

2. Report of the Leadership Team

The Leadership Team provides general oversight of Annual Conference and executive leadership for the committees of Annual Conference. It also acts as a liaison between the Annual Conference and the Church of the Brethren, Inc. Members of the Leadership Team are the Annual Conference Officers (Moderator, Moderator-elect, and Secretary), the General Secretary, a district executive representing the Council of District Executives, and the director of Annual Conference, serving ex officio.

Some of the primary tasks are serving as an executive committee for Annual Conference, delegating tasks from Conference actions, interpreting Conference decisions and denominational polity, and providing general oversight for Annual Conference in consultation with the Program and Arrangements Committee and the director of Annual Conference.

In preparation for the 2022 Annual Conference, the Leadership Team spent considerable time finalizing recommendations about polity related to the three agencies that have an official relationship with Annual Conference—Bethany Theological Seminary, Eder Financial, and On Earth Peace. That work included a final consultation with leaders from those agencies and a conversation with the Council of District Executives. The Leadership Team also led a hearing on the topic at Annual Conference.

In April, the Leadership Team met with the Council of District Executives at the Church of the Brethren General Offices in Elgin, Ill., to reflect together on their common work and ministry. It was an uplifting and encouraging time to experience renewal, strengthen relationships, and explore ways district and denominational leadership work together.

The Leadership Team prepared a study on “Doing Annual Conference Differently” for conversation with the 2022 Standing Committee.

Following up actions of the 2022 Annual Conference, the Leadership Team incorporated the polity changes into the *Manual of Organization and Polity* and sent assignments to the study committees appointed to work on two business items, “Breaking Down Barriers: Increasing Access to Denominational Events” and “Standing with People of Color.”

After 10 years of exceptional service as Annual Conference Secretary, Jim Beckwith worked with the newly called secretary, David Shumate, and the Leadership Team to finalize minutes and business items and assist with the transition.

Part of the work of the Leadership Team is to “coordinate denominational envisioning and assume responsibility for how denominational vision shall be implemented, giving consideration to emphasizing a unified vision among de-

nomination, districts, and congregations.”¹ With that in mind, the Leadership Team regularly discusses how the denominational vision statement currently is used and how its use in congregations and districts might be further promoted and encouraged. That statement is printed below.

Jesus in the neighborhood

Together, as the Church of the Brethren, we will passionately live and share the radical transformation and holistic peace of Jesus Christ through relationship-based neighborhood engagement. To move us forward, we will develop a culture of calling and equipping disciples who are innovative, adaptable, and fearless.

Tim McElwee, Moderator
Madalyn Metzger, Moderator-elect
David Shumate, Secretary
David Steele, General Secretary
Torin Eikler, representative from the Council of District Executives
Rhonda Pittman Gingrich (ex officio), director of Annual Conference

Manual of Organization and Polity, Chapter 1, Section III, 2,C,a.