As Annual Conference draws nearer, we know that some people have questions and even concerns about how online Annual Conference will work. We are working hard to make access and navigation of the Online AC site a smooth experience for all participants. Throughout this newsletter you will find information that we hope will help you access the site with confidence. If you think you’d benefit from a training session, see Page 3 for a schedule of seven options to join a Zoom training. A "How To" video will also be available on the Annual Conference website closer to the start of Conference.

Page 3 also includes some answers to other questions you might have, including CEU credits and how to navigate computer and internet challenges.

As a registered participant you will receive a link and password the week before Conference begins. Watch your email so you don’t miss this important communication!

Did you know that the Annual Conference website contains a lot of information regarding Conference details? You can find out about the business being discussed, the reports from agencies and partners of the church, the schedule, the concerts presented, and so much more. Go to www.brethren.org/ac to see for yourself!

Remember that worship services on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday nights and Sunday morning are open to anyone - you don’t have to be registered to participate. If your congregation plans to Livestream the Sunday service, see www.brethren.org/ac2021/webcasts for information.

The Livestream of Annual Conference business will be coming to you from the General Offices in Elgin, IL. The Moderator, Moderator-Elect, Secretary, and Parliamentarian will all be present, along with a camera and tech crew.

To register for Conference
www.brethren.org/ac

Questions? Call or email:
847-429-4366 | annualconference@brethren.org

AC photos by Glenn Riegel | Michael Gorman and Elizabeth Tindall provided photos

Annual Conference exists to unite, strengthen and equip the Church of the Brethren to follow Jesus.
A dozen reasons to participate in Annual Conference

Still need a good reason to join in this year’s Annual Conference Insight Sessions and Networking Groups taking place July 1-3? Here are 12 to consider:

• Some of the great treats of summer: Strawberries, raspberries, and Wendell Berry (Check out “Wendell Berry and the Sabbath Imagination”).
• Unlike at a typical Annual Conference, nobody will look at you oddly if you come to a session in your pajamas or munch on chips during a presentation (but please mute for the latter).
• With sessions on investing, science fiction, and clergy taxes, you can learn about stocks, Spock, and H&R Block.
• All the Q&A’s will make the often-neglected ampersand key on your laptop feel extra-special.
• If you can’t connect with David Sollenberger, Chris Douglas, David Radcliff, and others in person, at least you can connect with them in pixels.
• You can indulge in a Brethren six-pack: Half a dozen sessions related to Kingian nonviolence.
• Pastors and others in ministry can get continuing education units (CEU’s) for attending most of the sessions—a veritable smorgasbord of credits!
• The glow of a screen doesn’t quite measure up to a roaring campfire, but you can come close by joining Outdoor Ministry Association’s camp celebration and awards.
• Take a tour of the globe from your living room with sessions on Africa’s Great Lakes region, South Sudan, Puerto Rico, Nigeria, Haiti, and more. You don’t even need your passport.
• Nine out of 10 theologically inclined dentists recommend virtual networking sessions to build Christian community and healthy gums.
• With multiple laptops, you could catch up on several Brethren colleges simultaneously. No pop tests will follow.
• And, of course, it’s a reminder that even in a time of physical separation, we can come together virtually to learn, share, educate, and celebrate what it means to be the body of Christ together.

All Insight Sessions and Networking Groups can be accessed via the online site by anyone registered. Insight Sessions run 12:30-1:30 pm and 9:15-10:15 pm Eastern (9:30-10:30 am and 6:15-7:15 pm Pacific) each day, while Networking Sessions run 12:30-1:30 pm and 5:30-6:30 pm Eastern (9:30-10:30 am and 2:30-3:30 pm Pacific). Find the full list at www.brethren.org/ACschedule

—Walt Wiltschek

Insight Sessions and Networking Groups will be accessed through the Online AC site. When you click to join the session you be automatically sent to the group. If you don’t have Zoom installed you can click the bottom of the page where it says “Join from your browser.” If you try to join from a smartphone you will need to download the Zoom app before you can join the session.

Most laptops don’t have very sophisticated speakers. We recommend using external speakers, headphones or earbuds.

Did you get your Annual Conference booklet?

The Annual Conference books have been mailed or emailed for those who purchased or requested a PDF.

Please let us know as soon as possible if you haven’t received a booklet!

But what about an AC Mug?

Are you fearing you won’t have a mug to commemorate this year’s Online Annual Conference? Fear no more! They are now available on the homepage of www.brethrenpress.com.

Order yours now so that you’ll have it in time for AC!
Online Annual Conference FAQ’s

How will I get on to the online Annual Conference platform?
You will need to log on using your email address (the same one you used to register!) and the password we email you the week before Annual Conference. If you are a delegate, each person must have a different email address (i.e., a couple cannot both use the same email). If two delegates try to use the same email address, it will only let the first person log in. Separate computers or tablets would also be helpful when voting in the election. Delegates using the same computer will need to log out after they cast their ballot so that the other delegate can log in to cast theirs. Non-delegates can use the same email address to register and to log on to the site, but we respectfully ask that all participants register individually for Conference. We are not recommending delegates use a smart phone to access the AC Online Site, as it will be very difficult to participate in the polling, table conversations and election.

I’m a pastor. Will I still be able to earn Continuing Education Credits by attending Annual Conference Insight Sessions online?
Yes, absolutely! Like in previous years, the back page of the Annual Conference book will list all of the Insight Sessions that are available for CEU credit. Because Annual Conference is online you will, of course, not be able to have the leader stamp your page. Instead, you may check the sessions that you attended online and at the end of Annual Conference, mail that page to your District Executive to indicate what CEUs you earned during Annual Conference.

I’m not very experienced with computers. How difficult will it be to participate in an Online Annual Conference?
We understand that there are Brethren who are not highly skilled on computers. With that in mind, we chose an online platform that will be very easy for everyone to use. You will be sent a website address for the online platform. We recommend using Google Chrome as your Internet browser. When you get to the log in page you’ll enter your email address (be sure to use the same email that you used at registration) and then enter the password that we will send to all registrants the week before Annual Conference. You will be encouraged to change the password to one unique to you. Once you are on the website, there will be tabs to click on to go to the Business Session or to Insight Sessions or Networking Groups. We plan to have training sessions during the month of June on various days at different times for anyone who wants to learn how to use the platform (see below). We will also post a tutorial on the Annual Conference website to show you what each screen will look like as you enter the website and go to different events.

What if I don’t have internet?
We hope that it will be possible for congregations close to one another to cluster together if there is one that does not have access to internet. We are suggesting to districts that they may want to help pair up a congregation without internet with a nearby congregation that does have internet. So, check with a neighboring congregation or contact your district office to ask for help.

Online AC Training Sessions

Training Sessions showing step by step instructions from how to log on to the Online AC site to how to join an Insight Session will be hosted by Tim Harvey and Carol Elmore, both of the Oak Grove Church of the Brethren. During these trainings they will be able to answer any questions you have about the site and hopefully calm any fears you may have about navigating an online conference.

Online Dates for Training
All times are Eastern Time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, June 16</td>
<td>2:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, June 17</td>
<td>11:00 am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, June 21</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, June 22</td>
<td>4:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, June 24</td>
<td>2:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, June 26</td>
<td>12:00 noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, June 26</td>
<td>4:00 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Zoom link will be included in our June 15 weekly email blast sent to all who are registered and will also be posted on www.brethren.org/ac2021

We could only list Eastern and Pacific Times in the booklet. If the times are confusing for you, we suggest you write your time in the booklet so you can easily follow the schedule.
Sign up to pray During Annual Conference

Prayer is already an important part of our preparation for and participation in all Annual Conference events! This year, however, we are seeking to blanket the entire event in prayer...morning to night, Wednesday through Sunday.

Below, find the link to sign up to pray. Call your friends, make announcements at church, include the information in your bulletins so that others can sign up, too. The link below will take you to a webpage where you can choose a day and a portion of that day to hold Annual Conference in prayer.

You will be asked to provide your name and contact information. Only the prayer coordinators will be able to see your information.

Go to www.brethren.org/prayac to sign up.
— Lidia Gonzalez and Karen Cassell are the prayer coordinators for Annual Conference 2021.

Bolsinger and Gorman Featured Leadership

The two featured speakers bring greetings and are interviewed by Moderator Paul Mundey on the videos available at www.brethren.org/ac2021. Dr. Bolsinger shares the focus of his presentations at Annual Conference, including the Plenary: “Doing Church” in Uncharted Territory, during the Friday morning business session. Dr. Gorman gives a preview of his many offerings, which include focusing on passages from Revelation during Bible Study at the beginning of business each day.

Delegate Briefing Video

A video including important information for all Delegates and other interested persons is available to watch at www.brethren.org/ac2021/business

Order your Wrap-up and Sermons from Brethren Press

Highlights from the first Virtual Annual Conference are available to purchase from Brethren Press as a mailed DVD or a download. Go to www.brethrenpress.com and search “wrap-up” or “sermons”.

Annual Conference Wrap-up DVD: approximately 20 minutes, plus bonus material. Annual Conference Sermons: 2-DVD set of all the sermons preached during the five worship services. Produced by David Sollenberger.