></ul></li></ul>	<b>July 6</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Interviews with LMC Credentialing Commission</b></li></ul>	<b>July 8</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Final proposal affirmed by credentialed leaders</b></li></ul>	<b>July 20</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Formation of a Bishop Support Team</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ A three-person team representing all parts of the district responsible to develop and implement a plan for the financial support of the bishop team.</li></ul></li></ul>	<b>July 27</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Start date for the new team</b></li></ul>	<b>October 1</b>