

# New Business

## 1. Query on Congregational Disagreement with Annual Conference Decisions

*Whereas:* the 2001 *Manual of Organization and Polity* recognizes Annual Conference as “the ultimate legislative authority of the Church of the Brethren;” and

*Whereas:* the model constitution and bylaws for congregations passed by Annual Conference in 1969 states that “the congregation shall covenant to support faithfully the program of the Church of the Brethren, recognizing Annual Conference enactments of the Church of the Brethren as having governing force in its life;” and

*Whereas:* the 1996 Annual Conference *Statement of Ethics for Congregations in the Church of the Brethren* states that “The congregation has an ethical responsibility to support the denomination;” and

*Whereas:* the 1996 Annual Conference *Statement of Ethics for Congregations in the Church of the Brethren* states that, “There may be rare instances in which the congregation may conclude that conscience will not permit participation in a particular aspect of denominational program;” and

*Whereas:* the Church of the Brethren holds the New Testament as its creed, but finds variation in interpretation of the scriptures;

Therefore, we, the District Board of the South/Central Indiana District and the Manchester Church of the Brethren petition the Annual Conference through South/Central Indiana District to appoint a committee to study and offer guidance on how congregations can disagree with Annual Conference decisions yet remain, as much as possible, in unbroken fellowship with their sister congregations, including how District Boards should respond in these situations.

Amended and passed by the S/C Indiana District Board on July 13, 2002 for considerations by District Conference meeting in Anderson, Indiana on September 13-14, 2002. Re-affirmed by the Manchester Congregation on September 8, 2002 for consideration by District Conference.

Passed by the S/C Indiana District Conference on September 14, 2002 for consideration by Annual Conference Standing Committee meeting in Boise, Idaho in July, 2003.

Paul Schrock, S/C Indiana District Conference Moderator, 2002

Dwight Beery, S/C Indiana District Conference Secretary, 2001-2003

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