



Church of the Brethren

July 14, 2025

Dear Colleagues in Ministry,

Greetings, beloved fellow disciples of Jesus. I am encouraged by the theme and vision cast by the 2026 Annual Conference moderator. I pray that God's Spirit will inspire us all in the coming year to IMAGINE! "what no eye has seen, nor ear has heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him – these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit." (1 Cor. 2:9-10a). May each partnership between pastor and congregation be filled with divine creativity and holy imagination!

As we engage in ministries together, the Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Advisory Committee, in cooperation with the Ministry Office and the Council of District Executives, provides materials related to ministerial compensation that have been approved by the Annual Conference. The *Integrated Annual Ministry Agreement* (IAMA) serves as one document for both the start-up and renewal needs for pastors. In addition, this Agreement contains a helpful document entitled "*Shared Ministry Priorities*," which can aid in developing a strong and transparent partnership between pastor and congregation. We urge congregations to utilize both documents and to renew them each year. The documents (in fillable form) are posted separately on the Office of Ministry compensation page.

The *Guidelines for Pastors' Salary and Benefits* contain basic background information and explanations regarding compensation and benefits. The *Minimum Cash Salary Table and Guidelines* seeks to encourage congregations to be fair and generous employers of pastoral leadership. All these materials can be utilized in conjunction with the *Pastoral Compensation Calculator* developed with Eder Financial and found here:

<https://www.brethren.org/ministryoffice/compensation/>

It is important to note that the Pastoral Compensation Calculator starts with what the congregation can afford to pay, includes the cost of housing, pension, and benefits, and then calculates how many hours (based on the Minimum Cash Salary Table) of average weekly pastoral time the congregation should expect to receive from their pastor. In summary, the calculator clarifies the congregation's ability to determine appropriate levels of compensation for pastors. Updates to the calculator that incorporate the 2026 figures are in process by Eder Financial staff and should be ready by the beginning of August.

Please NOTE: THE NECESSARY FORMS ARE AVAILABLE IN FILLABLE FORMAT AT <https://www.brethren.org/ministryoffice/compensation/>
(This is the source to find all documents and resources related to pastoral compensation.)

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The following resources are provided for congregations and pastors as they work at these conversations:

1. **Integrated Annual Ministry Agreement (IAMA)** –
As mentioned above, the Integrated Annual Ministry Agreement (replacing start-up and renewal agreements) is available online (see link above). This agreement is to be completed each year. Please secure the appropriate signatures and place a copy in the ministerial file. A signed copy should be returned to the *district office* from each pastor and placed in the minister's file. ***Please highlight the critical importance of this document being signed and returned annually to the district office.***
2. **Minimum Cash Salary Table and Guidelines*** (the Table as posted reflects a cost-of-living adjustment of 2.6% approved by Annual Conference delegates and effective January 1, 2026.) Link: <https://www.brethren.org/ministryoffice/compensation/>
3. **Compensation Calculator** available at this link: <https://pccalc.azurewebsites.net/>
4. **Shared Ministry Priorities**, fillable – This document included in the IAMA is also posted separately for convenient access.
5. **Guidelines to Pastors' Salaries and Benefits** document serves as a resource for compensation conversations and can be found here:
<https://www.brethren.org/ministryoffice/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2022/08/2023-Guidelines-for-Pastors-Salary-and-Benefits.pdf>

*The recommended cost-of-living increase approved by delegates at the 2025 Annual Conference constitutes a 2.6% increase across the salary table taking into consideration economic factors and careful projections of experts in the field. The committee encourages congregations to be equitable in seeking to be supportive to ministers in this midst of a climate of rising inflation and increased social challenges. While financial remuneration is not the only means of expressing support, it is a fitting way to communicate gratitude during these challenging days of ministry together.

The Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Advisory Committee is available as a resource during this process of resourcing pastors and congregations.

The recording of the original introductory workshop to the new compensation tools is still posted on the compensation website here: <https://www.brethren.org/ministryoffice/compensation/>

The Office of Ministry welcomes your input, and we desire to work closely with you in endeavoring to serve our ministers and congregations well. We recognize that the conversations you guide as leaders provide a prime opportunity for you to be in conversation with congregations about their vision for mission and ministry as a people of faith including a vision for leadership/staffing needs.

Under special, limited circumstances, licensed ministers are utilized as pastors. Two important notes/reminders about licensed ministers:

1. Please remember to use the **Approval for Employment** form in the Ministerial Leadership Manual (page OM340 and attached to this mailing in both PDF and Word

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format) for licensed ministers serving as pastors. Remember that a licensed minister is to serve as a pastor only when she/he is engaged in an approved ministerial training program and under the direct supervision of an ordained minister (MLP 2014).

2. Please remember to use the **Student Placement Guidelines** in the Ministerial Leadership Manual (page OM320 and attached to this mailing) for a licensed minister who is serving as a pastor in a district beyond where she/he is licensed while in seminary or academy level training programs.

Please be in touch with me if you have questions. Thank you for your ongoing assistance with interpreting items regarding pastoral salaries and benefits. May God bless you in your ministry and give us all wisdom and courage for the journey.

Yours in Christ,

Nancy S. Heishman

Nancy Sollenberger Heishman, Director, Ministry Office

c: David Steele

Members of Pastoral Compensation & Benefits Advisory Committee: Robert (Bob) S. McMinn, chair, Angela Finet, Lori Hurt, Harry Biddle, and Andy Hamilton, representative from the Council of District Executives

- * While the title pastor is used, these materials are to be used with other types of ministerial leaders as well – Associate Pastors, Assistant Pastors, Youth Ministers/Pastors, Interim Pastors, etc. They are designed for most persons serving in “pastoral” roles.

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