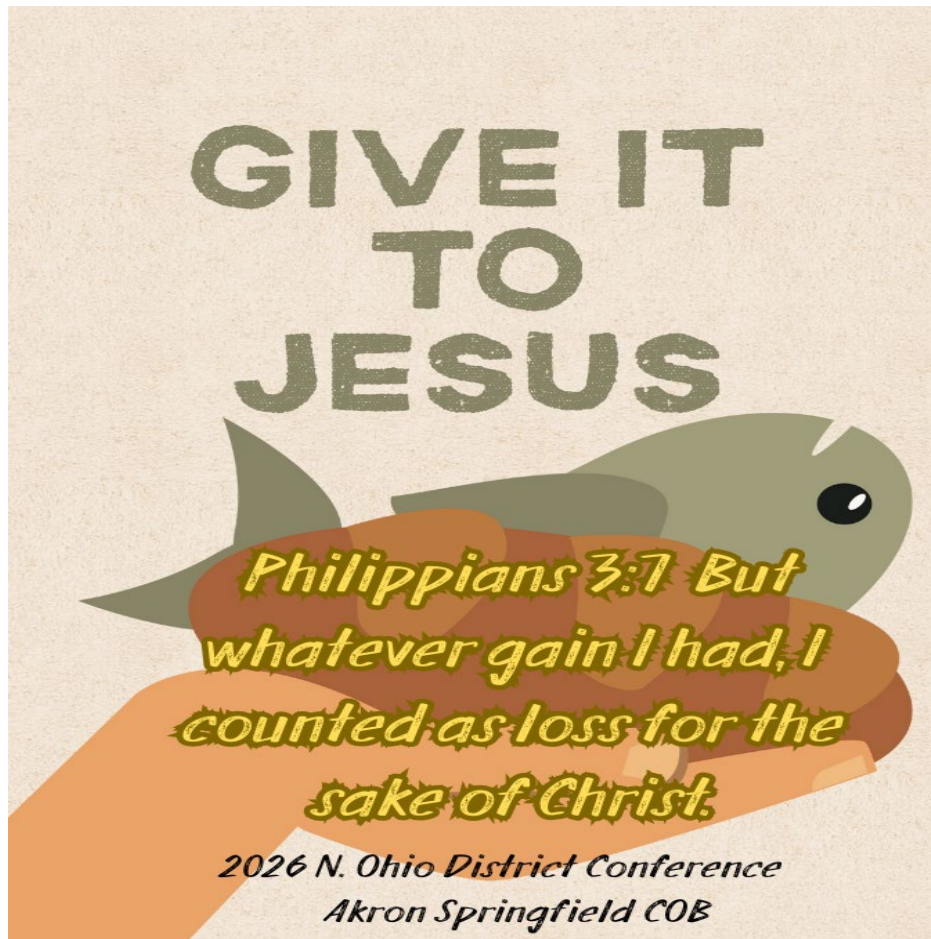


THE NORTHERN OHIO DISTRICT CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN



Conference Agenda

2026 District Conference

The 62nd Conference of the Northern Ohio District
Akron Springfield Church of the Brethren, Akron, Ohio

August 14-15, 2026

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Northern Ohio District Conference

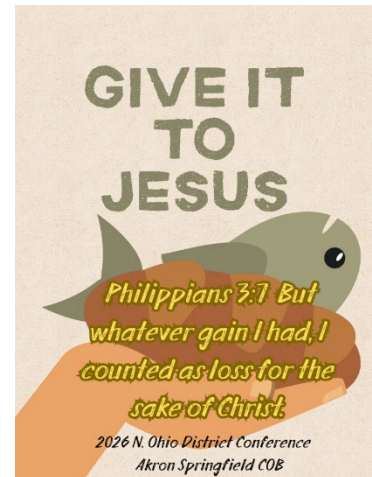
2026 Schedule

Friday, August 14 Schedule

11:00 a.m.	Exhibit & Peace Auction Set-up Begins
12:00 p.m.	Registration Begins
1:00 - 4:00 p.m.	Pre-Conference Workshop
5:00 p.m.	Dinner (in Fellowship Hall)
6:00 p.m.	Opening Worship, Guest Speaker Ryan Braught preaching (Sanctuary)
7:15 - 8:15 p.m.	Insight Sessions
8:15 pm	Ice Cream (in Fellowship Hall)

Saturday, August 15 Schedule

8:30 a.m.	Worship Service (in Fellowship Hall)
9:00 - 11:45 a.m.	Business Session (in Fellowship Hall)
12:00 p.m.	Lunch (in Fellowship Hall)
1:15 - 2:15 p.m.	Insight Sessions
2:30 - 3:45 p.m.	Business Session (in Fellowship Hall)
4:30 p.m.-5:30 pm	Worship Service, Cindy Peel (Sanctuary)
	Installation of Moderator
5:30 p.m.	Dinner (in Fellowship Hall)
5:30 p.m.	Reorganization of the Board



Children and Youth Activities

Childcare (toddlers and preschoolers) is available during the Pre-Conference Workshop, Worship Services, Business Sessions and Insight Sessions, located in the Childcare area.

Children's Activities (K-5th grade) are provided during Insight and Business Sessions.

Jr. & Sr. High Activities Youth registration begins at 4:00 p.m. Friday and activities continue overnight through Saturday worship.

Conference Activities Room Assignments 2026

Business Sessions (Saturday)	Fellowship Hall
Child Care:	Room 2B
(Nursery/Preschoolers during worship, business, pre-conference, & Insight Sessions)	
Children's Activities Grades 1-5 (Saturday)	Room 2D
District Board Reorganization (Saturday)	Classroom LL3
Exhibits (Friday – Saturday)	Classrooms 1B, 1C, 1D
Ice Cream Social (Friday)	Fellowship Hall
Jr. & Sr. High Activities (See Jr. & Sr. High Schedule)	Classroom 2C
Meals	Fellowship Hall
Peace Auction (Friday & Saturday)	Fellowship Hall
Pre-Conference Workshop: with Ryan Bruaght (Friday)	Sanctuary
“Five Core Principals for Missional Movement”	
Registration/Information Desk	Library Room 1A
Worship Services	Sanctuary

Insight Sessions

Friday Evening 7:15 – 8:15

“Immigration/Deportation” (Connections Commission)	Sanctuary
“Living a Questionable Life” (Ryan Braught)	Fellowship Hall
“Planned Giving” (Eder Financial – Dan Radcliff)	Room LL1

Saturday Afternoon 1:15-2:15

“Congregations Sharing What is Going Well?” (Connections/Congregation Commissions)	Sanctuary
“Exegeting (Interpreting) Our Neighborhoods” (Ryan Braught)	Fellowship Hall
“Inspiration Hills – 60 Years of Ministry” (Andrew Kauffman)	Room LL1

The building is equipped with a lift to both the sanctuary and the fellowship hall levels.

Akron Springfield Phone Number 330-628-3058

Message from the Moderator



In her book, “Keeping Your Cool When Your Anger is Hot!”, June Hunt writes, “Because of our unprecedented access to technology, to some degree we all have control issues – so much so that we are unaware of its influence on how we think and the role it plays in our problems with runaway anger.

At the touch of a button or the flick of a switch, we exercise a level of command over our environment that our ancestors would never have imagined possible. We have thermostats to regulate room temperature, light bulbs to “extend” the day, timers on everything from coffeepots to automatic sprinkler systems, and cars and planes that can condense months of travel by foot into a few hours’ journey.

*Kids & adults alike play home video games & watch what happens in the world using a device called a “controller.” We **order** our food, **manage** our careers, **master** our money, and **secure** our retirement. The list could go on and on. Clearly, we’ve made control a way of life.”*

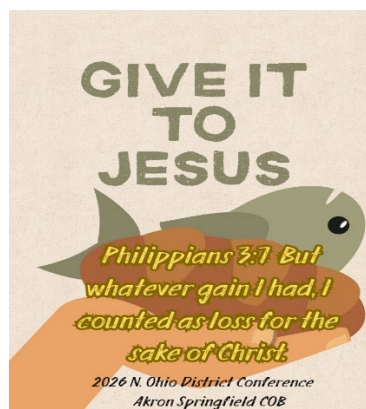
In the midst of this, we are reminded that Paul gave up everything – including his control – to the Lord Jesus. Why? Because he found something in Jesus that he could find nowhere else: a righteousness beyond his control, a peace beyond what the world can give and a love beyond all limits.

A story is told that an acquaintance once asked a friend of Paul’s why Paul did what he did & behaved as he did. Paul’s friend answered the acquaintance, “Don’t you know? Paul is in love.” And that is where we find something worth giving everything for – in being in love with Jesus, our Lord, our Savior & our Friend. And, in knowing that “Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.”

Let us take everything we have – including our control – and give it to Jesus.

Philippians 3:7-11 7 But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. 8 Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— 10 that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Cindy Peel, District Conference Moderator



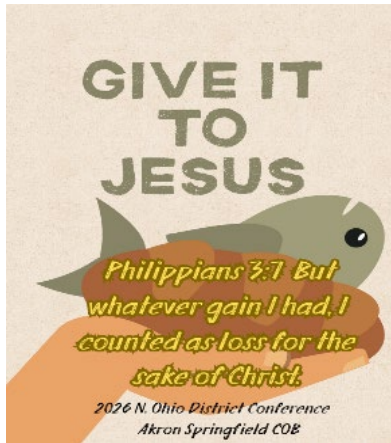
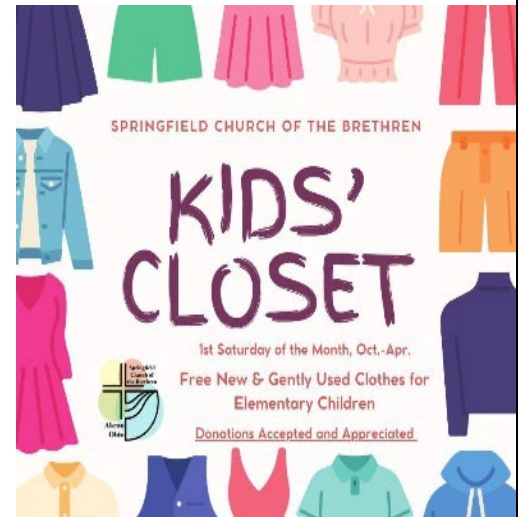
Service Projects and Special Offerings



Please consider bringing the items listed below to District Conference to help support Akron Springfield's Church of the Brethren Kid's Closet!!!

- *New or gently used clothing for babies, toddlers, and elementary ages children.*
- *New Socks and Underwear.*

Sizes newborn through size 14 for boys & girls



District Conference expenses Friday Evening

The District Conference Central Committee works to be frugal while providing a meaningful time of worship, business, and fellowship. The registration cost is low so there will be no financial barrier to those that want to attend – but that means this offering is needed to supplement registration to help cover the costs of printing, speaker travel/honorariums, and more.



Camp Inspiration Hills Saturday Evening

A special offering will be taken for **Inspiration Hills Camp** during Saturday evening's worship. Our district camp needs the generous support of our churches and members to continue this vital ministry in our district.

This year, in addition to the offerings taken during the worship service, there will be offering boxes available for each of the above purposes at the back of the sanctuary. There will also be an offering box for the Peace Endowment Fund in the same location. That way, even if you cannot attend the worship service where the offering goes for a specific purpose, you will still have the opportunity to give. Thank you for your generosity.

Worship Times, Moderator & Guest Speaker

Friday Evening Worship – 6:00 p.m.

Guest Speaker: Ryan Braught



Ryan Braught is the Church Planter/ Pastor of the Veritas Community in Lancaster, PA as well as the Program Manager of the Part Time Pastor: Full Time Church program of the

Church of the Brethren. Ryan also works as a Circuit Rider within the Part Time Pastor: Full Time Church program as well as being a barista in Lititz, PA and a Snowboard Instructor at Roundtop Mountain Resort in Lewisberry, PA.

Ryan is the husband of Kimberly, and they have been married for almost 30 years, father to Kaiden who is 22 and a Senior at Messiah University, and father to Trinity who is 19 and a Sophomore at Indiana University of PA. In his free time Ryan likes to read, watch movies, listen to music and podcasts, snowboard, and hang out with his family.

Saturday Afternoon Worship – 4:30 pm

Speaker: Pastor/Moderator Cindy Peel



Cindy is a retired pastor & respiratory therapist. She has served as pastor at the Marion 1st COB, the Woodworth COB, Akron Eastwood & Akron Springfield COBs. She grew up in the Kent COB and graduated from The Ohio State University and

Bethany Seminary. She has served in many capacities at the district level including district board, nominating committee, strategic planning committee, camp counselor & chaplain.

She lives alone with her dog, Millie and my three cats, Taco, Mattie & Bindi. She enjoys gardening, jigsaw puzzles & mysteries.

Pre-Conference Workshop

Friday, August 14th from 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Five Core Principles for Missional Movement

Training Event led by Ryan Braught

Open to all / 0.3 CEUs for Clergy



Everywhere you turn, there's a new church model, framework, or strategy promising growth, but without a missional mindset, even the best structures struggle to form disciples who live as sent people. In this session, we'll explore five core principles as the foundational building blocks of missional movement, helping you cultivate leaders, shape culture, and steward mission in ways that fit your unique context.

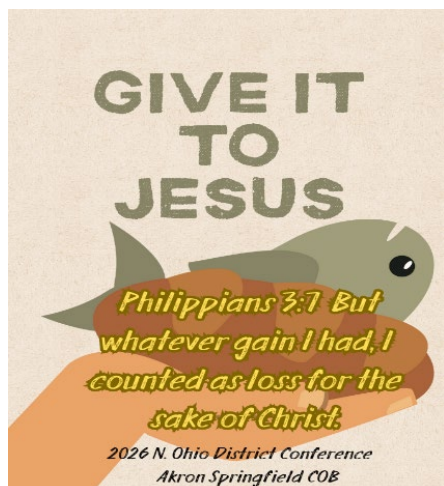
Insight Sessions

Friday Evening August 14
from 7:15 pm – 8:15 pm

Immigration/Depuration- Presented by Connections Commission. Talk about what is happening with the Immigration and Deportation in our nation.

Living a Questionable Life – Presented by Ryan Braught. Often when we hear the phrase “questionable life” we tend to think in negative terms. But what if we as followers of Jesus lived a questionable life? A way of living in the world, in our neighborhoods, and in our families that would provoke questions and open up opportunities to share the good news of the gospel of the Kingdom of God. In this insight session we will explore what it means to live a questionable life, as well as how we can, as 1 Peter 3:15 says, “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”

Planned Giving - Presented by Eder Financial- Dan Radcliff. Provide information about qualified charitable donations from your IRA to make charitable contributions tax deductible even if you do not itemize. Also, it will include end of life giving through wills, trusts, etc.



Saturday Afternoon August 15
from 1:15 pm – 2:15 pm

Congregations Sharing What is Going Well? - Presented by Connections and Congregation Commission. Sometimes it is hard to think about different ways to connect. Come hear what others are doing and share what is working in your church.

Exegeting our Neighborhoods – Presented by Ryan Braught. The word exegete means to interpret, and many times is only used in relation to the scriptures. But we, as followers of Jesus, in the place where we live, need to interpret or understand our missional context. We need to exegete the neighborhood so that we could know what good news looks and sounds and feels like so that we could be Jesus in our neighborhoods. In this insight session we’ll explore the 4 spiritual practices that will help us exegete or understand our missional contexts.

Inspiration Hills – 60 Years of Ministry – Presented by Andrew Kauffman, IH Executive Director. In 1966, the story of Inspiration Hills began with a vision for a dedicated space in Northern Ohio. Six decades later, that story continues to unfold through the changing landscape and the evolution of the camp itself. Join us for an Insight Session as we reflect on our 60-year history, tracing the milestones of how the camp has grown and changed from its earliest days to the present. We will look back at the development of our grounds and discuss the specific updates and transitions that have taken place over the last year. Come celebrate this significant anniversary as we honor the enduring legacy of the camp.

Item Start Time	Time Allowed	Agenda Item	Person Presenting
8:30 a.m.	20 min.	Worship	
8:50 a.m.	30 min.	Business Session Opens, Opening Prayer Greetings from Akron Springfield Church of the Brethren Roll Call of Delegates Accept Business Agenda Consecration of Delegates Review Conference Rules Introduction of Conference Officers Introduction of Guests	Cindy Peel Andrew Wenger Ashley Harris Cindy Peel Paul Bozman Paul Bozman Cindy Peel Paul Bozman Cindy Peel
9:20 a.m.	15 min.	Table time connection	Cindy Peel
9:35 a.m.	10 min.	New Business Item #1: Ballot	Paul Bozman
9:45 a.m.	5 min.	District Staff Reports / District Executive Minister	Kris Hawk (also written)
9:50 a.m.	5 min.	District Board Report	Terry Baldwin
9:55 a.m.	10 min.	Connections Commission/Peace and Conciliation Advocate	Jocelyn Siakula / Linda Fry
10:05 a.m.	5 min.	Congregational Commission	Beverly Wengerd
10:10 a.m.	5 min.	Ministerial Commission / BBI	Mike Huffaker / Tina Hunt
10:15 a.m.	15 min.	Break	
10:30 a.m.	10 min.	Stewardship & Finance Commission/District Financial Reports Treasurer's Reports / District Financial Secretary's Report	Dave Bassett Lisa Snyder / Cindy McNaull
10:40 a.m.	10 min.	New Business Item #2: 2027 District Budget	Dave Bassett / Lisa Snyder
10:50 a.m.	25 min.	Strategic Planning Committee - Report / 15 min Table Time	Dave Bassett
11:15 a.m.	10 min.	New Business Item #3: Proposed Constitutional Changes	Dave Bassett / Kris Hawk
11:25 a.m.	5 min.	Stretch Break	
11:30 a.m.	10 min.	New Business Item #4: Withdrawing Congregations	Terry Baldwin / Kris Hawk
11:40 a.m.	15 min.	ORDER OF THE DAY: Recognition of Ordained Ministers	Ministerial Commission
11:55 a.m.	5 min.	Election Results	Paul Bozman
12:00 p.m.	75 min.	Lunch	
1:15 p.m.	60 min.	Insight Sessions	
2:25 p.m.	5 min.	Gathering Song	
2:30 p.m.	10 min.	Camp Reports / Camp Executive Director Camp Administration Committee / Camp Financial Reports	Andrew Kauffman Russ Matz / Lisa Snyder Russ Matz / Lisa Snyder
2:40 p.m.	15 min.	New Business Item #5: 2027 Inspiration Hills Budget	Dawn Baldwin
2:55 p.m.	5 min.	Standing Committee Delegate	Amariah McIntosh
3:00 p.m.	5 min.	Ohio Council of Churches	Lucas Keller
3:05 p.m.	10 min.	Church of the Brethren Denominational Report	
3:15 p.m.	20 min.	Church of the Brethren Agency Reports Eder Financial Bethany Seminary On Earth Peace	Loyce Borgman Doug Macias (written only)
3:35 p.m.	5 min.	Brethren Homes: Good Shepherd Home West View Health Living	Chris Widman (written only)
3:40 p.m.	5 min.	Acceptance of Reports, Close of Business	Cindy Peel
4:00 p.m.		Close of Peace Auction / Bidding closes at 4:00 p.m.	
4:15 p.m.		Closing Worship / Consecration of 2027 Moderator	
5:30 p.m.		Dinner	
5:30 p.m.		District Board Reorganization Dinner	

Service of Consecration for District Conference Delegates

August 15, 2026 - Prayer of Commitment

O God, we thank You for each of these disciples who have answered Your call to serve in Your ministry through the Northern Ohio District Church of the Brethren. Each of these people come with gifts for specific tasks under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Today we join in a service of consecration, commissioning these people to do Your work.

We are grateful for our brothers and sisters who express their faith and witness through specific ministries in the Northern Ohio District.

Grant us grace that we may all present our gifts and talents to be used for Your glory and our neighbor's good, because our faith is in the following. Amen.

Leader: Brothers and sisters in Christ, God has called you to this service. We thank God for each of you and for your willing response to this call. Now I invite you to make your commitment by responding to the questions of consecration as a delegate.

Do you willingly accept the responsibility to which you have been called, and do you promise to be faithful in fulfilling that responsibility?

Delegates: **We do.**

Leader: Will you seek to respond in a manner worthy of this trust, exemplifying Christian faith and spirit in all that you do and consider?

Delegates: **We will.**

Leader: Will you be cooperative as you work together in common tasks and decisions?

Delegates: **We will.**

Leader: May we as brothers and sisters in Christ, affirm one another as leaders called to serve the Church of the Brethren of Northern Ohio. Above all, may we seek to do God's will relying on His wisdom, strength, and love.

Delegates: **By His grace and with the leading of His Spirit we will!**

Unison Prayer:

O God, we thank you for our fellow delegates who have been entrusted with the responsibility of doing business for Your church. Be with us as we administer what You have entrusted to our hands. Help us to study, pray, and reflect before we make decisions. Make us alert to the needs of all Your people, in the Northern Ohio District and beyond, so that we can carry out ministries in Your name. May this conference reflect the light of Your truth. We pray in the precious name of Your Son, Christ Jesus. Amen.

Rules of District Conference

All matters of business shall be clearly presented to Conference, after which the Moderator shall declare the same to be the business of Conference.

No one shall speak more than twice on the same question. The first speech shall be limited to three minutes and the second to one minute.

The Moderator shall decide when a question shall be put on its passage, but anyone from the voting body may “move the previous question” which is a motion to close debate.

A two-thirds majority shall be necessary to pass answers to queries, matters of polity, and other items as determined by the Officers of the District Conference. A majority vote shall be the rule for all other motions.

A plurality vote shall be required for the election of all officers.

All appeals from the rulings of the Moderator shall be decided by the voting body.

These rules may be amended at any regular session of the conference.

Persons nominating from the floor may only name the nominee; the biographical information must be submitted in writing to the officers of the Conference who will later submit the information to the Conference Delegates.

Written or oral consent must be obtained from all nominees.

A delegate can “Move the previous question” to stop the debate on the immediately pending question. This requires a second, is not debatable, and requires a 2/3 vote to be approved. Merely calling the question from the floor is not the same as a motion for the previous question and does not obligate the Moderator to take a vote.

Robert’s Rules of Order Revised shall be the standard for any point not covered by these rules.

District Conference Central Committee Personnel and Appointments

Cindy Peel, Moderator (Akron Springfield)

Paul Bozman, Moderator-Elect (Reading)

Mike Conner, Past-Moderator (Painesville)

Ashley Harris, Clerk (Freeburg)

Deb Rising, Member (Ashland First)

Michelle Brumbaugh, Member (Eden)

Moses Siakula, Member (Hartville)

Linda Fry, Conference Manager (Mansfield First)

Erin Beebe, Conference Registrar (Maple Grove)

District Conference Personnel & Appointments

Worship and Music Coordinators: Cindy Peel & Andrew Wenger (Akron Springfield)

Children’s Program Coordinators: Joyce Mohler, Karen Beaty, Trish & Gary Griffith, & Christen Stockdale
(Akron Springfield & Akron Eastwood)

Display Coordinator: Kim Morckel (Akron Springfield)

Hospitality Coordinator: Michelle Brumbaugh (Eden)

Sound & Media Technician: Mark Conner, Glen Grunder (Akron Springfield) & Mike Conner (Painesville)

Counting Supervisor: Bernita Shorb, Lee Beaty (Akron Springfield) & Linda Fry (Mansfield First)

Teller: Brian Layman (Ashland First)

Akron Springfield Church On-Site Coordinator: Rita Snyder & Teri Tucker (Akron Springfield)

Meal Coordinators: Ranay Cowie & Sam Courie (Akron Springfield)

Business Item #1, Ballot

2026 District Conference Ballot – Biographical Information

***Indicates Incumbent**

Moderator Elect – 3-year term (vote for one)

Sherry Reese Vaught
(Paradise)



Why am I Interested in Serving in this Role? I am always willing to follow the Holy Spirit's guidance when asked to serve the church.

Leadership and Ministry

Roles Current and Past: Sunday School teacher, Moderator, Church Board. Moderator at Brook Park CoB. I have served lots of places in Northern Ohio District.

Personal: Middle School Teacher in Mansfield. Married to Terry. Mom of Reese. Grandma of Kaycee.

District Board Eastern Area – 3-year term (vote for two)



Martin Brumbaugh
(Eden)

Why am I interested in Serving in this Role? I am willing to serve.

Leadership and Ministry Roles Current and Past:

Deacon, Trustee, and Usher.

Personal: Married to Michelle. I have 2 daughters and 5 grandchildren. Retired Operating Engineer. Volunteer Carroll County Historical Society.



Mike Conner
(Painesville)

Why am I Interested in Serving in this Role? Helping the district impact lives for Jesus.

Leadership and Ministry Roles Current and Past:

Pastor at Painesville CoB. 2025 District Conference Moderator. Springfield CoB Moderator. 12 years on the Junior High Cabinet.

Personal: Wife, Dawn. Two children, Brandon, wife Kayla and Alex. I drive a block truck full time. Commissioner and umpire for an ecumenical softball league.

District Board Central Area – 3-year term (vote for two)



Brian Layman
(Ashland First)

Why am I Interested in Serving in this Role? I am eager to serve the district and Christian Church as needed and I was told this is how I was needed most.

Leadership and Ministry Roles Current and Past: I have been a pastor of the Ashland First CoB since 2021. I have served as interim pastor the Reading CoB. I have more than a decade of experience as Church Board Chair as the Hartville CoB and have served in other board roles as well. I am Moderator for the Mansfield CoB. I have served on most, if not all, of the district commissions. I was District Conference Moderator once.

Personal: I have been married for going on 33 years and have four grown kids, one of which has moved out and lives in Indiana. At the last four Annual Conferences, I have served as Messenger facilitating the needs of the AC offices and assisted those at the microphones.



Deb Rising
(Ashland First)

Why am I Interested in Serving in this Role? I want to give back to my Christian family as they have given me so much.

Leadership and Ministry Roles Current and Past: In Church: Church Board Chair. Ministry and Music. Christian Education. Sunday School Teacher. In District: Central Committee. Shalom Team.

Personal: Semi-retired from Appleseed CMHC. I take care of my 98 year old Dad. Brethren Disaster Ministries. Brethren Work Camp.

District Board Western Area – 3-year term (vote for two)



Abigail Akyeampong*
(Elm Street)

Why am I Interested in Serving in this Role? To serve God's purpose and mission.

Leadership and Ministry

Roles Current and Past: Connections Commission member. Leadership Committee.

Personal: Nurse Practitioner. Mother of 2. Head of nonprofit called Anothony's Found Peace for Mental Health.



Todd Clemens*
(Poplar Ridge)

Why am I Interested in Serving in this Role? To continue serving the Norther Ohio CoB to the best of my ability.

Leadership and Ministry Roles Current and Past:

Licensed minister. Recently elected as Associate Pastor. Church Board Chair, Vice chair of Deacon's, run audio and sound for service, serve on Ministerial Commission Chair. Worship lead on rotation. Volunteer as needed at Poplar Ridge.

Personal: Diesel Mechanic/Truck Driver. Married to Judy for 24 years. I have 5 children and 12 grandchildren.



Jenny Jones
(Sugar Creek West)

Why am I Interested in Serving in this Role? I felt it was time to step up and help with the District and fellow churches.

Leadership and Ministry Roles

Current and Past: Church Board on various committees, Church Board Chair, Youth Group Advisor, Sunday School Teacher, VBS Director. Nominating Committee in the District.

Personal: I have worked for the Head Start Program for 16 years as a Home Based Teacher helping parents understand their child's development and being the best parents, they can be.

District Conference Nominating Committee West 3-year term (vote for one)

No Candidate

District Conference Nominating Committee Central 3-year term (vote for one)



Sierra Swanson
(Brook Park)

Why am I Interested in Serving in this Role? I am excited to serve in this role to help support the district and find the best people to support our

district in many different roles.

Leadership and Ministry Roles Current and Past: I have served on my church's board. I currently run our

livestream programs. I support our sound system and our social media content. In the District I have served on several committees for camp including program committee and CAC. I have also served on the District Strategic Planning Committee.

Personal: I am a school administrator in an elementary school near my home. I am married for 19 years to Josh and have 2 kids, Elizabeth, 13 and Mathew, 12 who keep me busy.

District Conference Central Committee 3-year term (vote for one)



Erin Beebe
(Maple Grove)

Why am I Interested in Serving in this Role? I enjoy District Conference and think I will like helping to plan the event.

Leadership and Ministry Roles Current and Past: Deacon, in the worship leader rotation, prayer person rotation, prayer chain contact person, Nominating

Committee, Inspiration Hills Camp Rep, Adult Sunday School Chair. District Strategic Planning Committee, Conference Registrar in 2025 and 2026.

Personal: I have 3 kids, Nikolas 27, Megan 24, and Kate 21. I am the County Recorder for Ashland County.

Camp Administration Committee – 3-year term (vote for three)



Terry Vaught*
(Paradise)

Why am I Interested in Serving in this Role? I have volunteered, counseled, and served as chaplain for many years. I have already served on CAC for 3 years and

would like to continue that service.

Leadership and Ministry Roles Current and Past: I have served as pastor since the of 2016. I am currently taking a class from Bethany for an update on Theology and the study of memes, literature and practices that updates me on theology, writing, and cultural items that I hope to connect me better. I have attended district events as they come along and taught Worship and Brethren History in the Brethren Buckeye Academy.

Personal: Married to Sherry Reese Vaught. I seek to be a good source of Brethren history, theology, and practices on the camp. I yearn for our camp to be a listening voice for our youth so they are not afraid of the modern world, but so they will have the faith, biblical, and spiritual resources to grapple with the challenges they will face in the world.



Dean Foster
(Black River)

Why am I Interested in Serving in this Role? I love the camp and think it can be transformative place for people to grow in Christ.

Leadership and Ministry Roles Current and Past: Associate Pastor at Black River Church involved in all aspects of the ministry there. Sandy (my wife) and I have been the delegates to both District and Annual Conference. I served on the Connections Commission on District Board for six consecutive years. I write “The Journey”, a blog that appears on the District Website. I fill pulpits when called on.

Personal: Married to Sandy. Writing is a hobby of mine and I answered my call to ministry after working twenty years as an electrician. I am hence will interested in the building trades when I can help out somewhere. Clerk, pianist, Deacon.



Chris Snyder
(Hartville)

Why am I Interested in Serving in this Role? I was asked to serve and I said yes. My children, and now, my grandchildren have greatly enjoyed their visits to Inspiration

Hills.

Leadership and Ministry Roles Current and Past: Church Treasurer, Leadership Team (Fellowship) member, Sunday School Teacher, Zambia Missions Team. Steward ship Committee.

Personal: Married to Jay. My husband and I love to camp and visit National Parks.

2026 District Executive Minister Report

In January, the Council of District Executives (CODE) met in Miami so that we could participate in an intracultural training event with our churches in the area. Most of our time was spent with the Miami Haitian Church of the Brethren. It was both inspiring and humbling. Their depth of faith and intensity of worship challenged me to grow deeper. Many were facing life-changing challenges. Even though I don't understand a word of Haitian, I know the tune to "Count Your Blessings" which they sang a number of times. "God will provide" was a theme not just in worship but lived out in their daily lives. When I look at the loaves and fishes on our conference logo, "God will provide" echoes with joy in my spirit. What a powerful reminder that God is more than enough – everyone fed with 12 baskets left over!

Since 2023, we have had 8 churches leave the denomination. Two more withdrawals will be finalized at conference this year, bringing us to a total of 35 congregations (34 churches and one fellowship). I am grateful for each of our congregations. They bring a deep commitment to discipleship, ministry within communities, and hope that comes from walking with God. And I am so appreciative of pastors and churches as they keep moving forward in faith. One of our congregations has developed a ministry team within the congregation, calling out the gifts of those that attend there. Two of our churches are considering merging so that their resources can be better used in ministry. I have met with two other churches that are looking at options including ministry teams, yoking, selling the building and renting space instead.

We are still called to love God, love, our neighbors, and make disciples. It is a joy to see those overarching commands from Jesus become our renewed focus within our congregations and our district. Events that encourage connection and service are a priority of the district leadership are deepening relationships and bringing hope in the life of the district: the Ministerial Day of Encouragement and Clergy Spouse Retreat sponsored by the Ministerial Commission, Lenten services held with sister churches in the eastern and central part of our district, area ministerial area events, women's Bible studies led by Cindy Peel, the peanut butter and canned food drive sponsored by the Connections and Congregational Commissions, raising over \$20,000 for the Deportation Defense Response to help care for our brothers and sisters, and commitment to prayer for each other

The Strategic Planning Committee (see their report at the back of your conference booklet) brought a preliminary report last year that some considered discouraging but it was a realistic look at our district that allowed them to bring a plan for the ministries of the district and our churches into the future – continuing our work with Jesus peacefully, simply, together. Many of their suggestions have been implemented and some await your approval at District Conference this year. God has provided more than enough to accomplish all that He is calling us to do.

I am so appreciative for the District Board, for so many serving in other roles, and for our staff* as we work together for Christ's kingdom in Northern Ohio. I am also grateful for the faithfulness of our churches that continue to work within the denomination and provide support for district ministries through their self-allocations and their dedication to serving.

***Staff and Office – Laura Huffaker, Administrative Secretary is in the office Monday through Friday from 9 am – 2 pm. I take Monday as my day off.**

We have 4 people in appointed positions that receive an honorarium: **Linda Fry, Peace and Conciliation Advocate**, works from her home. Her position is funded by the Peace Endowment Fund. **Lisa Snyder, Treasurer**, spends 8-10 hours/week in the office in her role. **Cindy McNaull, Financial Secretary**, comes in weekly to process and make the bank deposit. She is completing 6 years of service in this and will finish after district conference this year. **Tina Hunt, Ministry Education Director**, coordinates the BBI program for our district. **We are so blessed!**

Ministerial – I had the blessing of licensing Mackenzie Bozman (Reading) on November 23rd and commissioning Mark Self and installing him as pastor of Jonah’s People Fellowship on December 7th. It was also a blessing to license Jamie Spencer as he was installed as pastor of the Eden church on December 14th. We have a number of candidates for licensing, ordination, and commissioning in the coming months. I encourage you to seek out those with pastoral gifts from within your congregation.

We completed the five-year ordination/commissioning renewal process at the end of 2025. We have a total of 55 credentialed clergy within our district.

I am currently working with 2 search committees in different stages of the process. Several churches are working with an interim or transitional pastor and have chosen to not begin searching at this time.

Administrative and Relational - I work with the Central Committee, the Nominating Committee, and the Strategic Planning Committee and attend CAC meetings. I attend Buckeye Brethren Institute (BBI) classes, providing tech support. And I also serve in a resource capacity to a number of churches, attending board meetings, council meetings, and planning retreats. Worshipping in a different church each Sunday and attending as many board meetings and fellowship events as possible allows continued focus on relationships and is a source of great joy. And it is always a great joy to be asked to preach in one of our congregations.

Professional growth/Personal time - I serve on the Ministerial Issues Committee of the Council of District Executives (CODE) and on the team planning for leadership development workshops within the denomination. I had surgery in February and again in May. I appreciate the support and prayers of the board, allowing for flexibility in my schedule, as I work around my dad’s medical needs. I am taking vacation the week of July 27th, spending time with family including all 6 of our grandchildren – joy!

God’s Will for you in Christ Jesus!

As we move forward, I pray we will focus on revival, calling and building up new leaders, walking alongside our sister churches, and impacting our communities as we share our hope in Christ. Can we as a district commit to God’s will for us in Christ Jesus in this season of joy and struggle as is made clear in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, “Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” God will provide more than enough for all He is calling us to do.

In Christ,



Kris Hawk, District Executive Minister

Statistics 2025			Search Committee	Call Vote	Installations	Council/Church Boards	Sunday am Worship	Other Worship Services	Fellowship Events	District Level Meetings
Miles	Hours*									
2024 Totals	12804	2490	4	3	2	27	42	26	78	94

Statistics 2026 YTD			Search Committee	Call Vote	Installations	Council/Church Boards	Sunday am Worship	Other Worship Services	Fellowship Events	District Level Meetings
Miles	Hours*									
Jan.	567	225	0	1	0	4	3	4	4	12
Feb.	364	156	0	0	0	1	2	3	5	5
March	1223	216	0	0	0	4	4	3	8	10
April	897	202	1	0	0	2	4	1	3	10
May	684	143	0	0	0	1	3	1	3	1
June	926	232	0	0	0	0	3	5	6	6
YTD Totals	4661	1174	1	1	0	12	19	17	29	44

*Actual hours worked; does not include vacation, holiday, or special circumstance days.

2026 District Board Report

It has been a great privilege to serve with the Board over the past several years and to be a member of the Northern Ohio District family for 40 years. As I write this report, there is a sense of sadness in saying goodbye to our Northern Ohio District church family. At the same time, there is also a sense of excitement and anticipation in following the Lord's leading into a new adventure in our lives as Dawn and I move to a new home in Indiana and join the Northern Indiana District.

As I look back on what has happened in our Northern Ohio District this past year, there has been great joy in seeing the changes being made to help the camp become more financially independent. Brother Andrew has faced much turmoil in his comparatively brief time at the camp, but the good news is that there is a growing number of people using the camp. There is also greater financial stability.

It is also a joy to see our District BBI classes continue with helping people grow and mature in ministry leadership under the direction of our Ministry of Education Director, Sister Tina.

Sister Linda, our Peace and Conciliation Advocate, puts in many hours of work keeping up with the rapid political, social and environmental factors that impact each of us in some way. Her articles are a great insight into what is taking place in the world around us, and they challenge us to find ways of applying Christ-like living to each area.

Our District Executive Minister, Sister Kris, and our District Office Administrator, Sister Laura, are to be commended for the extra hours of work and stress they have faced this past year.

The face of the Board continues to change in keeping with the changes in our District and Denomination as congregations continue withdrawing. This results in the need to restructure, both financially and with personnel. The need to change and adapt will continue into the future. In the face of district and denominational changes, the Commissions of the Board have worked diligently with budgets and programming as well as taking time to assess what the future may look like

The District Executive Committee has met regularly as scheduled between Board meetings. We have worked diligently as your district Board to meet the challenges of change in this part of God's Kingdom. We prayed, studied, discussed, planned, strategized, shed some tears and had some good laughs.

Above all, we have given glory to God and sought the direction of His Holy Spirit in all our work. It has been our desire and prayer that Christ's Kingdom will increase because of the faithfulness of each one who serves on the Northern Ohio District Board.

Respectfully submitted in the name of our Lord, Jesus the Christ,

Terry Baldwin
District Board Chair

2026 Stewardship and Finance Commission Report

Once again, it seems the investments for the district have been on a roller coaster ride, with good returns the first part of the year followed by negative returns at the start of the Iran conflict. As events settled down, the financial markets bounced back, recovering most of the losses rather quickly. Your district continues to be in a sound financial position.

The Stewardship and Finance Commission examined the allocation of our fund assets with the help of Eder Financial early in 2026, looked at our risk tolerance and time horizon for each fund, and made some minor adjustments. Generally, our funds are invested in 50-60% equities and 40-50% bonds or fixed incomes. This is a conservative investment approach. We decided to put the Hottle Fund under active management, meaning a paid advisor will be making adjustments to that investment as market conditions change. Another change that will be taking place in our investments is that Eder Financial, through whom most of our funds are invested, will be transitioning their services to Everence Financial.

The Stewardship and Finance Commission is sponsoring a District Conference insight session on Planned Giving. This is being done to call attention to the various tools that are available for planned giving which include outright cash gifts, qualified charitable distributions, giving through a will or bequest, or more sophisticated tools such as charitable remainder trusts, endowments, etc. Some of these ways of giving can save you significant tax dollars. Make sure that you have the right tools in your financial toolbox so that your legacy reflects your priorities in life.

As a part of the District Strategic Planning Report, you will find a section on *How the District is Funded*. It is a rather comprehensive description of all things financial as it relates to the district. The budget projection for the next 10 years was updated to reflect the 2025 actual spending, the 2026 District Conference approved budget, and the actual amount of Reserve Funds with the addition of the Lake Breeze gift. Despite the rather large balance in Reserve Funds at the present time, you will see that these funds will be gone in approximately 10 years, even with the conservative approach outlined in the report. Therefore, the Stewardship and Finance Commission will continue to recommend a very conservative approach to the district budget and will continue to monitor our finances closely going forward.

There are several changes to the budget this year:

1. The \$5,000 stipend for youth worker(s) that was in the budget in 2026 has been removed. Money for that purpose will be taken from the Youth Ministries Fund under the oversight of the Connections Commission.
2. The Peace Worker position was made a stipend position in the 2026 budget. As such we have removed that position from the staff section to a line item under the Connections Commission budget, similar to the way we list the Treasurer and Financial Secretary under the Stewardship and Finance Commission budget.

These and other minor changes have allowed the 2027 district budget to actually decrease by \$4,690 from the 2026 budget.

We encourage your continued support for both the Northern Ohio District and Inspiration Hills Camp. You can be assured that there is proper accounting and oversight in place for all financial transactions through the Stewardship and Finance Commission, through the quarterly reviews by the accounting firm of Whitcomb and Hess, by Lisa Snyder as our District Treasurer, Cindy McNaull as our District Financial Secretary, and the District Office staff, all working as your “financial team”. They are doing an excellent job on your behalf.

We look forward to what God has in store for us in the 2026-2027 year.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Bassett – Commission Chair, Todd Clemens, Bruce Morckel & Mark Pollock

2026 District Treasurer's Report

Greetings,

I have completed my 14th year as your District Treasurer (I started in this role in 2013 as interim 😊). In some ways, it seems like a long time, in others time has flown! This year has been a pretty routine year...a few changes have occurred. We recently had to migrate our QuickBooks online from a QuickBooks product to a TechSoup QB product which will save the district money in the long run, as the subscription prices had substantially increased, and TechSoup offers nonprofit organizations much lower rates than can be found through QuickBooks. This involved migration of both the online data and the payroll program as they are two separate subscriptions.

Eder Financial is in the process of transitioning our investment funds, pension and insurance to Everence Financial with the process to be completed by March 2027. There have been no changes to report as of the time of this writing of this report.

The saddest of changes, of course, is the withdrawal of congregations within our district. When withdrawal funds are received, they have been placed in reserve funds to have for future operating expenses for the district needs. These funds are being held in CDs at Edward Jones with varying maturity dates over the next 2 years at rates between 3.7-4.3%. We did recently cash one of the CDs in and placed the funds back into the checking account for operating funds. Withdrawal of churches also means that self-allocation totals from churches continue to decline as well. **Thank you** to churches that continue to remember the work of the district in their self-allocation giving. You are needed and appreciated more than ever now!

The process of handling the financial resources of the district remains the same. The District Executive (Kris Hawk) approves all bills, and the District Administrative Secretary (Laura Huffaker) records them into QuickBooks for me to pay. Most of the routine monthly bills are paid electronically. Deposits are received by the Administrative Secretary and recorded and deposited by the Financial Secretary (Cynthia McNaul). All bank and investment accounts are reconciled monthly by me and every quarter we continue to have our accounts and QuickBooks data reviewed by Whitcomb and Hess, a local accounting firm. Financial reports (Statements of Financial Position i.e. Balance sheets, Statements of Financial Activity i.e. Profit and Loss, Budget vs Actual, and Year-to-date self-allocation reports) are provided to Stewardship and Finance, Executive Committee and/or District Board on a monthly basis.

As always, there is a mountain of financial information given to you at conference. 2025 reports are in your conference booklets, and 2026 year to date information located in your packets. If you have any questions at any time, before, during or after conference, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. I am usually in the District office on Tuesdays or can be reached at the contact information below.

Lisa Snyder
District Treasurer
lisa@nohcob.org
567.203.9739

NORTHERN OHIO CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

Financial Position Comparison

As of December 31, 2025

	TOTAL	
	AS OF DEC 31, 2025	AS OF DEC 31, 2024 (PY)
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Bank Accounts		
1001 Farmers - Checking Account	82,771.87	61,278.87
1002 Farmers - District Conference	11,670.90	10,556.10
1003 Farmers - Youth Sch Fund	0.00	6,458.32
1005 EF- Church Extension Fund	228,123.03	232,083.79
1006 EF- Hottle Memorial Fund	1,306,960.85	1,302,877.40
1007 EF- Peace Endowment	25,397.94	27,799.10
1008 EF- Student Ministers Fund	39,761.76	36,848.92
1009 EF- District Disaster Ministry	32,287.81	29,350.76
1010 EF-Sampson Endowment	175,318.94	163,291.02
1011 Womens Fellowship Savings	976.58	1,199.78
1012 EF-Church Improvement Loan Fund	316,298.27	317,239.27
1013 Edward Jones CD	262,000.00	244,000.00
1014 EF-Congregational Growth	50,758.12	47,894.25
1015 EF-Excellence in Ministry	26,317.38	27,503.27
1017 Eder Money Market	202,405.63	
1018 EF-Youth Ministries Fund	31,910.75	
Total Bank Accounts	\$2,792,959.83	\$2,508,380.85
Accounts Receivable		
1500 Accounts Receivable	1,686.00	15.00
Total Accounts Receivable	\$1,686.00	\$15.00
Other Current Assets		
1605 A/R IH Liability Ins.	0.00	17,292.74
QuickBooks Tax Holding Account	1,117.26	
Total Other Current Assets	\$1,117.26	\$17,292.74
Total Current Assets	\$2,795,763.09	\$2,525,688.59
Other Assets		
1612-07 Woodworth Church of the Brethren CILF	200.00	18,200.00
1612.03 Painesville CILF 20-001	0.00	3,000.00
1612.05 Chippewa CILF 20-003	11,538.94	17,137.61
Total Other Assets	\$11,738.94	\$38,337.61
TOTAL ASSETS	\$2,807,502.03	\$2,564,026.20

NORTHERN OHIO CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

Financial Position Comparison

As of December 31, 2025

	TOTAL	
	AS OF DEC 31, 2025	AS OF DEC 31, 2024 (PY)
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY		
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable		
2000 Accounts Payable	0.00	1,125.00
Total Accounts Payable	\$0.00	\$1,125.00
Other Current Liabilities		
2100 Withheld Ashland Income Tax	163.16	154.62
2102 Withheld Ohio Income Tax	123.76	107.49
2107 Withheld Federal	830.34	813.94
2108 Withheld 403(b)	0.15	0.03
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$1,117.41	\$1,076.08
Total Current Liabilities	\$1,117.41	\$2,201.08
Total Liabilities	\$1,117.41	\$2,201.08
Equity		
2501 Unrestricted Net Assets	2,561,825.12	2,432,483.67
2502 Unrestricted Net Assets - Lake Breeze	271,896.82	
Net Income	-27,337.32	129,341.45
Total Equity	\$2,806,384.62	\$2,561,825.12
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$2,807,502.03	\$2,564,026.20

Income vs Expense (Budget and Actual)

EXPENSE	Actual2022	Budget 2022	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2024	Budget 2024	Actual 2025	Budget 2025
Stewardship	6,530.00	6,850.00	6,960.00	10,000	8,615.00	10,000	9,220.00	10,200
Connections	-746.60	2,900.00	1,214.26	2,900	365.97	2,900.00	587.72	2,900.00
Congregational	0.00	1,300.00	0.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	0.00	300.00
Ministerial	147.97	4,950.00	46.71	950.00	0.00	950.00	-400.00	950.00
DE	80,235.94	83,936.00	79,612.27	83,836.00	80,485.96	83,836.00	81,777.77	83,381.00
Office	25,051.44	27,300.00	24,985.17	27,300.00	23,783.42	27,050.00	28,015.33	26,900.00
Admin Assistant	21,891.62	31,972.96	17,860.96	32,918.00	20,258.65	28,348.00	23,489.40	24,810.00
Youth Worker	6,625.65	21,455.00	15,052.85	21,995.00	-3.23	21,995.00	0.00	25,823.00
Peace Worker	6,962.55	7,173.43	7,123.81	7,372.00	7,332.77	7,679.00	7,549.42	7,843.00
District Board	10,331.44	12,575.00	10,878.05	12,375.00	13,383.16	12,175.00	10,015.76	12,575.00
Total Expense	157,030.01	200,412.39	163,734.08	199,946.00	154,221.70	195,233.00	160,255.40	195,682.00
INCOME								
District SA	128,008.46		111,319.20		90,361.80		78,420.90	
Hottle dispersements	47,424.92	47,424.92	44,035.24	44,035.24	41,187.20	41,187.20	38,049.40	38,049.40
Peace reimbursement	7,173.43	7,173.43	7,372.00	7,372.00	7,679.00	7,679.00	7,843.00	7,843.00
Emergency draw								
Total Income	182,606.81	54,598.35	162,726.44	51,407.24	139,228.00	48,866.20	124,313.30	
Income minus expense	25,576.80		(1,007.64)		(14,993.70)		(35,942.10)	

DEC 2025

NORTHERN OHIO CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

Financial Activity Comparison

January - December 2025

	TOTAL	
	JAN - DEC 2025	JAN - DEC 2024 (PY)
Income		
3000 Self Allocations	0.00	0.00
3010 Church of the Brethren M&M	395.00	317.00
3013 District Disaster Self Allocati	200.00	16,012.54
3015 District Self Allocation	78,420.90	90,361.80
3025 Inspiration Hills Self Allocati	150.00	0.00
Total 3000 Self Allocations	79,165.90	106,691.34
3100 Church Property Funds	0.00	75,000.00
3200 Other Income	0.00	0.00
3205 District Conference Income	8,332.67	8,597.80
3230 District peace work income	1,421.99	1,243.40
3240 Student Minister's Fund Income	3,139.16	1,400.96
3260 Withdrawal Funds	26,350.00	82,225.00
Total 3200 Other Income	39,243.82	93,467.16
Total Income	\$118,409.72	\$275,158.50
GROSS PROFIT	\$118,409.72	\$275,158.50
Expenses		
5100 Stewardship/Finance Commission	0.00	0.00
5109 Financial Secretary Honora	1,000.00	1,000.00
5110 Treasurer Honorarium	3,000.00	3,000.00
5113 Accounting Fees	2,820.00	3,015.00
5115 Audit Fees (IH)	2,400.00	1,600.00
Total 5100 Stewardship/Finance Commission	9,220.00	8,615.00
5200 Connections Commission	0.00	0.00
5205 Women's Fellowship	388.32	365.97
5206 Men's Fellowship	169.40	0.00
5210 Child Protect/Background	30.00	0.00
Total 5200 Connections Commission	587.72	365.97
5400 Ministerial Commission	0.00	0.00
5411 Licensed Ministry Testing	-400.00	0.00
Total 5400 Ministerial Commission	-400.00	0.00
5500 District Executive	0.00	0.00
5501 D.E. Salary	60,799.92	55,799.92
5502 Housing Expense	0.00	5,000.00
5506 Workers' Compensation	111.14	132.95
5507 Travel & Expenses	10,977.63	9,968.98
5508 Annual Conference	1,563.08	1,394.26
5509 Professional Growth	250.00	0.00
5510 CODE Dues	585.00	585.00
5511 Retirement expense	7,296.00	7,296.00

NORTHERN OHIO CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

Financial Activity Comparison

January - December 2025

	TOTAL	
	JAN - DEC 2025	JAN - DEC 2024 (PY)
5512 Professional Expenses	195.00	297.89
Total 5500 District Executive	81,777.77	80,475.00
5600 District Office	0.00	0.00
5606 Office Administrative Expenses	2,759.79	1,352.85
5607 Office Equipment Repair	110.00	0.00
5608 Office Equipment - Leased	3,820.92	4,534.07
5609 Telephone	1,259.40	1,219.40
5610 Computer on-line	779.40	779.40
5611 Herald & Directories	3,101.76	1,168.68
5612 Utilities	3,403.02	3,291.54
5613 Groundskeeping	2,520.00	1,670.00
5614 Facility Security	989.76	942.60
5615 Facility Maintenance	1,834.72	856.76
5616 Real Estate Taxes	2,732.38	2,829.62
5619 Office Supplies	1,112.94	1,012.62
5620 Dues & Subscriptions	2,942.45	3,404.05
5621 Office Equipment - New	426.99	0.00
5622 Congregational Background Check	6.00	3.00
5623 Postage	215.80	718.83
Total 5600 District Office	28,015.33	23,783.42
5650 District Admin Secretary	0.00	0.00
5601 Secretary Wages	21,455.22	16,574.34
5602 Health Insurance	0.00	-0.01
5603 SS/Medicare Taxes	1,641.32	1,393.39
5604 Workers' Compensation	40.26	55.37
5605 Prof Growth - Travel & Expenses	352.60	603.96
5618 Retirement expense	0.00	1,640.00
Total 5650 District Admin Secretary	23,489.40	20,267.05
5700 District Youth Worker	0.00	0.00
5704 Workers' Compensation	0.00	-3.23
Total 5700 District Youth Worker	0.00	-3.23
5800 District Peace Worker	0.00	0.00
5801 Salary	7,001.53	6,800.50
5802 SS/Medicare/Taxes	535.61	520.24
5803 Workers' Compensation	12.28	14.59
Total 5800 District Peace Worker	7,549.42	7,335.33
5900 District Board	0.00	0.00
5901 District Board Expense	3,304.79	3,879.48
5902 Annual Conference Expenses	1,434.80	1,903.32
5903 Ohio Council of Churches	1,474.00	1,450.00
5904 Standing Committee Deleгат	2,052.71	1,379.10

NORTHERN OHIO CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

Financial Activity Comparison

January - December 2025

	TOTAL	
	JAN - DEC 2025	JAN - DEC 2024 (PY)
5907 Legal Fees	0.00	3,026.00
5908 District Liability Insuran	1,620.26	1,395.26
5911 Memorials	100.00	250.00
5914 Executive Committee Expense	29.20	100.00
Total 5900 District Board	10,015.76	13,383.16
6000 Self-Allocation Payments	0.00	0.00
6007 Church of the Brethren M and M	395.00	317.00
6020 Inspiration Hills Self Alloc.	150.00	0.00
6035 Student Minister's Fund	4,680.00	5,400.00
Total 6000 Self-Allocation Payments	5,225.00	5,717.00
6100 Non-budget Church Expense	0.00	0.00
6106 Jonah's People Grant	25,000.00	20,000.00
Total 6100 Non-budget Church Expense	25,000.00	20,000.00
6200 Non-Budget Expenses	0.00	0.00
5912 Investment Admin Fees	12,255.70	11,959.51
6210 District Conference Expenses	7,218.95	6,626.60
6211 Non-Budget - Inspiration Hills	105,549.40	91,187.20
6212 Loan Forgiveness IH	17,292.74	16,464.26
6220 Hottle Grants paid out	38,075.00	28,627.00
6225 Excellence in Ministry Expenses	4,548.32	3,111.84
6226 Congregational Growth	1,112.67	390.70
6227 District Disaster Fund	1,584.19	40,396.32
6228 Youth Ministries Fund	428.12	0.00
Total 6200 Non-Budget Expenses	188,065.09	198,763.43
Total Expenses	\$378,545.49	\$378,702.13
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$ -260,135.77	\$ -103,543.63
Other Income		
8000 Interest Income	18,047.99	42.42
8001 Interest Income - EF Accounts	49,214.39	46,342.09
8002 Gain/Loss (Mkt Fluc) - EF Acct	160,282.82	186,500.52
8003 Rounding Differences	0.00	0.05
8005 Miscellaneous Income	5,131.25	0.00
Total Other Income	\$232,676.45	\$232,885.08
NET OTHER INCOME	\$232,676.45	\$232,885.08
NET INCOME	\$ -27,459.32	\$129,341.45

NORTHERN OHIO CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

Budget vs. Actuals: Budget_FY25_P&L - FY25 P&L

January - December 2025

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Income				
3000 Self Allocations				
3010 Church of the Brethren M&M	395.00		395.00	
3013 District Disaster Self Allocati	200.00		200.00	
3015 District Self Allocation	78,420.90		78,420.90	
3025 Inspiration Hills Self Allocati	150.00		150.00	
Total 3000 Self Allocations	79,165.90		79,165.90	
3200 Other Income				
3205 District Conference Income	8,332.67		8,332.67	
3230 District peace work income	1,421.99		1,421.99	
3240 Student Minister's Fund Income	3,139.16		3,139.16	
3260 Withdrawal Funds	26,350.00		26,350.00	
Total 3200 Other Income	39,243.82		39,243.82	
Total Income	\$118,409.72	\$0.00	\$118,409.72	0.00%
GROSS PROFIT	\$118,409.72	\$0.00	\$118,409.72	0.00%
Expenses				
5100 Stewardship/Finance Commission				
5101 Commission Expense		0.00	0.00	
5109 Financial Secretary Honora	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	100.00 %
5110 Treasurer Honorarium	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00	100.00 %
5113 Accounting Fees	2,820.00	3,100.00	-280.00	90.97 %
5115 Audit Fees (IH)	2,400.00	3,100.00	-700.00	77.42 %
Total 5100 Stewardship/Finance Commission	9,220.00	10,200.00	-980.00	90.39 %
5200 Connections Commission				
5103 Disaster Rep		95.00	-95.00	
5107 VOAD dues		50.00	-50.00	
5108 PeaceTask Team		140.00	-140.00	
5201 Commission Expense		65.00	-65.00	
5202 Education Training		380.00	-380.00	
5203 Junior/Senior High Cabinet		525.00	-525.00	
5204 Youth Fellowship		1,045.00	-1,045.00	
5205 Women's Fellowship	388.32	165.00	223.32	235.35 %
5206 Men's Fellowship	169.40	95.00	74.40	178.32 %
5207 Young Adult Ministry		200.00	-200.00	
5210 Child Protect/Background	30.00	140.00	-110.00	21.43 %
Total 5200 Connections Commission	587.72	2,900.00	-2,312.28	20.27 %
5300 Congregational Commission				
5301 Commission Expense		300.00	-300.00	
Total 5300 Congregational Commission		300.00	-300.00	
5400 Ministerial Commission				
5401 Commission Expense		100.00	-100.00	
5407 License & Ord. Gifts		200.00	-200.00	

NORTHERN OHIO CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

Budget vs. Actuals: Budget_FY25_P&L - FY25 P&L

January - December 2025

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
5411 Licensed Ministry Testing	-400.00	600.00	-1,000.00	-66.67 %
5412 Ministerial Background Check		50.00	-50.00	
Total 5400 Ministerial Commission	-400.00	950.00	-1,350.00	-42.11 %
5500 District Executive				
5501 D.E. Salary	60,799.92	48,800.00	11,999.92	124.59 %
5502 Housing Expense		12,000.00	-12,000.00	
5504 Health Insurance	0.00		0.00	
5506 Workers' Compensation	111.14	200.00	-88.86	55.57 %
5507 Travel & Expenses	10,977.63	12,000.00	-1,022.37	91.48 %
5508 Annual Conference	1,563.08	1,600.00	-36.92	97.69 %
5509 Professional Growth	250.00	500.00	-250.00	50.00 %
5510 CODE Dues	585.00	585.00	0.00	100.00 %
5511 Retirement expense	7,296.00	7,296.00	0.00	100.00 %
5512 Professional Expenses	195.00	400.00	-205.00	48.75 %
Total 5500 District Executive	81,777.77	83,381.00	-1,603.23	98.08 %
5600 District Office				
5606 Office Administrative Expenses	2,759.79	1,250.00	1,509.79	220.78 %
5607 Office Equipment Repair	110.00	200.00	-90.00	55.00 %
5608 Office Equipment - Leased	3,820.92	3,800.00	20.92	100.55 %
5609 Telephone	1,259.40	1,200.00	59.40	104.95 %
5610 Computer on-line	779.40	800.00	-20.60	97.43 %
5611 Herald & Directories	3,101.76	3,000.00	101.76	103.39 %
5612 Utilities	3,403.02	3,250.00	153.02	104.71 %
5613 Groundskeeping	2,520.00	2,000.00	520.00	126.00 %
5614 Facility Security	989.76	950.00	39.76	104.19 %
5615 Facility Maintenance	1,834.72	1,500.00	334.72	122.31 %
5616 Real Estate Taxes	2,732.38	2,900.00	-167.62	94.22 %
5619 Office Supplies	1,112.94	1,200.00	-87.06	92.75 %
5620 Dues & Subscriptions	2,942.45	3,500.00	-557.55	84.07 %
5621 Office Equipment - New	426.99	600.00	-173.01	71.17 %
5622 Congregational Background Check	6.00		6.00	
5623 Postage	215.80	750.00	-534.20	28.77 %
Total 5600 District Office	28,015.33	26,900.00	1,115.33	104.15 %
5650 District Admin Secretary				
5601 Secretary Wages	21,455.22	22,000.00	-544.78	97.52 %
5602 Health Insurance	0.00	350.00	-350.00	0.00 %
5603 SS/Medicare Taxes	1,641.32	1,760.00	-118.68	93.26 %
5604 Workers' Compensation	40.26	100.00	-59.74	40.26 %
5605 Prof Growth - Travel & Expenses	352.60	600.00	-247.40	58.77 %
Total 5650 District Admin Secretary	23,489.40	24,810.00	-1,320.60	94.68 %
5700 District Youth Worker				
5701 Salary		17,800.00	-17,800.00	
5702 SS/Medicare Taxes		1,584.00	-1,584.00	

Accrual Basis Tuesday, January 27, 2026 02:30 PM GMT-05:00

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NORTHERN OHIO CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

Budget vs. Actuals: Budget_FY25_P&L - FY25 P&L

January - December 2025

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
5703 Health Insurance		2,000.00	-2,000.00	
5704 Workers' Compensation		71.00	-71.00	
5705 Travel		4,068.00	-4,068.00	
5706 Professional Growth		250.00	-250.00	
5707 District Conference		50.00	-50.00	
Total 5700 District Youth Worker		25,823.00	-25,823.00	
5800 District Peace Worker				
5801 Salary	7,001.53	6,776.00	225.53	103.33 %
5802 SS/Medicare/Taxes	535.61	542.00	-6.39	98.82 %
5803 Workers' Compensation	12.28	25.00	-12.72	49.12 %
5805 Office Expenses		100.00	-100.00	
5806 Continuing Ed. Expenses		100.00	-100.00	
5807 Travel		250.00	-250.00	
5808 District Conference		50.00	-50.00	
Total 5800 District Peace Worker	7,549.42	7,843.00	-293.58	96.26 %
5900 District Board				
5901 District Board Expense	3,304.79	3,000.00	304.79	110.16 %
5902 Annual Conference Expenses	1,434.80	1,700.00	-265.20	84.40 %
5903 Ohio Council of Churches	1,474.00	1,450.00	24.00	101.66 %
5904 Standing Committee Deleгат	2,052.71	1,500.00	552.71	136.85 %
5905 Historical Committee		200.00	-200.00	
5906 Shalom Team		250.00	-250.00	
5907 Legal Fees	0.00	2,000.00	-2,000.00	0.00 %
5908 District Liability Insuran	1,620.26	1,375.00	245.26	117.84 %
5909 Ethics Committee		200.00	-200.00	
5911 Memorials	100.00	500.00	-400.00	20.00 %
5914 Executive Committee Expense	29.20	400.00	-370.80	7.30 %
Total 5900 District Board	10,015.76	12,575.00	-2,559.24	79.65 %
6000 Self-Allocation Payments				
6007 Church of the Brethren M and M	395.00		395.00	
6020 Inspiration Hills Self Alloc.	150.00		150.00	
6035 Student Minister's Fund	4,680.00		4,680.00	
Total 6000 Self-Allocation Payments	5,225.00		5,225.00	
6100 Non-budget Church Expense				
6106 Jonah's People Grant	25,000.00		25,000.00	
Total 6100 Non-budget Church Expense	25,000.00		25,000.00	
6200 Non-Budget Expenses				
5912 Investment Admin Fees	12,255.70		12,255.70	
6210 District Conference Expenses	7,218.95		7,218.95	
6211 Non-Budget - Inspiration Hills	105,549.40		105,549.40	
6212 Loan Forgiveness IH	17,292.74		17,292.74	
6220 Hottle Grants paid out	38,075.00		38,075.00	

NORTHERN OHIO CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

Budget vs. Actuals: Budget_FY25_P&L - FY25 P&L

January - December 2025

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
6225 Excellence in Ministry Expenses	4,548.32		4,548.32	
6226 Congregational Growth	1,112.67		1,112.67	
6227 District Disaster Fund	1,584.19		1,584.19	
6228 Youth Ministries Fund	428.12		428.12	
Total 6200 Non-Budget Expenses	188,065.09		188,065.09	
Total Expenses	\$378,545.49	\$195,682.00	\$182,863.49	193.45 %
NET OPERATING INCOME	\$ -260,135.77	\$ -195,682.00	\$ -64,453.77	132.94 %
Other Income				
8000 Interest Income	18,047.99		18,047.99	
8001 Interest Income - EF Accounts	49,214.39		49,214.39	
8002 Gain/Loss (Mkt Fluc) - EF Acct	160,282.82		160,282.82	
8005 Miscellaneous Income	5,131.25		5,131.25	
Total Other Income	\$232,676.45	\$0.00	\$232,676.45	0.00%
NET OTHER INCOME	\$232,676.45	\$0.00	\$232,676.45	0.00%
NET INCOME	\$ -27,459.32	\$ -195,682.00	\$168,222.68	14.03 %

District Self Allocations 2025

Church	2023 Giving	2024 Pledge	2024 Giving	2025 Pledge	2025 Giving
Adrian	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Akron Eastwood	3,500.00	3,500.00	3,500.00	3,500.00	3,500.00
Akron First	0.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00
Akron Springfield	4,004.00	0.00	3,498.00	4,000.00	4,008.00
Ashland Dickey	7,300.00	7,300.00	7,300.00	7,300.00	7,300.00
Ashland First	2,550.00	2,550.00	2,550.00	2,700.00	2,700.00
Bethel	225.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Black River	250.00	0.00	250.00	250.00	250.00
Bristolville	3,800.00	3,800.00	3,800.00	3,800.00	3,800.00
Brook Park	1,629.00	2,450.00	1,798.00	2,500.00	2,366.00
Center	700.00	0.00	700.00	725.00	775.00
Chippewa	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
County Line	0.00				
Defiance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Dupont	6,500.00	0.00	6,500.00		
East Chippewa	9,000.00	7,200.00	7,200.00	7,200.00	7,200.00
East Nimishillen	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00		
Eden	1,600.00	1,600.00	1,699.24	1,600.00	1,793.90
Elm Street	950.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Faith in Action	0.00	900.00	1,800.00	900.00	900.00
Freeburg	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,500.00
Hartville	300.00	0.00	300.00	0.00	300.00
Jonah's People	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Lake Breeze	204.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	150.00
Lakewood	3,500.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Lick Creek	3,090.00	3,182.00	3,182.00	3,277.00	3,277.00
Mansfield	4,001.00	4,001.00	4,001.00	4,001.00	4,001.00
Maple Grove	6,180.00	6,180.00	6,180.00	0.00	6,180.00
Marion	200.00	100.00	200.00	200.00	100.00
Mohican	5,333.32				
Mount Pleasant	0.00				
New Philadelphia	1,400.00	1,400.00	1,400.00	0.00	1,400.00
North Bend	15,000.00	0.00	7,500.00		
Owl Creek	1,400.00	1,400.00	1,400.00	1,400.00	1,400.00
Painesville	3,000.00	0.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
Paradise	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Pleasant View	1,325.00	1,300.00	1,395.00	0.00	1,370.00
Poplar Ridge	8,000.00	8,700.00	8,700.00	8,200.00	8,200.00
Reading	8,000.00	8,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	4,000.00
Richland	600.00	600.00	600.00	600.00	600.00
Silver Creek	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00	0.00	3,000.00
Sugar Creek West	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
Sugarcreek East	0.00	0.00	0.00	250.00	0.00
Swan Creek	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Woodworth	300.00	0.00	250.00	0.00	250.00
Individual	2,500.00	0.00	2,570.00	0.00	1,500.00
CC fees	22.12	0.00	11.44	0.00	0.00
TOTAL	111,319.20	70,763.00	90,361.80	61,903.00	78,420.90

12/31/25 Its

	Budget 2025	Budget 2026	Proposed Budget 2027	Change from 2026	Comments
Stewardship and Finance Commission					
5101 Commission Expenses	0	0	0		
5109 Financial Secretary Honorarium	1,000	1,000	1,000		
5110 Treasurer Honorarium	3,000	3,000	3,000		
5113 Audit Fees (NOHCOB)	3,100	3,000	3,000		
5114 Audit Fees (Inspiration Hills)	3,100	3,100	3,100		
Total Discipleship	10,200	10,100	10,100		
Connections Commission					
5201 Commission Expenses	65	65	50	-15	
5202 Education Training	380	380	100	-280	
5203 Jr/Sr High Youth Cabinets*	525	0	0		
5204 Youth Ministry*	1,045	0	0		
5205 SISTERS Fellowship	165	165	400	235	
5206 Men's Fellowship	95	95	200	105	
5207 Young Adult Ministry	200	200	100	-100	
5210 Child Protection/Background Checks	140	140	75	-65	
5103 Disaster Representative	95	0	0		
5104 Disaster Travel**	0	0	0		
5105 BVS Representative**	0	0	0		
5107 VOAD/General Scholarship**	50	50	0	-50	
5306 Peace Task Team**	140	140	125	-15	
Total Fellowship	2,900	1,235	1,050	-185	
Congregational Commission					
5301 Commission Expenses	300	300	300		
5302 Leadership Training	0	0	0		See** below
5303 Spiritual Life Retreats	0	0	0		
5305 New Church Development	0	0	0		See*** below
Total Congregational	300	300	300	0	
Ministerial Commission					
5401 Commission Expenses	100	100	100		
5402 Clergy/Spouse Retreat	0	0	0		See *** below
5403 New Pastor's Expenses	0	0	0		
5404 Mentor Expenses	0	0	0		
5405 TRIM Expenses	0	0	0		
5406 Trim Coordinator Expenses	0	0	0		
5407 License and Ordination Gifts	200	200	200		
5410 Pastoral Education Expenses	0	0	0		See **** below
5411 Licensed Ministry Testing	600	400	400		
5412 Ministerial Background Checks	50	50	50		
Total Ministerial	950	750	750	0	

*Expenses will go through a new Youth Ministries Fund

**Leadership Training/Spiritual Life Retreats are funded through the "Congregational Growth Fund"

***New Church Development is funded through the "Church Extension Fund"

****Clergy/Spouse Retreat and Pastoral Education Expenses are funded through the "Excellence in Ministry Fund"

District Executive	Budget 2025	Budget 2026	Proposed Budget 2027	Change from 2026	Comments
5501 Salary	48,800	48,800	48,800		
5502 Housing Expenses	12,000	12,000	12,000		
5503 Medicare/Taxes	0	0	0		
5504 Health Insurance	0	0	0		
5506 Workers Compensation	200	200	200		
5507 Travel and Expenses	12,000	12,000	12,000		
5508 Annual Conference	1,600	1,400	1,600	200	
5509 Professional Growth	500	500	400	-100	
5510 CODE dues	585	585	585		
5511 Retirement Pension	7,296	7,296	7,296		
5512 Professional Expenses	400	400	300	-100	
Total District Executive	83,381	83,181	83,181	0	
District Administrative Secretary					
5601 Salary	22,000	22,000	22,360	360	
5602 Health Insurance	350	0	0		
5603 SS/Medicare/Taxes	1,760	1,650	1,650		
5604 Workers Compensation	100	100	50	-50	
5605 Professional Growth, Travel, Expenses	600	800	800		
5618 Retirement Pension	0	0	0		
Total District Administrative Secretary	24,810	24,550	24,860	310	
District Office					
5606 Office Administrative Expenses	1,250	1,250	1,700	450	
5607 Office Equipment Repair	200	200	200		
5608 Office Equipment Lease	3,800	4,000	4,000		
5609 Telephone	1,200	1,250	1,260	10	
5610 Computer On-Line	800	800	800		
5611 Herald and Directories	3,000	1,500	1,500		
5612 Utilities (electric, gas, water, trash)	3,250	3,400	3,400		
5613 Groundskeeping	2,000	2,000	2,400	400	
5614 Facility Security	950	0	0		
5615 Facility Maintenance	1,500	1,300	1,300		
5616 Real Estate Taxes	2,900	3,000	2,800	-200	
5619 Office Supplies	1,200	1,100	1,100		
5620 Dues and Subscriptions	3,500	3,500	3,000	-500	
5621 Office Equipment New	600	600	600		
5622 Congregational Background checks	0	0	0		
5623 Postage	750	800	400	-400	
Total District Office	26,900	24,700	24,460	-240	
District Youth Coordinator*					
					See * below
5701 Salary/Stipend	17,800	5000.00	0.00	-5,000	
5702 SS/Medicare/Taxes	1,584	0	0		
5704 Workers Compensation	71	0	0		
Medical Stipend (if combined w/Camp)	2,000	0	0		
5705 Travel	3,000	0	0		
Pension (if combined w/Camp)	1,068	0	0		
5706 Professional Growth	250	0	0		
5707 District Conference	50	0	0		
Total District Youth Coordinator	25,823	5,000	0.00	-5,000	

*Youth Ministries Fund will cover all expenses for youth programming – so this is moved out of the budget

*Youth Coordinator could be covered under Youth Ministries Fund

District Peace & Conciliation Advocate**	Budget 2025	Budget 2026	Proposed Budget 2027	Change from 2026	Comments
5801 Salary/Stipend	6,776	3,000	3,000		
5802 SS/Medicare/Taxes	542	0	0		
5803 Workers Compensation	25	0	0		
5805 Office Expenses	100	0	0		
5806 Continuing Ed Education	100	0	0		
5807 Travel	250	0	0		
5808 District Conference	50	0	0		
5809 Health Insurance	0	0	0		
Total District Peace & Conciliation Advocate	7,843	3,000	3,000		
District Board Expense					
5901 District Board Expenses	3,000	4,000	4,000		
5902 Annual Conference Assess	1,700	1,550	1,385	-165	
5903 Ohio Council of Churches	1,450	1,450	1,450		
5904 Standing Com Delegates	1,300	1,300	1,400	100	
5905 Historical Committee	300	200	100	-100	
5906 Shalom Team	250	250	250		
5907 Legal Fees	2,000	2,000	2,000		
5908 District Liability Insurance	1,375	1,400	1,650	250	
5909 Ethics Committee	200	200	200		
5910 Financial Services Fee	0	0	0		
5911 Memorial Gifts	500	500	500		
5914 Executive Meetings Expense	400	400	300	-100	
Total District Board Expense	12,575	13,250	13,235	-15	
Sub Totals					
Total Commission/Board Expenses	26,925	25,635	25,435	-200	
Total Staff/District Office Expenses	168,757	140,431	135,501	-4,930	
Total Budget	195,682	166,066	160,936	-5,130	
Income (* = estimates)	Actual 2025	Projected 2026	Projected 2027	Change from 2026	
Self-Allocations	78,420.90	*80,000	*75,000	-5,000	
Hottle Endowment Disbursement	38,049.40	*40,000	*38,000	-2,000	
Peace Worker Endowment Disbursement	7,549.42	3,000	3,000	0	
Income	124,019.72	*123,000	*116,000	-7,000	
Amount of Reserve Funds to be used	28,686.26	*43,066	*44,936	*1,870	
Total Income	152,705.98	166,066	*160,936	*-5,130	
Budget vs Income Difference	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	

2026 Congregational Commission Report

We have approved one Hottle Grant since District Conference last year for \$4,900. We encourage churches to take advantage of these grants of up to \$5000 for ministries and projects that impact community outreach.

We provide oversight for the Steering Committee of Jonah's people, our congregation that meets in the Good Shepherd home. Please see the report that follows.

We worked with Connections Committee on ways to promote events to churches in the district. We are planning an open forum for this District conference so churches can exchange ideas that have worked for them is promoting their congregations to their local communities. Our two committees are also trying to get information about the Shalom Team to congregations in case of conflict within their congregations.

Respectfully Submitted,

Beverly Wengerd, Chair

Scott Brinkman

Edith Kieffaber

Joseph Routh

2026 Jonah's People Fellowship

This fall will mark eleven years since the beginning of the Jonah's People Fellowship, our congregation that meets in the Good Shepherd Home in Fostoria.

Since Jonah's People is a Fellowship, decisions are made by a Steering Committee (instead of church board) made up of several residents of the Good Shepherd community (Darlene Jennings, Janet Fadley, Rose Brinker), a community representative (Dave Myers), Mark Self (Pastor and Chaplain at Good Shepherd), and ex-officio members: Chris Widman (Executive Director of Good Shepherd), Kat Siegel (Chaplain at Good Shepherd along with Mark Self), Kris Hawk (District Executive Minister), and Agnes Hayhurst (N. Ohio District Board representative). We appreciate the commitment of Good Shepherd to the spiritual care of their patients, family, and staff.

It has been a year mixed with sorrow and joy. The Jonah's People Fellowship participants grieved the loss of Amanda Riedling who had been serving as an interim co-pastor before her death last August. Along with the loss of several past Steering Committee members, the loss has been deeply felt.

There is also much to celebrate at Jonah's People. It was a joyful day of celebration on December 7th as Mark Self was commissioned in the Church of the Brethren and called to be Pastor of Jonah's People. He had been serving as interim until that time. Mark serves half time as pastor of the congregation and halftime as chaplain for Good Shepherd Home. Kat Siegel, who began more recently as a chaplain, will be working towards licensing in the Church of the Brethren this fall. Mark and Kat have been holding a Monday afternoon Bible Study. The fellowship in the group has been a blessing to many.

This year has seen an attendance of 35-40 people for worship in the chapel at Good Shepherd. People from the independent and assisted living sections of Good Shepherd attend as do some staff members. And those from the memory care unit join for worship, which is a vital part of the ministry of Jonah's People. Several people from the community also attend.

Connecting to the community has been difficult from the beginning. There is work to be done to let the community know that the services are open to the public. The Steering Committee is working on plans for community outreach. We look forward to seeing God's plan unfold for this Fellowship.

Respectfully submitted,

The Jonah's People Steering Committee

2026 Connections Commission Report

The Connections Commission is focused on ways that we can connect people across our district. The **SiSterns**, **Men's Fellowship**, **Peace Task Team**, **Youth Cabinet**, and **Creation Care Advocate** fall under this commission. So much of our work is done through resourcing the volunteers that serve in these important ministries.

Our **District Disaster Ministries Team** has faithfully lead **Brethren Disaster Ministries** teams each year. We are grateful for their service and the service and ministry of those who have traveled on these trips. We are researching additional ways we can offer opportunities to serve and fellowship together. If you have ideas or questions do not hesitate to contact the District Office.

We are excited to hear what the **Youth** bring back from National Youth Conference!

Creation Care continues to transition and explore the new ideas and role. We are grateful for the **Peace Advocate** and the continued work and knowledge that is brought through newsletters and a call to peace and justice for all.

Our **SISTERS** had a wonderful retreat that was held at Inspiration Hills with Tina Hunt as the main speaker and we look forward to having a **Men's** retreat this fall, also at Camp Inspiration Hills.

Thank you for the Zoom Bible Study led by Cindy Peel.

We have also planned an insight session for this conference, which we hope you will attend, focusing on Immigration and connecting churches when things aren't how they have always been.

We are grateful to all those that work in these areas for connecting us. And we pray that we may connect in deeper ways as we continue to love God and Love our Neighbors.

Blessings,

The Connection Commission

Jocelyn Siakula, Crystal Zellers, Jane Matz, Abigail Akyeampong

Peace & Conciliation Advocate: *Linda Fry*

District Conference Report 2026

Greetings in Christ Jesus:

- I will continue to meet with the **District Board & Connections Commission**.
- I work with the **Peace Task Team**.
- I work with the **Shalom Team**, which is under the District Board Executive Committee. The Team is currently inactive but continues to be available to serve the District as requested when conflicts arise.
- At District Conference last year, I tried to speak with the Congregational Contact people who were there. I had buttons to put on their nametags. I was able to talk to 15 of them and have had email interactions or in-person conversations with some of them since conference. I am currently revising my contact list of congregational peace contact people.
- I continue to provide information to congregations when asked.
- Five congregations responded to the information I sent out about Peace Day, September 21, by sending pictures of their activities observing the day. I published a special addition of the *Peace Advocated News* on the District's Peace Day observances using the pictures from congregations.
- I published a **Peace Prayer Calendar** for March and April which offers suggestions to expand your daily prayers; to reflect on your call to be a peacemaker; and to remember people who, and events that helped call the world to become a better place either by the selflessness of individual peacemaking efforts, or the horror of atrocities that shattered the peace and must not be forgotten so that they will not be repeated. The need for peace and peacemaking often seems overwhelming. Prayer (including very specific prayers) is a critical starting point. May our prayers call us and lead us to do more where we can. The calendar included some peace action suggestions as well.
- With the country again at war, continuing talk of reinstating a military draft, and changes that have been made in how draft registration works, **One thing Brethren can do to be a witness for peace**, and many Brethren have done in the past, is to become a conscientious objector to war. A conscientious objector, or CO, is someone who is opposed to serving in the armed forces and/or bearing arms on the grounds of moral or religious principles. I have prepared two flyers for the District on **conscientious objection** outlining resources for young people exploring their own peace position based on Biblical teaching and the traditions of the church. In March, I sent out **A Call To Conscience** sharing resources from the church that can help young people explore the church's traditional beliefs on the issue based on the teachings of Jesus and explore their own position and call to peacemaking. Then in April I sent out a flyer, **Conscientious Objection**, on a webinar to be offered May 17th to youth during the Sunday school hour to explain the current registration process and help youth understand conscientious objection, what taking this position means, and on how to document their beliefs, if this is their choice, so they are ready if a military draft is activated. The church also works with the Center on Conscience & War, a non-profit organization that advocates for the rights of conscience, opposes military conscription, and serves all conscientious objectors to war. Their website is full of information about conscientious objections and faith. Their Website is found at: <https://centeronconscience.org>.
- I sent out a flyer about **"Say Something Week"**, March 23-27 from the Church of the Brethren Gun Violence Prevention Team. The "Say Something" program was created by Sandy Hook Promise (started by the parents following the Sandy Hook school shooting). It is a tool developed to help people be aware of the signs that someone is considering an act of violence against themselves or others. The hope is that spotting the signs can lead to getting the person the help they need and prevent an act of violence.

- In April I sent out a flyer on **National Youth Violence Prevention Week** (April 27-May 1). This is a time to highlight efforts to prevent youth violence by educating ourselves about the issues and exploring ways to prevent youth violence as a community.
- I continue to be available if a congregation wishes to schedule a visit, give me a call or email me (419-589-7719, linda@nohcob.org). I can bring greetings, preach, share a children's story, or present a Sunday school lesson.
- I continue keeping up with news and information about current peace concerns in the world.
 - The Church of the Brethren Newslines, the Church of the Brethren Gun Violence Prevention Team, Brethren Intercultural Ministries, the Brethren Deportation Defense Response Team, and The Office of Peacebuilding and Policy are helpful resources.
- Be in prayer for and seek ways to help people caught in the **Immigration** crisis here and elsewhere in the world. Millions of people are being forced to flee their homes due to violence, war, famine, economic disaster, natural disaster and climate change. Some people attempting to enter the U.S. seeking safety and asylum are regularly denied their rights to due process and frequently subjected to dehumanizing or abusive treatment. This includes 1,100 Afghan refugees (400 are children) in the process of receiving asylum in the U.S. when the current administration banned refugees from coming. These Afghans, presently held on a former U.S. military base in Qatar, are threatened with forced return to Afghanistan where many face death, or being sent to Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) which is already dealing with more than 6 million displaced people. Refugees seeking safety in Europe risk death crossing the Mediterranean and are increasingly unwelcome in Europe. Thousands displaced in Africa often leave violence, famine, and horrific conditions at home only to find deplorable conditions in refugee camps in neighboring countries already dealing with their own similar struggles. Immediate help for refugees is needed, but the whole world community must work together to address the issues causing people to flee their homes so that everyone can safely stay at home with dignity, with basic needs met, and with hope for the future. No one wants to leave their home and become a refugee! Some of our Brethren brothers and sisters are directly affected. Get in touch with the Brethren Deportation Defense Response Team for resources, updates on the U.S. situation, and ways to help: https://www.onearthpeace.org/deportation_defense_response_team.
- A booklet, **Curriculum Resources for Teaching Peace & Justice** about resources for teaching what the Bible says about peacemaking and justice is available upon request. I keep it updated as resources change. It lists and describes resources that can be used in Sunday school classes (adult, youth, and children) or in a small group setting. Contact me for a copy or more information.

Grace & Peace, Linda Fry,
District Peace & Conciliation Advocate

2026 Brethren Disaster Ministries Report

Brethren Disaster Ministries District Disaster Coordinator Team

“Living With Purpose” was the theme for the Church of the Brethren Service Sunday this past February based on Ephesians 4:11-13. It is a reminder that being involved in Brethren Disaster Ministries is one way to live a life with purpose.

In September of 2025, seven volunteers traveled to Letcher County, KY to serve for the week alongside volunteers from Southern Ohio. We have been fortunate to serve with folks from southern Ohio for several trips and will continue to do so in the future. Volunteers worked to construct new homes for the victims of devastating flooding in 2022. We thank the following for making that week a priority to serve on behalf of our district – Dave Bassett, Don Earlenbaugh, Amy Flake, Sandy Humphrey, Doug Imhoff, Charlene Kuhn and Cindy Peel.

With the encouragement from some of our volunteers to add another week to our schedule, we volunteered our district for a week in February 2026 also in Letcher County, KY. Unfortunately, the weather changed the plans and our week was cancelled. We thank Dave Bassett, Sandy Humphrey, Dan Kettering, Donna Kettering, Travis Kettering and Pete Snyder for being willing to go that week. When we commit to a week on the Brethren Disaster Ministries schedule, we are asked to send seven volunteers. We have been able to send six or seven each week.

May 10-16 was our third week, and the site was moved to Hendersonville, NC. This area was hit hard with flooding by Hurricane Helene in 2024. BDM is partnering with two local Habitat affiliates. Volunteers worked on repairing homes and new builds. We thank Don Earlenbaugh, Amy Flake, Patricia Griffith, Sandy Humphrey, Christen Stockdale and Thomas Stockdale for serving on behalf of our district.

It has been our hope to have more volunteers and to add more weeks to our schedule. We are excited to report that we had seven people volunteer for the first time! All ages and skill levels are always welcome. Funds from the District Disaster Ministry fund are used for vehicle rentals and gas. Please stop by the Brethren Disaster Ministries booth in the display area.

While we are focusing mainly on the rebuilding part of BDM, Children’s Disaster Ministries and Global response are also a part of Brethren Disaster Ministries.

We thank you for your prayers, participation, encouragement and support as we serve together and strive to live lives with purpose.

Sandy Humphrey (330-603-9073)

Kim Morckel (330-618-2379)

Pete Snyder (419-685-0903)

2026 Sisters Report

Dear Brothers + Sisters of Northern Ohio District Conference,

Warm greetings from the SiSters team. We hope that all women across the district are finding ways to connect, enrich and serve in their congregations and communities.

This year has brought growth and excitement to our team, as we held our Spring Retreat at Camp Inspiration Hills. We felt this was a great central point for everyone to join together, and we were able to utilize camp in multiple ways. We were led by Sister Tina Hunt who encouraged us in our theme of “Renew + Rejoice”. We so appreciate Tina and her multifaceted gifts that she freely shared with us! We also enjoyed chair yoga led by Deb Rising, a Bible Study time led by Cindy Peel, and an outdoor hike around camp led by Linda Smith. We packed over 100 hygiene kits that were delivered to Church World Service. Many thanks to Andrew and Grady for hosting us at camp and making sure the facilities and food were wonderful!

As we move into the second half of 2026, we would love to host something around the holidays as a connection point for the ladies of our district. The logistics of this are still being worked on, and we will share information in the coming months.

We love to connect and serve with each other, and are looking for the best ways to do that at the district level. As always, we welcome any ideas and suggestions you may have!

We thank you for the opportunity to serve the District in this way, and look forward to connecting to serve, enrich, and support.

Crystal Zellers | Linda Smith | Jane Matz | Meralyn Zigler
SiSters Committee Members

2026 Ministerial Commission Report

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. **Romans 15:13**

In a time of challenge in ministry, I hope the above verse gives you encouragement and hope. I believe that as a Ministry committee, we have worked at being encouraging and hopeful as we do our best to equip pastors in the district.

We did an interview for licensing a minister and an interview for commissioning a minister last fall.

We held a Clergy Spouse Retreat February 15-17, 2026 at a different location this year. We were at Amish Door in Wilmot, OH. We had a couple of pretty days as opposed to the year before when it was a wild snowstorm. We had 44 in attendance this year. Paul Munday was our speaker and I really appreciated his lessons from Romans Chapter 8. It applied so well to what we experience as ministers. It was a good three days of retreat for the Pastors who attended.

We also sponsored a Day of Encouragement for Pastors and Church Leaders at Maple Grove Church of the Brethren on April 18, 2026. This involved an entire Saturday with Galen Hackman leading us in 3 sessions about Exploring 6 realizations in the way we do ministry. For one session, we led in worship musically with Bill Holsopple, Mike Huffaker, and Jamie Spencer using his gifts playing the guitar. I thank Maple Grove for providing lunch and hosting this event.

I want to say a Big Thank you to Tina Hunt, who continued her work as the Ministry Education Director. She did incredible work teaching classes and securing instructors for our BBI classes. We appreciate all you are doing to provide education for leadership in the district.

I want to say a big thank you to both Kris Hawk, our District Executive, and Laura Huffaker, District Administrative Secretary, for keeping on track with Licensed and Ordained Ministers. Also, for their help with the Clergy Spouse Retreat and the Day of Encouragement. (2 events which were special to our district this year).

The District is saddened by the churches that have left the denomination. We pray and continually hope to encourage those congregations who remain and those that have closed or left. In all situations, may God be Glorified in all things.

God's Blessings,

Mike Huffaker, Chair, Bill Holsopple, Steve Keib, Candie Orr

The Northern Ohio District Church of the Brethren Scholarship program was created to provide financial assistance to

1. Licensed clergy that are seeking to fulfill their educational requirements to move forward with ordination or commissioning in the Church of the Brethren or
2. Ordained or commissioned ministers pursuing an MDiv degree.

Please contact Kris Hawk or a member of the Ministerial Commission or the District Office for more information.

2026 Buckeye Brethren Institute

It is my honor to present my second report to the Northern Ohio District Church of the Brethren as Ministry Education Director. My deepest thanks go to our District Executive Kris Hawk for helping me in innumerable ways. And I would have been lost without our District Administrative Secretary Laura Huffaker's assistance in making copies and contacts. We also have a great group of instructors.

This year the number of students who were enrolled in the program ranged from one to four, with several others who participated for either CEU's or Personal Enrichment. I would love to see that number increase. Our classes have been meeting on Fridays in a hybrid of on-site and on-Zoom. We completed the following courses this year: Preaching (Tina Hunt, instructor), New Testament Survey (Cindy Peel, instructor), Church History (Tina Hunt, instructor), and Ministry Leadership and Administration (Panel). In the fall we will begin our three year cycle again. One of the benefits to how the program runs is that students can jump in at any time. Our courses for the next year will be: Teaching and Learning in the Church (Cindy Peel, instructor), History Beliefs, and Practices in the Church of the Brethren (Paul Bozman, instructor), Biblical Interpretation (Paul Bozman, instructor), and Pastoral Care (Tina Hunt, instructor). As always, the courses will fulfill the requirements for ordination but also provide practical material that can enrich the spiritual lives of clergy and laity alike.

Additionally, as a part of the BBI program, we will be including two Practice of Ministry events. The fall workshop will be Conflict Transformation on October 9, 2026 led by Kris Hawk. We are still in conversation about the topic for spring. If there's something you'd like to suggest send me an email.

There are two scriptures which have driven my passion for spiritual learning. The first is Jesus' invitation to learn from him the ways that lead to rhythm and rest (Matthew 11:28-30). The second comes from Peter's writings where he closes his letter by encouraging the believers to "grow in grace and knowledge" (2 Peter 3:18). These will continue to be my motivation as I serve the district in this position, serve my church, and serve as a follower of Jesus. My prayer is that as followers we all will avail ourselves to all the learning opportunities we can.

Respectfully Submitted,
Tina M. Hunt
Pastor, Mansfield First Church of the Brethren
Ministry Education Director, Northern Ohio District

Class Dates:
Teaching and Learning in the Church: 8/28, 9/11, and 9/25
History, Beliefs, and Practices in the Church of the Brethren: 10/23, 11/6, and 11/20
Biblical Interpretation: 1/15, 1/29, and 2/12
Pastoral Care: 4/2, 4/16, 4/30

Practice of Ministry Events:
October 9, 2026- Conflict Transformation
Spring 2027- topic TBD

Inspiration Hills Executive Director Report August, 2026

Roots in Action Rather than just talking about our "Going Deeper" theme again, we are currently *living* it in the dirt. Stewardship lately has moved from planning to physical transformation. We are stripping away the old (sand-blasting) to protect the new, ensuring the camp's "roots" are healthy for the next generation.

The 60th Anniversary Scoreboard

We're moving past the "launch" phase and into the "climb."

- **Financial Goal:** \$60,000
 - **Current Standing:** \$6,285 (10.5% of goal).
 - **Projects Remaining (not an exclusive list...):** Continue restoration of red barn, replacing the lake culvert and the culvert to the athletic field, fix the lake storage roof, paint the dining hall deck, build the new educational pavilion, repair the Family Camp restroom, seal Pine Lodge.
-

Facility Momentum: The "Shine-Up" Progress

Completed & Recent:

- **Cabin Prep:** We have finished sand-blasting and staining five cabins!
- **Scout Impact:** The new handicap-accessible sidewalk from Dogwood to the Dining Hall is in the ground. It's a game-changer for our inclusive ministry.
- **Critical Repair:** A major system failure in the main freezer was averted with a full compressor replacement—it is officially summer-ready.
- **Center Pavilion Lighting:** We've added LED lighting to the center pavilion for late evening events.

Diamond Anniversary Pavilion Grant!

The Wayne County Community Foundation awarded us a \$40,000 grant to help us build a pavilion in the middle of the cabin circle! This pavilion, amongst other uses, is intended to help us with the new day camp programs we are looking to start in 2027 as well as outdoor education. It has a storage room and educational elements to make it suitable for educational purposes. We still need people to help us reach the final project cost estimated at another \$10,000-20,000. Gifts towards this project can be given to the 60th Anniversary Challenge fundraiser.

Urgent Project Backlog (Volunteers Needed): We have a heavy "to-do" list and limited staff. We are looking for groups or individuals to tackle:

- **The Red Barn:** Structural post repair, painting, and the construction of a new lean-to for dry firewood storage.
- **Infrastructure:** Culvert repair/replacement and installing a new chimney cap.
- **Electrical:** Replacing "electric eyes" for our outdoor security lighting and installing pavilion lights.
- **Interiors:** Stripping and waxing the high-traffic floors in the Office and Dogwood.

Staffing Gaps

This summer we continued to be short on staff. Here is what we needed but couldn't find.

- **Counselors:** **2 male** and **2 females** counselors (23+) to round out our Youth camp and **1 male** and **1 female** counselor for our Junior and Junior High camps.
- **The "Green Team":** During the spring through the fall we desperately need **2 Full-Time volunteers** (or several part-timers) dedicated strictly to mowing and string trimming. With 200 acres, the "reaching out" of our grass is currently winning.
- **Medical:** As we look at the safety of our campers we need volunteer **Nurses** for every camp session.. While we have someone certified to dispense meds, we want to ensure the safety of our campers by having solid medical staff on site during each of our weeks of camp.

Save the Dates

- **Labor Day Family Camp:** September 4-7
- **60th Anniversary Fall Festival & BBQ:** September 26

In Christ,

Andrew Kauffman
Executive Director
Inspiration Hills Camp



2026 Camp Administration Committee Report

The mission of Inspiration Hills Camp is to provide a set-apart place in nature where people of all ages can grow in awareness of God and deepen their commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior so that in all aspects of Christian life we might continue the work of Jesus Christ peacefully, simply, together.

We invite everyone to come and visit. You can take a tour, come to one or more of our events, rent a lodge or cabin for your family or church group. Check our table display to see what's happening and prices to rent our facilities. (We have discounted crates for Northern Ohio Churches.)

We are thankful for Andrew Kauffman as our Executive Camp Director. We have been further blessed to have Grady Metz full time heading up the Kitchen and Dining Facility, assisted by Olivia Baker for the summer season and part time Jasmine Winger, Maddie Stokes. What a great team! Also, Mark Dulabaum as an experienced Facility Manager assisted by Taylor Leidigh. Program Director Hannah Warnick returning again from California has a positive impact on the overall program! We are fortunate to have several returning counselors and CITs - Abby Severe, Gabe Zellers, Gavin Baisden, Lifeguards - Alessandra Gerber, Gabe Zellers.

There are two new prospective programs being developed - Mountain Bike Trails (bicycle), & Day Camp for 2027.

Camp would not function well without the many volunteers throughout the year along with the individual churches' financial support. Don't miss the Fall Festival and Chicken BBQ. This is the 60th Anniversary of Inspiration Hills! Come for Fun Activities, Fellowship, and Good Eating!

The Finance Subcommittee (Russ Matz, Linda Smith) along with Lisa Snyder, Treasurer, Andrew Kauffman Executive Director, and Kris Hawk District Executive continue to maintain the financial policies and develop the financial budget for the coming year. Much progress is being made toward a sustainable camp. Beverly Wengerd financial secretary and Bonnie Brockway bookkeeper continue with their much appreciated duties.

The program subcommittee (Lisa Bertsch, Denise Layman, Ashley Sayre, Terry Vaught) along with Andrew Kauffman, Russ Matz worked on developing the summer camp program Going Deeper & Reaching Out. The writing of the program manual was developed and completed by Pastors Brian Laymon and Tina Hunt.

The Maintenance subcommittee (Mark Dickerhoof, Ernie Imhoff, William Fike) along with Mark Dulabaum continue to improve and maintain facilities along with all the many volunteers. You will see a new handicap accessible concrete sidewalk leading to the dining hall. This is an Eagle Scout Project of Gabe Zellers. Pete Snyder, Mark Dickerhoof, Russ Matz are weekly volunteers helping with the grounds keeping.

Let's take a moment to thank all the volunteers who help behind the scenes -work days, fundraisers, cookie makers, electricians, plumbers, painters, etc. the list goes on - Thank You All !

Sincerely,
Russ Matz
Camp Administration Committee Chair

2026 Inspiration Hills Camp Treasurer Report

Greetings,

You will find the financial reports for the camp for 2025 in your conference book and the most recent financial reports for 2026 in your conference packet. Each month the same reports (Statement of Financial Position i.e. Balance sheet, Statement of Financial Activity i.e. Profit and Loss, Budget vs Actual) are compiled through the QuickBooks online software and submitted to CAC and/or the Finance Committee. These reports are also shared with the District Board at their meetings. Bonni Brockway, through H&R Block, continues to provide payroll and tax services to the camp. Beverly Wengerd is the Financial Secretary for the camp and records deposits and bills in QB for the camp, Andrew Kauffman (Camp Executive Director) reviews and approves bills and sends vouchers to me electronically, which I then pay.

The camp finances this year have been much more solvent, cash flow has been more constant year-round. As you can see, even without the gift from Lake Breeze designated from District Board, the camp was actually in the black for 2025. How exciting!

Some large projects have been able to take place as well, and there are now funds in the Eder Investment account. These will help cover the cost of replacing the freezer, but since they are gaining money and haven't been needed to cover operating expenses and bills for the freezer, we have opted to leave them in the Eder account for now.

I serve the camp from the District office, usually working on Tuesday. If you have any questions about the financial reports, please do not hesitate to reach out. My contact information is listed below.

Lisa Snyder
Treasurer
Inspiration Hills Camp
lisa@nohcob.org
567.203.9739

Statement of Financial Position Comparison

Inspiration Hills Camp

As of December 31, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL	
	AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2025	AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2024 (PY)
Assets		
Current Assets		
Bank Accounts		
1100 Petty Cash	100.00	100.00
1160 Checking Acct - Farmers State	96,215.42	58,504.56
1170 Savings Acct - Farmers State	4,445.23	4,444.76
Total for Bank Accounts	\$100,760.65	\$63,049.32
Accounts Receivable		
1190 Accounts Receivable (A/R)	0.00	0.00
Total for Accounts Receivable	\$0.00	\$0.00
Other Current Assets		
1180 Investments - Eder Financial	36,687.48	2,861.16
Total for Other Current Assets	\$36,687.48	\$2,861.16
Total for Current Assets	\$137,448.13	\$65,910.48
Fixed Assets		
Other Assets		
Total for Assets	\$137,448.13	\$65,910.48
Liabilities and Equity		
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accounts Payable		
2100 Accounts Payable (A/P)	810.67	18,376.62
Total for Accounts Payable	\$810.67	\$18,376.62
Credit Cards		
Other Current Liabilities		
2200 Sales Tax Payable	0.00	0.00
2250 Pension Plan Withheld	50.87	0.12
2260 Insurance Withheld	125.04	133.50
2300 Loan Payable - NOHCOB	0.00	0.00
Total for Other Current Liabilities	\$175.91	\$133.62
Total for Current Liabilities	\$986.58	\$18,510.24
Long-term Liabilities		
Total for Liabilities	\$986.58	\$18,510.24
Equity		
3200 Retained Earnings	22,531.29	-18,231.76
Net Income	89,061.31	40,763.05
3100 Net Equity	24,868.95	24,868.95
Total for Equity	\$136,461.55	\$47,400.24
Total for Liabilities and Equity	\$137,448.13	\$65,910.48

Inspiration Hills Camp

Budget vs. Actuals: Budget_FY25_P&L - FY25 P&L

January - December 2025

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Revenue				
4100 Rental and Retreat Income	105,725.74	100,000.00	5,725.74	105.73 %
4150 Food Service Income - Rentals	68,811.50	81,000.00	-12,188.50	84.95 %
4160 Youth Retreats	1,260.00	22,575.00	-21,315.00	5.58 %
Total 4100 Rental and Retreat Income	175,797.24	203,575.00	-27,777.76	86.36 %
4300 Summer Camp	21,705.00	45,000.00	-23,295.00	48.23 %
5110 Contributions				
5120 Individual Contributions	25,083.84	25,000.00	83.84	100.34 %
5124 Hottle Fund Transfer	38,049.40	38,000.00	49.40	100.13 %
5125 Church Allocations	37,480.90	35,000.00	2,480.90	107.09 %
5130 Scholarship Income		3,500.00	-3,500.00	
Total 5110 Contributions	100,614.14	101,500.00	-885.86	99.13 %
5200 Fundraiser Income				
5201 Fall Festival	5,285.29	12,000.00	-6,714.71	44.04 %
5202 Other Fundraising	115.00	100.00	15.00	115.00 %
Total 5200 Fundraiser Income	5,400.29	12,100.00	-6,699.71	44.63 %
5300 Camp Store Revenue	1,288.18	3,000.00	-1,711.82	42.94 %
5400 Miscellaneous Income	67,769.40		67,769.40	
5500 Gas Well Revenue	551.77	3,500.00	-2,948.23	15.76 %
Total Revenue	\$373,126.02	\$368,675.00	\$4,451.02	101.21 %
GROSS PROFIT	\$373,126.02	\$368,675.00	\$4,451.02	101.21 %
Expenditures				
6000 Salary and Wages				
6100 Executive Director				
6110 Salary - Executive Director	49,800.00	45,800.00	4,000.00	108.73 %
6120 Payroll Taxes- Executive Director	3,749.52	3,664.00	85.52	102.33 %
6130 Workers' Compensation- Executive Director	162.00	137.40	24.60	117.90 %
6140 Medical Insurance- Executive Director		4,000.00	-4,000.00	
6150 HSA- Executive Director		0.00	0.00	
6160 Pension Plan- Executive Director	7,296.00	6,688.00	608.00	109.09 %
6180 Other Expenses- Executive Director		608.00	-608.00	
Total 6100 Executive Director	61,007.52	60,897.40	110.12	100.18 %
6200 Facility Manager				
6210 Salary-Facility Manager	37,785.00	37,500.00	285.00	100.76 %
6220 Payroll Taxes- Facility Manager	2,860.18	3,600.00	-739.82	79.45 %
6230 Workers' Compensation- Facility Manager	1,063.36	1,125.00	-61.64	94.52 %
6240 Medical Insurance- Facility Manager		7,500.00	-7,500.00	
6250 HSA- Facility Manager		0.00	0.00	
6260 Pension Plan- Facility Manager	2,136.00	2,250.00	-114.00	94.93 %
Total 6200 Facility Manager	43,844.54	51,975.00	-8,130.46	84.36 %
6300 Director of Program and Operations				
6310 Salary - Director of Program and Operations	4,900.00	17,800.00	-12,900.00	27.53 %

Inspiration Hills Camp

Budget vs. Actuals: Budget_FY25_P&L - FY25 P&L

January - December 2025

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
6320 Payroll Taxes-Director of P&O	374.85	1,584.00	-1,209.15	23.66 %
6330 Workers' Compensation- Director of P&O	355.07	71.20	283.87	498.69 %
6340 Medical Insurance- Director of P&O		2,000.00	-2,000.00	
6360 Pension Plan- Director of P&O		1,068.00	-1,068.00	
6370 Travel Reimbursement- Director of P&O		1,500.00	-1,500.00	
6380 Other expense-Director of P&O		25.00	-25.00	
Total 6300 Director of Program and Operations	5,629.92	24,048.20	-18,418.28	23.41 %
6400 Kitchen Coordinator				
6410 Salary - Kitchen Coordinator	31,350.00	35,600.00	-4,250.00	88.06 %
6420 Payroll Taxes- Kitchen Coordinator	2,380.03	3,168.00	-787.97	75.13 %
6430 Workers' Compensation- Kitchen Coordinator	786.02	142.40	643.62	551.98 %
6440 Medical Insurance- Kitchen Coordinator		4,000.00	-4,000.00	
6450 HSA- Kitchen Coordinator		0.00	0.00	
6460 Pension Plan- Kitchen Coordinator	1,768.16	2,136.00	-367.84	82.78 %
Total 6400 Kitchen Coordinator	36,284.21	45,046.40	-8,762.19	80.55 %
6600 Kitchen Staff				
6610 Wages - Kitchen	7,109.25	15,000.00	-7,890.75	47.40 %
6620 Payroll Taxes- Kitchen	518.67	1,368.00	-849.33	37.91 %
6630 Workers' Compensation -Kitchen	124.83	400.00	-275.17	31.21 %
Total 6600 Kitchen Staff	7,752.75	16,768.00	-9,015.25	46.24 %
6700 Maintenance Staff				
6710 Wages - Maintenance	26.25	2,000.00	-1,973.75	1.31 %
6720 Payroll Taxes- Maintenance		152.00	-152.00	
6730 Workers' Compensation -Maintenance	19.08	100.00	-80.92	19.08 %
Total 6700 Maintenance Staff	45.33	2,252.00	-2,206.67	2.01 %
6800 Program Staff				
6810 Wages - Program		4,150.00	-4,150.00	
Total 6800 Program Staff		4,150.00	-4,150.00	
6900 Summer Staff				
6910 Wages - Summer staff	9,666.00	20,000.00	-10,334.00	48.33 %
6920 Payroll Taxes - Summer staff	655.93	1,520.00	-864.07	43.15 %
6930 Workers' Compensation- Summer Staff	60.64	500.00	-439.36	12.13 %
6940 Orientation expenses - Summer Staff		0.00	0.00	
6950 Training/other expense- Summer Staff	543.15	500.00	43.15	108.63 %
6960 Summer Staff Stipends		0.00	0.00	
Total 6900 Summer Staff	10,925.72	22,520.00	-11,594.28	48.52 %
Total 6000 Salary and Wages	165,489.99	227,657.00	-62,167.01	72.69 %
7000 Operating Expenses				
7100 Professional Services				
7105 Financial Service Fees	3,980.00	5,000.00	-1,020.00	79.60 %
7120 Licenses	1,503.00	2,000.00	-497.00	75.15 %
7130 Insurance - Fire & Liability	17,822.74	17,000.00	822.74	104.84 %

Inspiration Hills Camp

Budget vs. Actuals: Budget_FY25_P&L - FY25 P&L

January - December 2025

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
7140 Legal Fees		0.00	0.00	
7150 Association Fees	1,453.68	2,000.00	-546.32	72.68 %
7170 WWTP Monitoring	1,800.00	1,800.00	0.00	100.00 %
7180 Real Estate Taxes	373.22	320.00	53.22	116.63 %
Total 7100 Professional Services	26,932.64	28,120.00	-1,187.36	95.78 %
7210 Summer Registration	2,643.17	10,000.00	-7,356.83	26.43 %
7220 Marketing	4,398.83	6,000.00	-1,601.17	73.31 %
7230 Office Supplies & Equipment	2,036.70	1,200.00	836.70	169.73 %
7240 Postage	2,183.32	2,500.00	-316.68	87.33 %
7250 Camp Store Goods	1,997.23	2,000.00	-2.77	99.86 %
7300 Food Purchases				
7310 Food Purchases - Retreats	23,893.70	20,000.00	3,893.70	119.47 %
7320 Food Purchases - Summer Camp	9,564.65	15,000.00	-5,435.35	63.76 %
7330 Food Purchases - Volunteers	733.59	1,400.00	-666.41	52.40 %
Total 7300 Food Purchases	34,191.94	36,400.00	-2,208.06	93.93 %
7400 Supplies				
7410 Outreach Expenses		0.00	0.00	
7420 Misc Fundraiser Expenses		0.00	0.00	
7430 Facilities Supplies	6,083.35	7,000.00	-916.65	86.91 %
7440 Program Supplies	442.91	500.00	-57.09	88.58 %
7450 Medical Supplies	106.92	200.00	-93.08	53.46 %
7460 Craft Supplies	169.46	100.00	69.46	169.46 %
7470 Recreation Equipment	126.51	500.00	-373.49	25.30 %
7480 Miscellaneous Expenses	289.20	300.00	-10.80	96.40 %
7490 Kitchen Supplies	4,568.60	4,500.00	68.60	101.52 %
Total 7400 Supplies	11,786.95	13,100.00	-1,313.05	89.98 %
Total 7000 Operating Expenses	86,170.78	99,320.00	-13,149.22	86.76 %
8100 Utilities				
8110 Telephone & Internet	1,813.08	2,000.00	-186.92	90.65 %
8120 Electricity	21,105.00	18,500.00	2,605.00	114.08 %
8130 LP Gas & Natural Gas	16,023.69	15,000.00	1,023.69	106.82 %
8140 Trash Removal	1,334.10	2,000.00	-665.90	66.71 %
8150 Gasoline & Diesel	1,150.67	3,000.00	-1,849.33	38.36 %
8160 Gravel	1,115.55	3,000.00	-1,884.45	37.19 %
8170 WWTP Testing	2,198.24	2,500.00	-301.76	87.93 %
Total 8100 Utilities	44,740.33	46,000.00	-1,259.67	97.26 %
8200 Maintenance	432.67	3,500.00	-3,067.33	12.36 %
8300 Repairs	1,913.27	13,000.00	-11,086.73	14.72 %
8400 Annual Inspections	1,543.23	900.00	643.23	171.47 %
8500 Small Tools & Equipment	273.97	500.00	-226.03	54.79 %
8600 Grounds & Conservation		200.00	-200.00	
8700 Pest Control	1,620.00	2,500.00	-880.00	64.80 %

Inspiration Hills Camp

Budget vs. Actuals: Budget_FY25_P&L - FY25 P&L

January - December 2025

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Total Expenditures	\$302,184.24	\$393,577.00	\$ -91,392.76	76.78 %
NET OPERATING REVENUE	\$70,941.78	\$ -24,902.00	\$95,843.78	-284.88 %
Other Revenue				
9000 Other Income				
9100 Interest Received	413.54		413.54	
9200 Market Value Fluctuation	616.43		616.43	
9400 Forgiven Loans	17,292.74		17,292.74	
Total 9000 Other Income	18,322.71		18,322.71	
Total Other Revenue	\$18,322.71	\$0.00	\$18,322.71	0.00%
Other Expenditures				
9500 Other Expenses				
9501 Admin fees Eder Financial	203.18		203.18	
Total 9500 Other Expenses	203.18		203.18	
Total Other Expenditures	\$203.18	\$0.00	\$203.18	0.00%
NET OTHER REVENUE	\$18,119.53	\$0.00	\$18,119.53	0.00%
NET REVENUE	\$89,061.31	\$ -24,902.00	\$113,963.31	-357.65 %

CAMP INSPIRATION HILLS

Income vs. Expenses

EXPENSES

	2023	2024	2025	2025	
	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	
EXPENSES					
Executive Director	75,417.69	62,182.97	61,007.52	60,897.40	
Facility Manager	56,777.42	50,217.84	43,844.54	51,975.00	
Director of Program and Operations	43,531.97	571.49	5,629.92	24,048.20	
Kitchen Staff	16,238.62	39,321.64	44,036.96	61,814.40	#see below
Maintenance Staff	3,491.77	1,315.12	45.33	2,252.00	
Program Staff	45.00	0.00	0.00	4,150.00	
Summer Staff	15,312.18	7,819.56	10,925.72	22,520.00	
Operating Expenses	79,750.07	99,886.46	86,170.78	99,320.00	
Utilities	51,645.40	39,194.11	44,740.33	46,000.00	
Maintenance and Grounds	12,972.56	7,631.55	5,783.14	20,600.00	
Total Expenses	355,182.68	308,140.74	302,184.24	393,577.00	
Income					
Rental Income	90,750.38	129,676.39	175,797.24	203,575.00	
Summer Camp	33,286.20	27,951.00	21,705.00	45,000.00	
Individual Contributions	25,818.06	21,328.32	25,083.84	25,000.00	
Hottle Fund	44,035.24	41,187.20	38,049.40	38,000.00	
Church Contributions	42,223.86	39,578.98	37,480.90	35,000.00	
Fundraiser Income	8,896.38	16,104.00	5,400.29	12,100.00	
Scholarship Income		875.00	0.00	3,500.00	
Camp Store	2,330.77	1,405.11	1,288.18	3,000.00	
Misc. Income	1,871.99	1,950.98	67,769.40*	0.00	66,000/Lake Breeze
Gas Well	4,049.56	2,614.96	551.77	3,500.00	
Timber	1,270.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Subtotal	254,532.44	282,671.94	373,126.02	368,675.00	
Emergency Loan	70,000.00	50,000.00	0.00		
Total Income	324,532.44	332,671.94	373,126.02	368,675.00	
Income minus expense (before loan)	-100,650.24	-25,468.80	70,941.78	-24,902.00	

this doesn't include interest, market fluctuation, admin fees, capital improvement expenses, late fee or penalties)

this doesn't include capital improvement donations given in 2023 for Pine lodge 26, 641.19, or capital improvement expenses 29, 262.46)

#combined kitchen coordinator, staff and office for 2024

2/1/2026

Inspiration Hills Camp Proposed Budget 2027

	Actual 2025	Budget 2026	Budget 2027	Change from 2026 Budget	Change from 2025 Actual
Earned Revenue					
41000 Rental Income				\$ -	\$ -
41100 Off-Season Retreats - Lodging	\$ 52,409.49	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 55,000.00	\$ (45,000.00)	\$ 2,590.51
41110 Off-Season Retreats - Food	\$ 21,035.00	\$ 81,000.00	\$ 26,000.00	\$ (55,000.00)	\$ 4,965.00
41110 Off-Season Retreats - Programming			\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
41200 Rental Camps - Lodging	\$ 51,922.50		\$ 55,000.00	\$ 55,000.00	\$ 3,077.50
41210 Rental Camps - Food	\$ 47,776.50		\$ 49,000.00	\$ 49,000.00	\$ 1,223.50
41220 Rental Camps - Programming	\$ 1,393.75		\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 106.25
41300 Outdoor Education - Lodging			\$ 5,250.00	\$ 5,250.00	\$ 5,250.00
41310 Outdoor Education - Food			\$ 4,725.00	\$ 4,725.00	\$ 4,725.00
41320 Outdoor Education - Programming			\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00
Total 41000 Rental Income	\$ 174,537.24	\$ 181,000.00	\$ 198,175.00	\$ 17,175.00	\$ 23,637.76
42000 Self-Hosted Programs					
42100 Summer Camp	\$ 14,500.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ (15,000.00)	\$ 500.00
42110 Summer Camp - Food	\$ 7,205.00		\$ 8,000.00	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 795.00
42200 Day Camp			\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
42210 Day Camp - Food			\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
42300 Programmed Retreats	\$ 980.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ (2,000.00)	\$ 1,020.00
42310 Programmed Retreats - Food	\$ 280.00		\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 220.00
Total 42000 Self-Hosted Programs Income	\$ 22,965.00	\$ 34,000.00	\$ 32,000.00	\$ (2,000.00)	\$ 9,035.00
Other Earned Income					
46100 Camp Store	\$ 1,288.18	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,711.82
47000 Interest Income	\$ 413.54			\$ -	\$ (413.54)
48000 Unrealized Gain/Loss (Market Value Fluct.)	\$ 616.43			\$ -	\$ (616.43)
49000 Miscellaneous Revenue	\$ 67,769.40			\$ -	\$ (67,769.40)
49100 Gas Well Revenue	\$ 551.77	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 550.00	\$ (1,950.00)	\$ (1.77)
49200 Timber Revenue			\$ 40,000.00	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 40,000.00
Total Other Earned Income	\$ 70,639.32	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 43,550.00	\$ 38,050.00	\$ (27,089.32)
Total 40000 Earned Revenue	\$ 268,141.56	\$ 220,500.00	\$ 273,725.00	\$ 53,225.00	\$ 5,583.44
50000 Contributed Support					
55551 Church Allocations	\$ 37,480.90	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 34,500.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ (2,980.90)
55552 District Contribution				\$ -	\$ -
55553 Hottle Fund	\$ 38,049.40	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 31,320.00	\$ (4,680.00)	\$ (6,729.40)
56100 Individual Contributions	\$ 25,083.84	\$ 22,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ (83.84)
56400 Scholarship Income		\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ -	\$ 2,500.00
58100 Fall Festival	\$ 5,285.29	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ 4,714.71
58200 Other Fundraising	\$ 115.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ -	\$ 4,885.00
Total 5110 Contributions	\$ 106,014.43	\$ 105,500.00	\$ 108,320.00	\$ 2,820.00	\$ 2,305.57
59000 Net Assets Released from Restriction				\$ -	\$ -
Total Revenue	\$ 374,155.99	\$ 326,000.00	\$ 382,045.00	\$ 56,045.00	\$ 7,889.01
Expenditures					
60000 Operating Expenses - Personnel					
61100 Executive Director					
61110 Salary - Executive Director	\$ 49,800.00	\$ 45,800.00	\$ 47,632.00	\$ 1,832.00	\$ (2,168.00)
61120 Payroll Taxes - Executive Director	\$ 3,749.52	\$ 3,664.00	\$ 3,811.00	\$ 147.00	\$ 61.48
61135 Workers' Compensation - Executive Director	\$ 162.00	\$ 137.00	\$ 1,270.00	\$ 1,133.00	\$ 1,108.00
61150 Medical Insurance - Executive Director		\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 4,500.00
61170 Pension Plan - Executive Director	\$ 7,296.00	\$ 6,688.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 812.00	\$ 204.00
61180 Professional Development - Executive Director			\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250.00
61190 Other Expenses - Executive Director		\$ 500.00		\$ (500.00)	\$ -
Total 61100 Executive Director	\$ 61,007.52	\$ 60,789.00	\$ 65,963.00	\$ 5,174.00	\$ 4,955.48

	Actual 2025	Budget 2026	Budget 2027	Change from 2026 Budget	Change from 2025 Actual
62100 Facility Manager					
62110 Salary - Facility Manager	\$ 37,785.00	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 37,500.00	\$ (2,500.00)	\$ (285.00)
62120 Payroll Taxes - Facility Manager	\$ 2,860.18	\$ 3,560.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ (560.00)	\$ 139.82
62135 Workers' Compensation - Facility Manager	\$ 1,063.36	\$ 1,125.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ (125.00)	\$ (63.36)
62150 Medical Insurance - Facility Manager		\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 4,500.00
62170 Pension Plan - Facility Manager	\$ 2,136.00	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 2,496.00	\$ 96.00	\$ 360.00
62180 Professional Development - Facility Manager		\$ 350.00	\$ 350.00	\$ -	\$ 350.00
62190 Other Expenses - Facility Manager				\$ -	\$ -
Total 62000 Facility Manager	\$ 43,844.54	\$ 51,435.00	\$ 48,846.00	\$ (2,589.00)	\$ 5,001.46
62400 Part-Time Facility Staff					
62410 Wages - Facility Staff	\$ 26.25	\$ 1,355.43	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 8,644.57	\$ 9,973.75
62420 Payroll Taxes - Facility Staff		\$ 108.43	\$ 800.00	\$ 691.57	\$ 800.00
64435 Workers' Compensation - Facility Staff	\$ 19.08	\$ 36.14	\$ 267.00	\$ 230.86	\$ 247.92
62480 Professional Development - Facility Staff				\$ -	\$ -
62490 Other Expenses - Facility Staff				\$ -	\$ -
Total 62400 Part-Time Facility Staff	\$ 45.33	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 11,067.00	\$ 9,567.00	\$ 11,021.67
Total 62000 Facility Staff	\$ 43,889.87	\$ 52,935.00	\$ 59,913.00	\$ 6,978.00	\$ 16,023.13
63100 Food Service Manager					
63110 Salary - Food Service Manager	\$ 31,350.00	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 37,500.00	\$ (2,500.00)	\$ 6,150.00
63120 Payroll Taxes - Food Service Manager	\$ 2,380.03	\$ 3,560.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ (560.00)	\$ 619.97
63135 Workers' Compensation - Food Service Manager	\$ 786.02	\$ 160.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 840.00	\$ 213.98
63150 Medical Insurance - Food Service Manager		\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 4,500.00
63170 Pension Plan - Food Service Manager	\$ 1,768.16	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 2,400.00	\$ -	\$ 631.84
63180 Professional Development - Food Service Manager			\$ 350.00	\$ 350.00	\$ 350.00
63190 Other Expenses - Food Service Manager		\$ 350.00		\$ (350.00)	\$ -
Total 63100 Food Service Manager	\$ 36,284.21	\$ 50,470.00	\$ 48,750.00	\$ (1,720.00)	\$ 12,465.79
63300 Kitchen Staff - Off-Season Retreats					
63310 Wages - Kitchen Staff - Off Season Retreats			\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
63320 Payroll Taxes - Kitchen Staff - Off Season Retreats			\$ 16.00	\$ 16.00	\$ 16.00
63335 Workers' Compensation - Kitchen Staff - Off Season Retreats			\$ 5.00	\$ 5.00	\$ 5.00
63380 Professional Development - Kitchen Staff - Off Season Retreats				\$ -	\$ -
63390 Other Expenses - Kitchen Staff - Off Season Retreats				\$ -	\$ -
Total 63300 Kitchen Staff - Off-Season Retreats	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 221.00	\$ 221.00	\$ 221.00
63400 Kitchen Staff - Rental Camps					
63410 Wages - Kitchen Staff - Rental Camps			\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
63420 Payroll Taxes - Kitchen Staff - Rental Camps			\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00
63435 Workers' Compensation - Kitchen Staff - Rental Camps			\$ 133.00	\$ 133.00	\$ 133.00
63480 Professional Development - Kitchen Staff - Rental Camps				\$ -	\$ -
63490 Other Expenses - Kitchen Staff - Rental Camps				\$ -	\$ -
Total 63400 Kitchen Staff - Rental Camps	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,533.00	\$ 5,533.00	\$ 5,533.00
63500 Kitchen Staff - Outdoor Education					
63510 Wages - Kitchen Staff - Outdoor Education			\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
63520 Payroll Taxes - Kitchen Staff - Outdoor Education			\$ 48.00	\$ 48.00	\$ 48.00
63535 Workers' Compensation - Kitchen Staff - Outdoor Education			\$ 16.00	\$ 16.00	\$ 16.00
63580 Professional Development - Kitchen Staff - Outdoor Education				\$ -	\$ -
63590 Other Expenses - Kitchen Staff - Outdoor Education				\$ -	\$ -
Total 63500 Kitchen Staff - Outdoor Education	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 664.00	\$ 664.00	\$ 664.00
63600 Kitchen Staff - Self-Hosted Summer Camp					
63610 Wages - Kitchen Staff - Summer Camp	\$ 7,109.25	\$ 9,036.20	\$ 5,000.00	\$ (4,036.20)	\$ (2,109.25)
63620 Payroll Taxes - Kitchen Staff - Summer Camp	\$ 518.68	\$ 722.90	\$ 400.00	\$ (322.90)	\$ (118.68)
63635 Workers' Compensation Kitchen Staff - Summer Camp	\$ 124.83	\$ 240.91	\$ 133.00	\$ (107.91)	\$ 8.17
63680 Professional Development - Kitchen Staff - Summer Camp				\$ -	\$ -
63690 Other Expenses - Kitchen Staff - Summer Camp				\$ -	\$ -
Total 63600 Kitchen Staff - Summer Camp	\$ 7,752.76	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 5,533.00	\$ (4,467.00)	\$ (2,219.76)

	Actual 2025	Budget 2026	Budget 2027	Change from 2026 Budget	Change from 2025 Actual
63700 Kitchen Staff - Day Camp					
63710 Wages - Kitchen Staff - Day Camp			\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00
63720 Payroll Taxes - Kitchen Staff - Day Camp			\$ 32.00	\$ 32.00	\$ 32.00
63735 Workers' Compensation - Kitchen Staff - Day Camp			\$ 11.00	\$ 11.00	\$ 11.00
63780 Professional Development - Kitchen Staff - Day Camp				\$ -	\$ -
63790 Other Expenses - Kitchen Staff - Day Camp				\$ -	\$ -
Total 63700 Kitchen Staff - Day Camp	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 443.00	\$ 443.00	\$ 443.00
63800 Kitchen Staff - Programmed Retreats					
63810 Wages - Kitchen Staff - Programmed Retreats			\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
63820 Payroll Taxes - Kitchen Staff - Programmed Retreats			\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
63835 Workers' Compensation - Kitchen Staff - Programmed Retreats			\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
63880 Professional Development - Kitchen Staff - Programmed Retreats				\$ -	\$ -
63890 Other Expenses - Kitchen Staff - Programmed Retreats				\$ -	\$ -
Total 63800 Kitchen Staff - Programmed Retreats	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Hourly Kitchen Staff	\$ 7,752.76	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 12,394.00	\$ 2,394.00	\$ 4,641.24
Total 63000 Kitchen Staff	\$ 44,036.97	\$ 60,470.00	\$ 61,144.00	\$ 674.00	\$ 17,107.03
64100 Program Manager					
64110 Salary - Program Manager	\$ 4,900.00	\$ 5,873.53	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 6,126.47	\$ 7,100.00
64120 Payroll Taxes - Program Manager	\$ 374.85	\$ 469.88	\$ 960.00	\$ 490.12	\$ 585.15
64135 Workers' Compensation - Program Manager	\$ 355.07	\$ 156.59	\$ 320.00	\$ 163.41	\$ (35.07)
64150 Medical Insurance - Program Manager				\$ -	\$ -
64170 Pension Plan - Program Manager				\$ -	\$ -
64180 Professional Development - Program Manager				\$ -	\$ -
64190 Other Expenses - Program Manager				\$ -	\$ -
Total 64100 Program Manager	\$ 5,629.92	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 13,280.00	\$ 6,780.00	\$ 7,650.08
64300 Self-Hosted Summer Staff					
64310 Wages - Summer Staff	\$ 9,666.00	\$ 19,457.01	\$ 9,000.00	\$ (10,457.01)	\$ (666.00)
64320 Payroll Taxes - Summer Staff	\$ 655.93	\$ 1,556.56	\$ 720.00	\$ (836.56)	\$ 64.07
64335 Workers' Compensation - Summer Staff	\$ 60.64	\$ 486.43	\$ 225.00	\$ (261.43)	\$ 164.36
64380 Professional Development - Summer Staff	\$ 543.15	\$ 500.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 206.85
63390 Other Expenses - Summer Staff				\$ -	\$ -
Total 64300 Summer Staff	\$ 10,925.72	\$ 22,000.00	\$ 10,695.00	\$ (11,305.00)	\$ (230.72)
64400 Day Camp Staff					
64410 Wages - Day Camp Staff			\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
64420 Payroll Taxes - Day Camp Staff			\$ 320.00	\$ 320.00	\$ 320.00
64435 Workers' Compensation - Day Camp Staff			\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
64480 Professional Development - Day Camp Staff				\$ -	\$ -
64490 Other Expenses - Day Camp Staff				\$ -	\$ -
Total 64400 Day Camp Staff	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 4,420.00	\$ 4,420.00	\$ 4,420.00
64500 Programmed Retreat Staff					
64510 Wages - Programmed Retreat Staff			\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00
64520 Payroll Taxes - Programmed Retreat Staff			\$ 64.00	\$ 64.00	\$ 64.00
64535 Workers' Compensation - Programmed Retreat Staff			\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00
64580 Professional Development - Programmed Retreat Staff				\$ -	\$ -
64590 Other Expenses - Programmed Retreat Staff				\$ -	\$ -
Total 64500 Programmed Retreat Staff	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 884.00	\$ 884.00	\$ 884.00
64600 Outdoor Education Staff					
64610 Wages - Outdoor Education Staff			\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
64620 Payroll Taxes - Outdoor Education Staff			\$ 160.00	\$ 160.00	\$ 160.00
64635 Workers' Compensation - Outdoor Education Staff			\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
64680 Professional Development - Outdoor Education Staff				\$ -	\$ -
64690 Other Expenses - Outdoor Education Staff				\$ -	\$ -
Total 64600 Outdoor Education Staff	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,210.00	\$ 2,210.00	\$ 2,210.00

	Actual 2025	Budget 2026	Budget 2027	Change from 2026 Budget	Change from 2025 Actual
64700 Rental Camp Staff					
64710 Wages - Rental Camp Staff			\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00
64720 Payroll Taxes - Rental Camp Staff			\$ 720.00	\$ 720.00	\$ 720.00
64735 Workers' Compensation - Rental Camp Staff			\$ 225.00	\$ 225.00	\$ 225.00
64780 Professional Development - Rental Camp Staff				\$ -	\$ -
64790 Other Expenses - Rental Camp Staff				\$ -	\$ -
Total 64700 Rental Camp Staff	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,945.00	\$ 9,945.00	\$ 9,945.00
Total 64000 Program Staff	\$ 16,555.64	\$ 28,500.00	\$ 41,434.00	\$ 12,934.00	\$ 24,878.36
Total 60000 Operating Expenses - Personnel	\$ 165,490.00	\$ 202,694.00	\$ 228,454.00	\$ 25,760.00	\$ 62,964.00
Operating Expenses - Non-Personnel					
65000 Contractors & Professional Fees					
66000 Program Consultants				\$ -	\$ -
67100 Accounting Services	\$ 3,980.00	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 1,800.00	\$ (2,400.00)	\$ (2,180.00)
67110 Treasurer Fees			\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
67120 Audit				\$ -	\$ -
67810 WWTP Monitoring	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 1,800.00	\$ -	\$ -
Total 65000 Contractors & Professional Fees	\$ 5,780.00	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,600.00	\$ 600.00	\$ 820.00
71000 Business & Organizational					
71100 Marketing	\$ 4,398.83	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ (1,500.00)	\$ 101.17
71120 Background Checks / Wanted Ads			\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00
71300 Bank Fees / Bad Debt	\$ 203.18			\$ -	\$ (203.18)
71350 Credit Card / Merchant Fees			\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
71400 Dues & Memberships	\$ 1,453.68	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 3,400.00	\$ 3,046.32
71500 Insurance	\$ 17,822.74	\$ 18,500.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 2,177.26
71650 Watershed/Real Estate Tax	\$ 373.22	\$ 320.00	\$ 350.00	\$ 30.00	\$ (23.22)
71655 Sales Tax				\$ -	\$ -
71700 Licenses & Registrations	\$ 1,503.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 2,250.00	\$ (1,750.00)	\$ 747.00
71850 Penalties & Fines				\$ -	\$ -
71900 Board Training				\$ -	\$ -
Total 71000 Business & Organizational	\$ 25,754.65	\$ 29,920.00	\$ 32,500.00	\$ 2,580.00	\$ 6,745.35
72000 Office & Miscellaneous Expenses					
72100 Board/Staff Appreciation			\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
72200 Miscellaneous Expenses	\$ 289.20	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 500.00	\$ (500.00)	\$ 210.80
72300 Postage & Delivery	\$ 2,183.32	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	\$ -	\$ 316.68
72400 Printing & Reproduction			\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
72500 Reference & Subscriptions				\$ -	\$ -
72600 Office Supplies	\$ 2,036.70	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ (1,000.00)	\$ (1,036.70)
72700 Technology Licenses			\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00
72750 Telephone & Internet	\$ 1,813.08	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -	\$ 186.92
72800 Web Hosting			\$ 40.00	\$ 40.00	\$ 40.00
Total 72000 Office & Miscellaneous Expenses	\$ 6,322.30	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 8,340.00	\$ 840.00	\$ 2,017.70
73000 Kitchen					
73100 Food Purchases					
73110 Off-Season Rental Retreats	\$ 23,893.70	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 9,300.00	\$ (10,700.00)	\$ (14,593.70)
73120 Rental Camps			\$ 17,700.00	\$ 17,700.00	\$ 17,700.00
73130 Volunteers	\$ 733.59	\$ 750.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 266.41
73140 Outdoor Education			\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
73150 Summer Camp	\$ 9,564.65	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ (7,000.00)	\$ (6,564.65)
73160 Day Camp			\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
73170 Programmed Retreats			\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
73200 Kitchen Supplies	\$ 4,568.60	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -	\$ (1,568.60)
Total 73000 Kitchen	\$ 38,760.54	\$ 33,750.00	\$ 37,900.00	\$ 4,150.00	\$ (860.54)

	Actual 2025	Budget 2026	Budget 2027	Change from 2026 Budget	Change from 2025 Actual
74000 Program					
74100 Summer Camp Supplies	\$ 738.88	\$ 2,750.00	\$ 800.00	\$ (1,950.00)	\$ 61.12
74120 Summer Camp Scholarship Awards			\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00
74150 Summer Camp Registration	\$ 2,643.17	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 300.00	\$ (700.00)	\$ (2,343.17)
74200 Outdoor Education Supplies			\$ 801.00	\$ 801.00	\$ 801.00
74300 Day Camp Supplies			\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00
74320 Day Camp Scholarship Awards			\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00
74400 Retreat Supplies				\$ -	\$ -
74500 Medical Supplies	\$ 106.92	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ -	\$ 143.08
74600 Fall Festival Supplies			\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Total 74000 Program	\$ 3,488.97	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 5,301.00	\$ 1,301.00	\$ 1,812.03
75000 Occupancy					
75450 Utilities					
75451 Electricity	\$ 21,105.00	\$ 18,500.00	\$ 21,500.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 395.00
75452 LP Gas & Natural Gas	\$ 16,023.69	\$ 12,000.00	\$ 16,250.00	\$ 4,250.00	\$ 226.31
75453 Trash Removal	\$ 1,334.10	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ -	\$ 165.90
75454 WWTP Testing	\$ 2,198.24	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 2,300.00	\$ (1,200.00)	\$ 101.76
75455 Pest Control	\$ 1,620.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 1,800.00	\$ (1,200.00)	\$ 180.00
Total 75000 Occupancy	\$ 42,281.03	\$ 38,500.00	\$ 43,350.00	\$ 4,850.00	\$ 1,068.97
76000 Facilities					
76100 Gasoline & Diesel	\$ 1,150.67	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ (750.00)	\$ 99.33
76200 Facility Supplies	\$ 6,083.35	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,200.00	\$ (300.00)	\$ 116.65
76300 Equipment Maintenance & Repairs	\$ 432.67	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ (2,000.00)	\$ 2,567.33
76400 Annual Inspections	\$ 1,543.23	\$ 500.00	\$ 1,750.00	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 206.77
76500 Small Tools & Equipment	\$ 273.97	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00	\$ -	\$ 26.03
76600 Buildings Maintenance & Repairs	\$ 1,913.27	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ (1,000.00)	\$ 2,086.73
76700 Grounds & Conservation	\$ 1,115.55	\$ 250.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 750.00	\$ (115.55)
Total 76000 Facilities	\$ 12,512.71	\$ 19,550.00	\$ 17,500.00	\$ (2,050.00)	\$ 4,987.29
77000 Travel, Parking, Accommodations					
77200 Mileage, Local Travel, Parking			0.00	\$ -	\$ -
77900 Vehicle Rental			0.00	\$ -	\$ -
Total 77000 Travel, Parking, Accommodations	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
78000 Camp Store					
78100 Camp Store Goods	\$ 1,997.23	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ (1,000.00)	\$ 2.77
78200 Camp Store Supplies			\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
Total 78000 Camp Store	\$ 1,997.23	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 2,100.00	\$ (900.00)	\$ 102.77
Total 70000 Operating Expenses - Non-Personnel	\$ 136,897.43	\$ 142,220.00	\$ 153,591.00	\$ 11,371.00	\$ 16,693.57
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 302,387.43	\$ 344,914.00	\$ 382,045.00	\$ 37,131.00	\$ 79,657.57
Net Operating Revenue	\$ 71,768.56	\$ (18,914.00)	\$ -	\$ 18,914.00	\$ (71,768.56)
Net Revenue	\$ 71,768.56	\$ (18,914.00)	\$ -	\$ 18,914.00	\$ (71,768.56)
9400 Forgiven Loans	\$ 17,292.74				

New Business Item #3: Proposed Constitutional Changes

As part of their work, the Strategic Planning Committee made recommendations that require changes to our Constitution and Bylaws. The District Board reviewed these, noted several other areas needing addressed, and is recommending changes in seven areas of the Constitution and Bylaws. The recommended changes in each section are in **red** on the following pages. Copies of the full current Constitution and Bylaws are available on request.

Some of these changes reflect a smaller district with fewer available/ fewer willing to serve in elected positions as we acknowledge the difficulty of filling a ballot or sometimes even a slate for the delegates to act on at District Conference. But all these changes reflect a commitment to continue ministries to our churches, pastors, and individuals within the district through Spirit-led ministries, with a structure that will help us serve well.

Additional rationale is presented in the order that the changes appear in the Constitution and Bylaws, with the green letters corresponding to the proposed changes.

A **Mission Statement.** Upon evaluation of our mission statement, it was determined that only a small change is needed to bring about a substantial difference in meaning that more accurately describes our district's mission. The word "resource" be changed to "connect and support" so that the mission statement reads "The mission of the Northern Ohio District is to **connect and support** congregations, ministers, and individuals in all aspects of Christian life so that we might continue the work of Jesus Christ in our world today - peacefully, simply, together."

Nominating Committee. Recommendations in two of the sections relate to the Nominating Committee.

- B** 1. Instead of the Nominating Committee being led by the moderator-elect, the new structure would have the past moderator chair the Nominating Committee. The moderator-elect will serve as a member of the committee, providing opportunities to learn more about the district and before stepping into the chairperson role. If this passes both Cindy Peel and Paul Bozman, who have served as chairs while moderator-elect, will serve an additional year on the committee in the role of chair as past moderator. They are both willing to do that as we transition to this new model- and we are grateful.
- C** 2. Instead of two representatives elected from each of our district areas (west, central, east), we would reduce the number to one from each area, decreasing the names needed on the ballot for Nominating Committee positions from 2 per year down to one. With the addition of the past moderator on the committee, those serving would go from 7 on the committee down to 5 without compromising their important work. A transition plan has been written to maintain representation from all three district areas as the board goes through the reduction in size.

E District Board Structure. We propose changing the current board structure of 18 voting members, six (6) from each geographic area to a board of ten (10) voting members, three (3) from each geographic area plus one at large number. This will reduce the number of names on the ballot from 6 each year to 3 for the board. We believe that this board size will be able to coordinate our vital ministries within the district, utilizing volunteers in specific areas where they feel called. These are people gifted and passionate about specific ministries but not interested in committing to a three-year term on the official board. A transition plan has been written to maintain representation from all three district areas as the board goes through the reduction in size.

Flexibility in Structure for both the District Board and the Camp Administration Committee (CAC) are addressed in two sections.

- D** 1. Rather than naming specific committees for the Camp Administration Committee, simple changes in the language ensure that all necessary areas are covered while allowing CAC to determine the best way to organize around those areas. This allows for flexibility in how the nine members of CAC are organized without requiring constitutional amendments if needs change.
- F** 2. The District Board has flexibility in the organization and naming of commissions in the current bylaws, as long as they meet the areas outlined for their work. The simple change in wording here (from “around” to “ensure coordination of”) is to provide clarity and consistency with the language that we use for CAC.

G District Board / Board Appointments. Our current bylaws limit those serving in appointed positions to only 2 three-year terms. The only exception is the treasurer who can serve unlimited three-year terms if called. Our recommendation is that terms continue to be three years, but that the limit of two terms is lifted. This allows someone that has a passion for a specific area to continue serving if that calling is evident to both them and the appointing body.

Here are the proposed changes to the Northern Ohio District CoB Constitution and Bylaws recommended by the District Board to District Conference 2026

Article 2 - Purpose of the District

(page 1)

A 18 **Article 2 - Purpose of the District**
19 Grounded in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the purpose of the Northern Ohio District shall be to
20 administer and coordinate the religious and business activities of the Church of the Brethren
21 within the bounds of the District. The District covenants to support faithfully the program of the
22 Church of the Brethren, recognizing Annual Conference enactments of the Church of the
23 Brethren as having governing force in its life and shall remain a member of the Church of the
24 Brethren or its successor. The mission of the Northern Ohio District is to connect and support
25 resource congregations, ministers, and individuals in all aspects of Christian life so that we
26 might continue the work of Jesus Christ in our world today - peacefully, simply, together.
27 The District shall have power to receive and disburse gifts, own and convey real estate and to
28 be trustee of property and of endowment and other funds.

Article 3 District Conference, D. Conference Officers Qualification and Duties

(page 6)

B 238 2. Moderator-Elect - The Moderator-Elect shall:
239 a. Perform the duties of the Moderator in the Moderator's absence or at the Moderator's
240 request and shall become familiar with the program of the District.
241 b. Serve as a member ~~Be chairperson~~ of the Nominating Committee and a member of
242 the District Conference Central Committee.
243 c. As an officer of the District Conference, the Moderator-Elect may represent and
244 report to the District Board, as needed.
245 3. Past-moderator - The Past-Moderator shall:
246 a. Offer guidance to the Moderator and Moderator-Elect for the purpose of continuity
247 between one District Conference and another.
248 b. Serve as chairperson of the Nominating Committee.
249 c. Serve as a member of the District Conference Central Committee.
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District Conference Committees

(page 7)

C 292 G. District Conference Committees
293 1. Nominating Committee
294 a. There shall be a Nominating Committee of ~~seven~~ five members. ~~Three~~ Six members
295 (~~one~~ two from each area) shall be elected by District Conference for one term of
296 three years and shall not be eligible to succeed themselves. The ~~Past~~ Moderator-
297 ~~Elect~~ shall be chairperson of the Committee. The Moderator-elect shall be a member
298 of the committee.
299 b. The term of office for all elected ~~or appointed~~ personnel shall be three years unless
300 otherwise stated in these By-Laws. No one shall be eligible to be elected to more
301 than two terms in succession. A person appointed to serve an unexpired term may
302 still be elected to two terms in succession. Approximately one-third of the
303 membership of the District Board and continuing committees shall be elected in any
304 one year.

e. Camp Committees

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- 2) Committees may be formed by the CAC to ensure coordination of ~~around~~ the following work areas: Program, Maintenance/Development, Finance, and Marketing/Fund Raising.

Article 4 District Board; B. Board organization

(page11)

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B. Board organization

1. There shall be a board consisting of 10 voting ~~18 voting~~ members, three ~~six~~ from each geographic area plus one at-large member. Members should include ~~ing~~ clergy and lay persons. Board members shall be elected by District Conference, three (one from each area) ~~six~~ elected each year for three-year terms. Every third year, an at-large member will also be elected for a three year term. All will serve on Commissions, with the exception of the Board Chair ~~and Secretary~~.

Article 4 District Board; E. Commissions

(page 12)

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E. Commissions

- The Board shall establish and maintain task descriptions for the Commissions it organizes. Commissions may be formed by the Board to ensure coordination of ~~around~~ the following work areas:

Article 4 District Board; F. Board Appointments

(page 14)

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6. All appointed positions will be for a 3-year term unless otherwise indicated in the bylaws. There is no limit to the number of terms; conversation with the appointing body and the appointee should happen prior to each additional term.

Business Item #4: Withdrawing Congregations*

Two congregations in our district have decided to leave the Church of the Brethren. It is with sadness that the Board makes the following recommendations to the District Conference delegates.

Chippewa Church of the Brethren

Changing name with state to Chippewa Church / going independent

Active members 24

Vote: September 28, 2025, 100% yes to withdraw (21 of 21 ballots)

Amount received: \$0

Service of Blessing and Sending at District Conference

- a. The District Board recommends the disorganization of the Chippewa Church of the Brethren.**

Sugarcreek East Church of the Brethren

Changing name with state to Sugarcreek Community Church / going independent

Active Members 13

Vote: April 26, 2026, 100% yes to withdraw (12 of 12 ballots)

Financial settlement received: \$ 3,575

Service of Blessing and Sending held June 18, 2026

- b. The District Board recommends the disorganization of the Sugarcreek East Church of the Brethren.**

** Disorganization is the term the COB uses when closing a congregation. Dissolution is the legal process with the state. Each of these churches above changed their name and articles of incorporation with the state. So, the motion is to disorganize them with the Church of the Brethren, but they remain incorporated in Ohio under their new names.

2026 Standing Committee Report

Annual Conference meets. This report will highlight Standing Committee activities of the past year and then a re-cap of Annual Conference and its business will be provided in the delegate packets at District Conference.

As a member of Nominating Committee, we met virtually for a full week in January to develop the ballot that will be presented to the Annual Conference delegates. Nominating Committee is grateful for the many names submitted to fill Annual Conference open positions, for the nominees who said “yes”, and for the strong ballot that has been prepared for this year.

The business agenda for this year’s Annual Conference appears to be less taxing than last year’s agenda. Old business for this year’s conference includes:

- Interim report from the Review and Evaluation Committee

New business for this year’s conference includes:

- Resolution on Weapons Transfer – from the Mission and Ministry Board
- Recommendation for Adjustments to the 2014 Ministerial Leadership Papers – from the Mission and Ministry Board
- Resolution – Walking Together: Immigration, Peacemaking, Conscience, and Supporting Our Neighbors – from the Mission and Ministry Board
- Recommended Cost of Living Adjustment to the Minimum Cash Salary Table for Pastors – done annually by the Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Advisory Committee

At a special session meeting in April, Standing Committee supported Eder Financials’ request to make a significant organizational transition and make Everence Financial the provider of choice for the denomination’s employee benefits and organizational investing. Additional information is available at: ederfinancial.org/transition.

Thank you for the privilege of representing the Northern Ohio District on Standing Committee and I am grateful for your support.

Serving Him Together,

Dawn Baldwin

Denominational Reports



Church of the Brethren

Together as the Church of the Brethren

Dear Friends in Christ,

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ. It is with a deep sense of gratitude that I bring greetings to you during your district conference—gratitude for your ongoing work as the hands and feet of Jesus in your local communities and for the work of denominational staff on your behalf. You will find information about denominational mission and ministries reflected in two resources available to you on the Church of the Brethren website (www.brethren.org). The *Church of the Brethren Annual Report* offers a glimpse of the ministries over the last year, and the *Advocating Generosity* booklet invites you to partner with us in our current ministries. Your conference may have these resources printed and available onsite as well.

We are living in times marked by uncertainty and strain. Across our communities and around the world, we witness conflict, division, economic pressure, and deep human suffering. Public discourse is often shaped more by outrage than understanding, and many feel isolated, overwhelmed, or weary. In such a time as this, the witness of the Church of the Brethren is both urgent and essential.

Bonded to Jesus Christ, we move together toward God's new creation. This shared journey grounds us when the world feels fractured. In our diversity, we celebrate our unity in the person and work of the Savior, praising the God who makes us one. We remember that we are not simply individuals navigating difficult times alone—we are the people of God, formed into one body through Christ.

In a culture that often elevates independence, self-interest, and going it alone, we choose a different way. We choose interdependence and community. The church is called to embody a life together that resists isolation and fear, offering instead belonging, mutual care, and shared purpose.

The early church in Acts 4 gives us a vision for faithful living in uncertain times. They devoted themselves to teaching, fellowship, prayer, and the breaking of bread. Their life together was marked by a radical generosity, gladness, and awe—and even amid uncertainty, God was at work, adding to their number and strengthening their witness. This was not a perfect community, but a faithful one, shaped by devotion to Christ and love for one another.

The Apostle Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians that the church is one body with many members, carefully arranged by God. Each part matters. Each person belongs. God's

Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together.

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desire is that there be no division within the body, but that the members have the same care for one another. When one member suffers, all suffer together; when one is honored, all rejoice together. This shared life calls us to notice one another, to bear one another's burdens, and to celebrate one another's gifts.

Let us live out this calling together within the Church of the Brethren. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, may we seek to follow Jesus faithfully, trusting that every expression of the church—local and trans-local—has a role in God's reconciling and renewing work. May our faith legacy live on as we risk adventuresome acts of radical discipleship reflecting Christ's body at work in the world: united, compassionate, and alive with hope. Together, let us venture forth boldly serving others and bearing witness to the God who makes all things new.

With gratitude for our shared journey in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David A. Steele', with a stylized, cursive script.

David A. Steele
General Secretary

Resources located at www.brethren.org/annualreport for the *Church of the Brethren Annual Report* and www.brethren.org/greatthing for the *Advocating Generosity* booklet.



Church of the Brethren

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

... Serve one another humbly in love (Gal. 5:13 NIV)
... Love your neighbor as yourself... (Mark 12:31 NRSVUE)
Serve the Lord with Gladness.... (Psalm 100:2 NRSVUE)

These verses exemplify the love and service that flow from the volunteers, supporters, and partners of Brethren Disaster Ministries (BDM) as we bring hope and healing to survivors of disasters in the US and around the world. We are grateful for all who support our ministry in varied ways: leaving home to serve in a different community, providing practical support at home to enable others to travel, praying for our ministry and those who serve and are served, providing financial or in-kind donations, advocating for the work that we do—there are so many ways that your compassion and dedication are indispensable to our ministry.

The primary 2025 location for the BDM Rebuilding Program was in Eastern Kentucky helping families impacted by the 2022 flooding in the area. Volunteers repaired homes and built new homes on reclaimed mining land in higher ground communities. This work, with partner HOMES Inc., was completed in March 2026, ending BDM's three-year plus work in Kentucky in response to flooding and tornadoes. Two 2025 short-term responses served survivors of 2024's Hurricane Helene in North Carolina and Tennessee. Hurricane Helene recovery will be the main focus for the Rebuilding Program during 2026 and possibly longer. The need is still great, and recovery is expected to last for years.

In December 2025, a new Construction Assessment Team was formed after the initial team training was held in Allegany County, Md., in an area that experienced flooding in May 2025. This team of five is now equipped to deploy to disaster impacted areas where they can perform damage assessments on homes to determine the work and cost needed to complete repairs. The training also led to a partnership with the long-term recovery group, resulting in a one-week BDM response in April/May 2026.

Children's Disaster Services (CDS) responded to seven disasters in 2025, sending 61 volunteers to care for a total of 759 children. Critical Response Childcare Teams cared for children in January after a truck attack in New Orleans, La., and in July after catastrophic flooding in Texas. When wildfires devastated large areas of the Los Angeles, Calif., region in January, CDS sent three volunteer teams to serve in Multiagency Resource Centers (MARC) and one team to a Local Assistance Center (LAC). They cared for 515 children in five weeks. After multiple tornadoes passed through Missouri in April and May, CDS responded with four teams to three MARCs, a shelter, and a Disaster Assistance Center. In mid-September, a CDS team from La Verne, Calif., responded for one day to a LAC after a fire in Sonora. In December, after heavy rains caused flooding and evacuations in Washington, CDS responded with a local team, serving in two shelters for a total of four days.

BDM's international disaster response supports relief and recovery for global churches and partners following natural and human-caused disasters, including in conflict areas. In 2025, nearly 16 percent of global Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) grants (\$163,350) were in response to natural disasters, including flooding and storm damage in Venezuela and Uganda. When Hurricane Melissa brought extensive damage in the Caribbean in the fall, a unique opportunity emerged to support churches in Cuba with emergency relief through their relationship with the Church of the Brethren in Venezuela. An EDF grant also supported agricultural recovery programs of the Church of the Brethren in Haiti following the storm, in areas that received little international attention.

The majority of international grants in 2025 supported responses to conflict by Global Church of the Brethren Communion members in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Nigeria, and the Church of the Brethren Mission in South Sudan. The ongoing conflict in the DRC between the national army and the M23 rebel group has created destruction, chaotic conditions, economic hardship, and food insecurity which spilled over to the neighboring countries of Rwanda and Burundi, with the latter receiving many refugees. EDF grants have helped Brethren leadership in DRC and Burundi to serve church members and neighbors. In South Sudan, BDM has partnered with the Global Mission office on strategic planning, while concentrating on humanitarian relief to support families impacted by flooding as well as escalating conflict between the two major power groups in the government.

The Nigeria Crisis Response, a partnership between the Church of the Brethren and Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) since 2014, provided food and agricultural distributions, medical assistance, livelihood training centers for widows and orphans, new wells for drinking water, education assistance for orphan children, trauma workshops, and home repairs for the most vulnerable during 2025, and continuing through 2026.

Several staffing changes early in 2026 saw Michael Scalzi retiring as the CDS program assistant and Jenn Dorsch-Messler resigning to work with another disaster response organization. We expect new staff to be in place by the time of the district conference.

Toward the end of 2025, with the help of a Lilly Foundation planning grant, BDM gathered a broad range of information about its current work and impact, helping it to envision how its ministry could be improved and extended. This served as the foundation for a strategic planning process which in turn led to the application for and receipt of a three-year Lilly Foundation implementation grant. This grant will support the strategic plan's goals of strengthening BDM's US programs and increasing volunteer participation. While these funds focus on program improvement and growth, continued support from individuals, congregations, and districts will be key for ongoing operations.

Brethren Disaster Ministries' mission to share Christ's compassion and transform lives by working toward recovery and healing for disaster survivors is only possible because of the faithful support and sharing of God's bounty of all who partner with us through donations of time, talent, treasure, and prayer. We are humbled and thankful for your commitment, compassion, and generosity.



Roy Winter, Executive Director for Service Ministries
*On behalf of BDM staff: Sharon Franzén, Kim Gingrich,
and Carolyn Neher*

ANNUAL REPORT

BRETHREN VOLUNTEER SERVICE

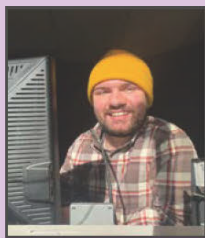


Brethren Volunteer Service Updates

New Opportunities

Under new leadership, BVS has introduced several exciting changes. A new early enrollment initiative gives motivated volunteers the opportunity to apply early for targeted volunteer placements—this year, 9 applicants joined BVS during this time! A new pre-orientation discernment period helps volunteers gain a deeper understanding of the policies, procedures, and expectations of BVS before they sign their service covenant and attend

orientation—this aims to improve volunteer retention and resilience. And, four new project sites allow more options for the upcoming year: SPARK, a service-learning organization in North Carolina; Shepherd's Spring Camp and Global Village in Maryland; Food for Greater Elgin, a food pantry in Illinois; and The Shalom Project, a gap-year program in Pennsylvania. BVS is excited to offer these new opportunities to our volunteers!



"Though the world certainly seems chaotic currently, these months in BVS at SnowCap Community Charities have given me hope and shown me the sheer incredible number of people who are working toward making a more just world where everybody looks out for their community and everyone has enough."

— Josiah Esch, Unit 338

Volunteer Spotlight

Meet the FaithX BVSer

Aly Heckeroth is serving her second BVS year as the Assistant FaithX Coordinator in the BVS office! Aly helps to plan FaithX trips and supports the work of BVS.



2025: BVS by the Numbers

- **Full-Time Volunteers:** 43 served in 8 states, Japan, and Northern Ireland.
- **Short-Term Volunteers:** 165 served in 7 states and Uganda.

| BVS Staff Transitions

Welcome New Co-Directors!

After three years of service as Director of BVS, Chelsea Skillen resigned from her position in early 2026 ahead of a move to Portugal. We are grateful for Chelsea's leadership, generosity, and commitment to service.

In January 2026, Marissa Witkovsky-Eldred and Virginia Rendler accepted the positions of Interim Co-Directors of BVS.

Marissa resides in Spruce Creek, PA, and served with BVS during the 2018–2019

year (Unit 321) as Assistant Workcamp Coordinator in Elgin, IL. She continues her current role as Coordinator of Short-Term Service (FaithX) while also providing leadership in the administration of BVS as Co-Director.

Virginia resides in North Manchester, IN, and served with BVS during the 2022–2023 year (Unit 331) at the Corrymeela Community in Northern Ireland. She continues in her role as Volunteer Coordinator while also leading BVS development and partner relationships as Co-Director.

Although the role is currently designated as interim, there are no plans to pursue candidates for the BVS Director position.

Marissa and Virginia are excited for the future and looking forward to leading BVS into its next chapter as Co-Directors!



Orientations

19 volunteers completed orientation in 2025. Summer orientation (Unit 337) was at Camp Colorado and fall orientation (Unit 338) was at Camp Mardela. Orientations for 2026 will be held at Inspiration Hills Camp on July 28–August 5 and Camp Emmaus on September 15–23.

Did You Know?

- BVS welcomes **anyone over age 18**... young adults, mid-age, or retirees!
- FaithX offers **custom short-term service trips** for districts, churches, youth groups, or families!

Stay in Touch

- ✱ www.brethren.org/bvs/
www.brethren.org/faithx/
- ✉ bvs@brethren.org
faithx@brethren.org
- ☎ (800) 323-8039

| FaithX Updates

Living With Purpose

In 2025, FaithX welcomed 165 youth and adults for 9 week-long service trips in Uganda, Arkansas, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Oregon, North Carolina, and Virginia. Participants ranged in age from 11 to 70, represented 26 Church of the Brethren congregations, and 36% were first time attendees! The year's theme, "Living with Purpose," was grounded in Ephesians 4:1-3 and invited participants

to explore the unique ways that Christ calls them to serve and love others. Thank you to Rachel Johnson for serving as our BVS Assistant FaithX Coordinator for the 2025 season!

In 2026, FaithX will host 5 trips with over 60 youth, adults, and young adults with intellectual disabilities. The 2026 theme is "Break Through" inspired by Isaiah 43:2.



"The knowledge that FaithX trips provide is astounding. A lot of it is getting to know what goes into serving people and understanding what people are going through. It is very interesting and eye-opening."

— Kellen, Senior High Participant



Northern Ohio District Report
Part Time Pastor:Full Time Church
06/22/2026

“Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 1:3

On behalf of the roughly 80% of our Multi-Vocational Pastors within the Church of the Brethren, I bring you greetings from the Part Time Pastor: Full Time Church program. It has been about 6 months since I took over the Program Manager position from Richard Wehrle who left to become the Program Manager for the Rural and Small Town Initiative. I encourage you to check out both the Part Time Pastor: Full Time Church and the Rural and Small Town Initiative on the Church of the Brethren website.

What does the Part Time Pastor: Full Time Church program offer:

Our Part Time Pastor:Full Time Church program exists to provide our Multi-Vocational Pastors (those who have multiple jobs including pastoring a congregation, those who only work as a pastor part time, and those who don't get paid on scale) with what we call the 3 P's: Peers, Practice, and Purpose, which were adapted from McNeil, J. D., Kate R. Davis, and Andrea Sielaff. “Resilience.” Center for Transforming Engagement. <https://transformingengagement.org/resources/the-resilience-report>.

Peers: Peer relationships are vital to thriving ministers. Part-Time Pastor; Full-Time Church offers many ways to connect with other ministering persons, both locally and throughout the Church of the Brethren. These ways include things like Book Studies, webinars, workshops, etc..

Practice: Participation in healthy spiritual, emotional, and physical practices must be a priority for ministering persons. Part-Time Pastor; Full-Time Church offers a diverse array of opportunities for ministering persons to engage in these practices, so they are able to thrive in their ministry settings. We provide coaching, cohorts around Spiritual Practices, etc..

Purpose: Through peer connections and healthy practices, ministering persons are more equipped to be connected to God's purpose for their ministries; which enables pastors and congregations the opportunity to thrive in their neighborhood and beyond. We provide Circuit Riders to walk alongside MVP's as well as limited grants for Pastors to take a Sabbath Rest.

What has the Part Time Pastor: Full Time Church program offered this past Spring?

How has the Part Time Pastor: Full Time Church program lived out the the 3P's in the past 6 months?

John Fillmore offered two Book Studies. First he offered a 7 Week session on the book "How to lead when you don't know where you are going: Leading in a Liminal Season" by Susan Beaumont. And then he followed that up with a 9 week session on the book "The Space Between Us: Conversations about Transforming Conflict" by Betty Pries.

Mayra Calix, our Circuit Rider who primarily connects with our Spanish speaking clergy offered a book study entitled, "¿Cómo sería mi iglesia si Jesús fuera el pastor?" by Pablo Marzilli.

I offered a four week Spiritual Practice cohort on the practice of Sabbath using the Practicing the Way: Sabbath Practice. I have also offered monthly coaching sessions to two MVP's.

We have also brought on Gaston Pierre-Louis as a Circuit Rider who will primarily connect with our Haitian Pastors in the Atlantic Southeast District. Gaston will be replacing Founa Badet-who has resigned effective 7/31/26.

At Annual Conference in Fort Wayne we were involved in the conference in a number of different ways. We were able to sponsor the Minister's Pre-Conference on AI. We were able to offer an in-person listening session to hear the thoughts, ideas, and ways that the program can be supportive of Multi-Vocational Pastors. John Fillmore and I offered an equipping session entitled Betwixt and Between: Following Jesus in the midst of liminality.

What will the Part Time Pastor:Full Time church program offer in the next 6 months?

I continue to offer monthly coaching to MVP's for free. If you are an MVP and are interested in exploring monthly coaching, please don't hesitate in reaching out. In September-October I will be offering a 4 week Spiritual Practice cohort using the Practicing the Way: Scripture Practice resource. You can sign up for the Scripture Practice cohort here: <https://forms.gle/>

sY7D2bMqf6yQfYxG9 And in November, I'll be offering a 4 week Spiritual Practice cohort using the Practicing the Way: Prayer Practice resource. You can sign up for the Prayer Practice cohort here: <https://forms.gle/dW26Bo8Cec51tYPa8>

We also have one more listening session scheduled for the rest of the summer. This listening session will primarily be for Spanish speaking clergy on Monday August 24 and can be registered for here: <https://forms.gle/TSZEhYxBBS2ZYSJX6>.

If you haven't been able to attend a listening session (either at Annual Conference or online) and would like to attend or give your input and feedback, there are two options.

First, if you'd like to actually attend an online listening session, you can reach out to me and we can schedule either a one-on-one session or if you pull together a few Multi-Vocational Pastors we could put together a group listening session.

The second option is, if you want to share your thoughts, ideas, hopes and dreams and how this program can be helpful to you and your ministry, we also have a listening survey which can be found here: <https://forms.gle/bfaGW6xzU4aFTH5x8>

If the Part Time Pastor: Full Time Church program of the Church of the Brethren and/or I as the Program Manager can be of any help to you, your district, or your church, please don't hesitate in reaching out to me at the contact information below.

"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."- 2 Corinthians 13:14.

Ryan Braught
Program Manager- Part Time Pastor: Full Time Church
rbraught@brethren.org
717-572-5914



Eder Financial

BOLD. BALANCED. TRUSTED.

2026 Eder Financial Report

Eder Financial provides retirement and insurance services to pastors and church-related employees, asset management services to Brethren congregations and organizations, and deferred gift services to all Brethren members. It also manages benevolent funds that enable entities to provide financial assistance to individuals facing extraordinary hardship during times of crisis. At 83-years young, Eder Financial continues to care for those it serves, evident in 2025 by the many new one-time and ongoing initiatives it launched.

In 2025, Eder Financial issued one-time payments to annuitants as a result of the sale of Eder Retirement Plan annuities to Securian Financial in late 2024. These payments helped augment the retirement income members received. For at least one individual, these additional funds made it possible to remain in their residence rather than being forced to relocate late in life due to financial constraints. Eder's retirement planning specialists continue to help Eder Retirement Plan members prepare for and navigate retirement through one-on-one guidance.

Eder Financial partners with organizations and denominations — such as the Church of the Brethren — to manage benevolent funds with care and integrity. We help establish clear policies and efficient processes to ensure funds are distributed fairly, responsibly, and in a timely manner to those in need.

Eder Organizational Investing fully launched Nonprofit Toolkit, a wholistic resource designed for nonprofit organizations that offers tools, resources, and knowledge to actively and easily help institutions increase the gifts they receive from donors. Nonprofit Toolkit helps churches and nonprofits navigate how to solicit and manage funds to undergird their financial health.

The new initiatives were well received by members and clients, and the longstanding work Eder has carried out through its core ministries continues to be equally valued.

Investment Oversight

Distinct to Eder Financial is the intentional socially responsible investment (SRI) approach it takes to align investment fund offerings with Church of the Brethren values. Known as Eder Values Investing, this approach focuses on screening, positive investment, and shareholder activism to achieve long-term, competitive market returns while supporting ethical, faith-based principles. EVI is an integrated approach that filters companies that do not conform to Eder's investment guidelines while simultaneously providing competitive returns. Orchestrating EVI within our separately managed accounts is straight forward because managers are hired to construct portfolios exclusively based on Eder's investment guidelines. Mutual funds, which we utilize when we do not have sufficient

assets to meet balance requirements for a separately managed account, must meet Brethren values and ethical commitments so that Eder can assure members that the Eder Investing Platform is 100 percent compliant with Eder's social screens.

Eder Financial Board and Staff

The 12-person Eder Financial Board consists of people who have knowledge and experience in accounting, finance, investments, law, employee benefits, human resources, pastors, denominational executives, and organizations of like mind with Eder Financial.

Our team works in retirement, employee insurance, organizational investing, finance, investments, client relations, marketing, public relations, IT, data, special projects, and business development. We are a family friendly, faith-based organization that strives to provide concierge level service to our members and clients while also providing a fulfilling work environment in a permanent work-from-home setting.

Conclusion

The Board and staff also believe a strong organization is realistic about the challenges that it faces. Eder understands that tomorrow's church is different from yesterday's church. Given this, the firm must adapt boldly, and as Alexander Mack wrote, "without hesitation or fear." In 2026, Eder has a strong balance sheet, ample reserves, and a steady client base. But our data shows that Eder will face operational challenges in the future if it does not adapt today. Adapting from strength allows an organization to control its decision making and narrative; adapting from weakness means making decisions out of desperation. Eder's practice, no matter how difficult, is to make decisions out of strength. This is why in 2026 Eder entered into an agreement to transfer most of its products and services to Everence Financial, a financial services organization of Mennonite background that serves Anabaptist organizations, by the end of April 2027. Everence has a much larger scale than Eder so that it can offer more products at lower fees to employees, organizations, and all denominational members.

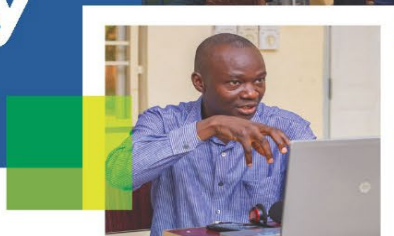
This step, while difficult to make, will ensure that Eder's members and clients will be well served for years to come.

Donna Rhodes

Eder Financial Board Chair

Nevin Dulabaum

Eder Financial President



Bethany Basics ENROLLMENT

122

TOTAL
STUDENTS



● LOCAL: 11%
● DISTANCE: 89%

71

FULL-TIME
EQUIVALENT



● MALE: 44%
● FEMALE: 54%



Academic Programs

- Master of Divinity
- Master of Arts
- Master of Arts in Biblical Peacemaking
- Master of Arts in Spiritual and Social Transformation
- Master of Arts: Theopoetics and Writing
- Certificate/Postgraduate Diploma in Biblical Peacemaking (CBP/PDBP)
- Certificate of Achievement in Ministry Studies (CAMS)
- Certificate in Intercontextual Biblical Interpretation (CIBI)
- Certificate in Peacebuilding and Neighborhood Engagement (CPNE)
- Certificate in Peacemaking, Violence, and Power (CPVP)
- Certificate in Theopoetics and Theological Imagination (CTTI)
- Certificate for Expanded MA Studies (CEMAS)
- Certificate for Chaplaincy Preparation (CCP)



THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION WITHOUT DEBT

During the past two academic years, not a single Bethany student took out a student loan. This success was made possible by the combined efforts of generous donors, shifts in administrative policies and practices, and efforts of our students themselves. A decade ago, Bethany had many fewer students, and they collectively borrowed about \$300,000 in a year.



FLOURISH: A CAMPAIGN FOR BETHANY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Bethany recently completed an initiative to enhance the student experience, encourage faculty innovation and creativity, and bolster annual fundraising efforts. As of June 30, 2026 we have surpassed our goal and raised more than \$12 million.



NIGERIA CONNECTION

Bethany celebrated its first commencement in Jos, Nigeria in May 2024. The Seminary hopes to host ceremonies there every other year. Beginning in the fall, Nigerian students will be able to pursue the Master of Arts in Biblical Peacemaking in addition to the Postgraduate Diploma in Biblical Peacemaking.



615 National Road West, Richmond, IN 47374 ■ bethanyseminary.edu ■ 765-983-1800 ■ 800-287-8822

Preparing the Way

The Lilly Endowment Inc. has cast a remarkable vote of confidence in Bethany with a \$10 million grant — the largest in the Seminary’s 120-year history. This new funding will support the Seminary’s new partnership with undergraduate institutions and encourage students to pursue graduate theological education and careers in ministry. The grant marks the beginning of a new era for Brethren higher education, as it will strengthen the connection between the Seminary and the Brethren-related colleges and universities.

This generous philanthropy will establish the Brethren Higher Education Consortium and foster collaboration between Bethany and the six undergraduate colleges and universities that are affiliated with the Church of the Brethren: Bridgewater College, Elizabethtown College, Manchester University, McPherson College, Juniata College, and the University of LaVerne. Bethany has created a new program called UP@Bethany, which will allow juniors and seniors at those institutions to take Bethany courses prior to receiving their undergraduate degrees. The grant will also support continued collaboration

with Earlham School of Religion, a key partner of Bethany for the last 30 years. The Lilly Endowment grant will enable Bethany to create an endowed fund, helping to ensure the Seminary’s long-term success.

“We are thrilled and humbled to receive this transformational grant from the Lilly Endowment.”

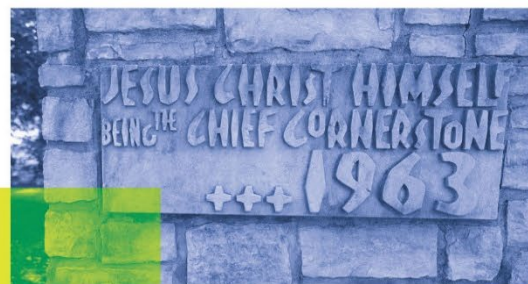
—REV. DR. JEFF CARTER
PRESIDENT OF BETHANY
SEMINARY

The new project funded by the Lilly Endowment is entitled, “Preparing the Way: Expanding Vocational Paths for Undergraduate Students.” It is being funded through Lilly Endowment’s Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative. The grant to Bethany is one of 45 that were approved in a competitive round of the initiative to support theological schools as they lead large-scale collaborations with other seminaries, colleges and universities, and other church-related organizations.

The Lilly Endowment — a private foundation based in Indianapolis, Indiana — supports the causes of community development, education, and religion.

“We are thrilled and humbled to receive this transformational grant from the Lilly Endowment,” says Rev. Dr. Jeff Carter, president of Bethany Theological Seminary. “Thanks to Lilly’s generous support, we will create new pathways to careers in ministry for exceptional students attending Brethren colleges and universities. The grant will also allow us to provide students at these institutions an introduction to graduate study and access to advanced courses in theology and Biblical studies that are not typically available to undergraduates.”

Bethany currently enrolls 122 students in five master’s degree programs and nine graduate certificates, including those from across North America and a strong and growing contingent in Nigeria. Most Bethany students study at a distance, so all courses are accessible via Zoom using state-of-the-art classroom technology. This format ensures that undergraduates will enjoy robust educational experiences without leaving their undergraduate campuses.



In December, Bethany received a check for \$5 million in immediate funding to get the program up and running. These new funds will have an immediate positive impact on the Seminary's operating budget, and will help Seminary collaborate with the other Brethren colleges and universities to begin enrolling students as soon as possible.

Bethany will be required to raise \$2.5 million from other donors in order to receive \$5 million in matching funds from Lilly Endowment. The Seminary has begun conversations with a number of donors who are enthusiastic about supporting this new endeavor.

"A grant like this is a tremendous vote of confidence in our mission from one of the leading philanthropic supporters of education and religion

in the world," notes President Carter. "As I travel around the country speaking to friends of the Seminary, it is clear to me that this grant from Lilly has made even longtime supporters of Bethany think about us in a new way. We are imagining possibilities that none of us could have envisioned without Lilly's generous support."

The Seminary's fundraising will build upon the success of its ongoing comprehensive campaign — Flourish: A Campaign for Bethany Theological Seminary, which has already generated significant new funding to strengthen the student experience, bolster faculty creativity and innovation, and bolster annual fundraising.

It remains to be seen what long-term effects this grant will have

on the life of the Seminary. Early signs suggest that UP@Bethany will offer undergraduates at Brethren colleges and universities a new pathway to Bethany, a new range of options to engage with some of the most important questions facing humanities, and more ways to explore ministry and service in whatever communities they join.

"We believe that the impact of this new funding will reverberate long after the five-year lifespan of the grant," says Carter. "By establishing an endowed fund, and by inspiring the generosity of other donors, this moment holds the promise of transformation for Bethany and our partner institutions."

Measuring Bethany's **Impact**

AN ENTERING CLASS OF RECORD SIZE.

This fall, Bethany welcomed 38 entering students — the largest class at the Seminary in recent memory. This growth would not be possible without the generosity of donors like you.

THREE CONSECUTIVE SEMESTERS WITHOUT FEDERAL STUDENT LOANS.

Philanthropy has been key to our efforts to reduce student borrowing and create a pathway to graduate theological education without new debt.

A NEW MASTER OF ARTS IN BIBLICAL PEACEMAKING.

For several years, our Nigerian students have expressed interest in pursuing master's degrees at Bethany. Thanks to the leadership of our faculty and your faithful support, we launched this new degree this year.

AN ALUMNI AND FRIENDS TRIP TO GREECE.

Dr. Dan Ulrich led an education journey through Greece, focusing on places that feature prominently in Paul's letters. This trip was remarkably successful, thanks in large part to the 30-some alumni, friends, and students who participated.

A STEINWAY FOR NICARRY CHAPEL.

A fund provided by Professor Emerita Nancy Faus made it possible for Bethany to acquire a Steinway Grand B piano for Nicarry Chapel. We were happy to be able to celebrate the dedication of this instrument with many local donors and friends.

A BOLD EVENT, SPONSORED BY THE BAKER ENDOWMENT.

Bethany welcomed Dr. Heather DuBois of Boston College as the feature speaker at an event supported by the Jennie Calhoun Baker Endowment. We are grateful to all who support Bethany's ongoing commitment to peace studies.

A NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH BRETHREN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.

Many generous alumni and friends of the Seminary are also loyal supporters of Brethren colleges and universities. Building on the foundation of support that you have provided, we received a \$10 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., to create a new partnership with the goal of encouraging undergraduates to explore theological education and careers in ministry.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR THE BETHANY FUND.

Thanks to tremendous support from a growing group of alumni, friends, and local community leaders here in Wayne County, Indiana, it has been another successful year for the Bethany Fund. This annual fundraising effort provides money that goes into immediate use to support the day-to-day activities of the Seminary and the vital work that our employees do every day.





Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership District Conference Report 2026

The Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership (BAML) is a partnership of the Church of the Brethren and Bethany Theological Seminary, which coordinates non-graduate, certificate-level ministry training through programs in both English and Spanish, as well as overseeing continuing education for clergy within the Church of the Brethren.

Staffing updates:

BAML staff includes Janet Ober Lambert, Director, Arlyn A. Morales, Coordinator of Spanish-Language Ministry Training Programs, and Tabitha Rudy, Coordinator of English-Language Ministry Training Programs. Raul Rivera joined us in February as our new administrative assistant.

Ministry Training:

The ministry training programs of the Brethren Academy are Training in Ministry (TRIM), Seminario Bíblico Anabautista Hispano de la Iglesia de Los Hermanos (SeBAH-COB), Education for Shared Ministry (EFSM), Educación Para un Ministerio Compartido (EPMC), and Academy Certified Training Systems (ACTS).

Currently, there are thirty-one regular students engaged in either TRIM, EFSM, or EPMC, and eighteen regular students engaged in SeBAH-COB.

At the time of this report, two students completed their program during this academic year.

The six ACTS programs maintain their own records.

TRIM and EFSM Orientation will take place July 14-16, 2026, at Bethany Theological Seminary. A second virtual Orientation will be offered in the Winter of 2027, dates to be confirmed.

BAML staff have begun the revision process for EFSM and EPMC.

Global Brethren:

The Brethren Academy continues its educational relationship with the Global Brethren, which currently includes both the *Church of the Brethren of Venezuela* and *Viviendo en Amor y Fe/Living in Love and Faith* of Honduras.

Financial support for these students is made possible through an arrangement with the Church of the Brethren Global Mission Office, Mennonite Church USA Hispanic Ministries, and the Brethren Academy. Conversations are progressing that would allow BAML to accept several more Global Brethren from additional Spanish-speaking communions.

Continuing Education:

Strength for the Journey (SFTJ):

Two cohorts completed their time December. The Chaplains' Cohort concluded with a virtual retreat in February.

Building Bridges Across Ideological Divides:

This series of courses and equipped sessions concluded with a one-day retreat on April 8, 2026. Facilitator Audrey Hollenberg-Duffey invited a group of clergy, Bethany students, and Bethany faculty to consider "what it means to be the church, name the divisiveness that threatens this calling, and explore together how we might call our own congregations and communities to be reoriented by the hope we have in Christ".

The 2026 Clergy Tax Seminar took place January 31 via ZOOM with 47 participants.

Ethics for the Set-Apart Ministry-Basic Course are offered three times a year via Zoom for pre-licensed and newly licensed ministering in the Church of the Brethren. The next training is scheduled for June 13, 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Janet L. Ober Lambert". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Janet Ober Lambert, Director

A Future with Hope: On Earth Peace's Next 50 Years

"For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline." - 2 Timothy 1:7 (NRSVUE)



On Earth Peace's purpose as an **agency of the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference** is to help the Church of the Brethren become a relevant, vital, "living" peace and justice church equipped to create vital relationships and initiatives responding to contemporary issues of violence and injustice.

On Earth Peace's work as a ministry within the Church of the Brethren dates to 1974, when the organization was founded by 20th-century Church of the Brethren peace leader M.R. Zigler. In 2026, we call the church to courageous acts of peace witness. Kingian Nonviolence Principle 1 is "Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people." In our Agape Magazine (a quarterly resource from On Earth Peace for children ages 8-12) issue *Pursuing Justice*, the author considered the above verse from 2 Timothy. They wrote, "Sometimes we have to listen to our love for others and our compassion for those suffering more than we listen to our fears. Stop and ask, 'Is this an act of love or is it a response to fear?' ...**It's a courageous act of love that helps make someone else's world a more loving place.**" Today, we work to prevent gun violence, support immigrants, challenge political violence, and raise conscientious objectors to war as our faith calls us.

OEP is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit that has been an agency of the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference since 1998. While OEP is an agency of the denomination, no centralized denominational funding supports our work. All resources for our ministry come from individual and congregational donations or program income. **We are grateful to all individuals and congregations who remember us in their family or congregational giving. If you are unable to include us in your annual budget, please consider taking up a one-time special offering in 2026.**

2025 Highlights

- Partnership with Horizons Project to offer Harnessing Our Power to End Political Violence (HOPE-PV) workshops focused on immigrants, LGBTQ+, school board/local electeds, and community leaders.
- **4 issues of a children's resource, Agape Magazine**, covering topics included being neighbors, love in action, preventing gun violence, and finding hope.
- **105 trainings and events** including Kingian Nonviolence intros, book groups, and advanced trainings; gun violence and anti-authoritarianism organizing meet-ups; and more.
- **\$220,000 raised for the Deportation Defense Response Legal and Mutual Aid Fund with more than 90 grants** made to individuals and families.
- **14 interns** supported On Earth Peace's programs, fundraising, and communications work.
- **335 people reached toward our goal of 1000 Brethren in Kingian Nonviolence Conflict Reconciliation.** Will your congregation or district partner with us this year?

While On Earth Peace offers many programs for congregations, communities, and individuals of all ages, we want to draw your attention to two opportunities that have been centered this year.

Deportation Defense Response

The Deportation Defense Response (DDR) Team was initiated by four Church of the Brethren Districts (Atlantic Northeast, Atlantic Southeast, Virginia, and Pacific Southwest), working in partnership with On Earth Peace and the Church of the Brethren Office of Intercultural Ministries.

Church of the Brethren congregations have experienced firsthand the devastating injustices committed by Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Many members have been unjustly detained and deported, and many more are living in fear—afraid to attend church services, work, or necessary medical appointments. Throughout the country, we are witnessing beloved church members, neighbors, fathers, mothers, and children being torn from their homes, workplaces, schools, and neighborhoods.

The DDR Initiative has helped the church stand alongside our siblings in Christ and our neighbors affected by this crisis. We ask you to join us in providing for the needs of immigrants and refugees with your resources and time, raising awareness of this crisis, defending the rights of our brothers and sisters, and demanding that leaders act justly.

I Object! Now What? Conscientious Objection to War

OEP was founded in response to the Vietnam War in recognition that we need ongoing preparation toward conscientious objection and resistance to war. The Church of the Brethren believes that all war is sin, yet our preparedness for conscientious objection in times of war always seems to come a little too late. As armed conflict with many different countries seems to become a real possibility for American citizens, we must look to our churches and within ourselves to see what we believe about violence and war, and how we can muster the courage to walk a path of peace. At On Earth Peace, we are considering what resourcing for conscientious objection to war and preparing youth & young adults is needed at this time. This resourcing might include technical training (how to register or prepare to resist a draft), theological education, war resistance and resistance to the things that lead to war, including systemic oppression, legislative advocacy, and preparing adults and congregations to support conscientious objection. We look forward to working with partners who have long carried this work.

On Earth Peace Values: Jesus-Centered Spirituality; Positive Peace; Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression; Intergenerational Leadership; Beloved Community

Vision Statement: "We see a world in Beloved Community, free from oppression, violence, and war."

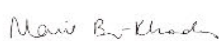
Mission Statement: "We develop and walk with leaders and communities who work for justice and peace."

In 2026, we anticipate working with many of you to respond to the increasing political violence affecting our neighbors and communities. We name our support and commitment to LGBTQ+ persons, to immigrants, to people of color, to those affected by gun violence, to those most directly harmed by state violence and war, and to all who yearn and work for a world free from oppression, violence, and war. We will continue to walk with followers of Jesus in the Church of the Brethren as we seek together a path to become a living peace church. Please include us in your prayers.

In Christ's peace,



Matt Guynn
Co-Director,
Organizing



Marie Benner-Rhoades
Co-Director,
Youth & Young Adults



Mandy Park
Co-Director,
Development



Sydney Goldsborough
Co-Director,
Administration & Communications



Church of the Brethren

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ of the Northern Ohio District,

I am grateful to send you greetings as you prepare for your District Conference. Each year, we hear reports and process business of the work being undertaken by our local congregations, districts, agencies, and denomination. Sometimes that work seems routine. And yet, with each new year comes new opportunities to think creatively and pray that God will continue to renew our church and grow our ministries.

I am excited to welcome each of our sisters and brothers who will gather together for the 240th recorded Church of the Brethren Annual Conference in Daytona Beach, Florida, July 28 – August 1, 2027. We will return to our typical Wednesday-through-Sunday format, while meeting later in July than usual. Ocean Center in Daytona Beach lives up to its name, located only 400 feet from the Atlantic Ocean. But most importantly, we will experience the great cultural diversity present among our brothers and sisters in the Atlantic Southeast District.

The Hartford Institute for Religion Research reported in late April 2026 that, for the first time in two decades, Christian congregations were growing overall. If we look worldwide, we see many of our congregations in the Global Church of the Brethren and other denominations growing and thriving. What do we need to do in our North American Church of the Brethren congregations to see growth and renewal?

Much of my ministry over the past three decades has focused on the youth of the church. I have seen young children who listened intently to a Sunday School teacher become young adults who volunteered at their district summer camp teaching other children about Jesus. I have served alongside youth at Annual Conference senior high activities, Christian Citizenship Seminar, FaithX, and National Youth Conference who have gone on to become leaders in our denomination. This is where we see growing faith continue in our church.

May we be energized and encouraged as we anticipate gathering together next summer in Daytona Beach, continuing to support the growing faith of those in our congregations, districts, and denomination.

Your Brother in Christ,
Dennis Beckner
2027 Annual Conference Moderator

Church of the Brethren Annual Conference

1451 Dundee Avenue • Elgin, IL 60120

www.brethren.org/ac • annualconference@brethren.org

Annual Conference exists to unite, strengthen and equip the Church of the Brethren to follow Jesus.

June 2026

Dear kindred connections in the Church of the Brethren,

As Manchester University enters its 137th year, we remain committed to our mission of developing persons of ability and conviction who draw upon their education and faith to improve the human condition. We are pleased to share highlights from the past year.

University Profile

- Fall 2025 enrollment included 916 undergraduate students and 350 graduate and professional students. Undergraduate enrollment declined slightly, while graduate and professional enrollment continued to grow.
- Students represent 22 states and 3 countries; 87.4% of undergraduate students are from Indiana
- Approximately 1 in 6 undergraduates are students of color
- Approximately 1 in 35 undergraduate students are affiliated with the Church of the Brethren
- Nearly half of undergraduate students participate in intercollegiate athletics
- Approximately 1 in 10 undergraduate students participate in study-away experiences each year
- 100% of new undergraduate students receive financial aid

Academic Innovation and Student Success

- Nursing graduates achieved a 100% first-time pass rate on the NCLEX licensure examination, significantly exceeding the national average of 88.5%.
- Early College Experience partnerships continued to expand, providing more high school students with opportunities to earn college credit while experiencing university-level coursework.
- Manchester expanded its 'Degree in 3' initiative, now offering accelerated applied bachelor's degrees in Accounting, Business Management, Criminal Justice, Marketing Communication, Pre-Athletic Training, and Pre-Physical Therapy. These innovative programs enable students to complete their degrees in three years, reducing educational costs.
- The continued development of MU Online extends Manchester's educational mission to new populations of learners through flexible, high-quality online programs.
- A new University-Wide Experiential Learning Initiative is increasing opportunities for internships, applied learning, and career-connected experiences integrated throughout the curriculum. Many students now participate in hands-on, and often paid, professional experiences before graduation.

Strengthening Communities

- Construction began on the Manchester Mile, a transformational project that will strengthen connections between the university and the North Manchester community through trails, recreational spaces, and improved public amenities.
- Manchester was awarded a \$375,000 grant as the pilot institution for the Connect Church initiative. The program equips rural congregations to identify community assets, strengthen relationships, and develop sustainable ministries through an Asset-Based Community Development approach. Manchester students will be trained as facilitators to work alongside participating congregations.
- The Manchester Fund reached its \$1.6 million goal, establishing a new record for annual giving and demonstrating strong support from alumni, friends, churches, and community partners.

Living Our Brethren Heritage

- Manchester served as the pilot institution for UP@Bethany, a partnership with Bethany Theological Seminary that enables undergraduates to enroll in graduate-level theological courses. Three Manchester students completed five Bethany courses during the inaugural year, and three additional students are preparing to participate in the coming academic year.
- *The Manchester Story*: President Stacy Young has dedicated campus space for a permanent exhibit exploring Manchester University's history. Beginning with the history, beliefs, and values of the Church of the Brethren, the exhibit will highlight how Brethren commitments to individual discernment, service, community, and peace continue to shape Manchester's mission and identity.
- The Church of the Brethren Annual Conference in Fort Wayne will provide opportunities for conference-goers to engage with Manchester students, faculty, staff, and programs. The Peace Studies Program is partnering with Brethren Volunteer Service to offer activities and learning experiences for senior high youth attending Conference.

In gratitude for our shared witness and fellowship,

Katy Gray Brown

Professor of Peace Studies and Philosophy & Religious Studies

Director of Peace Studies and Manchester University Connect Church Project

Megan Sarber

Director of Alumni Relations



**GOOD SHEPHERD HOME
DISTRICT BOARD REPORT
2025 RECAP**

Greetings from Good Shepherd Home!

As we reflect on 2025, we are grateful for another year filled with growth, fellowship, service, and meaningful connections throughout our campus and community. From musical performances and fundraising events to campus improvements and resident-centered programming, the year has been marked by energy, compassion, and continued support from so many who believe in our mission.

The Good Shepherd Home Choir, Hooked On Singing!, under the direction of retired teacher and choir director Karis Matz, continued to flourish throughout 2025. What began in 2023 with just a handful of participants has grown into a vibrant and enthusiastic group that continues to bring joy to residents, families, staff, and community members alike.

The choir presented several performances throughout the year, including a spring concert featuring music from well-known movies and a patriotic summer performance celebrating the 250th anniversary of the United States. In 2025, the choir also reached an exciting milestone by presenting its 10th public performance. Weekly rehearsals continue to provide opportunities for fellowship, confidence-building, and meaningful engagement for choir members, while sharing the gift of music with others.

We continue to be amazed by the dedication and growth of this special group and are grateful for the joy they bring to our campus and community.

In May, Good Shepherd Home once again hosted the Annual Herald Award Luncheon, recognizing employees who exemplify compassion, kindness, and servant leadership in their daily work. Named in honor of Reverend W. Harold Row, a respected Church of the Brethren pastor and denominational leader, the Herald Award celebrates caregivers who go above and beyond in providing comfort and healing to residents and families. This year, we were honored to recognize 21 outstanding staff members nominated by residents, families, and fellow employees.

Our annual Good Samaritan Dinner & Auction also returned in 2025, bringing together supporters, donors, volunteers, and friends of Good Shepherd Home for an evening of fellowship and generosity. The event theme, "It's Gonna Be a Great Day!" reflected our ongoing commitment to faith, compassion, positivity, and community. Thanks to the tremendous support of attendees and sponsors, the event continues to be one of our biggest fundraisers to benefit the mission of Good Shepherd Home.

The Mary Rose Golf Classic continued to grow in both participation and impact during its 3rd year. Held in support of the DayBreak SAIDO Learning Center, the outing welcomed 29 teams and is another of our biggest fundraising efforts. Proceeds benefit the Mary Rose Endowment through the Greater Fostoria Community Foundation, helping sustain the operating and program needs of the DayBreak SAIDO Learning Center, which continues to provide valuable support and engagement for participants and families in our community.

Campus improvements also remained a priority throughout the year as we worked to enhance outdoor spaces for residents, families, staff, and visitors, including breaking ground of our new pickle ball courts! (completion of project took place in spring 2026.)

We remain deeply thankful for the many individuals, churches, organizations, volunteers, and community partners who continue to support the ministry of Good Shepherd Home. We are especially grateful for the ongoing encouragement and blessings from the Church of the Brethren.

As we look ahead, Good Shepherd Home remains committed to providing Christ-centered care with compassion, dignity, and innovation while preparing to meet the evolving needs of older adults and their families for generations to come.

the WEST VIEW WAY



330.264.8640
www.wvhl.healthcare

1715 Mechanicsburg Rd
Wooster, Ohio 44691



West View Healthy Living is a Christian based, non-profit, Continuous Care Retirement Community nestled on 27 scenic acres in the heart of Wooster, Ohio. Last year, 2022 marked the 60th Anniversary that West View has been the trusted provider of health and wellness for our residents and their families. The West View campus has also experienced a lot of growth with the addition of 20 skilled nursing rooms for transitional care, 15 independent living apartments, a brand-new Wellness Center, and The Connection Conference & Event Center available to employees, residents, and open to the community for rental.

In addition to an engaging lifestyle, all West View residents enjoy the full range of amenities offered in our 1950's small town throwback community. Town Square is not only a great gathering space for residents and guests to fellowship together, but also includes a Main Street Café, gift shop, library, theatre, beauty shop, post office, Grandma's House, and a Chapel.

INDEPENDENT LIVING

Offering apartment style units and standalone villas, either choice is ideal for families who still wish to maintain all their normal routines, but with the peace of mind of no longer having to worry about maintenance and upkeep, with the reassurance that a qualified caregiver is nearby if needed.

ASSISTED LIVING | TOWN SQUARE

From a studio to larger one-bedroom option, our assisted living suites are designed for today's senior. You can choose from several different sizes and configurations, providing an atmosphere where you have the ultimate in comfort, hospitality, security, and fun to engage in a vibrant lifestyle and build new relationships.

BRIDGES MEMORY CARE

Meaningful life experiences does not end with dementia. West View offers a specialized, separate memory care neighborhood within our assisted living community that is designed specifically for those with memory challenges, 24-hour nurse services, and state-of-the-art monitoring system.

the WEST VIEW WAY



330.264.8640
www.wvhl.healthcare

1715 Mechanicsburg Rd
Wooster, Ohio 44691



TRANSITIONAL CARE AND REHABILITATION

The Transitional Care Center offers the perfect environment for patients who require short-term, high-quality rehabilitation or skilled nursing. West View's highly experienced team includes therapists, physicians, dietitians, social workers, life enrichment coordinators and a nursing staff, all working together to develop and execute an individualized plan of care.

LONG-TERM CARE

We work with each resident and their family to create individual lifestyles and personalized services to meet specific needs and interests. This means residents can do what they want and accomplish what they want. Most importantly, person-centered care places our residents in the center of the care process and is consistent with our commitment to ensuring growth regardless of individual ability.

Since 1962, when West View began the mission of providing healthcare for residents, the growing financial gap of cost versus reimbursement has only expanded. During the first sixty years, it was rare for West View to ask for financial support from the community. The impact the pandemic has had on healthcare and senior communities and the rising cost of operations, it has become vital to actively solicit donations to uphold the quality of care our residents and their families have grown to expect. Raising additional funds will make a significant difference to ensure the lives and wellness of those we serve today and benefit future generations. The leadership at West View will continue to be good stewards of all resources entrusted to this non-profit organization.

Please contact West View for additional information on our lifestyles and mission, or to schedule a campus tour and come see everything our beautiful campus has to offer.

...THE...
CONNECTION.
conference and event center
1034 Country Club Dr. | Wooster, OH 44691
www.theconnectioninwooster.com



**Report to the
Report to the Northern Ohio District Conference
Church of the Brethren
August 14-15, 2026**

Akron Springfield Church of the Brethren, Akron OH

We are a Jesus Christ Movement for Unity, Justice, and Peace!

Our Member Communions:

The African Methodist Episcopal Church, The African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, The Alliance of Baptists, The Armenians Apostolic Church; The Christian Church in Ohio (Disciples of Christ) US and Canada, The Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Christian Science, The Church of the Brethren, The Community Churches, The Episcopal Church in the USA, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, The Greek Orthodox Church, The Moravian Church in America, The Ohio Baptist General Convention, The Presbyterian Church (USA), The Religious Society of Friends, The United Church of Christ, and The United Methodist Church.

www.ohcouncilchs.org.

Rev. Dr. Jack Sullivan, Jr., the Executive Director since 2019, announced his retirement at the spring Governing Board meeting. On November 12, the Governing Board honored Dr. Sullivan's service to the ecumenical and justice community during its meeting. The meeting was followed by a reception at the Ohio Statehouse and a worship service held at Trinity Episcopal Church, Columbus with guest preacher Bishop Vashti McKenzie, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches. Dr. Sullivan's service with the Ohio Council of Churches concluded on December 31, 2025. The Interim Executive Director is Deacon Nick Bates, a Lutheran minister based in Ohio. He serves in a part-time capacity while also leader the Hunger Network of Ohio. Deacon Bates is working with the Executive Committee to review the current Council structure to determine our future viability. Keep Deacon Bates in your prayers.

Report of 2025-2026 Activities

- The OCC's Anti-Racism Team sponsored our fifth Anti-Racism Sunday that began October 19, 2025 and concluded January 18, 2026. Rev. Adam Sornchai, a Lutheran pastor and Council Treasurer facilitated the effort to deal with how we as the community of faith can stand against the threat of white Christian nationalism. Several articles and videos were shared via emails and social media over the period.
- Dr. Sullivan, Deacon Bates and I continued to speak in person at the Ohio Statehouse and provided written testimony on several bills, including opposition to legislation that is harmful to LGBTQIA+ and trans youth, and abolition of the death penalty, gun violence prevention, and addresses issues hunger and poverty .
- The Ohio Council of Churches received a \$100,000 grant from the Governor's Office on Faith Based Initiatives. This grant enables us to work with Tom Carlisi and Associates on peacemaking initiatives known as PLAN (Pastors and Laity Advocating



Non-Violence). We are seeking families from p and Northwest Ohio to be part of this effort. If there are interested persons, please see Dr. McIntosh during the conference for more information.

- Dr. Sullivan attended the 75th Anniversary of the National Council of Churches that was held in Boston MA, October 15-17, 2025.
- We received a grant from the SEE (a group of State Executives of Councils of Churches) address how we educate persons on countering white Christian nationalism. Events were held in January and May 2026.
- The Associate Director contributed to videos and op-eds that spoke to non-violence in elections and was a panelist for a discussion on reproductive justice.
- The Associate Director gave presentations around the state on Project 2025.
- We are still continuing our advocacy efforts with our partners in the areas of death penalty abolition, fairness in public education, gun violence prevention, hunger, housing, and fairness for all Ohioans.
- We collaborated with the Hunger Network of Ohio for its Advocacy in Advent (December 2025) and its Statehouse advocacy luncheon held May 18 at the Ohio Statehouse. The event was themed "A Budget That Works for Us All."

We are continually grateful for the leadership of Rev. Kris Hawk who faithfully serves us on our Governing Board and Rev. Tina Hunt, her Proxy. We are also grateful for the work of Rev. Terry Vaught, who works on our Faith and Order to Committee that developed our statement on gun violence prevention. See attached



Statement on Gun Violence

As the Ohio Council of Churches — a 105-year-old statewide body uniting 17 denominations as a movement of Jesus Christ for unity, justice, and peace — we come together in lament. Since 2022, at the request of the former Ohio Coalition Against Gun Violence, we have committed ourselves to the work of gun violence prevention in our communities. Today we grieve the countless lives lost — in 2023 alone, **46,728 people in the United States died by firearms, an average of one death every 11 minutes**, and here in Ohio nearly **690 lives were taken by homicide, over 1,000 by suicide, and dozens of children and youth whose futures were cut short**. This grief is not abstract for us: members of our own Council have been directly affected by gun violence, and so we hold all who mourn in prayer before the God who is near to the brokenhearted (Psalm 34:18).

Biblical Foundations

The OCC stands united against gun violence because of our belief that human life is sacred. This core belief forms the bedrock of our anti-gun violence stance. It is based on the following biblical principles:

- The sanctity of human life (Genesis 1:26)
- Love of neighbor (Matthew 22:39)
- Peace and non-violence (Matthew 5:9)
- Social Justice bringing God's shalom into being (Micah 6:8)

Weaknesses in Current Ohio Law

As followers of Christ, we cannot separate our call to do justice from the urgent need to examine the policies shaping daily life in our state. Ohio's current firearm laws contain serious weaknesses that place children, families, and whole communities at risk. Naming these gaps is a first step in our witness for peace.

- No permit required to purchase firearms: Handguns, rifles, and shotguns can be purchased without a state permit or license.
- Permitless/constitutional carry (since 2022): Adults 21+ may carry concealed handguns without a permit, training, or background check beyond federal minimums.
- No universal background checks: Private sales and transfers are not required to go through background checks, creating loopholes.
- Weak safe-storage/child access laws: Ohio lacks strong requirements to secure firearms from children or unauthorized users, despite firearms being the leading cause of death for Ohio youth.
- Preemption of local authority: Cities and counties are barred from passing stricter gun laws tailored to local violence conditions.
- Age restrictions limited: No comprehensive minimum age for possession in all circumstances; only certain restrictions on sales (under 18 for long guns, under 21 for handguns).
- Limited crime-gun tracing/enforcement: Gaps in resources for law enforcement to trace guns and enforce prohibitions.



- **Public health & equity concerns:** Weaker regulations interact with systemic inequities (poverty, racism, disinvestment) to magnify risks in certain communities.

Legislative Recommendations

We call upon Ohio's lawmakers and leaders to enact evidence-based policies proven to save lives:

- **Universal background checks** on all firearm sales, and closing loopholes that allow firearms to be obtained without oversight.
- **Ban assault rifles and kits that change guns into automatic weapons, including high capacity magazines.**
- **Safe storage and locking devices** for guns to protect children, households, and those with mental illnesses.
- **Red-flag laws and extreme risk protection orders** that empower families and courts to temporarily remove firearms from those at imminent risk of harming themselves or others.
- **Local control over gun laws** (state legislators can now override local laws).
- **Require firearms safety training** for all concealed- and open-carry permits in Ohio.
- **Community-based violence prevention programs, trauma-informed care for survivors, and expanded access to mental health services.**

Congregational Recommendations

We call upon Ohio's congregational members and leaders to:

- **Make sure our own guns are safely stored and locked** so that no others (in or out of the household) can access them.
- **Participate in and lead nonviolence and peacemaking training.**
- **Host prayer vigils, memorial services, or liturgies of lament to honor victims of gun violence in Ohio communities.**
- **Organize safe-storage awareness events** (partner with law enforcement, hospitals, or nonprofits to distribute gun locks or safes).
- **Promote "Guns to Gardens" initiatives, where unwanted firearms are safely dismantled and repurposed into garden tools or art.**
- **Offer pastoral care and support groups for families and survivors of gun violence, integrating trauma-informed ministry.**
- **Build partnerships with local organizations** (schools, neighborhood associations, public health groups) working on violence prevention.
- **Educate your congregation by hosting forums, Bible studies, or film screenings on the moral and public health impacts of gun violence.**
- **Advocate with legislators by writing letters, calling representatives, or hosting town halls in your church space.**
- **Engage youth and families in conversations about conflict resolution, mental health, and gun safety.**
- **Observe national awareness days** (e.g., Wear Orange weekend, Gun Violence Awareness Month) to raise visibility in your community.



- Publicly declare churches as gun-free sacred spaces, posting signage where appropriate.

Closing Prayer

Our advocacy on this subject stems from our personal pain as faith leaders who have had to attempt to comfort families affected and eulogize the victim. We pray the day comes soon when we no longer have to bury our parents, children, siblings, and friends whose lives have been cut short by gun violence. It is our prayer that God's abundance, safety and shalom will be realized in our lifetimes. Amen.

Strategic Planning Report

May 2026



**Northern Ohio District
Church of the Brethren**

Strategic Planning Report – May 2026

For the Northern Ohio District Church of the Brethren

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Background

The Church of the Brethren traces its roots back over 300 years to 1708. In Europe, where the Church of the Brethren was founded, this was a time of strong governmental control of the church and low tolerance for religious diversity. The early Brethren were determined to live out their faith despite the threat of persecution. Though they shared many beliefs in common, a number of issues separated the Brethren from other Protestant groups. Relying on the New Testament as their guide, these men and women believed that Jesus had intended for his followers to live a different kind of life, one based on peaceful action, plain and compassionate living, and a shared search for truth. They believed their relationship with Jesus should be a profoundly personal religious experience resulting in a lifestyle that fully demonstrated their commitment to God. These beliefs are still foundational to Brethren belief and practice today. This was fully embodied in the motto of an early Brethren: *For the glory of God and my neighbors good*. More recently, Brethren have used the tagline: *Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully, Simply, Together*.

Unfortunately, these beliefs do not seem to resonate in today's popular culture, where Christian values seem to be constantly under attack. The Church is facing unprecedented challenges. Within our own district, we find:

- It is difficult to find people willing to fill positions on District Board, Nominating Committee, Moderator and Camp Administrative Committee.
- Many of our churches are in survival mode, supporting buildings and staff, but with little resources (energy or finances) left for ministry outside the congregation. Most congregations can only support part-time pastoral positions.
- The pandemic disrupted the strong bond of fellowship that we historically had in our district, and it has not rekindled at the same depth.
- We currently have no youth coordinator and have difficulty getting participation at district sponsored events for youth.
- As throughout the denomination, few are going into pastoral ministry, requiring greater creativity in calling leadership.
- Sisters (Women's Fellowship) is active again; men's fellowship has also begun activities.
- Our mission statement focuses on resourcing our churches, individuals, and pastors, but does not include a mission for what we can work at together as a district.

The Church of the Brethren, like most mainline denominations, has experienced a significant decline in membership over the past 50 years. More recently, the Church of the Brethren has experienced division, primarily over the issue of homosexuality, causing many congregations to leave the denomination. Departing congregations want the denomination to exercise more authority and control over ministers and congregations that deviate from the church's official position on human sexuality. Within the Northern Ohio District, we have had four churches leave in 2023 (Mt. Pleasant, Mohican, Zion Hill, and County Line), two churches leave in 2024 (North Bend and East Nimishillen), two in 2025 (Dupont and Bristolville). Two more are withdrawing in 2026 (Chippewa, Sugarcreek East). Sadly, withdrawing churches in the Northern Ohio District express that their theological differences are not with the district, but with denominational leadership. Membership in the Northern Ohio District has decreased from 5,127 in 2013 to 1,977 in 2024 (the last year statistics are available).

Because the District has had financial reserves, it has been able to continue to function until now with the same level of leadership, staffing and programming as in the past. However, with the level of self-allocation giving decreasing due to the withdrawal of churches and with the level of support from the Hottle Fund decreasing each year, it is imperative that we re-examine all aspects of our mission as the Northern Ohio District so that we can continue to serve our membership in the most effective way possible with the resources that we have.

The Northern Ohio District Strategic Planning Committee

To this end, the District Board appointed a Strategic Planning Committee in November of 2024 consisting of six members, including a District Board member and the Moderator-elect. Members of the committee and their home churches include Dave Bassett, chair (Pleasant View), Erin Beebe, secretary (Maple Grove), Jessi Adams (Ashland Dickey), Karl Kelby (East Chippewa), Cindy Peel (Akron Springfield), and Sierra Swanson (Brook Park Community). Lisa Snyder (District Treasurer) and Kris Hawk (District Executive) are ex-officio members of the committee without vote.

The assignment for this committee was to prepare a strategic plan for the district by:

- Gathering data on strategic planning, staffing, fellowship activities, finances, and ministries of other districts, including hopes and limitations for moving forward.
- Gathering information from the committee, District Board, staff, clergy, and other district members on how the district is perceived, hopes for the district, and ideas for creative fellowship and ministry.
- Reviewing and bringing recommendations for a new or modified mission/vision statement to center the work of a strategic plan.
- Bring a preliminary report to the May 2025 District Board meeting and 2025 District Conference and a written strategic plan with specific goals and implementation plan to the 2025-2026 District Board seeking a recommendation to bring to District Conference 2026.

Information Gathered From Other Districts

A survey was prepared and sent to the other 22 districts of the Church of the Brethren across the United States. The survey was intended to discover how other districts are organized, funded, and staffed, what ministries and services are provided by the district, what challenges they are facing, and how they have evolved to face those challenges. The hope was that this might provide some insight into ways that our district might address similar challenges as we move forward. The following pages are a summary of their responses.

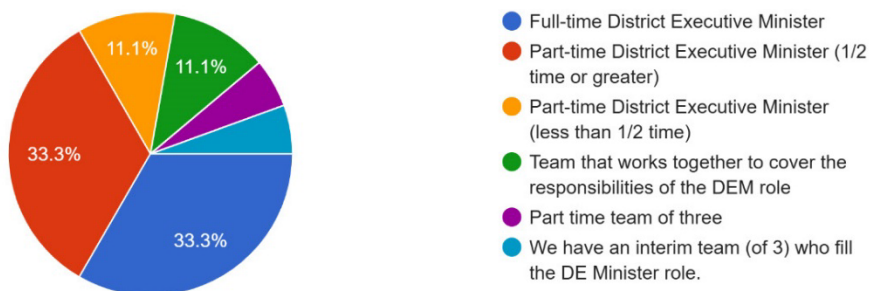
District Survey Responses as of 03/18/2025

District	Number of Churches	New Starts since 01/2020	Churches withdrawn since 01/2020	Churches Closed since 01/2020	How does your district currently fill the District Executive Minister role?	Office Space	Camp Ownership
Southern Plains	3	0	1	0	Team	In the home of the DEM	No
Pacific Northwest	11	0	1	1	Team	In one of our churches	Yes, no changes
Southeastern	13	0	34	0	PT DE (1/2 time or greater)	In the home of the DEM	Yes, growing
Michigan	18	0	4	2	PT DE (less than 1/2 time)	In the home of the DEM	Yes, reductions
Northern Plains	25	0	0	1	PT DE (1/2 time or greater)	In the home of the DEM	Yes, growing
Pacific Southwest	26	3	0	1	FT DE	In one of our churches	Yes, no changes
West Marva	27	0	27	2	PT DE (less than 1/2 time)	In the home of the DEM	Yes, no changes
Northern Indiana	34	0	5	0	PT DE (1/2 time or greater)	In one of our churches	Yes, no changes
Illinois/Wisconsin	36	1	0	4	PT DE (1/2 time or greater)	In one of our churches/work from home	Yes, no changes
Western Plains	36	0	1	0	PT DE (1/2 time or greater)	DEM remotely/Adm Assistant from home	no answer
S/C Indiana	37	0	4	0	FT DE	In one of our churches	Yes, no changes
Southern Ohio/KY	39	1	1	2	PT DE (1/2 time or greater)	In the home of the DEM	No, but program growing
Northern Ohio	40	0	6	2	FT DE	Stand alone	Yes, reductions
Western Pa.	41	0	18	5	Interim Part Team of 3	Stand alone	Yes, growing
Middle Pennsylvania	50	0	2	1	Interim Part Team of 3	Stand alone	Yes, no changes
Mid-Atlantic	53	0	4	1	FT DE	In one of our churches	No
Atlantic Northeast	60	3	12	2	FT DE	Stand alone	No
Shenandoah	86	1	16	1	FT DE	Stand alone	Yes, no changes
	635	9	136	25			
Have not yet responded							
Atlantic Southeast							
Idaho/Western Montana							
Missouri/Arkansas	11	0	0	2	PT DE (1/2 time or greater)	In one of our churches	
Southern Pa.							
Virginia							

From the Survey of Other Districts

How does your district currently fill the District Executive Minister role?

18 responses

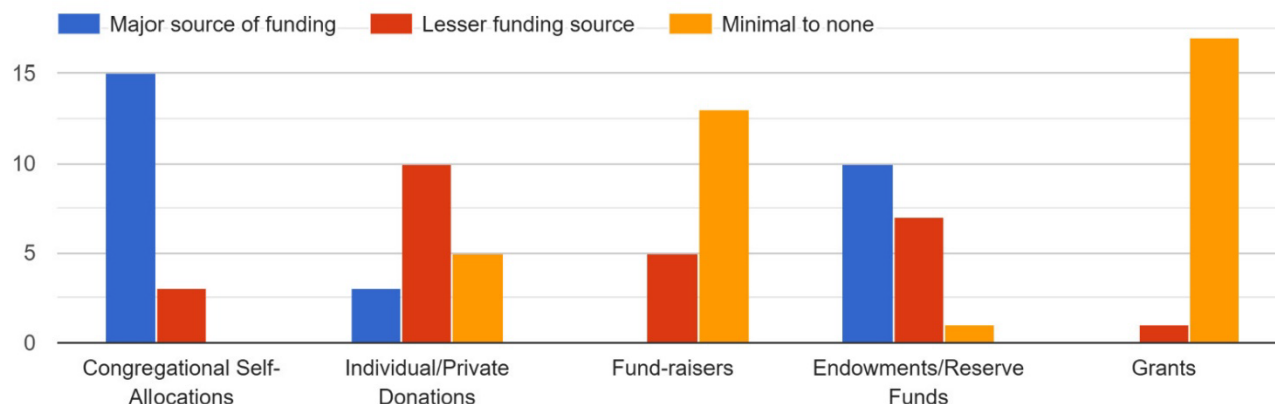


Which best describes the space that serves as your District Office?

18 responses

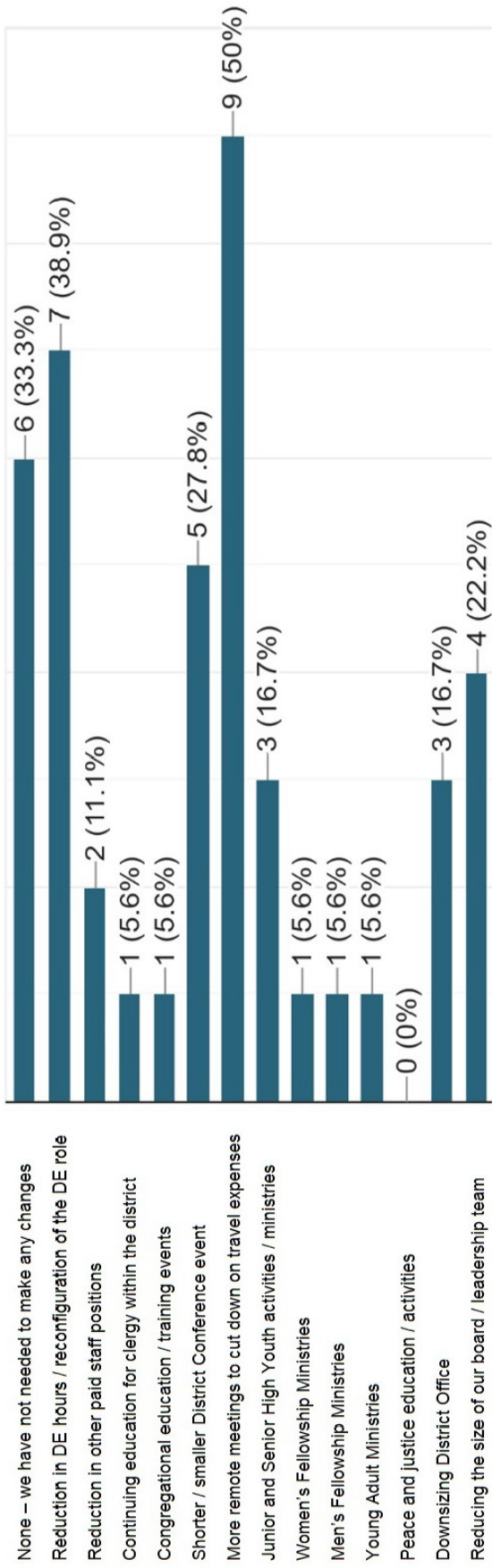


How does the district receive funding?



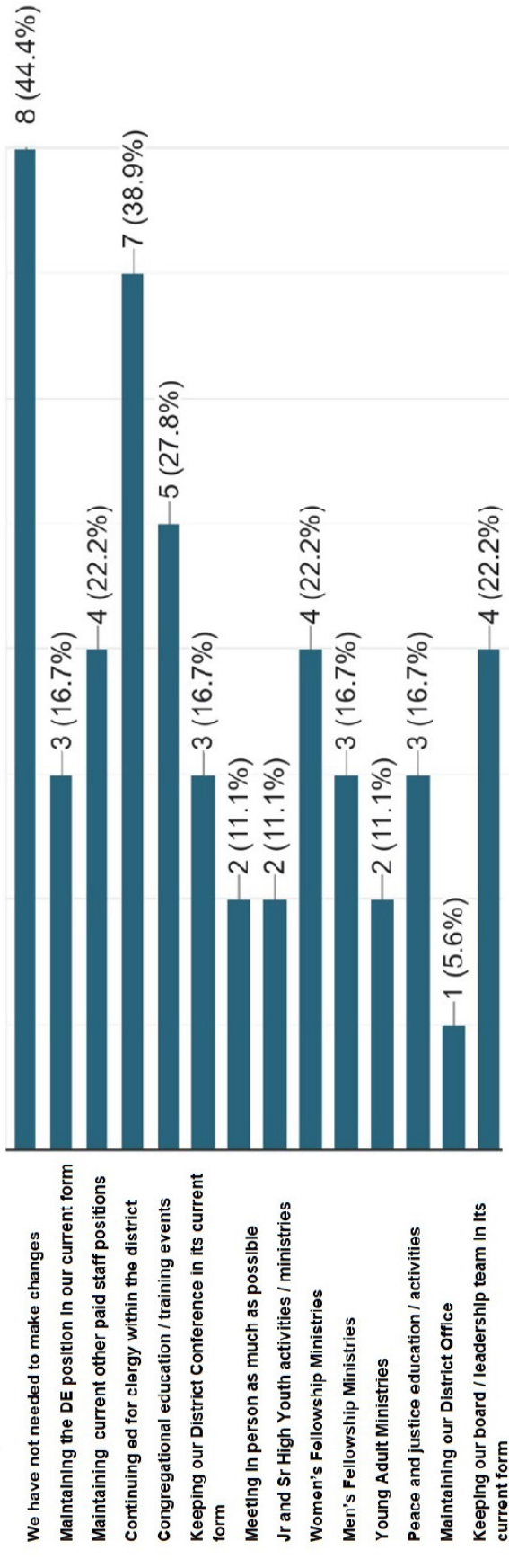
What changes have you had to make in staffing and programming due to the loss of churches and income over the last five (5) years? Please mark all that apply.

18 responses



Which of these were determined to be priorities to keep? Please mark all that apply.

18 responses



Insights and Conclusions

Some of the insights gleaned from the survey of the Church of the Brethren districts would be the following:

1. The Northern Ohio District is in the middle of the range of districts in terms of size (number of churches), with little correlation between district size and number of withdrawing churches or number of churches closing.
2. Districts with full-time DE's are generally our size or larger; districts with part-time DE's are generally our size or smaller.
3. Districts with stand-alone offices tend to be our size or larger; districts smaller than Northern Ohio tend to have offices in homes or share space in one of their churches.
4. Camp ownership does not relate to district size.
5. Ministries carried out by the DE in Northern Ohio are similar to those in most other districts
6. Funding sources for most districts are similar to Northern Ohio with congregational self-allocations and endowments/reserve funds being the major sources. Private donations, fundraisers, and grants are minor sources of funding for most districts.
7. The most common changes that other districts have made due to loss of churches and income over the past five years include:
 - Reduction in DE hours (7 districts)
 - Shorter/smaller District Conferences (5)
 - Reducing travel costs with more zoom meetings (9)
 - Fewer districts reported downsizing the district office (3) and reducing the size of their boards (4) as changes that have been made.
8. Priorities that districts reported as important to keep included:
 - Maintaining current staff (4 districts)
 - Continuing education for clergy (7)
 - Congregational education/training events (5)
 - Women's fellowship ministries (4)
 - Keeping the board/leadership team in its current form (4).

Information Gathered From Within the District

A survey was prepared and sent to members of the Northern Ohio District. The survey was intended to discover their opinions and perception of the district, their hopes for the district, any creative ideas they might have to offer, and what importance they placed on the various services that the district provides. The following are key takeaways from their responses.

When asked to rate the importance of the following district and church elements from 1 (not important) to 5 (very important), the rank and average scores were as follows:

1. Youth ministries 4.157
2. Supporting individual congregations' mission and ministry 4.111
3. Credentialing ministers 4.111
4. Help with pastoral calling and placement 4.083
5. Helping churches with conflict management 4.083
6. Continuing education for ministers 4.018
7. District conference 3.84
8. District church camp 3.79

9. Knowledge of district news 3.77
10. District events 3.47
11. To increase the number of churches 3.07
12. Belonging to a large district 2.82

When asked which roles of the District Executive were essential to continue if the DE was a part-time position, they ranked in the following order:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Help with pastoral calling | 92.6% |
| 2. Credentialing ministers | 80.6% |
| 3. Being a pastor to the pastors | 70.4% |
| 4. Helping churches with conflict | 69.4% |

When asked about hopes for the future of the district, responses centered around the following themes:

1. **Youth** – developing and encouraging youth programs
2. Spiritual **revitalization** of our congregations, sticking to Biblical truth
3. More **fellowship** and encouragement of our congregations
4. More **communication** with congregations
5. **Unity** – to prevent more churches from leaving
6. Support for the **camp**
7. Encouragement and support for **Pastors**

Ideas put forth to work toward as a district included (in no particular order):

1. Sustain district events that support and revitalize churches; help churches grow.
2. Develop a strong youth program.
3. See the camp grow and become self-sustaining.
4. Improve communication; help churches know each other better; become better connected.
5. Stay true to God's word.
6. Work on unity, retaining the churches remaining.

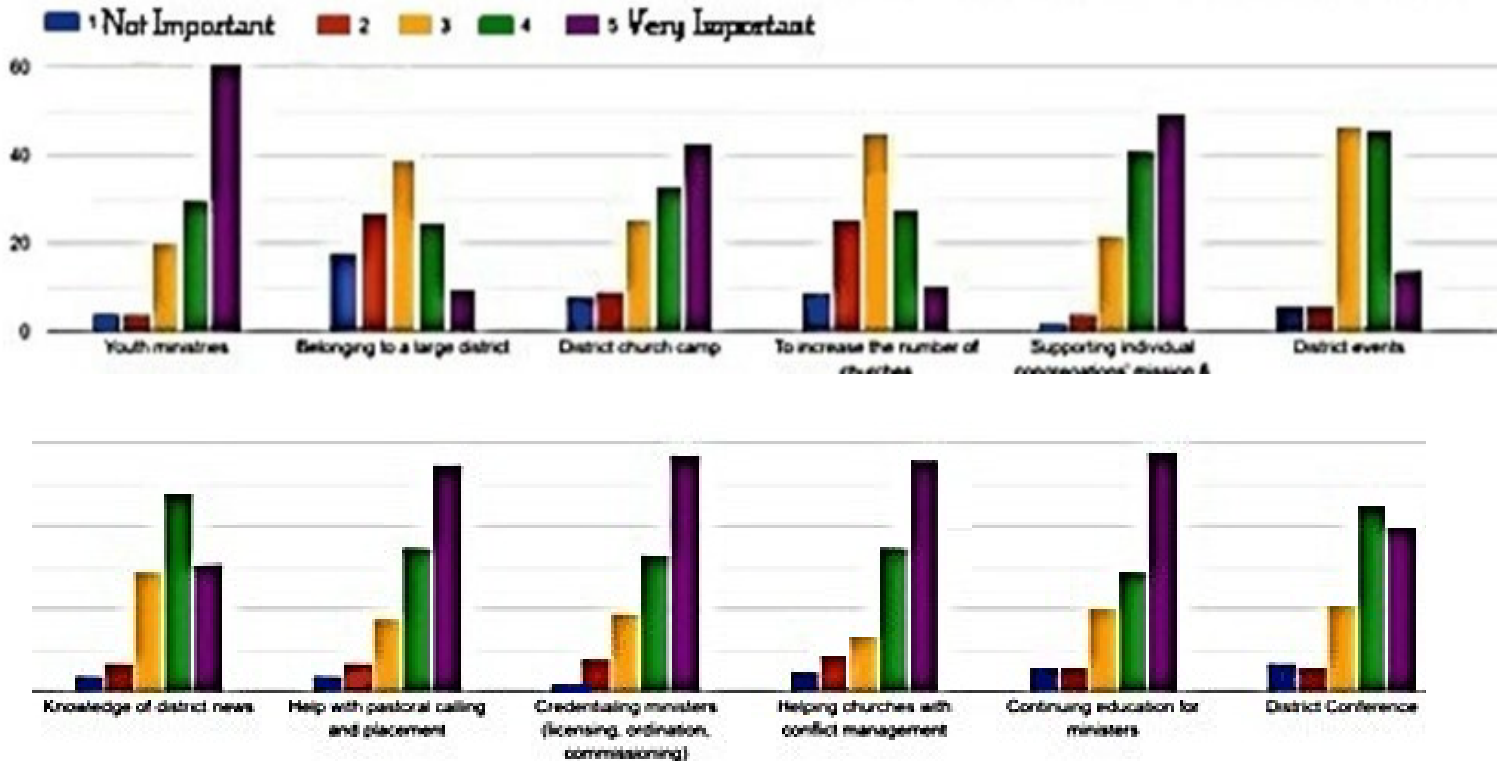
Insights and Conclusions

While the survey sampled only a small fraction of the district's total membership (approximately 5 to 6%), if we were to draw some of the insights from the results of the survey, they would be the following:

1. Youth ministry is an important priority for many members. Even though many churches lament the fact that they have little or no youth in their congregations, ministry to youth is important because without youth, our churches and the district have no long-term future. The district has had little response from youth in attending organized youth activities and events for over 15 years despite having gifted leadership in the Youth Coordinator role. And we have been unable to fill the Youth Coordinator position since the end of 2023. A successful youth program in the district will require a new and different approach than in the past.
2. The District Executive will continue to play a vital role in the district. While many of the DE's primary duties in the past will continue into the future, it may become necessary to allow some of those duties to be assumed by others when/if the DE position becomes less than full-time.
3. Communication and relationship building becomes especially important as we seek unity and stronger ties between the churches within the district and between the churches and the district.

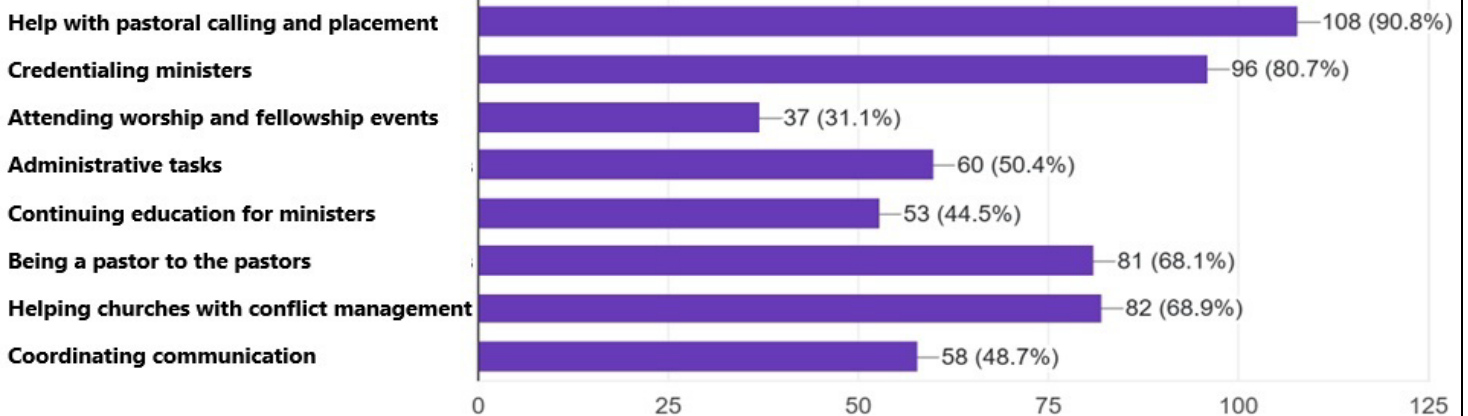
From the Survey within our District

Rate the following district and church elements based on how important you feel they are.



As our funds decrease, the position of District Executive will need to move to a part-time position. Which of these roles of the District Executive do you feel are essential and need to continue? Mark all that apply.

119 responses



How the District is Funded

Self-Allocation Income

Prior to 2009, the district's primary source of income was from self-allocation giving by the district's churches. Beginning in 2009, the budget was supplemented by monies from the Hottle Fund (which will be discussed later), but self-allocation giving has always provided the largest share of the district's budget. A summary of self-allocation giving over the past 10 years is shown on the following page. Giving increased from \$112K in 2015 to a peak of \$132K in 2021. In 2022, several congregations which were anticipating withdrawal from the denomination reduced or stopped giving to the district. As four congregations withdrew in 2023, followed by two more in 2024, the total self-allocation giving has been further reduced. Interestingly, the amount of self-allocation giving by the non-withdrawing churches in the district has remained relatively steady over the 10-year period at around the \$80K level. This is quite amazing, considering the total membership in the district has decreased over this same time period by over 50%! The per capita giving nearly doubled in the seven years from 2015 to 2022, far exceeding the rate of inflation during that period.

While we cannot predict the future membership in the Northern Ohio District Church of the Brethren, we can say that the churches remaining to date have been faithful in supporting the district at a level around \$80,000. Unfortunately, with additional churches withdrawing from the district in 2026, we felt that it was prudent to reduce the projected level of self-allocation giving to \$75,000 as we analyze possible budget scenarios going into the future.

Self Allocations Analysis

Year	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	1982	1977
Total SA giving to the District	\$78,420	\$90,362	\$111,319	\$128,008	\$132,434	\$131,405	\$127,874	\$121,695	\$120,241	\$115,573	\$112,435	\$91,839	\$66,131
% change yr to yr	-13.20%	-18.83%	-13.04%	-3.34%	0.78%	2.76%	5.08%	1.21%	4.04%	2.79%			
Amount given by withdrawing Churches	\$3,800	\$19,300	\$32,133	\$43,635	\$49,780	\$45,180	\$41,880	\$41,880	\$39,005	\$33,880	\$31,520	\$10,346	\$9,162
% given by the withdrawing Churches	4.85%	21.36%	28.87%	34.09%	37.59%	34.38%	32.75%	34.41%	32.44%	29.31%	28.03%	11.27%	13.85%
Given by Remaining	\$74,620	\$71,062	\$79,186	\$84,373	\$82,654	\$86,225	\$85,994	\$79,815	\$81,236	\$81,693	\$80,915	\$81,493	\$56,969
District Membership ³	1,939	1,977	2,110	2,799	3,255	3,669	4,388		4,678	4,917	4,903		9,035
Per capita giving	\$40.44	\$45.71	\$52.76	\$45.73	\$40.69	\$35.81	\$29.14	#DIV/0!	\$25.70	\$23.50	\$22.93	#DIV/0!	\$7.32
% change yr to yr	-11.53%	-12.93%	15.37%	12.38%	13.62%	22.89%			9.36%	2.49%			
% increase in CPI	2.60%	2.9%	3.1%	8.0%	4.7%	1.2%	1.8%	2.4%	2.1%	1.3%	0.1%	6.2%	6.7%

Notes:

1. Giving for 1982 and 1977 are pledged amounts.
 2. All other years are actual giving.
 3. 2025 membership is estimated.
- Preliminary Conclusions:
1. In most years when total self allocation giving decreased, the per capita giving has increased and outpaced inflation.
 2. Despite smaller membership, giving by the remaining churches has remained fairly steady over time at the \$80,000 level.

Withdrawing Churches

	2026	2025	2024	2023
Chippewa		Dupont	North Bend	Mt. Pleasant
Sugarcreek East		Bristolville	E. Nimishillen	Mohican
				Zion Hill
				County Line
38	133	299	536	# of members in withdrawing churches by year

Hottle Fund Income

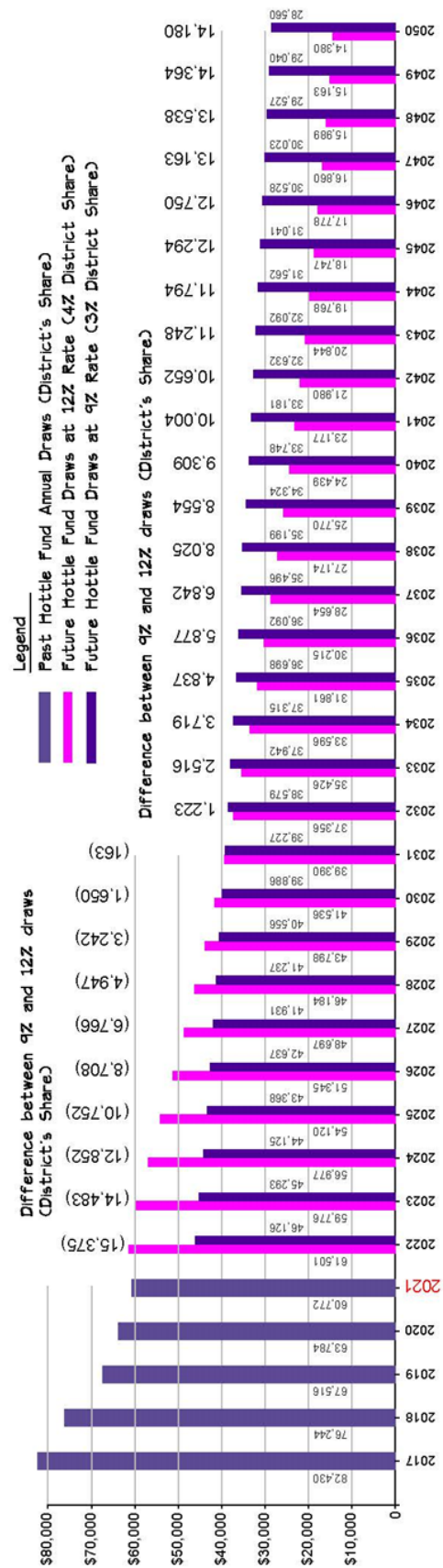
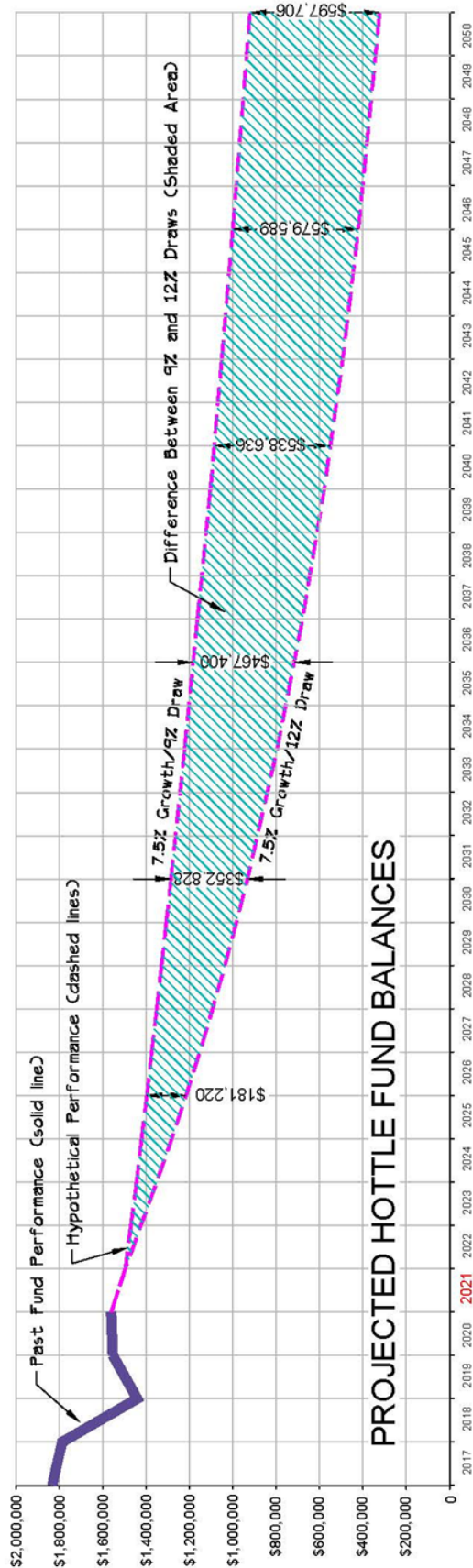
The Hottle inheritance was received by the Northern Ohio District in two installments: \$1,500,000 in 2007 and \$500,000 in 2009. The district began using the funds to supplement the district budget in 2009. In 2010, the District Board set the draw amount at 4% and it was increased to 5% in 2014. As the amount of the draw from the Hottle Fund increased, the district budget also increased. From 2009 to 2016, the district budget increased by 25%, while inflation increased by only 9.6%.

At a time when the rate of return on the Hottle Fund invested in the Brethren Benefit Trust was approximately 7.5%, and only 4 to 5% was being withdrawn, the fund grew larger over time. Feeling the fund was not being properly utilized, the following motion was brought to the 2016 District Conference and approved:

1. To give a tithe on the original amount of money received of \$200,000. \$152,000 was to go to Inspiration Hills and \$48,000 would go to the Northern Ohio District Churches/Fellowships (\$1,000 each).
2. Beginning in 2017, the yearly draw was changed to 12% (taken quarterly): up to 4% for District operating expenses, up to 4% for Inspiration Hills operating expenses, and 4% for church/fellowship grants with the unused grant amount distributed equally to the churches/fellowships.

Because the rate of withdrawal (12%) was higher than the average rate of return (7.5%), the fund balance decreased over time. From a high in 2013 of \$2,342,322, the fund balance fell to \$1,561,933 at the end of 2020. Due to the declining fund balance, the amount of funds available to support the district budget has decreased every year. In 2016, the fund provided \$89,210. By 2021, the amount had decreased to \$60,772. In an effort to sustain the Hottle Fund over a longer period of time, creating the opportunity for more income for the benefit of future generations, the District Board asked the 2021 District Conference to reduce the draw percentage from 12% (4% each to District, Camp and Church grants) to a 9% draw (3% each to District, Camp and Church grants). The resulting amount of the annual draw would be less for the first 9 years, but greater every year thereafter. This change, which was approved, is graphically illustrated on the following page labeled Attachment 'B,' which was included in the *2021 District Conference Agenda* book. Note that the Hottle Fund is invested through Eder Financial (the successor to Brethren Benefit Trust) in a mix of stocks and bonds and is subject to market fluctuations. The actual fund balance for the start of 2025 is approximately \$100,000 lower than the projected balance shown on the chart due to market losses in recent years.

The actual amount of the Hottle Fund contribution to the budget is determined each year by taking the average end balances of the previous three years. The Hottle Fund contribution to the district budget in 2024 was \$41,187.20. In 2025, the amount was \$38,049.40. In 2026, we will receive \$38,869.68. The amounts for future years included in budget projections have been interpolated from the graph on the following page and are only approximate.



PROJECTED HOTTE FUND DRAWS
With 7.5% Annual Growth + Comparing 9% and 12% Yearly Draws
Northern Ohio District Church of the Brethren

Attachment 'B' 5-15-2021

Reserve Funds

Northern Ohio District budgets in recent years have indicated that shortfalls in income from self-allocations and Hottle Fund sources would be made up by using “Reserve Funds.” Initially, these were simply carryover funds from prior years when income exceeded expenses (usually the result of unfilled staff positions). More recently, funds have been generated by financial settlements from withdrawing churches. In 2020, the District Board adopted a *Northern Ohio District Withdrawal Policy* which provides a process to be followed by any Northern Ohio District church wishing to withdraw from the Church of the Brethren. If, after the prescribed meetings and votes have been taken, the withdrawing congregation is to continue in its present facility, a financial settlement is paid to the District to “support the remaining members through a time of transition and help reduce the loss of future donations to the District.” Through this process, the District has acquired a substantial amount of Reserve Funds which have been invested until needed. The North Bend Church also reimbursed the District for a grant they had received for the purchase of property. This is also included in Reserve Funds. Any additional funds received from future withdrawing churches will be placed in this fund as well. As of January 1, 2026, the fund is \$464,405.

Peace Endowment

The District Peace Advocate is funded by the Peace Endowment. Neither the budget cost nor the income from the endowment are being considered in this study.

Special Funds

The general fund attempts to fund primarily the cost of staff salaries and day-to-day operations of the District. In an attempt to provide adequate funding for special ministries, activities and events of the District Board and its Commissions, various special funds have been established. These included the following:

- Church Improvement Loan Fund – for no interest loans to district churches for building improvements.
- Congregational Growth and Revitalization Fund – funds for special programs, events and retreats sponsored by District Board Commissions as well as scholarships for churches in need to send delegates to District Conference.
- District Disaster Ministries Fund – funds to be used for disaster response.
- Excellence in Ministries Fund – continuing education programs, scholarships, and pastor recognition programs.
- Student Minister’s Fund – scholarships for student ministers and for expenses of the BBI program for ministerial training.
- Youth Ministries Fund – funds to support youth activities and events.

These descriptions provided are not complete and various restrictions and conditions may apply, but even with limitations in the general fund budget, ministry will be able to continue in the district because of these funds.

Budget Projections

Option 1

To analyze what level of budget the Northern Ohio District can sustain in the future, let us first look at the implications of **not** making any changes to the budget from its current level. This scenario is not as dire as it looked in 2025 because of actions taken by District Board to rein in spending as recommended in the 2025 preliminary Strategic Planning Report and because of a significant donation to Reserve Funds from the disorganization of the congregation of Lake Breeze. For 2025, the total general fund budget presented to and approved by District Conference was \$195,682. Because the District Youth Worker position was not filled during the year, the total actual spending for the district in 2025 was \$160,255. For 2026, the Youth Worker position was eliminated, and a \$5,000 stipend was placed in the budget to fund youth leadership services. The budget passed by District Conference for 2026 was \$166,066. Subtracting the Peace Worker stipend of \$3,000 leaves 163,066. This will be the budget level for Budget **Option 1** shown for 2026. For this scenario, the following assumption are also used:

- The amount of reserve funds at the end of-2025 is \$464,404.
- The budget will grow at 2% each year from the 2026 budget level to allow for inflation costs.
- The Reserve Fund will earn 3.5% annual interest.
- Self-allocations will remain steady at \$75,000 per year.
- The Hottle Fund decreases each year as per the chart published in the *2021 District Conference Agenda*

We can see from this scenario that within seven years the District has expended all the reserve funds, and the yearly budget will have grown by \$20,000 from the current 2026 budget.

with a shortfall of over \$76,000+ each year thereafter. Obviously, this is an unsustainable option. Any option that does not cut the budget will require the District to strip money out of other designated funds. The Church Improvement Loan Fund (CILF) is currently the most underutilized fund and most likely to be used to supplement the General Fund. With approximately \$350,000 currently in the fund, totally depleting this fund would extend the solvency of the General Fund for only 4 1/2 additional years.

Option 2

Option 2 explores an approach that steps the budget down over a period of years beginning in 2025. The example provided reduces the District's budget by \$20,000 at each step, with 5 years between each step. Similar assumptions are used as in Option 1 for the amount of reserve funds, budget growth due to inflation, interest rate and self-allocation giving. This approach has several advantages, including:

1. It will be easier to reduce the budget in small, incremental steps, resulting in less impact on the District's ministry at any one time.
2. The District has 5 years to prepare for each step.
3. If additional resources become available, the time before the next step can be extended or eliminated.

As one can see in this scenario, the Reserve Funds extend the solvency of the general fund for 10 years. At that time, the district's budget would be \$10,000 less than the current 2026 budget and funds would need to be transferred from the CILF, or further budget cuts would be necessary to keep the general fund solvent.

An analysis of recommended budget cuts will be discussed further under the *Budget and Program Strategies* section of this report

Option 1

Budget Projection Keeping Current Staff & Programing with 2% Annual Inflation Allowance

Year	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>	<u>2027</u>	<u>2028</u>	<u>2029</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u>2031</u>	<u>2032</u>	<u>2033</u>	<u>2034</u>	<u>2035</u>
Revenue Source											
Self Allocations	\$78,420	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000
Hottle Funds	\$38,049	\$38,500	\$37,900	\$37,300	\$36,700	\$36,000	\$35,500	\$35,200	\$34,300	\$33,750	\$33,200
Reserve Int.@4%	\$0	\$16,254	\$15,088	\$13,746	\$12,337	\$10,740	\$8,944	\$6,947	\$4,746	\$2,310	-\$359
From Reserves	<u>\$35,942</u>	<u>\$33,312</u>	<u>\$38,339</u>	<u>\$40,281</u>	<u>\$45,617</u>	<u>\$51,307</u>	<u>\$57,064</u>	<u>\$62,891</u>	<u>\$69,593</u>	<u>\$76,252</u>	<u>\$83,217</u>
Total	\$152,411	\$163,066	\$166,327	\$166,327	\$169,654	\$173,047	\$176,508	\$180,038	\$183,639	\$187,312	\$191,058
Remaining Reserve	\$464,405	\$431,093	\$392,754	\$352,473	\$306,856	\$255,549	\$198,485	\$135,594	\$66,001	-\$10,250	-\$93,467

Assumptions:

1. Amount of Reserve at end of 2025 is \$464,405.
2. Annual budget grows at 2% each year from 2026 budget
3. Reserve will earn 3.5% annual interest
5. Self allocations will remain at \$75,000 per year
6. Hottle fund decreases each year as per chart published in 2021 District Conference Agenda
7. District Peace worker and funding not included since it is funded separately
8. Budget numbers for 2025 are actual spending
9. Budget numbers for 2026 are the District Conference approved budget for 2026

0.035	0.02	\$75,000	\$163,066
Int. Rate	Budget Growth Rate	Self Allocations/Year	2026 Budget

Option 2

Budget Projection – Hold to 2% Annual Growth, Reduce Budget by \$20,000 Every 5 Years

Year	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035
Revenue Source											
Self Allocations	\$78,420	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000
Hottle Funds	\$38,049	\$38,500	\$37,900	\$37,300	\$36,700	\$36,000	\$35,500	\$35,200	\$34,300	\$33,750	33200
Reserve Int.@3.5%	\$0	\$16,254	\$15,088	\$13,746	\$12,220	\$10,501	\$9,275	\$7,880	\$6,314	\$4,547	\$2,584
From Reserves	\$35,942	\$33,312	\$38,339	\$43,607	\$49,127	\$35,007	\$39,863	\$44,751	\$50,473	\$56,112	\$42,014
Total	\$152,411	\$163,066	\$166,327	\$169,654	\$173,047	\$156,508	\$159,638	\$162,831	\$166,087	\$169,409	\$152,797
Remaining Reserve	\$464,405	\$431,093	\$392,754	\$349,147	\$300,020	\$265,013	\$225,150	\$180,399	\$129,926	\$73,814	\$31,800

Year	2036	2037	2038
Revenue Source			
Self Allocations	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000
Hottle Funds	32600	32100	31600
Reserve Int.@3.5%	\$1,113	-\$537	-\$2,371
From Reserves	\$47,140	\$52,407	\$57,921
Total	\$155,853	\$158,970	\$162,150
Remaining Reserve	-\$15,340	-\$67,747	-\$125,668

Assumptions:

1. Amount of Reserve at end of 2025 is \$464,405.
2. Annual budget held to 2% growth for 6 years, then reduced by \$20,000, then process repeated for next 6 years
3. Reserve will earn 3.5% annual interest
4. Self allocations will remain at \$75,000 per year
5. Hottle fund decreases each year as per chart published in 2021 District Conference Agenda
6. District Peace worker and funding not included since it is funded separately
8. Budget numbers for 2025 are actual spending
9. Budget numbers for 2026 are the District Conference approved budget for 2026

0.035	Budget Growth Rate	\$75,000	\$163,066
Int. Rate	Self Allocations/Year	2026 Budget	

Mission Statement

The current mission statement of the Northern Ohio District reads as follows:

The mission of the Northern Ohio District is to resource congregations, ministers, and individuals in all aspects of Christian life so that we may continue the work of Jesus Christ in our world today – peacefully, simply, together.

A mission statement is intended to express an organization's core values and purpose. In a concise statement, it sets forth what an organization does and perhaps how it does it. Our mission statement should help set the direction for the district's work and clearly state our purpose. The district has printed the mission statement frequently on directories, district board manuals, website, etc. and should continue to do so. As we re-examine the ministry of the Northern Ohio District in light of our reduced size and budget capabilities, it is an opportune time to re-examine our mission statement to center the work of the district going forward in line with the priorities and expectations outlined in the strategic plan. As we re-examined the mission statement of the district, the Strategic Planning Committee asked the questions: "What is the most important work that our district is trying to accomplish?" and "What is our shared purpose?" We agreed that the following phrases most succinctly describe the role of our district going forward:

1. *Connecting and supporting our congregations, ministers, and individuals.* To stay vital as a district, we need to strengthen our connections to each other.
2. *Continuing the work of Christ.* This is our core mission.
3. *Peacefully, Simply, Together.* This describes how we want to carry out our mission and ties into the denominational tagline.

The Strategic Planning Committee considered how to communicate these thoughts into a concise statement that would guide the work of the district going forward. We ultimately agreed to suggest only a slight modification to the current mission statement changing the word "resource" to "connect and support" which more clearly describes the mission. The updated statement would read as follows:

The mission of the Northern Ohio District is to connect and support congregations, ministers, and individuals in all aspects of Christian life so that together we continue the work of Jesus Christ in our world today – peacefully, simply, together.

Finding a Path Forward

Trends in Church Attendance

The Messenger, the Church of the Brethren's monthly publication, published a series of articles in 2021 documenting the state of church attendance. Membership in the Church of the Brethren reached a peak around 1960 at 201,219. By 2019, membership in the Church of the Brethren in the US and Puerto Rico had fallen below 100,000. Average worship attendance was 32,488. While recent attention had focused on congregations leaving the denominations, longer term decline in membership has had far more to do with the size of congregations than with the number of congregations. This can be seen by looking at the chart on page 11. In 1970, the Northern Ohio District had 9,035 members. By 2015, that number had shrunk to 4,903, a 45.7% decrease.

Another trend in church attendance is the decline in attendance rates. In 2000, average worship attendance in the Church of the Brethren was 53% of total membership. By 2019, it had declined to 33%. The good news is that new survey data indicates that US church attendance has stabilized after decades of decline exacerbated by the pandemic. Recent surveys by Gallup and Pew Research Center indicate that 30% of Americans now attend church regularly (weekly or almost every week) and another 10% attend at least once a month. Unfortunately, 55-57% seldom or never attend religious services.

Survey data also indicates a recent surge in church attendance among Millennial and Gen Z generations, although they are more likely to attend non-denominational churches. How do we connect with these younger generations? It will require adaptability and a renewed focus on how they connect with faith in today's world. To do this will require us all to understand how generational differences impact our values, needs, preferences and attitudes.

Understanding Generational Differences in the Church

In I Corinthians 12, Paul compares the Church to the human body. Each has many parts, each with a special purpose, each necessary, all parts working together in harmony for the benefit of the entire body. In verse 25, Paul warns that "the members all alike should have a mutual interest in and care for one another." To fully understand one another, we need to understand generational differences and how this may manifest in varying worship styles and distinct attitudes regarding family life, gender roles, institutions, politics, lifestyles, etc. Each generation possesses its own fundamental notions and worldview that have been shaped by the common experiences unique to that generation. Although we live in the same world, different generations do not experience the world in the same way. Generations tend to think and act in unison on many issues. In order to understand these differences, examining the characteristics of each generation is important. Listed below are the commonly recognized "generations" and the traits of each.

Traditionalists - Born 1925 – 1945

Dependable – Straightforward – Tactful - Loyal

Shaped by: The Great Depression, World War II, radio and movies

Values: Hard work, loyalty, respect for authority, family, appreciation for institutions

Basic needs: Love, acceptance, meaning or purpose, relationships, understanding

Communications style: Personal touch, handwritten notes

Worldview: Obedience over individualism, age equals seniority

Worship style: Traditional, structured

Baby Boomers – Born 1946-1964

Optimistic – Competitive – Workaholic – Team Oriented

Shaped by: Vietnam war, civil rights movement, Watergate
Values: Loyalty, teamwork, duty
Basic needs: Success includes not only wealth, but also emotional and psychological happiness
Communications style: Whatever is most efficient
Worldview: Achievement comes after paying one's dues, you sacrifice for success
Worship style: Celebrative, a spiritual searching generation
Boomers have been characterized as rebellious, affluent, and independent

Generation X – Born 1965-1980

Flexible – Informal – Skeptical – Independent
Shaped by: The AIDS epidemic, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the dot-com boom
Values: Quality of life issues, relationships, balance, independence
Basic needs: To have a meaningful purpose in life, yet live in comfort
Communications style: Whatever is most efficient
Worldview: Favoring diversity, resistant to change if it affects their personal lives
By 2028, Gen Xers will outnumber Baby Boomers

Millennials – Born 1981 – 2000

Competitive – Civic and Open Minded – Achievement Oriented
Shaped by: Columbine, 9/11, the internet
Values: Responsibility, teamwork, achievement, service, innovation
Basic needs: Experiences, connection with others, leadership that empowers, community engagement
Communications style: Internet messaging, texts, and email
Worldview: Seeking challenge, growth and development; more focused on God than on the institutional church

Generation Z – Born 2001 – 2020

Global – Entrepreneurial – Progressive – Less Focused
Shaped by: Diversity, life after 9/11, the Great Recession of 2008, access to technology
Values: independence, individuality, diversity, equity, creativity
Basic needs: Seek contemporary, authentic worship that relates to everyday life
Communication style: Social media, texts, internet messaging
Worldview: digital device addicts, new technologies

While each of these generational profiles indicate distinct attitudes about various aspects of life, we must remember that there is plenty of individuality within each group. Each person is a unique creation of God and individually gifted for service. We can, however, seek to understand how generational differences might create challenges within congregations. Older generations (Traditionalist and Baby Boomers) tend to prefer traditional hymns and services, finding comfort in familiar routines and practices. This may foster attitudes such as “This is the way we’ve always done it” or “Why change, this was always good enough in the past.” Whether spoken or implied, these attitudes may discourage younger generations which tend to prefer contemporary music and often seek a more dynamic style of worship that engages and relates to everyday life. Older generations may prioritize values such as loyalty, humility, stability, and tradition, while younger generations advocate for diversity, inclusion, innovation, creativity, and social action. Younger churchgoers may prefer more interactive and participatory form of worship and greater community engagement, while older members may favor a more passive approach to worship.

To foster a culture in our churches where we have “a mutual interest in and care for one another,” we need to address these generational differences with intentionality and understanding. Ways in which we can work at this may include:

- Prioritize listening to one another to gain an understanding of the historical and cultural contexts that have shaped each generation's beliefs and values.

- Implement small groups and activities that involve members of all ages to promote intergenerational relationships and collaboration.
- Create worship experiences that incorporate both traditional and contemporary practices to acknowledge the value of both styles of worship.
- Plan intentional studies about the characteristics and needs of different generations that can foster empathy and understanding within the church community.
- Encourage multi-generational work trips (BDM provides this opportunity)
- Start mentoring programs where older folks can teach younger people useful life skills.
- Include testimonies in the worship service so that both older people and younger people can share their life story with others who may not be familiar with their life's journey.
- Start a "Grandparenting" ministry for children and young parents in the church who live distant from their parents and grandparents.
- Empower youth by encouraging them to serve in the church using their gifts; whether on church committees, having input into song selections for the worship service, using their musical gifts, suggesting sermon topics, have leadership in worship, running technology, etc. Making a difference is vital to youth/young adults, so work with them on service projects where God's call to serve plays out in real life.

Why is all of this important? If we look at church membership, both in Northern Ohio and across the country, we can see that the older generations make up most of the membership of the church and consequently determine the style of worship in most of our churches. If we fail to understand and adapt to the needs of these younger generations, the church will continue to decline in membership and influence as more and more of these young people become discouraged and leave the church. Forty percent of the world's population is nineteen or younger. To meet their needs, churches need to be people centered, inclusive, and dynamic. Most churches today are word based while youth today are visually and technologically oriented and are accustomed to change at a fast pace. Today's youth want spirituality and faith experiences, not the traditional routines and worship they see at the typical church. They need experiences, participatory services, connection to others and leadership that empowers. The challenge today is to communicate with these younger generations and get them to understand and embrace God's word without compromising it. We must ask ourselves, are we empowering or inhibiting young people today in our churches.

Sources:

Purdue Global Infographic on Generational Differences

Becoming Family: Understanding Generations in the Church by Jeanine Bozeman

Shifting Expectations

As our district goes through a difficult time of transition brought about by shrinking membership, churches withdrawing due to theological differences with denominational practices, and the resultant decrease in operational funding, many are wondering what all this will mean for us as a district and the ministries that we support. To address these issues will require more than just budget and staff cuts and prioritizing which

ministries will be cut and which will be retained. It will require us to rethink what our purpose is as a district and re-energize our congregations in their commitment to each other, to the district, and to the denomination. If we do not do that, we will continue to see congregations withdraw and the district will face even more difficult times. Therefore, the strategies proposed going forward involve both recommendations to strengthen and connect our congregations, and strategies related to budget, funding, staffing, and program issues.

As we seek a new vision the future of the district, we need to keep ourselves open to new possibilities; being willing to give up programs and efforts that have failed, seeking new ways of doing ministry where past efforts have proven unfruitful or inefficient, and seeking out new possibilities for ministry and connection that can bring renewal, excitement, growth and energy to individuals, congregations and the district.

Congregational Connection and Renewal Strategies

Developing stronger connections between congregations and the district as well as stronger connections between individual congregations will require a multitude of strategies involving communication and shared fellowship opportunities. It is difficult to love each other if we do not know each other. Some connection strategies include:

1. Shared Activities and Ministries.

- Encourage congregations to share activities they are doing with neighboring churches and invite them to participate. This might include a game night, pancake breakfast, hayride, etc. Share a brief article and a picture in the Herald so that other churches can see your activity; they may want to plan something similar.
- A district wide activity might be fashioned after a friendly competition that takes place in the Northern Indiana District to see which church can collect the most soup between Christmas and the Super Bowl. Churches collect soup, keep track of the ounces collected, and then donate to a local organization or food bank. The district office tracks the amounts donated and then awards a “Souper Douper Trophy” to the congregation that received the most donations. Last year, with eleven congregations “competing,” the district collected a total 114,770 ounces of soup (that’s 896.6 gallons), a very impressive accomplishment for a very worthy cause.
- District wide collection of Church World Service kits.
- Church-to-Church, where one church shares a need (building a handicap ramp, painting, help with a local outreach ministry event, etc.) and sister churches assist.

2. Shared Services.

- Neighboring churches could plan Lenten services together. Go to different churches each week with different pastors speaking each week.
- Plan a Thanksgiving or Christmas Eve service and invite neighboring churches.
- Meet together for Love Feast.
- Churches should be encouraged to partner with another nearby church or churches in support of a shared ministry.
- Develop district wide zoom Bible studies / book studies.

3. Promote other ways for churches to get to know each other.

- Each church could send a picture of the inside of their church during services and a picture of their pastor to be used with the outside picture of their church during the district’s roll call at District Conference. These could also be used for churches that are featured in the District Prayer Calendar in the Herald.

- Churches could share a poster with some pictures and a brief description of what the church has been doing at events like District Conference and the Camp Fall Festival.
4. **Improve Communication.**
 - Work to create a communication system for congregations and individuals to feel well informed. Work to expand the district's e-mail list, post on social media, etc. Develop district reps for each congregation for feedback and to share information with their congregation.
 - Since it will be impossible for a part-time District Executive to visit each congregation every year, the District Board could have each board member take several churches to visit once or twice a year and provide a 5-minute update about what is happening in the district and at the camp.
 5. **Work to expand the Brethren Disaster Ministries (BDM) work within the district.** Not only is the need great, but strong friendships and bonds develop from these shared experiences that cross congregational and even district lines. Congregations that may see themselves as being too small to have effective ministry can gain a sense of purpose and fulfillment from participating in this important work. This work also helps individuals and congregations see the vital work that is being done by the denomination.
 6. **Promote the ministry of Camp Inspiration Hills.** The camp is a place where:
 - People of all ages meet and develop lasting friendships.
 - For many, especially youth, it is a place where faith development takes place.
 - Individuals, families, groups, or congregations can retreat from the hurried pace of the world and find peace, relaxation, and restoration in a beautiful setting.
 - Through their financial support, participation in volunteer opportunities and use of the camp, individuals and congregations can feel connected to this important ministry and to each other.
 7. **Learn from what is working at other churches.** As a part of this planning process, we asked all of the churches in the district to let us know what positive things were happening in their church and how they were connecting in their community. We have compiled some of their responses into the following lists with the hope that other churches might be inspired by these ideas and may be able to incorporate them into their own church program or ministry. There were many other responses sent in that indicate positive attitudes, good growth, etc. but are not actionable so they are not included here.

What positive things are happening in your church?

- We are in a stage of revitalization; people are growing in their faith.
 - New members are joining; some by baptism, some by reaffirmation.
 - Visitors that are returning and becoming involved in the life of the church.
 - Biblical based sermons and teaching.
-
- Seeing the power of God through healing.
 - Wednesday night Bible study utilizing *The Chosen* as a resource.
 - Using video resources to increase interest in Sunday morning Bible study.
 - Young adults and youth leading in worship.
 - A rotation of worship leaders that participate in worship.
 - Our prayer ministry. One person each week prays over our church throughout the service.
 - Moving from a traditional board structure to a leadership team model has allowed more people to be involved, using their gifts.
 - Ability inclusive ministry and partnership with the "All In" program.

- Planning a church mission trip in 2027 to Zambia; School sponsorship for a young man with disabilities in Zambia.
- Christian Ed. meets with each teacher to check in and make sure they have all they need.
- Spotighting a Sunday School class each Sunday during worship to encourage others to attend.
- Reaching out to the few kids that attend with cards, attending activities, dropping off a treat along with a “we miss you” note.
- Partnering with neighboring churches for love feast, Lenten services, and other special services.
- Involvement in NYC, BDM, district and annual meetings, camp.
- Transitioning away from traditional board structure.
- Yoking with nearby Brethren church to share worship, communion, picnics, and ministry.
- Having a service project each time there is a 5th Sunday of the month.
- Children’s time after worship with lunch, bible teaching, and fun activities
- Table time / small group discussions within Sunday morning service
- Utilizing the spaces in our church to allow discipleship groups.
- Church family growing closer together.
- Being a church that cares deeply and is welcoming.
- Renewed joy within the congregation.
- Ministry to those in the Good Shepherd home, bringing residents to the service each week.
- Volunteering at camp
- Weekly meals at the church followed by Bible study for different groups.
- Our fundraising meals draw both church and community members and give a chance to connect
- People from all over join services on YouTube/Facebook.
- Raise money to send kids to camp
- Sending more kids to camp that we have in the congregation!
- Beginning stages of forming a youth group.
- Having Sunday School ready for children of all ages – even though we do not yet have kids in all age groups.
- Empowering youth by calling out their gifts and giving them opportunity to participate in all aspect of church life.

How are you connecting in your community?

- Soup suppers/community meals (soup, chili, Swiss steak, breakfasts, spaghetti, ice cream...)
- Midweek monthly lunch
- Children’s events
- Holding festivals for the community or helping with festivals planned by the community
- Putting services on Facebook or YouTube
- Preschool or childcare programs
- House local programs that provide school release time for Christian instruction (Lifewise, etc.)
- Host 4-H, AA
- PB&J ministry – providing sandwiches weekly (24 loaves of bread!) for the homeless ministry.
- Movie nights; carnival days
- Visiting neighbors who are ill.
- Pastor conducting funerals for those who do not have a church home and the church providing a place.
- Collect coats, mittens & scarves and distributing through local agencies or schools.
- Decorate a mitten tree at Christmastime, then donate to a local school.
- Host fundraising meals to support individuals or families in need
- Put together hygiene kits for the local school
- Have a Blessing Box with food items and/or clothing for those in need.

- Outdoor game day (kickball, wiffleball, volleyball).
- Church picnic and water games day. Kite flying day. Hiking. Mini golf,
- A day at Inspiration Hills including hike, scavenger hunt, campfire – with community invited.
- Host 4-H groups and home school meetings
- Support a local food pantry
- Publicize church activities in local newspapers, flyers, and webpage.
- Disability ministries with a local residential facility.
- Christmas caroling.
- Allow community organizations to present during a portion of the worship services
- Provide a scholarship to a local graduating senior going to a local college or trade school
- Have a “Back to School Blast” giving away school supplies along with games, prizes, etc.
- Have a “Kids Closet” with clothing for elementary age kids
- Have a “Christ’s Closet” with clothing for all ages
- Our food pantry ministry reaching many – and draws many volunteers from outside the church. We provide food and a personal connection for those that come.
- Christmas / Thanksgiving baskets give an outlet to share with others.
- Special offerings when needs arise for community members (fire, accidents, etc.)
- Connect with a local school to see what is needed and how you can help.
- Make blankets for the terminally ill, aged, or disabled
- Support local community ministries with funds, goods, and volunteer hours: food banks, mobile food pantries, foster families, homeless shelters, pregnancy centers, associated charities.
- Provide personal hygiene kits to the local schools.
- Send kids to camp – include friends of church children and those in the community.
- Vacation Bible School.
- Webpage that is up to date.
- Summer socials for the community.
- Christmas open house.
- Publicize activities on the website, Facebook, and in the community.
- Give out laundromat debit cards and detergent pods to families in need
- Ministry to local residential facilities for the aged and disabled
- Support local missionaries
- Put a float in a local parade
- Bike ministry – repair and provide bikes for needed transportation.

If your church is interested in more information on any of these ideas, you may contact the district office, and they will put you in contact with the church or churches that have implemented these or similar programs or ministries.

Budget and Program Strategies

To achieve a sustainable budget as outlined in budget scenario 2 (page 17), the expenses of the district must be cut dramatically over the next ten years. To achieve these three stepped cuts of \$20,000 each will require some new ways of doing the business and program of the district. The following strategies should be considered:

1. **Revitalizing the Youth Ministry.** Although having a youth program ranked high on the district’s survey as a priority, the district has not had much success in filling the position recently, or in attracting youth to

scheduled activities. The District Board, through the Connections Commission, should explore a different approach to youth ministry which might include:

- a) Reactivate the Jr. and Sr. High Youth Cabinet positions.
- b) Have the Connections Commission/Youth Cabinet meet with the youth while they are attending Inspiration Hills Camp this summer (with signed parental consent forms), gather contact information, and enlist youth leadership from this group to join the Youth Cabinets to help plan youth events.
- c) The district should establish a Youth Ministry Fund. Roll the current Youth Scholarship fund over into this fund (or just change the name of the fund). Allow the fund to cover costs for any youth ministry related activity at the discretion of the Connections Commission. The District Board should transfer \$20,000 from the CILF into the Youth Ministry Fund to get the fund established.
- d) Create online meetings for Jr. High and Sr. High youth to keep them in touch with each other along with in-person meetings or events.

The changes outlined above, with the elimination of the Youth Coordinator position, will result in a significant reduction in the general fund budget while rejuvenating a youth program in the district.

2. **Restructuring the District Executive (DE) position.** Although the current budget allocates 43% of the budget to the DE position, reducing it to part time will not provide dramatic savings. The current DE has frozen her salary for many years, reduced travel expenses, and has no health insurance costs to the district. Replacing this position at scale, even at half time with some benefits may only net a small savings. Finding someone with the proper qualifications to only work half time may also be difficult. The District Board should be creative in planning for the DE position. Possible options to explore include seeking out retired ministers, ministers within the district who are currently serving part time and would desire additional part time employment or considering a team of 2 or more. Some of these strategies may require increasing the workload and salary of the District Administrative Secretary.

Note: The congregation of Lake Breeze, in the process of disorganizing, has provided the Northern Ohio District with a significant amount of money that remains from the sale of their building. They have expressed their desire that all or part of this money be used to see that the District Executive position remain a full-time position. If used for this purpose, this gift might extend the time before the DE position needs to be reduced to part time by anywhere from three to eight years, depending on future salary levels of the DE position.

If a time comes when the DE position becomes part-time, District Board should look at shifting some of the DE's responsibilities to others to allow the DE more time to work at relationship building to strengthen the connections between churches, ministers and individuals and the district. Some examples of jobs that could be taken over by someone else include:

- Ethics training (Ministerial Commission).
- Continuing education for ministers (BBI).
- Being a pastor to the pastors (Ministerial Commission).
- Helping churches with conflict management (Shalom Team).
- Office management (District Administrative Secretary).

3. **District Office considerations.** We see from the survey of districts across the country that only one-third of districts have a dedicated stand-alone office. Approximately one-third have a district office in

dedicated space within a church in the district. While the district would prefer to maintain a standalone district office, it may become necessary to evaluate the costs associated with maintaining the current office versus having an office within a church in the district. Eliminating our current standalone office would eliminate costs such as Groundskeeping (\$2,000), Facility Security (\$950), Facility Maintenance (\$1,500), and Real Estate Taxes (\$2,900) for a yearly savings of \$7,350. There would also be savings in property insurance, although the district would still need to maintain liability insurance. The current utility costs (\$3,250) would likely more than offset those costs at a new location and equipment costs (copier, telephone, etc.) might be shared with the host church. The value of the current facility would have to be explored, but given its location, condition, and fitness for use as a professional office (real estate, accounting, or investment office, etc.) the value might be \$200,000 or higher. Invested at 5%, that would return \$10,000 +/- per year. The rent and utility costs charged by the hosting church would determine if this strategy makes sense. This might also require moving out of the central area to find a church that could host an office.

There are several advantages to maintaining the current stand-alone office including:

- Location central to the district.
- Easy for visitors to locate on major thoroughfare with easy access to interstate.
- Excellent meeting facility for BBI and small groups with good handicap access.
- Better community image.
- Facility is in excellent repair.
- Room for district archives.

The only major drawback to maintaining a standalone office would be if the district can no longer afford the expense.

4. **Transition from print and postage to web-based delivery of communications** like the Herald. This will help curb the ever-increasing cost of postage as well as allow for expanded coverage of congregational events as outlined in the Congregational Connections strategies. Care must be taken to develop a list of those that continue to need printed documents so that communication is effective for all.
5. **Reduce the mileage rate.** The standard IRS mileage rate is the maximum that a business is allowed to deduct for miles driven for business use, and it is not the minimum that is allowed to be paid for business use of a personal vehicle. Negotiate a lower mileage rate with the employees that reflects their actual costs.
6. **Transfer audit fees for the camp to the camp.** When the camp becomes self-sustaining, have the camp pay for their own audit.
7. **Promote individual giving to the district** through a) Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD's) from IRAs for people over 70 ½ years old, b) end of life giving through wills and estates, or c) gifts to benefit special causes such as the district's disaster response work, youth ministries, etc.
8. **Be transparent about the financing of the district's work** to encourage congregational and individual giving toward the district's annual budget.

Organization Strategies

It is difficult to find people willing to fill positions on District Board, Nominating Committee, Moderator and Camp Administrative Committee, and many who serve are feeling exhausted from many years of service. Often,

the District Conference ballot in simply a slate of names, with only one name for each open position. And even then, it is difficult to find willing candidates. To address this issue, the following strategies should be explored:

1. Reduce the number of District Board members. Currently the District Board is composed of 18 members (four on each of 4 commissions, plus the board chair and secretary), each serving three-year terms. Each year, two are elected from each of the three areas of the district. Two of the four commissions have been meeting together with common goals. So, if the number of commissions were decreased to three and if each commission were to have three members instead of four, and only the board chair does not serve on a commission, this would reduce the total to 10 members. This would require electing 1 from each of the three areas each year, plus one member every three years. This would be three less positions to fill on the ballot most years (2 less in the year the at-large member is elected). This reduces the size of the board while ensuring ministries continue and while maintaining the balance of leadership from the three areas of our district. This would require a change in the constitution and by-laws.
2. Re-examine how the Nominating Committee is selected. Currently, two members are selected from each of the three areas in the district, and the moderator-elect is the chair. Consider having one member from each of the areas, the moderator-elect, and the past-moderator serving as the Nominating Committee Chairperson. This would be one less position to fill on the ballot each year. This would require a change in the constitution and by-laws.

Board action to date

Even before the preliminary report from the Strategic Planning Committee was presented at the 2025 District Conference, the District Board and District staff have seen the wisdom of many of the recommendations. Many changes within the responsibilities of the District Board and staff have already been implemented. Some, requiring constitutional changes are coming to the District Conference delegates this year.

Revitalizing Youth Ministry. The District Conference approved a budget for 2026 that reflects the Planning Committee's recommendations for revitalizing the youth ministry. This removes the paid District Youth Coordinator position (which has been empty since 12/2023), providing the ministry through the Connections Commission and the District Youth Cabinet. The District Board approved setting up a newly developed Youth Ministries Fund.

Under the renewal strategies, a number of the board's commission are increasing opportunities for fellowship and learning activities to connect us throughout the district. The Ministerial Commission added a "Day of Encouragement" for ministers and church leaders. The Stewardship and Finance Commission sponsored a Treasurer's Training Workshop. Our Brethren Disaster Ministries Coordinators (BDM) have been able to encourage participants to fill our commitment to this vital ministry that deepens fellowship while serving. Two women's Bible Studies via zoom began in the fall of 2025 and are continuing. Lenten services were held by both the Central and Eastern area churches, organized by the clergy from each of those areas (the eastern churches have done this for years, for the central area churches, 2026 was the second year after beginning in 2025). A soup challenge was issued to our district churches in the month of May by the Congregational and Connections Commissions.

Reducing expenses. The number of printed copies of the Herald mailed to churches has been decreased as more are accessing the electronic copy that is emailed and available online. The same is true of other publications, saving printing costs and postage. We have reduced District Office expenses, exploring discounts

through TechSoup that provides software for a minimal fee to nonprofits. Transparency about the financing of the district's ministry continues to be a high priority.

Under Organizational Strategies. Recommendations for changes to the constitution are coming to the delegates this year to reduce the size of the District Board to 10 members (down from 18) with three from each of our areas + one at-large member (from any area). While this is not the exact recommendation of the committee, it reduces the board even more and provides for a simpler way of tracking open positions. Also included with the constitutional revisions are the enactment of the recommendations for the Nominating Committee size and structure recommended by this committee.

A Final Word

It seems that we are living in an unsettled time. Each day, we find life becoming more complicated, more difficult, and perhaps less in line with our values and beliefs. Every day it seems we face the anxiety and emotional toll of job stress, family finances, busy schedules, health concerns, broken relationships –the list can go on and on. Add in the polarization and division within our country, a world that all too easily resorts to war and the erosion of moral and ethical values within our society; it can all weigh us down. This is the context within which we operate today. It can affect our world view, our communities, our relationships, and each of us personally – perhaps even our churches.

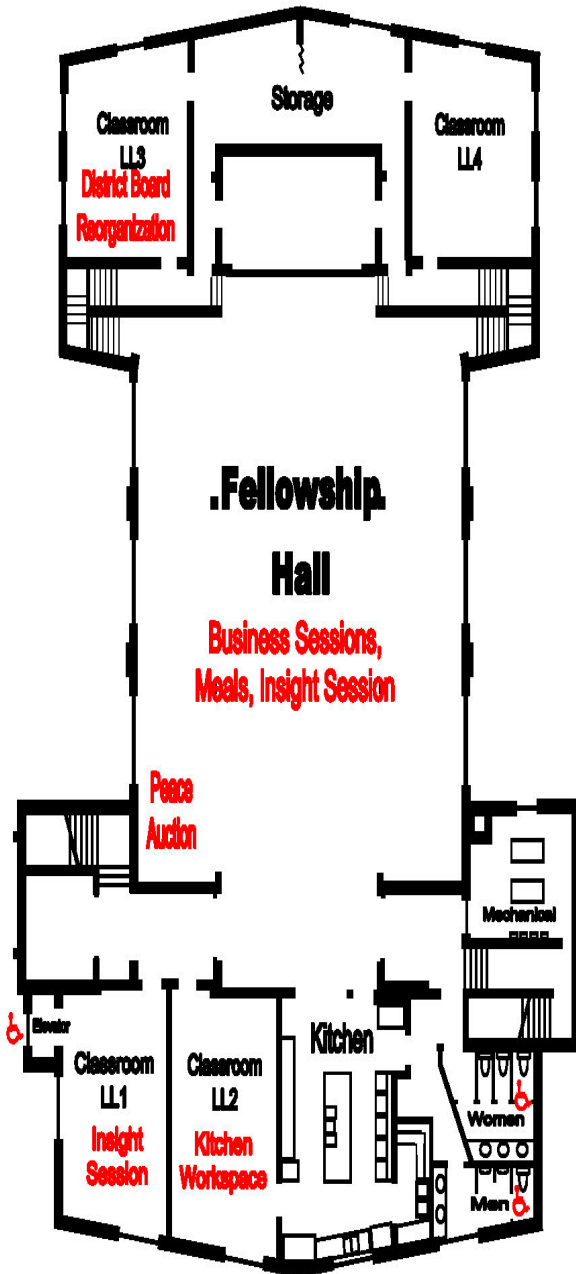
Does the turmoil of churches leaving our district and the changes this may require in our future leave you feeling anxious, discouraged or upset? It should not, and here are some reasons why:

1. While we don't know the future, we know the One who does. Our God is a powerful, creative, transformative God who calls us out of our comfort zone to rely on His grace, love, and wisdom. In this is our Hope!
2. Our core beliefs as Brethren are still the same today as they were when the Church of the Brethren was founded:
 - We believe in the Lordship of Jesus Christ
 - The New Testament is our ultimate guide for faith and practice
 - We believe in the Priesthood of all believers
 - We stand as a historic peace church
- We have distinctive practices such as trine immersion baptism, love feast, and anointing
- We believe in simple living – the avoidance of excess
- We prioritize service to others, including the work of Brethren Disaster Ministries. We believe that faith is demonstrated through action.
- We believe that our relationship with Jesus should be a profoundly personal religious experience resulting in a lifestyle that fully demonstrates our commitment to God.
2. The Northern Ohio District has been blessed with outstanding leadership, seeking to discern and follow God's will in all aspects of our ministry.
3. We have the promise that Jesus is sufficient to meet all of our needs. Let us remember these truths as we prayerfully move forward:
 - We are complete in Him (Colossians 2:10)
 - His grace is sufficient for every trial (2 Corinthians 12:9)
 - He will supply all your needs (Philippians 4:19)

- Our modern culture celebrates self-sufficiency as a virtue. While hard work and independence have their place, Jesus said in John 15:5, “Apart from me you can do nothing.” True sufficiency comes not from our own efforts, but from abiding in Christ.
- 4. Most importantly, we believe that Jesus had a lot to say about navigating the storms of life. How he lived and what he taught can help us respond to the things that weigh us down. Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, ended his teachings to the multitude with a story about a man who built his house on sand and a man who built his house on the rock. Jesus explained that “everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against the house, yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.” (Matthew 7:24-27) In our lives, and in the life of our Northern Ohio District, hard times may come our way. We may encounter difficulties, but we must remember that the way of Jesus does not lead us out of hardship, but through it.

We are more resilient and stronger as we work together for God’s Kingdom. Our prayer is that you will continue to walk and serve with us as we strive to be faithful servants of Christ in the Northern Ohio District Church of the Brethren.

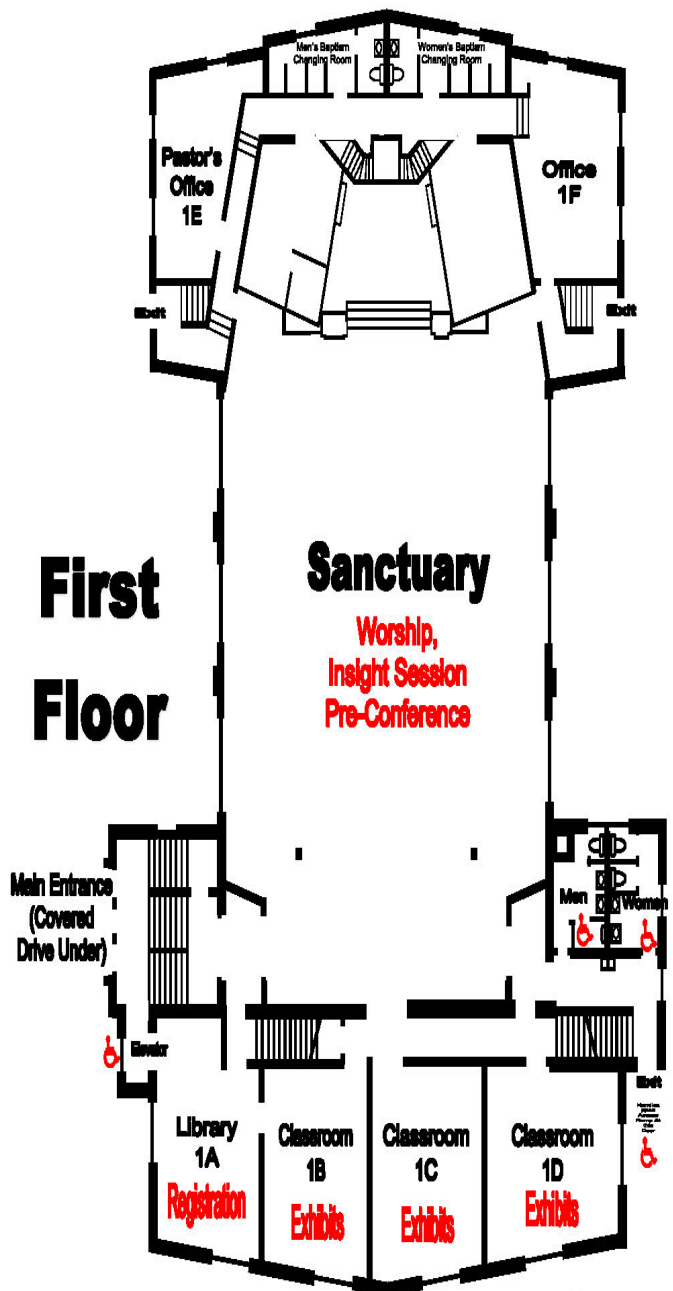
Basement



Akron Springfield

Church of the Brethren

First Floor



Second Floor

