

Draft Minutes

Southern Ohio/Kentucky District Board

May 4th, 2019, 10:00AM

Prices Creek Church of the Brethren

David Shetler, Carl Eurbanks, Linda Bandon, Tom Bowser, Phil Dell, Heather Fullen, Karen Crim, Becky Maurer, Ron Mack, Jennifer Scarr, Gary Crim, Nick Beam, Carrie Drees, Dennis Delk, Ann Stackhouse, Ty Pyles, Tracy Ravenstein

Pastor Don King welcomed us to the church which was established in 1830. The building was built in 1850. They describe themselves a small country church trying to do its share. He then led us in prayer.

Joys and Concerns:

Thanks for the Happy Corner church for hosting the Good Friday worship.

Welcome to Tracy Ravenstein, director of mission services with the brotherhood.

Linda Bandon shared that she recently went to her Aunt's 90th birthday celebration. She shared that Columbus group that provides medications for prescriptions to her company was hit by a tornado and could not supply medications.

Dave shared that Marcia's nephew's wife had a baby who was early and doing fine.

Dave's granddaughter was on the news recently explaining the new sensory table at her school.

Phil talked about his granddaughter going to the park to play and how shy she is about asking if she could play with other children. Recently she initiated playing with a Muslim child.

Carl attended the memorial service for a 105 year old, Mr. Roy Wynrick, who led a wonderful and eventful life.

Ann attended the interfaith women's group with 168 individuals attending.

Julie is spending the day with her sister in law who just had a baby.

Potsdam Church of the Brethren is hosting dessert auction May 4.

Opening Devotion was led by Jennifer Scarr . We sang Hymn 26, "Holy Spirit, Come with Power".

Jen presented verses from Romans chapter 12 about being transformed by practices that renew your mind. The scripture invites us to look at what patterns do we sink into that are of the world. The question is:

“When you are caught in a pattern of the world, how do we move to the practices that renew your mind?”

Jen led us in prayer.

Agenda and Minutes were approved as presented.

Affirmation of the 1979 Statement

Nick Beam, Tom Reish, and Becky Maurer worked on the restatement of the 1979 statement on Biblical Authority. This restatement was sent to the Board via email for affirmation. It was reread at the meeting by Jen Scarr.

The statement was unharmoniously approved by the board. Mary Boone will include it in our online communications. It was suggested that it will be mailed to each church and we will request that they include it in their bulletins. It was suggested that Dave send an email to pastors with this statement.

“There seems to be a common thought shared by those congregations in conflict with the Church of the Brethren and/or the Southern Ohio/Kentucky District of the Church of the Brethren that leadership does not agree with the decision of Annual Conference regarding the authority of the Bible. When congregations cite biblical authority rather than biblical interpretation as one of the reasons for the conflict, those in leadership hear the message as, “We take the Bible seriously and you don’t.” Heard this way the message seems unfair and hurtful. We confess that our ways of hearing and speaking have resulted in hurt and division.

As a beginning point of response and conversation, we the Southern Ohio/Kentucky District Board of the Church of the Brethren want to assure all our congregations and members that we affirm Annual Conference’s 1979 statement, “Biblical Inspiration and Authority”. In our affirmation we cite page 15 of the 1979 paper which says, “In our diversity we are not yet fully agreed on all that it means for Brethren to respond faithfully to the message of the Bible in our day. We are agreed, however, on the need for a continuing dialogue with and about scripture that we might experience biblical renewal in our midst”. The district board encourages that kind of continuing and respectful dialogue as the best expression of our Brethren heritage.”

Withdrawing Congregation Updates

- Bradford:

The representative team met with them on April 10. In response to our letter they mailed a counter offer to the Board's information about the financial payment.

We entered into a time of prayer.

A time was given for clarifying questions about the meeting and those who attended attempted to respond.

Clarification statements:

Dave presented the history of the establishment of the church and how the district raised funds to build the church building. The leadership members of the Bradford church were unaware of this. True to the denomination and to be equal in our approach to the congregations are the principles that we used to base the formula.

The Bradford Church of the Brethren wants our response in writing by May 6. The next meeting is scheduled on May 8, 2019.

We presented them with our offer. They presented a counter offer. If we do not accept their counter offer, we go to a binding arbitration meeting. We authorized Dave at our last meeting to begin the arbitration meeting. How public will our decision going to be? Our decisions are public.

Call for question: Do we accept the counter offer presented by the Leadership Team of Bradford Church of the Brethren? Moved and unanimously accepted by the Board that we decline the counter offer made by the Bradford Church of the Brethren.

- Castine

There was a discrepancy in the membership number for the Castine congregation . They had given photocopies of their registries and there had been multiple copies of several pages. This changed the numbers used to calculate the amount that they would need to pay as a part of the withdrawal process. Next meeting will be May 7.

- Eaton

There have been no communications from Eaton since they received our letter with the financial withdrawal agreement.

The question was raised as to what do we do if a congregation does not follow through but do not financially support the district. Dave read the 2017 denominational recommendation based on polity. As a board we need to look at the congregations which are not giving based on this polity.

Staff Reports

Communications - Mary Boone

Continue to meet with the Together Staff.

Burton Wolf has written several articles for the resources development. This writing is going to be the focus the spring issues around living simply.

Mary is continually updating the information on the website.

“God Provides” is the theme for the Fall Together issue. The request is for the Board members to write a short statement about how God has provided for them in their life. Mary is hoping to receive those before leaving this meeting, May 4.

Camping and Retreat - Karen Dillon

It is an interesting job daily. There are only a few registrations for camps to date. Quilting campers are sending in registrations. Karen needs male counselors. Contact Karen with the names of all males willing to help with the camps. Accommodations are good.

District Executive - Dave Shetler

Report online:

Dave is working with Beech Grove and White Cottage to complete profiles and entering into the search for pastors. Currently denominationally, 73 congregations looking for pastors and 24 pastors are looking.

There was a discussion about things Bethany Theology Seminary is doing to make their educational program more accessible.

Dealing with the congregations which want to leave the Church of the Brethren takes a great deal of time but Dave has found things that are renewing and exciting.

The Gallop poll reflects that only about 50% of people claim membership to a church which reflects about a 20% decrease from previous polls. Other organizations such as Rotary are experiencing the same decline. It is reported as a lack of trust in organizations and social media connections.

*Request from Piqua Church of the Brethren: Sent an email to Dave to indicate that they needed to fix their front steps and enhance the railing. Dave related to them that the grants are for ministries. The consensus is that we will share the information of need to see if other congregations can assist them to meet this need.

*Update - Donnels Creek Church of the Brethren :

Because of their Biblical interpretation of marriage, they have determined to withhold financial support for the District Ministries and Outdoor Ministries because they feel that we have not provided a resolute definition of marriage.

Board has directed that a letter be sent to the Donnels Creek board regarding violation of congregational ethics. Ministerial Commission will contact the pastor about violation of pastoral ethics. Our response by letter will be signed by the board chair and sent to the leadership of the congregation to address the decision of their board meeting and invite them to a future district board meeting.

*Personnel Team needs another board member. Linda Bandon has volunteered to be on the team.

Treasurer Report - Scott Fitzgerald

The board is requesting that Scott add a column for the fair share value per congregation to the report.

Urban Ministry:

The sub team met with Reggie Harvey pastor of the Brethren in Christ Church in downtown Dayton. Mark Lancaster indicated that there is interest in working together rather than to work parallel. Denominational leadership from Ashland and their regional representative met with Dave and the Brethren in Christ Bishop, as well as others. It is felt that no theological issues will divide us. Instead the emphasis was "how do we serve the community we serve". What would it look like to provide housing? Does urban homesteading still exist? Could we assist in getting folks established into the program? How do we work to meet the need for groceries in the community where it is not available now?

Update Brethren Retirement Community - John Warner

John was not able to join us so Carl shared 4 highlights from John's report that is online:

- 4-15-19 they celebrated the 117 anniversary of the BRC
- currently 164 residents being served
- hosted the fellowship brethren homes (22), and the exciting Oakwood village has 12 homes under construction.
- potential is for 18 homes

Program and Arrangements - Carl Eubank

For the future, what would the board think of having a Sunday service as district conference? It was suggested to have an afternoon worship in the future.

The Logo for the District Conference has been selected.

Commission Reports

Connections - Linda Brandon, Chair

The warehouse was successfully moved on Friday, March 29th. We were very fortunate in that the new tenants, All Around Roofing, Siding and Gutters, helped with the move. They provided vehicles in addition to 6-7 guys. They even had a forklift for putting the massive shelving directly into pickup trucks and into their trailers. We were also very fortunate to have the help of 10 people from the district, including myself, and my baby brother. All of us were out of there by 1:30 or 2:00p. Michael Murphy and I had already planned on him leading a group to finish moving on Saturday. But that group wasn't needed!

The advantage of new tenants helping us move is that they were very generous on what we were able to leave behind. Both owners were part of the group. The one owner said it was fine to leave the paint of unknown origin, some baby blankets that were nice but not suitable for refugees, junk and so much more.

Our new space is at St Vincent's large warehouse on Edwin C. Moses Blvd. We essentially have no walls which are going to be a problem with some of the unstable shelving. I have some feelers out, but do any of you have the skill set or know someone that does who might be willing to help organize our new space? I am spatially challenged to say the least. There were volunteers at the warehouse unpacking Friday, May 3. Respectfully submitted by Linda Brandon

Connections Commission Report by Linda Brandon:

May 18 Discuss and Dessert will be held at Painter Creek Church of the Brethren with a starting time of 10:00 am. We have not had a meeting since the last board meeting wo there is nothing else to report at this time.

Resource and Development - Sarah Frederick,

Board Contact Shared Ministries - Ann Stackhouse, Chair

Report online

Ministry - Tom Bowser, Chair

Report online

Training for pastors in ethics is scheduled Aug 17

Missional Renewal - Ty Pyles, Chair

They have been working on the survey with Jonathan Shivley. They are working with Happy Corner and Bear Creek as trial congregations. Coaches are needed for each congregation. Yesterday was congregational coach training at Mill Ridge. There are currently a few additional churches waiting to complete the survey.

All reports accepted as presented.

Gifts Discernment - Deb Oskin

Nominations can be made on the website

New Business?

Next Meeting date needs to be changed due to Jen's mission trip to Columbia

August 24 will be our next meeting.

Closing and Benediction

Submitted by PJ Arndts