

April 2007

TO: Annual Conference Standing Committee

COPY: Annual Conference Officers

Annual Conference Executive Director

FROM: Annual Conference Program Feasibility Study Committee

D. Miller Davis, Chair, Standing Committee (2007)

Eugene Roop, Bethany Theological Seminary (2007)

Wil Nolen, Brethren Benefit Trust (2008)

Eddie Edmonds, Recorder, Association of Brethren Caregivers (2009)

Bev Weaver, On Earth Peace (2009)

Kathryn Ludwick, Standing Committee (2010)

Ken Neher, General Board (2010)

Lerry Fogle, Executive Director of Annual Conference

The delegates to the 2006 Annual Conference voted to send the report of the study committee on Doing Church Business to the Program Feasibility Study Committee (PFC) for review. In a letter from Fred Swartz, Annual Conference Secretary, he stated, **“you are asked to help better inform the Conference delegates’ decision with possible costs and impacts associated with the proposed recommendations.”** This statement guided our work and provided direction in securing the information found in our report.

The committee met at the New Windsor Conference Center on December 3-4 and March 4-5, and met by conference call on April 25 to finalize the written report. Individual members conducted meetings, sent emails, and made phone calls to obtain insight and information from a variety of persons. Lerry Fogle was helpful to the committee in outlining the challenges and obtaining financial costs of providing the required facilities to meet the recommendations. Terms of service were established for each member as noted above in parentheses and Eddie Edmonds was selected as the recorder. Miller Davis was Chair by virtue of his tenure on Standing Committee.

Following are the eleven recommendations contained in the “Doing Church Business” paper: Indicated by (#) on the spreadsheet attached.

1. Delegate preparation, both congregational and Standing Committee
2. Study questions
3. Process counselors
4. Training for moderator and moderator-elect
5. Discernment groups during Annual Conference
6. Format of Annual Conference as a whole
7. Acknowledging various voices for the purpose of posterity
8. Love Feast
9. Length of Annual Conference
10. Implementation and review
11. Calling versus election of officers

The PFC obtained information on each recommendation, including projected costs and other information to help in fulfilling the assignment. A spreadsheet was prepared listing the recommendation, the agency or individuals to be contacted, the action needed to fulfill the recommendation, and the committee member to obtain the desired information. This format proved to be most helpful in defining the information we were seeking and in making sure we covered the areas that needed to be covered.

To arrive at the financial impact of implementing the eleven recommendations, we made certain assumptions as to costs. We agreed that all persons asked to provide leadership during the conference would be reimbursed for their expenses. We arrived at the number of discernment groups by using 850 as the average number of delegates attending conference. We assumed lodging would cost \$150 per person per day, meals would cost \$50 per person per day, and travel would cost \$500 per person. Training costs were obtained from On Earth Peace, as recommended in the paper, and other costs of training were obtained via the Internet. The committee worked hard at being consistent in arriving at the estimated costs.

**The spreadsheet included with this report provides details of the estimated financial impact should the recommendations be implemented. There are both one time costs and ongoing costs included. The total estimated one-time expense is \$45,330 and the total estimated additional annual expense is \$348,330 per year. The expenditures are broken down by both the recommendation and the agency that would be expected to cover the added costs.**

While the PFC focused its work on the financial impact of the recommendations, it was impossible not to recognize the potential value of some of the proposed recommendations. The PFC applauds the efforts of the Doing Church Business Committee in looking at ways to lessen polarization within the denomination, to spend intentional time at discernment, and to implement a calling versus election process.

We trust that our work will prove beneficial to the delegates as they continue to deliberate the report of Doing Church Business.