

**157<sup>th</sup> District Conference Minutes**  
**Northern Ohio District of the Church of the Brethren**  
**August 14, 2021 – Akron Springfield Church of the Brethren**

**Moderator** – Brad Kelley, East Chippewa CoB

**Moderator-elect** – Brian Layman, Ashland First CoB

**Clerk** – Nancy Jacobsen, Mount Pleasant CoB

**Opening:** Moderator Brad Kelley offered prayer. Pastor Andrew Wenger gave a welcome from the Akron Springfield Church of the Brethren. The meeting was called to order. The theme of conference is “Focusing on Jesus’ Vision of His Church and For His Church”.

**Roll Call:** Clerk Nancy Jacobsen conducted the roll call of delegates. There were 67 delegates for 36 of our 47 churches.

**Approval of Agenda:** (in delegate packet) A motion was properly made and seconded to accept the agenda. Moderator Brad Kelley called for the approval of the agenda by a verbal response. The agenda for the day was approved.

**Consecration of delegates:** Moderator-elect Brian Layman led the consecration of the delegates.

**Conference rules:** Moderator-elect Brian Layman reviewed the conference rules. Moderator Brad Kelley changed the rule for minutes to speak were adjusted to 3 minutes for the first speech and 1 minute for the second speech.

**Introduction of conference officers:** Moderator Brad Kelley introduced the conference officers.

**Introduction of Guests:** Moderator-elect Brian Layman stated that there were no guests for the day due to Covid concerns.

**New Business item #1- ballot:** (sample ballot on page 10) Brian Layman, Moderator-elect, presented the ballot on behalf of the Nominating Committee. He asked for nominations from the floor. With no nominations from the floor, the ballot was approved, and the delegates voted on the ballot. The results came later in the day.

**District Staff Reports:**

Kris Hawk, District Executive (report on page 16-17) – Kris shared her gratitude for support of the churches throughout the pandemic. She also expressed appreciation for the staff and board. She asked for prayer to meet the extra challenges of this time. She called for prayer for sister churches and for love for one another.

Linda Fry, Peace & Conciliation Worker (report on page 19-20) – Linda was not able to attend due to Covid concerns.

Jenny Imhoff, Interim District Youth Coordinator (report on page 18) – Jenny talked about having both virtual and in person events. She stressed that National Youth Conference is coming up soon.

**District Board:** Bruce Jacobsen, District Board Chairman – (report on page 21) – One joy from this year was seeing folks from the district complete their training through the BBI. He also expressed gratitude for the opportunity to help congregations through the Hottle funds especially through

this past year of extra challenges. He touched on the work done on the withdrawal policy for congregations desiring to leave the denomination.

**Congregational Commission:** Agnus Hayhurst, Secretary – (report on page 28) – A good amount was given to churches needing assistance. She also referred to the written report in the conference booklet.

**Connections Commission:** Billi Janet Burkey, Chairman – (report on page 29) – They have sent out some surveys to get an idea of age groups, etc. in our congregations. They are hoping to be able to hold more events during the next year. She mentioned pamphlets that are available with further information. There are links available on the conference web site to be able to make bids on an on-line Peace Action since an in-person auction was not feasible for this year.

**Stewardship and Finance Commission:** Dave Bassett, Chairman – (report on page 30) – Focus for the last year has been to prepare the budget and disbursement of Hottle Funds. There have been some personnel changes which are identified in the written report. There were no issues with our financial records according to our 2020 review. There is money available with no interest for church improvement projects through the Church Improvement Loan Fund.

**Treasurer's Report** – Lisa Snyder, Treasurer – (page 32-42) – The conference booklet has the report for 2020. The numbers for 2021 thus far are provided in the delegate packet. Funds collected for the cancelled Ukraine trip (young adult) are being returned or redirected as specified. Lisa verbally explained the written report. Self-allocation report is on page 42 of the conference booklet. We have engaged the services of Whitcomb and Hess CPA to provide a quarterly financial review, and to provide oversight on financial policies.

### **New Business Item #2: Hottle Distribution Proposals:**

#1 - The District Board recommends that beginning in 2022, the yearly draw from the Hottle Memorial Fund be decreased from 12% to 9% (taken in quarterly installments), distributed as follows: 3% District Operating Expenses, 3% Inspiration Hills Operating Expenses, 3% Church/Fellowship Grants.

*Bruce Jacobsen (Mt. Pleasant)* – Added a concern with the rapidly decreasing money, that the district would have trouble making salary and personnel. It would also impact the camp. This proposal will extend a more consistent framework for them.

A verbal vote was taken with only one verbal “no”. This motion passed.

#2 – The District Board recommends to the District Conference that the unused funds from the church/fellowship portion of the Hottle Grant distribution remain in the Hottle Memorial Fund at the end of each year.

A verbal vote was taken unanimously. This motion passed.

**New Business Item #3: Budget:** The proposed budget is on pages 47-49 of the conference booklet. A verbal vote was taken to accept the proposed budget for 2022. The motion passed unanimously.

**Camp Reports** - Allen Luginbill and Jessi Adams, CAC members – (Reports begin on page 53). At this point Shannon is the only paid employee with much of the other work at the camp being done by volunteers. The CAC will be working on establishing a salary and benefits package in order to be able to hire a maintenance person. The chicken BBQ is still being planned. The rest of the report was in written form and included in the delegate packets.

### **ELECTION RESULTS:**

Moderator-elect – James Washington (Elm Street/Pleasant View)

District Board, Central Area – Dean Foster (Black River), Mark Pollock (Brook Park)

District Board, Western Area - Bill Holsopple (Lick Creek), Mike Huffaker (Sugar Creek West)

District Board, Eastern Area – Bruce Morckel (Akron Springfield), Steve Simmons (Bethel)

District Conference Clerk – Ashley Harris (Freeburg)

District Conference Central Committee – Jane Matz (Ashland Dickey)

Nominating Committee, Central Area – Dan Kettering (Maple Grove)

Nominating Committee, Eastern Area – Sandy Humphrey (Center)

Camp Administration Committee – Erich Bassett (Pleasant View), Denise Layman (Ashland First), Allen Luginbill (Dupont)

**ORDER OF THE DAY: Recognition of Ordained Ministers** – Paul Bartholomew, Chairman (Ministerial Commission) and Paul Bozman, Ministry Education Director (Buckeye Brethren Institute) recognized the following ordained ministers and BBI graduates within the district:

#### 2020 Ordination Recognition

For *one year* of ordained service: Jeff Messner (Ashland Dickey), Steve Simmons (Bethel); for *five years*: Chris Ewing (County Line), Jason Harsh (Woodworth); for *15 years*: Tobin Crenshaw (Akron First), Mike Huffaker, (Sugar Creek West); for *20 years*: Bruce Jacobsen (Mt. Pleasant), Dick Marshall (Sugarcreek East), Dick Neuwirth (Swan Creek); for *25 years*: John Ballinger (Painesville), Tom Dearth (County Line); for *30 years*: Wayne Brockway (Center)

#### 2021 Ordination Recognition

For *one year* of ordained service: Jim Lee (East Nimishillen); for *30 years*: Cindy Peel (Akron Springfield), Gene Yenser (Defiance); for *40 years* Terry Porter (Dupont); for *45 years*: David Thompson (County Line), Wendell Thompson (Owl Creek); for *53 years*: Don Earlenbaugh (Ashland Dickey); for *55 years*: Paul Myers (Maple Grove); for *64 years*: Delbert Kettering (Maple Grove), for *66 years*: Carl Cawood (Ashland First), Clyde Fry (Mansfield First); for *70 years*: Horace Huse (Lakewood)

#### Buckeye Brethren Institute 2020 Graduates:

Bill Holsopple (Lick Creek), Carolyn Kuryn (East Nimishillen)

#### Buckeye Brethren Institute 2021 Graduates:

Cody Etter (Dupont), David Hobbs (New Philadelphia)

**Ministerial Commission Report** - Paul Bartholomew, Chairman – (report on page 51) – Paul reported that the District Executive, Kris Hawk and District Administrative Secretary, Julie Watson keep records of documentation for credentialing of new clergy. He encouraged pastors to attend

the Pastor/Spouse retreat and for congregations to encourage and care for their pastors. There is always a need for servants to do pastoral ministry.

**Buckeye Brethren Institute** – Paul Bozman, Ministry Education Director – (report on page 52) – Paul encouraged people to encourage those that might be feeling the call to pastoral ministry. There are several classes planned for this year ahead.

**New Business Item #4: Constitution Revision:** Deb Beer spoke for the Constitution Committee – (report on page 77) – A summary sheet of changes were listed on page 77 and 78.

*Peter Snyder (Ashland First)* – Offered his thanks for the work that was put into the revision.

A verbal vote was taken to accept the revised constitution. The motion was passed unanimously.

**Standing Committee Delegate** – Ben Polzin – Ben joined conference via ZOOM. A written copy of the report was provided in the packet. Annual Conference was held virtually this year. The main item of business was the compelling vision which was affirmed by the delegate body. Please give serious consideration to nominating someone from Northern Ohio for a position on the Mission and Ministry Board for Annual Conference in 2022.

**Acceptance of Reports:** A motion was properly made and seconded to accept the reports. A verbal vote was taken to accept the reports. This motion passed unanimously. Moderator Brad Kelley closed the meeting in prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Jacobsen, clerk

2021 District Conference delegates:

Adrian – none

Akron Eastwood – Edith Kieffaber, Karen Beaty

Akron First – none

Akron Springfield – Gail Naylor, Clara Jean Knepp

Ashland Dickey – Sharla Lechner, Jessi Adams

Ashland First – Peter Snyder, Mary Bright

Bethel – none

Black River – Dean Foster

Bristolville – Joan Parker, Donna Stillwagon

Brook Park – Alice Ramser, Anitra Kraus

Center – Charlene Oliver, Laura Kell

Chippewa – Bill Eley, Dave Lengacher

County Line – Jared Williams, Liz Gordon-Hancock, Bob Gordon-Hancock

Defiance – none

Dupont – Cody Etter, Allen Luginbill

East Chippewa – Esther Horst, Ellen Moore, Linda Smith  
East Nimishillen – Karen McGirr, Beth Werstler  
Eden – none  
Elm Street – Mark Leist, Vicki Leist  
Faith in Action Congregation – Jim Gorrell, Julie Gorrell  
Freeburg – Ed Wartluft, Ashley Harris  
Hartville – Jim Lavy, Barry Kashner  
Jonah’s People – Bob Simonsick  
Lake Breeze – Stephen McLaughlin, Jeanene McLaughlin  
Lakewood – Janet Huse  
Lick Creek – Gloria Hohenberger, Douglas Hohenberger  
Mansfield First – Mark Herbert, Ginny Herbert (on-line)  
Maple Grove – Andrew Cuffman, Shannon Cuffman, Kate Beebe  
Marion First - none  
Mohican – Beulah Bowman, Sue Howman, Lesa Forbes  
Mount Pleasant – Judy Brumbaugh, Sam Davis  
New Philadelphia – Dave Hobbs  
North Bend/Danville – Elaine Johnson, Joy Parr  
Owl Creek – none  
Painesville – Gaylee Hughes, Alberta Anderson  
Paradise – Terry Vaught, Sherry Vaught  
Pleasant View – David Bassett, Kim Bassett  
Poplar Ridge – Todd Clemens, Judy Clemens  
Reading – Agnes Hayhurst, Margaret Kimes  
Richland – Charlene Kuhn  
Ross – none  
Silver Creek – none  
Sugar Creek West – Linda Bell, Michael Huffaker  
Sugarcreek East – none  
Swan Creek – none  
Woodworth – Ellen Speicher  
Zion Hill – Curt Jacobsen, Scott McPeck