

Southern Ohio Northern Kentucky District

Church of the Brethren

District Conference

October 9, 2021

Zoom Meeting

Nick Beam Moderator of the 167 District Conference

Opening Welcome and Prayer

Seating of Delegates and nondelegates by Vicki Ullery

Approval of agenda

Minutes of the 2020 District Conference approved

Slate for 2022 Slate approved as presented by delegate vote was affirmed

NOTE: Becky Maurer was omitted from the proposed ballot. Bruce Rosenberger moved that Becky be affirmed for another 3-year term. It was seconded.

Denomination reports:

Bethany Seminary

Jeff Carter shared that they continue to grow with more and more students coming to the campus thanks to tuition scholarships as well as several collaborative programs for students. Jeff also talked about the most recent graduates and their pathways to serve Christ in the church.

On Earth Peace

Video report and printed report available online.

Brethren Retirement Community:

John Warner shared the district churches for their ongoing support as well as their board and staff for the support to the residents and families. The last couple of years have been opportunities for many. John thanked Dave Shetler for his support and hoped him well during his retirement.

Carl Hill of the Potsdam COB shared the call for a special offering for the school children of Nigeria:

Each month Potsdam focuses on a mission each month. As a part of this they have learned that the violence in Nigeria has increased and as a result several of the camps started by the COB need additional money to support the increasing numbers that they are serving and especially for the children. It takes about \$3800 yearly to support teachers and supplies to support the education for the children. The best way for our congregations is to collect money and send checks to Potsdam COB with a note in the memo line for the Nigerian Camp Education.

District Reports:

Missional Renewal:

Phil Dell convener for the commission reported that they have been actively helping congregations to become Missional through the Congregational survey and working with the racial injustice team.

Camping and Retreats:

Women's Retreat was via zoom. Theme was the ACTS of prayer. Winter Blast was not the same but still good. Women's retreat has met several times. Zoom meetings have allowed people from far away to join the fellowships. Summer camps were set with leadership and materials, but numbers were so low that the committee cancelled the zoom meetings for virtual camp and planned 2 activities at Salem COB for picnics and outside games, devotions and even ice cream bars! Peaceful Quilting camp met at the Bergamo Center.

Brethren Disaster ministries: report delivered by Helen Wolf highlighted the work in North Carolina and in Dayton, Ohio.

Charlene Forster: thanked the leadership of Brethren Disaster Ministries and the Camping and Retreats Ministry.

All reports accepted as presented to the conference.

Query presented by Todd Reish: See the attached Racial Justice Query

The discussion included that this is a broader spectrum of individuals and ethnic backgrounds.

Dawn Wojcik : asked a process question: If affirmed then what does that mean it goes to standing committee? Annual conference would refer to standing committee to determine if it should be added to the annual conference agenda, study it more, or that it has been answered in the past and should be returned to returned to the district.

Paula Bowser asked about the nature of standing committee. Brother Nick as a former standing committee representative from this district tried to explain the process and function of the committee. Becky Maurer is currently the representative from our district to the standing committee. She added that they would explore what the annual conference has done in the past on the issue. Vicki Ullery reminded that the committee is made up of representatives from every district.

Sarah Friedrich asked how this query is different from other stands pf the church on racial issues? Todd Reish responded that this one focuses on the violence and what actions we will take.

Delegates voted to pass query to standing committee.

Ministry Commission:

Carrie Drees reported that the commission had several interviews with candidates for ordination and that as a result David Balmer and Susan Liller were ordained.

Pastor Anniversaries were recognized:

Carl Hill 5 years

Mark Lancaster 5 years

Barb Saylor 5 years

Trent Smith 10 years

Irv Heishman 35 years

Kathy Hodges 35 years

Ron Sherck 35 years

Mel Smith 25 years

Larry Tyner 35 years

Stephen Reid 40 years

Burt Wolf 40 years

District Board Report:

Todd Reish, Board Chair, recognizing three churches that have closed this year:

Constance Church of the Brethren 1891 established

Mack Memorial Church of the Brethren established 1889 as West Dayton COB

Stony Creek Church of the Brethren has withdrawn from the COB 1827 was established originally.

We give thanks for these churches and for their ministries.

Todd reported that the board has met solely on zoom and trying to support the congregations with reminders to follow covid protocols. Dave Shetler decided to retire, and the board has hired Nick Beam as the interim District Executive. Dave has served the district for 11 years. He is not leaving the area, so we hope to continue to benefit from his skills for years to come. His love for our district, the congregations and individuals within the district.

Ann Stackhouse, Jim Baker and Heather Fullen have completed their terms of service to the board. We thanked them for their service.

The question was asked what the future challenge for the board is. Todd responded that we need to focus on the development of a visioning process and so will be developing a questionnaire for congregations.

Continued reports:

Director of Communication: Mary Boone

Mary has been working diligently on the following things:

District Newsletter

District website has been redesigned and should go live by the end of October 2021

Together Magazine

Facebook page has been underutilized, but she hopes to change this soon.

Mary attends all commission meetings and records minutes, checking the mail, responding to the mail, make deposits, reports them to the treasurer, and manage the files for all ministers.

Resource Development:

Sarah Friedrich explained what the commission does to support the congregations via the different grant programs. They are also responsible for district fund raising. The commission is also responsible for increasing the communication between the district and the congregations.

District Budget: Scott Fitzgerald, Treasurer

Scott reviewed the posted reports for the 2020 fiscal year and the midyear 2021 fiscal year. There was a question about the grant given to Prince of Peace since the pastor left and Dave indicated that since the grant was for a counselor working with them exploring the calling to ministry, they would allow the grant to continue as the congregation works to discern its ministry.

Proposed budget 2022 is based on what will hopefully be a post pandemic year.

Board reserve funds originally were created after the sale of the Poplar Grove property. This year it was decided to use these funds to offset shortages or special projects. Added to this fund will be any other properties that have been sold after the congregation has closed.

A motion to accept the report and proposed budget 33 votes to accept and those opposed 5 votes.

Micha 6:8 Project was explained by Sarah Friedrich.

Motion for the district reports acceptance was made by Tom Bowser, second by Dick Fox and motion was passed.

Dave Shetler final comments:

Dave felt the spirit moving in the midst of this district and is praying that the work here continues.

Passing of the Gavel

Vicki Ullery will be the conference moderator for the 2022 Fall Conference. Theme will be Celebrate God's Abundant Goodness! CHECK THE DISTRICT WEBSITE TO FIND THE DETAILS OF THIS Psalms 145: 7

The 2021 Fall Conference of the Southern Ohio Kentucky Church of the Brethren was closed with prayer and a challenge to find ways to celebrate what God is doing in each congregation!

Motion and second to adjourn.

Submitted by:

PJ Arndts