

Mission and Ministry Board approves 2020 budget

The 2020 budget for denominational ministries was the main item at fall meetings of the Mission and Ministry Board on Oct. 17-21 at the General Offices in Elgin, Ill. Meetings were led by chair Patrick Starkey with chair-elect Carl Fike and general secretary David Steele.

The board approved a total 2020 budget for all denominational ministries of \$8,527,880 income and \$8,584,200 expense, resulting in an anticipated net expense of \$56,320. The decision included budgets for the six major ministry areas of the Church of the Brethren: Core Ministries, Brethren Disaster Ministries, Brethren Press, Conference Office, Global Food Initiative, and Material Resources.

The Core Ministries budget of \$4,969,000 income and expense represents a cut of almost \$180,000 compared to 2019 budgeted expenses. Core Ministries include the General Secretary's office, Global Mission and Service, Ministry Office, Discipleship Ministries, Brethren Volunteer Service, workcamps, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy, communications, Brethren Historical Library and Archives, and finance, among others. Sources of income include giving from congregations and individuals.

A years-long downward trend in giving from congregations is expected to continue. Mission Advancement staff shared about their work to engage more closely and frequently with donors.

There was good news about the denomination's investments and asset balance in financial reporting for 2019. Net assets as of Sept. 30 were at their highest level in five years, at more than \$38 million, having grown by about \$5 million since 2015. These assets include invested funds with and without donor restrictions, real property, and cash.

In other business

The board approved a revision of the funding formula for grants from the Brethren Faith in Action Fund, routine updates to financial policies, and 2024 meeting dates. Also affirmed was a staff decision to remake the National Youth Conference Fund into a Youth and Young Adult Conference Fund in order to help finance a wider variety of events.

John Hoffman was named an at-large board member beginning in 2020. Currently he is filling a one-year uncompleted term on the board.

The board received a presentation from "Plains to the Pacific," a small think tank-style group that was initiated by former General Board staff. Plains to the Pacific is closing out its work.

Time was spent on a question raised during compelling vision conversations: what is the next "big idea" for the Church of the Brethren? Table groups brainstormed responses, contributing to the work of formulating a new strategic plan for the board. Leadership will assess the relationship of a strategic plan with the compelling vision statement expected to come to Annual Conference for approval in 2020.



Cheryl Bunnauigh-Carford

Annual Conference 2020 logo is released

The logo for the 2020

Conference has been released, illustrating the theme "God's Adventurous Future." The logo is by calligrapher Timothy Botts, who more than 20 years ago created a design for the Church of the Brethren tagline "Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together."

"Our future is not uneventful; it is marked by rigorous peaks, rushing

currents, and deep valleys," said Annual Conference moderator Paul Munday. "But it's wise to be expectant, even hope-full, for God moves among us, calling us beyond our bewilderment and discord."

Munday is writing a quarterly pastoral letter on the theme titled "Trail Thoughts: Trekking Toward God's Adventurous Future," available at www.brethren.org/ac/2020/moderator.



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Compelling vision conversations

A report on data from the compelling vision

conversations at Annual Conference 2019 is available at www.brethren.org/compellingvision.

“We want to express our gratitude to all who participated in the compelling vision conversations at Annual Conference for your prayerful and thoughtful engagement,” said Rhonda Pittman Gingrich. “The conversations were deep and rich. What a sacred honor and blessing it has been to read through the data generated by those conversations and in doing so to be given a glimpse into the hearts, minds, and souls of our brothers and sisters across the denomination. While differences remain, it is clear we all share an abiding love for Jesus Christ and the church and a genuine desire to live as faithful and passionate disciples in a turbulent world.”

Pittman Gingrich helped lead the compelling vision conversations at the 2019 Conference and is part of the ongoing Compelling Vision Team that is expected to bring a recommendation to the 2020 Conference.

Nursing students receive scholarship

Five nursing students have received the Church of the Brethren Nursing Scholarship for 2019. Made possible by the Health Education and Research Endowment, the scholarship is available to members of the Church of the Brethren enrolled in LPN, RN, or nursing graduate programs. Scholarships of up to \$2,000 for RN and graduate nurse candidates, and up to \$1,000 for LPN candidates are awarded.

Recipients are **Peter Barlow** of Montezuma Church of the Brethren in Dayton, Va.; **Lauren Becker** of Chiques Church of the Brethren in Manheim, Pa.; **Rebecca Bender** of Heidelberg Church of the Brethren in Myerstown, Pa.; **Krista Panone** of Nokesville (Va.) Church of the Brethren; and **Amanda Wampler** of Annville (Pa.) Church of the Brethren.

See www.brethren.org/congregationallife/nursingscholarships.html.



Brethren Volunteer Service Unit 324

Front row, from left: **Anjelica “Jeli” Mora** of Elizabethtown (Pa.) Church of the Brethren is serving with Alderson (W.Va.) Hospitality House; **Amanda Orndorff**, Sugar Grove Church of the Brethren in Wardensville, W.Va., is at Quaker Cottage, Belfast, N. Ireland; **Emily Bowdle**, Denton (Md.) Church of the Brethren, is at Camp Myrtlewood, Myrtle Point, Ore.

Middle row: **Nolan McBride**, Union Center Church of the Brethren, Nappanee, Ind., is with the Church of the Brethren Youth and Young Adult Ministry, Elgin, Ill.; **Antonia “Toni” Egner**, Frankfurt, Germany, is with Sisters of the Road, Portland, Ore.; **Liana Smith**, Palmyra (Pa.) Church of the Brethren, is with the Church of the Brethren Workcamp Ministry, Elgin, Ill.; **Jana Christ**, Bottrop, Germany, is at Gould Farm, Monterey, Mass.; **Catharina “Cathi” Iwan**, Kelkheim, Germany, is at Abode, Fremont, Calif.; **Kara Miller**, Lititz (Pa.) Church of the Brethren, is with the Workcamp Ministry.

Back row: **Maja von Werder**, Ahrensburg, Germany, is at Abode; **Hannah Nyce**, Annville (Pa.) Church of the Brethren, is at L’Arche Kilkenny Community, Callan, County Kilkenny, Republic of Ireland; **Colin Keiper**, Indian Creek Church of the Brethren, Harleysville, Pa., is at IncredABLE, Richhill, N. Ireland; **Jasmin Sprengel**, Hamburg, Germany, is with Human Solutions, Portland, Ore.

Youth Peace Travel Team program ends

The end of the Youth Peace Travel Team program has been announced by the cooperating sponsors: the Church of the Brethren Youth and Young Adult Ministry and Office of Peacebuilding and Policy, On Earth Peace, Bethany Seminary, and the Outdoor Ministries Association.

“This way of doing peace education seems to be becoming less effective,” the statement said, in part. “One of the ways

the denomination has expressed its commitment to peace education for youth and young adults over the last 30 years has been through the Youth Peace Travel Team. Between 1991 and 2016, a team of three or four young adults has been fielded every summer. Yet for the last three years, the number of program applicants has dwindled. For two of those years, one young adult took on the work of peace education as the Youth Peace Advocate.

The other year, there was neither a team nor an individual to fill the position.”

The sponsors will “seek more effective ways to encourage peace education” and are “committed to the Church of the Brethren’s call to build peace and form disciples of Jesus as peacemakers.” They encouraged young adults interested in peace work to apply for internships through Ministry Summer Service and On Earth Peace.