

# New Business

## NB 1. Mandate for the 2025-2027 Review and Evaluation Committee

### Introduction

For improving the effectiveness of accomplishing the goals and purpose of the church, it has become the practice of the Church of the Brethren during the fifth year of each decade to call a committee to review and evaluate the organizational structures and procedures of the denomination, and for this committee to make its report with any recommendations of organizational change to the Annual Conference in the seventh year of the decade.

Since its inception, the Review and Evaluation Committee assessed how well the denominational board was carrying out its mandate from the Annual Conference. In 2000, this review expanded beyond the sole focus on one denominational entity to include the interplay between the denomination and the four independent agencies created in the 1997 restructuring. In 2005, the scope of review and evaluation was expanded to include total denominational *structure and program*, including the work of all agencies reportable to Annual Conference. In 2008, the structure of the denomination changed again when the General Board and the Association of Brethren Caregivers merged and the Annual Conference Council was replaced by the Leadership Team. In light of this organizational evolution and the denomination's current circumstances, the Standing Committee recommends to the 2024 Annual Conference the following mandate for review and evaluation.

### The 2025 Review and Evaluation Committee Mandate

*Number of Members:* Five members from the church at large, excluding staff and employees of the Church of the Brethren and of the Annual Conference agencies (Bethany Theological Seminary, Eder Financial, and On Earth Peace).

*Election Procedure:* Twenty nominees will be presented to Standing Committee by its Nominating Committee. Standing Committee will vote to reduce the slate to ten nominees to be presented to Annual Conference, which shall elect five members for the committee.

*Term and Schedule:* Review and Evaluation Committee members are normally elected in the fifth year of each decade and make their final report to Annual Conference in the seventh year of the decade. The committee will meet as necessary to complete its task, making use of conference calls and online meeting applications as much as possible to be good stewards of Annual Conference resources and inclusive of individual schedules and other accessibility considerations.<sup>1</sup>

*Expenses:* Expenses are paid for travel and room and board during meetings. The chairperson's expenses to bring the report of the committee to Annual Conference are paid unless already covered. 1  
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*The Review and Evaluation Tasks:* 4  
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1. A study of the existing organization and structure of the denomination and the effectiveness of that organizational structure for accomplishing the goals and purpose of the church. 6  
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2. A study of thoroughness and comprehension of denominational program to include the total denominational structure and programs of the Church of the Brethren. 9  
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3. A consideration of the balance and unity of denominational witness and ministry as directed and implemented by the denominational board and by the Annual Conference agencies (Bethany Theological Seminary, Eder Financial, and On Earth Peace). 12  
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4. An evaluation of the role of the Leadership Team in relation to the duties outlined in the bylaws of the Church of the Brethren, Inc. 16  
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5. An evaluation of the collaboration, collegiality, cooperation, and communication among the Leadership Team, the denominational board and staff, the Annual Conference agencies, committees, and councils, and the Annual Conference. 18  
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6. An evaluation of the collaboration, collegiality, cooperation, and communication between the denominational board, the Annual Conference agencies, and the goals and programming of the districts. 22  
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7. Analysis of denominational size in relation to the size of our overall organizational structure, making recommendations for adjusting organizational fit. 25  
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8. Consideration and inclusion of any relevant reports by Annual Conference study committees that come to Annual Conference throughout the tenure of this committee. 27  
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9. An assessment of the interest and involvement of the general membership of the Church of the Brethren in denominational programs and missions as well as ongoing conversations through the Global Church of the Brethren. 30  
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10. The study of other matters of current relevance to the physical and spiritual effectiveness of the denomination. 34  
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11. The committee shall not recommend that Annual Conference adopt any recommendation that violates the bylaws of an Annual Conference agency. The committee can make suggestions for an agency board to consider, but only the agency board has the authority to change its bylaws. 36  
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12. Any recommendations of the committee affecting the bylaws of the Church of the Brethren, Inc. will be reviewed by the Leadership Team and the denominational board to bring an item of new business to Annual Conference, in accordance with Article II of the bylaws. 40  
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The committee shall develop the criteria for conducting its study. 44  
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1 *Tools, Methods, and Procedures:* While the committee will determine the tech-  
2 niques that are most appropriate for its task, the following may be helpful:

- 3 1. Self-evaluation by the denominational board and the individual Annual  
4 Conference agencies.
- 5 2. Interviews with key denominational leaders.
- 6 3. Questionnaires for Annual Conference delegates.
- 7 4. In person and virtual hearings and focus-groups in districts across the coun-  
8 try, and opportunities for listening and conversation at Annual Conference.
- 9 5. Examination of documents related to Annual Conference component  
10 groups and accountable agencies.
- 11 6. Research into current trends and actions taken by other denominations to  
12 address what it means to be church in this time.

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14 *Guidelines:* To promote cooperation between the Review and Evaluation Com-  
15 mittee and denominational groups and agencies, several guidelines are suggested.

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17 1. The Conference Office shall ensure that the committee members have an  
18 opportunity to be introduced to the leadership and staff of each of the agen-  
19 cies and their role interpreted.
- 20 2. Initial inquiries about the programs and activity of the Annual Conference  
21 agencies will be channeled through the respective executives of each agency.
- 22 3. Committee members are welcome and encouraged to arrange for interviews  
23 of denominational, district, and agency employees by working through the  
24 appropriate executive, as well as other knowledgeable and interested  
25 Brethren.
- 26 4. If deemed appropriate, the committee may seek the advice of outside orga-  
27 nizational experts if the expenses of such experts are pre-approved by the  
28 Leadership Team.
- 29 5. The committee must observe confidentiality at all times.
- 30 6. The committee will keep the Conference Office and the Leadership Team  
31 apprised of its progress.
- 32 7. The committee will provide brief interim reports to Annual Conference until  
33 its final report is submitted.

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35 1 The *Procedure, Term and Schedule, and Expenses* sections are standard procedures for the Review  
36 and Evaluation Committee for past years. The *Term and Schedule* section was modified to refer  
37 generically to technologies that replace in-person meetings.