

Mission and Ministry Board meets via Zoom

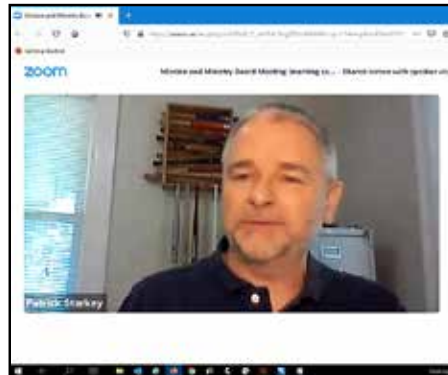
The denominational board met via Zoom on July 1 for a summer meeting usually held onsite at Annual Conference. The meeting was chaired by Patrick Starkey assisted by chair-elect Carl Fike and general secretary David Steele.

The board set a budget parameter of \$4,934,000 for core ministries in 2021.

Revised 2020 budgets that reflected work by staff to review expenses as well as to reassess income projections for the remainder of this year were approved in light of the pandemic that has resulted in changes to the denomination's financial situation.

"Staff needed a more dependable and realistic budget to work from," said Starkey.

This year has seen a significant shortfall in congregational giving, although individual giving has increased somewhat. Core ministries expenses were revised downward by almost \$340,000 to a total of \$4,629,150, and the income projection for core ministries was revised downward by



almost \$447,000 to \$4,522,040, resulting in an anticipated core ministries deficit of (\$107,110) for 2020.

The board approved a new strategic plan based in large part on the compelling vision statement that will be presented to the 2021 Annual Conference. The plan is titled "Jesus in the Neighborhood."

The board confirmed the appointment of Ed Woolf as treasurer of the Church of the Brethren, and called board members Thomas Dowdy, Lois Grove, and Colin Scott to the executive committee.

Small increase to pastors' salary table

In light of the cancellation of this year's Annual Conference, the Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Advisory Committee offered a recommendation rather than a delegate-approved decision. The committee recommends a 0.5 percent increase to the 2021 Minimum Cash Salary Table for Pastors. Find out more at www.brethren.org/ministryoffice.

Global Mission creates country advisory teams

The Global Mission office has instituted country advisory teams (CATs) as a way to stay informed and better understand each country or region where Church of the Brethren partners are involved.

CAT members are volunteers with passion for mission, commitment to the Church of the Brethren, and knowledge of the country served. These teams are made up of one person from the US, one from the country or region represented, and others as needed.

The teams: Africa Great Lakes—Chris Elliott and Bwambale Sedrack; Brazil—Greg Davidson Laszakovitz, Alexandre Gonçalves, Marcos and Suely Inhauser; Dominican Republic—Jonathan Bream and Pedro Sanchez; Haiti—Ilexene Alphonse and Vildor Archange; India—yet to be determined; Nigeria—Carol Mason and Joel S. Billi; Rwanda—Josiah Ludwick and Etienne Nsanzimana; South Sudan—Roger Schrock and Athanasus Ungang; Spain—Carol Yeazell and Santo Terrero; Venezuela—Jeff Boshart, Joel Peña, Robert Anzoategui, and Jorge Rivera.

Nominating and Appeals committees reorganize

The 2020 Standing Committee of district delegates meeting by Zoom on June 28 has named new members to the Nominating Committee and Appeals Committee.

The following people will join current Nominating Committee members Michaela Alphonse, Kurt Borgmann, Becky Maurer, and Dennis Webb: Bob Johansen of Northern Indiana District, Kim McDowell of Mid-Atlantic District,

Loren Rhodes of Middle Pennsylvania District, and Susan Chapman Starkey of Virginia District.

Three people will serve as the Appeals Committee for 2020-2021: Carolyn Dean of Middle Pennsylvania District, Jonathan Prater of Shenandoah District, and Craig Stutzman of Mid-Atlantic District. First alternate is Ben Polzin of Northern Ohio District. Second alternate is Mark Jones of West Marva District.



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EYN conference elects leadership

The 73rd Annual General Church Council Conference (Majalisa) of Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) was held July 14-16 at the EYN Headquarters in Kwarhi.

The conference re-elected incumbent president Joel S. Billi and vice president Anthony A. Ndamsai, reappointed as general secretary Daniel Y. C. Mbaya, reappointed the Disaster Relief Ministry director Yuguda Z. Mdurvwa, and appointed Nuhu Mutah Abba as administrative secretary. Joshua Wakai was confirmed to the EYN Board of Trustees.



EYN leaders are (from left) Nuhu Mutah Abba, Daniel Y. C. Mbaya, Joel S. Billi, and Anthony A. Ndamsai.

EYN members among aid workers killed in Nigeria

Two Nigerian Brethren, Ishaku Yakubu and Luka Filibus, were among five humanitarian aid workers who were killed in July, execution-style by a faction linked to Boko Haram.

Yakubu “lived with his widowed mother in Monguno, is from Kautikari, Chibok. He left behind a wife and two children,” reported Zakariya Musa, head of EYN Media. Filibus was from Agapalawa in the Gwoza area, and his parents “are living in one of the IDP camps managed by EYN in Maiduguri.”

The men were abducted in June on their way to Maiduguri. They were employees of the State Emergency Management Agency, Action Against Hunger, International Rescue Committee, and Rich International.



Disaster ministry completes rebuilding in Puerto Rico

Brethren Disaster Ministries has completed a rebuilding project in Puerto Rico in partnership with Puerto Rico District. The project worked on homes that were destroyed or damaged by Hurricane Maria in 2017. One hundred homes were completed either with volunteer labor, contractor work, or by providing materials to homeowners.

Brethren Disaster Ministries has opened a new project site in Dayton, Ohio—the first resumption of volunteer work since a shut-down due to COVID-19 began in mid-March. Local volunteers will serve families affected by the 2019 Memorial Day tornadoes.

19 congregations withdraw from Southeastern District

The Southeastern District Conference on July 25 approved the withdrawal of 19 congregations from the district and the Church of the Brethren. The withdrawing churches represent close to half of the 42 congregations that have been part of the district that covers Alabama, South Carolina, Tennessee, and the western parts of North Carolina and Virginia.

The withdrawals follow on the creation of the Covenant Brethren Church in 2019. Earlier this year its leaders—which include Southeastern District executive Scott Kinnick—indicated an intention to separate from the Church of the Brethren. It is not clear how many of the with-

drawing congregations will affiliate with the new organization.

Withdrawing congregations are Beaver Creek in Knoxville, Tenn.; Brummetts Creek in Green Mountain, N.C.; Community in Cleveland, Ala.; Ewing (Va.) Church; Hawthorne in Johnson City, Tenn.; Jackson Park in Jonesborough, Tenn.; Johnson City First; Knob Creek in Johnson City; Limestone (Tenn.) Church; Little Pine in Ennice, N.C.; Melvin Hill in Columbus, N.C.; Midway in Surgoinsville, Tenn.; Mill Creek in Tryon, N.C.; Mount Carmel in Scottville, N.C.; New Hope in Jonesborough; Pleasant Hill in Blountville, Tenn.; Pleasant Valley in Jonesborough; Spindale (N.C.) Church; and Trinity in Blountville.