

Church of the Brethren
Mission and Ministry Board
General Offices, Elgin, Illinois
October 14-16, 2022

Mission and Ministry Board – Minutes

Saturday, October 15

Members present: Carl Fike (chair), Colin Scott (chair-elect), Michaela Alphonse, Barbara Daté, Lauren Seganos Cohen, Joel Gibbel, Heather Gentry Hartwell, John Hoffman, Josiah Ludwick, Kathy Mack, Meghan Mauldin, Karen Shively Neff, Rosanna McFadden, Joel Peña, J. Roger Schrock, Paul Schrock, and Joanna Wave Willoughby

Ex officios present: Tim McElwee (moderator), Madalyn Metzger (moderator-elect), David Shumate (Annual Conference secretary), Nevin Dulabaum (Eder Financial president)
(in person)

Ex officios present: Jeff Carter (Bethany president), Matt Guynn (OEP interim co-executive director)
(via Zoom)

Ex officios absent Torin Eikler (Council of District Executives representative)

General Secretary: David Steele

Recorder: Nancy Miner

Carl Fike, Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed the group. Board members had previously introduced themselves during the closed session meeting, so he invited staff to introduce themselves.

**Welcome and
Introductions**

Carl Fike introduced the consent agenda.

Consent Agenda

- Approve meeting agenda
- Approve MMB minutes
 - July 10, 2022, meeting
 - July 10, 2022, closed session meeting

Colin noted one correction that had been made to the July open session minutes.

The Mission and Ministry Board had consensus and approved the consent agenda as presented.

Affirmation

Joanna Wave Willoughby led the opening devotions. She invited the group to sing “For the beauty of the earth,” then read Matthew 9:35-38; 10:1-10.

Opening Worship

In *The Message*, the twelve apostles are referred to as the twelve harvest hands. Paraphrasing the end of the passage as “Start with what you know; you are the equipment,” Joanna shared that her family does a lot of projects together. Each person has a job to do – starting with something simple and then building on that.

She reminded the group instead of jumping into something complicated to keep it simple, start with what you know because you are the equipment.

The group sang “Great is thy faithfulness,” and Joanna concluded her devotions with a responsive prayer.

For the General Secretary’s report, David Steele shared about his experience at the 11th Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC), held in September in Karlsruhe, Germany. The theme of the Assembly was “Christ’s Love Moves the World to Reconciliation and Unity.” The Church of the Brethren has been a member of the WCC since its start in 1948 and has sent delegates to each Assembly, held about every eight years.

General Secretary’s report

Liz Bidgood Enders, pastor of the Ridgeway congregation in Harrisburg, Pa., served as delegate. Also attending were staff members Nathan Hosler, Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford, and Bethany president Jeff Carter, who has served on the WCC Central Committee. Attending from Ekklesiyar Yan’uwa a Nigeria (EYN) were Joel Billi and Anthony Ndamsai.

David shared a video of the closing reflections from the Assembly, given by Christopher Douglas-Huriwa from the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand, and Polynesia and focusing on the rituals of encounter.

David reflected on the ritual of encounter. Maybe because the pandemic has kept him from interpersonal connections or because of the fracture in the church and the world, Love Feast, anointings, and handshakes have taken on new meaning for him. The hardest part of the pandemic for him has been the lack of personal encounter. Virtual technology has connected General Offices, New Windsor, and remote staff in new ways, yet he has felt incomplete because of the lack of in-person connection.

He reflected that our cultural shifts to social media over the years has taken away personal connections and encounters and has probably contributed to the deeper divides in our world and our church. It has not allowed us to stand in each other’s presence and recognize humanity and the dignity in the other.

In Maori, “tena koe” – I see you – acknowledges that we are part of the body together and reminds the other of the divine within. Perhaps through these encounters, Christ’s love can again move the church and the world to reconciliation and unity.

John Hoffman shared his appreciation to the Board and staff for their support following the death of his father, Paul Hoffman.

Words of appreciation

Carl Fike brought a report from the Executive Committee's meeting the previous day. The Committee:

Executive Committee report

- heard a report from Colin Scott on the exit interviews of departing Board members
- was reminded of the process for the annual General Secretary performance review, to be conducted in March
- reviewed the 2023 Budget proposal for recommendation to the Board
 - Carl reminded the Board that one of the significant responsibilities of the Board is to be fiduciaries. He stressed that it is not the responsibility of staff to bear the burden of the lack of income. It is the responsibility of Board members as individuals and as leaders in congregations and districts to see that giving keeps up with the cost of living.
- looked at guidelines for the Brethren Faith in Action Fund recommendation that would come to the full Board
- talked about Foreground Vision Initiatives 6 and 8, anticipating updates from both
- processed a recommendation of the Stewardship of Properties 3 committee and developed a recommendation to bring to the Board
- heard human resource and risk management updates

Carl also reported that in closed session, the Mission and Ministry Board considered and adopted the following Executive Committee recommendation in response to the Stewardship of Properties 3 committee:

That the Mission and Ministry Board assign the task of developing a plan to establish a standing committee to oversee the management of and forecast the needs for Church of the Brethren properties to its Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will develop the plan and present it to the Mission and Ministry Board at the March 2023 meeting. (Adopted by the Mission and Ministry Board in closed session on October 14, 2022)

Treasurer Ed Woolf provided a prerecorded financial update for Board members to view in advance of the meeting. Highlights included:

2022 Financial Update – Q&A
(Exhibits 1&2 and dashboard handout)

Dashboard handout (August 31, 2022)

Net Assets

Net assets are split into two categories – without donor restriction and with donor restriction.

Assets without donor restriction include:

- Core Ministries
- Land, Buildings, & Equipment funds
- Self-Funding Ministries

- Designated Funds

Assets with donor restriction include:

- Split-Interest Agreements
- Special Purpose Funds
- Restricted Funds (like Haiti Medical and Ministry Assistance)
- Endowments
- Perpetual Trusts

Net assets represent the Church of the Brethren's total value and express the difference between what is owned and what is owed – a key indicator of financial health.

Net assets as of August 31, 2022:

- At \$41.3 million, our total net assets are down \$7.2 million since the beginning of the year and down \$4 million from this time last year
- At \$22.9 million, assets without donor restriction decreased \$3 million from this time last year
 - Primarily due to investment losses and current deficit balances in Core Ministries and the Conference Office
- At \$18.4 million, assets with donor restriction decreased \$1 million from 2021
 - Primarily due to investment losses along with grants allocated from special purpose funds like the Emergency Disaster Fund and Global Food Initiative Fund
- Balance sheet remains liquid
 - 55% of net assets are without restriction
 - As of the 2021 audit, we have approx. 52 months of expendable reserves (benchmark is 5 months)
 - This number is inflated due to the lower-than-normal expenses in 2021
 - As our program expenses continue to increase back to normal levels, our expendable reserves will decrease
- We continue to be in a healthy position, primarily due to the generosity of our donors, limiting our liabilities, and remaining disciplined with our long-term investment strategies.

Investment balance

- At \$34.5 million, our investments have decreased \$7.2 million since the beginning of the year and are down \$4.1 million from this time last year
- The S&P 500 was down 4.3% in August and down 17% for the year – essentially wiping out the gains from last year when the market was up 17% as of August
- Our investment strategy focuses on long-term goals, risk tolerances, timelines, and purposes of funds, which should help us

navigate the continued market volatility through the last quarter of this year

- Appreciation to Eder Financial staff for their investment management services

Cash balance

- At \$1 million, our cash balance has decreased \$500,000 since this time last year
 - Cash balances tend to be lower during the summer months and tend to increase as year-end giving picks up
- We have healthy cash balances at both operating banks (Elgin and New Windsor)
 - Important because they become the payment for expenses that sustain the Church of the Brethren's missions, expenses for program supplies, ministry resources, staff, and other vital operating expenses
- No anticipated concerns from our auditors as the Church of the Brethren maintains good liquidity

Donors (All Giving Categories)

- Over 500 donor congregations through August
 - Up from 2020
 - Well below the average of 580 over the last 5 years
- Over 1,500 individual donors through August
 - Third highest number of donors over the last 5 years
 - Mission Advancement staff are making personal contacts to support donors
 - Staff are committed to attending 20 District Conferences this year
- Over 2,000 total donors through August
 - Close to the totals from the last 5 years and just below the 5-year average of 2,100 donors

Efforts of Mission Advancement staff include:

- Sending a personal acknowledgement to congregations of any gift received
- Contacting congregational leadership via phone, email, or handwritten note to ignite conversation, steward relationships, provide education on our ministries, and to foster a covenant between congregations and the Church of the Brethren
- Analyzing datasets of individual donors and congregations to determine points of engagement and giving trends with denominational missions and ministries
 - Sharing their findings with the Sustainability Committee to aid in the two tasks assigned with assessing the self-allocation process and training Board members to be ambassadors

The Church of the Brethren remains grateful to all donors that faithfully contribute to our programs and ministries (via prayer, financially, or with their volunteer service).

Core Ministries Giving

- At \$970,000, giving from congregations is down only \$8,000 from this time last year
 - Lowest giving total at this point in the year over the last 5 years
 - \$130,000 below the five-year average of \$1.1 million
- At \$329,000, giving from individuals is up \$39,000 from this time last year
 - Highest total at this point over the last 5 years
 - \$87,000 above the five-year average of \$242,000
- At \$1.3 million, total giving is up \$31,000 from this time last year
 - Second-lowest giving total in the last 5 years
 - Down \$56,000 from the five-year average of \$1.35 million received by this time of the year
 - With the significant increase in individual giving, a total giving decline of only 6% (or \$82,000) since the high watermark in 2018

Giving Summary (August 31, 2022)

Congregational Giving

- At \$970,000, congregational giving to Core Ministries is down \$8,000 from 2021 and \$15,000 behind budget
 - Over 400 congregations gave over 1,000 gifts to Core Ministries
- Actual congregational gifts received for Core Ministries from September through December over the last three years have averaged \$628,000
 - If we receive the average for the last three years, we will be close to our anticipated budget, perhaps falling short by only \$13,000
- Congregational giving to Restricted Funds is up \$330,000 from 2021
 - Mostly due to increased giving to disaster fundraising events and the Emergency Disaster Fund
- Offering gifts totaled over \$68,000
 - Up \$1,000 from last year, despite receiving 27 fewer gifts
- At \$2.15 million, total congregational giving is up \$323,000 (17.7%) from 2021

Individual Giving

- At \$329,000, individual giving to Core Ministries is up \$39,000 from last year and \$39,000 ahead of budget
 - 790 donors gave over 1,500 gifts to Core Ministries

- Actual gifts received for Core Ministries from September through December over the last 3 years have averaged \$ 356,000
 - If we receive this average in 2022, we should exceed the budgeted amount for individual giving
- Individual giving to Restricted Funds totaled \$499,000
 - Up \$110,000 from last year
- Online giving totaled \$116,000
 - Down \$33,000 from 2021
 - Monthly and quarterly recurring donors have stayed steady, with 45 this year and 44 in 2021
- At \$1.55 million, total individual giving is up \$326,000 (or 26.6%) from 2021
 - Primarily due to increases in Core Ministries giving, restricted giving, and bequests

Efforts of Mission Advancement staff include:

- After being unable to personally visit with donors this year, speaking to donors about scheduling visits for 2023
- Providing a more user-friendly and educational giving experience for donors
- The stewarding of relationships is producing positive and encouraging results

Combined Giving

- At \$1.3 million, total combined giving to Core Ministries is up \$31,000 from 2021 and \$23,000 ahead of budget
- Combined giving to Restricted Funds totaled over \$1.67 million
 - Up \$440,000 from last year
- Changes in restricted giving impact the Ministry Enablement Contribution in support of Core Ministries

Bequests

- Received over \$718,000 in unrestricted bequests
- Unrestricted bequests fund the Bequest Quasi-Endowment fund* from which we take a 17% draw to support Core Ministries
 - The 2023 budget proposal includes an increased draw on the Bequest-Quasi Endowment to 19% to support a new Executive Director position
- Over the last 12 years, the average bequest of \$848,000 plus the average market fluctuation of \$432,000 outpaces our average draw of \$963,000

**Current balance in the Bequest Quasi-Endowment fund is \$6.1 million*

Total Combined Giving to all Ministries

- At approximately \$3.7 million, total combined giving is up \$649,000 (21%) from this time last year, the highest giving total at this point since 2015

Income and Expense reports (August 31, 2022)

Core Ministries Income

- Congregational and individual giving are a combined \$20,000 ahead of budget
- Core Ministries giving is \$23,000 ahead of budget (including Annual Conference offerings)
- Ministry Enablement Contribution is \$4,000 behind budget, despite the increase in restricted giving previously noted
 - Based on a five-year average, rather than actual giving
- Transfers from our Bequest Quasi-Endowment, endowments, savings, and BSC Quasi-Endowment are ahead of budget by a combined \$110,000
 - Based on a five-year average, with higher-than-expected market returns in the fourth quarter of last year
- As of August, none of the budgeted \$195,000 transfer from designated funds has been used
- Core overhead income is \$44,000 short of budget

Core Ministries Expense

- Mission Advancement is underspent by \$27,000
 - Mostly due to less travel as staff are not meeting in-person with as many donors and congregations as in the past
- Discipleship Ministries is overspent by \$94,000 due to National Youth Conference expenses
 - Designated funds from the Gahagen Trust will cover this expense
- Global Mission is currently \$23,000 overspent
 - Due to Annual Conference travel being over budget and a decrease in restricted donations
- Brethren Volunteer Service is overspent by \$29,000 because project fees from the last orientation have not yet been billed out
 - It is hoped that income will increase after fall orientation and the projects are billed
- Buildings and Grounds (Elgin) is underspent by \$59,000 - mostly in independent contractors, electricity, equipment maintenance, and postage
- In total, director level expenses are over budget by only \$2,000

All Ministries Income and Expense

- At the end of August, Core Ministries has a deficit of (\$241,000)
 - \$46,000 behind budget
- Material Resources has a surplus of \$12,000
 - Processing of kits, quilts, medical supplies, and donations is the primary source of income
 - Special project processing supplies for Liberia brought in \$6,000
 - Staff have been working with partners to review and renew service contracts with increased fees.

- Coming months will include receipt of seasonal donations for Lutheran World Relief
- Annual Conference Office is showing a deficit of (\$54,000).
 - Registration income was lower than budgeted and expenses were higher than anticipated for travel and audio-visual needs
 - Approximately \$26,000 in outstanding anticipated income for exhibit space, meal events, and A/V equipment
 - Conference Office has yet to receive rebates from the two hotels in Omaha
- Brethren Disaster Ministries and Global Food Initiative operate on break-even budgets with support from the Emergency Disaster Fund and Global Food Initiative Fund

Current net asset balances for all ministry areas

- Core Ministries – net asset balance of \$1.8 million
 - Well above the \$1.5 million required by our financial policies and auditors
- Brethren Press – net deficit of (\$433,000)
 - No plan to immediately pay down the deficit. The deficit will be addressed after Brethren Press has operated within Core Ministries for a couple of years
 - Additional seasonal income is expected with Advent devotionals, quarterly bulletins, and winter quarter of Shine curriculum
 - Facing some higher costs for printing and paper
- Material Resources – net deficit of (\$174,000)
 - Board in June approved a recommendation to appoint a new Stewardship of Properties task team to consider questions about property management at both the General Offices and Brethren Service Center, including further assessment of Material Resources, and to bring recommendations to the Board
- Annual Conference Office has a net surplus of \$ 382,000
 - Expected to decrease with payment of operating expenses through the end of the year.

All Church of the Brethren ministries as of August 31, 2022:

- Total net loss was (\$283,000)
- Total net asset balance was almost \$1.6 million
 - Decrease from the \$299,000 income and \$1.8 million net asset balance reported this time last year

Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF)

- Donations totaled \$1.36 million as of August 31
- Expenses and grants totaled over \$1 million
- Brethren Disaster Ministries (BDM) has allocated \$215,000 in grants to partners for response to the Ukraine humanitarian crisis

- BDM was a recipient of a \$30,000 Lowe's grant in gift cards to buy materials for homes impacted by last year's flooding
- Rebuild projects are currently underway in both Tennessee and Kentucky
- Children's Disaster Service given grants for the summer storms and deployment in Uvalde, Texas
- BDM has allocated funds from the EDF in response to hurricanes in Puerto Rico and is working with partners on how best to respond to the hurricane damage in Florida.
- Emergency Disaster Fund has a balance of \$2.18 million

Global Food Initiative Fund (GFIF)

- Balance of just over \$120,000 as of August 31
 - Donations as of August totaled \$140,000
 - Expenses and grants totaled \$114,000
 - Trips planned later this year to meet with GFI partners and to review projects funded with grants from the GFIF
 - International grants expected to pick up as the year progresses
 - GFI is in conversation with BDM staff and the Brethren in Puerto Rico on ways GFI might be of assistance

Summary

- Net assets and investment balances are the second highest in 5 years, despite a significant drop in the market
- Although individual giving is on pace to far exceed the budget, congregational giving continues its downward trend at 4.3%
- Grateful for both the increase in giving and for the active participation in support of our denominational ministries

Updates and discussion

Ed reported briefly on the September financials and responded to Board members' questions.

Net Assets as of September 30

- Total net assets as of September were \$38.4 million
 - Decrease of \$2.9 million from the \$41.3 million as of August
 - Down \$10 million from the \$48.5 million net asset at the beginning of the year

Investment Balance as of September 30

- Investments totaled \$31.8 million
 - Includes all draws, withdrawals, deposits, and fees
 - Down \$2.6 million from August
 - Down \$9.8 million from the beginning of the year

Ed noted that although there is not much we can do to control the markets, we can continue to trust Eder's investment managers and we can stay

disciplined in our own long-term investment strategies. Continued use of the five-year average draws and controlled spending will help us navigate the current market downturn.

Giving Summary as of September 30

- Congregational giving to Core Ministries totaled \$1.06 million as of September – \$1,000 higher than last year and \$26,000 behind this year’s budget
- If we receive our average giving of \$524,000 over the last 3 months, we should see approximately \$1.59 million in congregational giving. This would be \$22,000 behind budget
- At \$2.3 million, total congregational giving is up \$210,000 from 2021
 - Due to increases in restricted giving for the disaster auctions, Emergency Disaster Fund, and Global Food Initiative Fund
- Individual giving to Core Ministries totaled \$347,000 as of September – including the Annual Conference offerings.
 - Up \$26,000 from last year and \$23,000 ahead of this year’s budget
 - If we receive our average giving of \$332,000 over the last 3 months, we should see approximately \$680,000 in individual giving – \$98,000 above budget
- At \$1.64 million, total individual giving is up \$313,000 from last year
- Total giving to Core Ministries is \$1.41 million as of September – up \$27,000 from last year and only \$3,000 behind budget

Income and Expenses as of September 30

- Core Ministries is showing a net deficit of (\$416,000) – down from the (\$241,000) deficit as of August
 - Starting to see some impact from the mid-year cost-of-living adjustment
 - Still a transfer to be made to offset the National Youth Conference expense and some timing issues with volunteer project fee billing
 - Have not yet used any of the budgeted designated funds
- Material Resources is showing a net deficit of (\$5,500), down from the \$12,000 net surplus as of August
- Annual Conference is showing a net deficit of (\$39,000), up from the (\$54,000) net deficit as of August
 - Anticipating additional income from billing agencies and hotel rebates
 - Will likely finish the year with a small deficit, as budgeted

Questions

Q: In pre-recorded video, you noted a \$94,000 unfavorable variance for Discipleship Ministries, and you just now noted anticipated transfer income. Can you provide more detail?

A: In 2019 we received a special distribution from the Gahagen Trust, earmarked for National Youth Conference. The funds are sitting in designated funds. Once we receive all the final bills from Colorado State University, we will make a transfer to offset that expense. Once the transfer is made, Discipleship Ministries will likely be underspent.

David Steele introduced Samuel Sarpiya, who led the group in a session on Peacemaking in a Polarized Church.

**Board Development
– Peacemaking in a
Polarized Church**

Samuel’s presentation included:

- Scripture (Story of Jacob and Esau from Genesis 22)
- A study of conflict
 - Benefits of a well-managed conflict
 - Kinds and levels of conflict
 - Stages of conflict and change
- A sample of Kingian nonviolence
- Tools for conflict transformation
- Exercises to practice conflict-solving

In his closing remarks, Samuel noted that conflict is constantly evolving. In a rapidly changing world, there is a longing and expectation for the church to be different. We cannot play catch-up, but we can lead from the rear.

Heather Hartwell offered a prayer for the mid-day meal.

Prayer for the meal

Following lunch, Meghan Mauldin offered a prayer for the afternoon session.

Gathering prayer

Erika Clary, who served as National Youth Conference (NYC) coordinator, brought a report from NYC 2022.

**Ministry Sharing –
National Youth
Conference**

She shared the following “fast facts” from NYC:

- 580 youth, 224 adult advisors, and 97 NYC staff
- Participants were from 154 congregations, four countries, and 25 states (plus the District of Columbia)
- Offerings received:
 - \$2,522 for CWS school kits
 - \$1,950 for NYC scholarship fund
- Assembled 3,102 CWS school kits and 444 diapers for Diapers for Haiti

She reported that there was a lot of youth participation in worship:

- Over 60 youth helped lead worship
- 17 youth performed with the NYC band

She shared soundbites from each of the conference speakers:

- Rodger Nishioka

- Drew Hart
- Dava Hensley
- Youth speech contest winners
- Jody Romero
- Naomi Kraenbring
- Chelsea Skillen and Tyler Goss
- Osheta Moore
- Seth Hendricks
- Jeremy Ashworth

She shared thoughts from some of the participants and asked Board members to share their own experiences or those of someone they knew who attended.

Erika thanked the Board for the ways they showed their support of her and of NYC throughout the year.

John Hoffman brought the report of the Audit and Investment Committee.

He introduced new members Joel Gibbel and Rosanna McFadden and gave a little information about each.

**Audit and
Investment
Committee report**

John reported that Eder Financial staff Dan Radcliff and Lynnae Rodeffer brought reports to the committee's meeting earlier in the week. Highlights of Dan's report:

- The Ukraine War, supply chain issues, down markets, rising interest rates, and inflationary economy have led to a challenging year for investment results.
- He commended the Church of the Brethren, Inc., for staying true to our long-term investment strategy, a strategy that will help us navigate the current market downturn.
- Review of Church of the Brethren investments, consisting of funds without donor restriction and funds with donor restriction, including fund investments, asset allocations, portfolio performance, and service fees, as of September 30, 2022
 - Net of activity, withdrawals, market fluctuation, and fees, the account value decreased \$9.8 million

Lynnae provided an organizational update for the committee:

- Eder Financial (formerly Brethren Benefit Trust) is living into their strategic plan, focusing on five areas:
 - Growth
 - Marketing
 - Identity
 - Location
 - People in the right places
- Lynnae noted that they have monthly investment meetings and quarterly meetings with their investment managers. Every three years the investment managers meet with the Eder board. Eder reviews and monitors investment managers' performance closely.

John reported that the investment strategy mix was last reviewed and approved in March with the transfer of short-term savings to long-term savings. The Church of the Brethren continues to focus on long-term goals, risk tolerances, timelines, and purposes of funds to help navigate economic uncertainty and volatility – especially during the current market downturn.

Committee actions:

- Approved a staff recommendation to remove revocable trusts and irrevocable trusts from the investment strategy mix list of funds
- Approved two changes to the financial policies as recommended by staff: removing Brethren Press from the list of Self-Funding Ministries and changing Brethren Benefit Trust's name to Eder Financial.

Treasurer Ed Woolf provided a prerecorded report on the 2023 Budget proposal for Board members to view in advance of the meeting.

**2023 Budget
proposal – Q&A
(Exhibit 3)**

Highlights of his report:

A reminder that the Board approved a Core Ministries expense parameter at the July meeting. Due to the inflationary economy, higher travel costs, an increase in program expense that represents a return to pre-pandemic operations, and the cost-of-living adjustment, a revised budget parameter is being recommended with an increase in use of designated funds.

Overview

- Congregational and individual giving is based on 10-year trends
- Draw percentages, except for the Bequest Quasi-endowment transfer, will remain unchanged for 2023
 - Bequest Quasi-Endowment transfer is being increased from 17% to 19%
- Budgeting \$186,000 from designated funds
- Net of new expense increases is \$150,000
 - anticipated expenses related to the General Secretary's recommendation for a new Executive Director position and the effect of a 3% mid-year 2022 cost-of-living adjustment
- 3% increase in hourly wages, salaries, and benefits planned for 2023 at an expense of approximately \$112,000

Budgeted income

- Budgeting \$1.53 million in congregational giving
 - Based on 10-year giving trend of a 4.3% annual decline
 - \$86,000 less than the 2022 budget
- Budgeting \$725,000 in individual giving
 - Based on 10-year giving trend of a 3.6% annual increase
 - \$143,000 more than the 2022 budget

- Budgeting a \$1.08 million draw from the Bequest Quasi-Endowment
 - \$297,000 increase from the 2022 budget
 - Based on a 19% draw* from the five-year average of the Bequest Quasi-Endowment Fund balance
*2% increase from 17% to 19% to support a new Executive Director position, as recommended by the General Secretary
- Budgeting a \$587,000 transfer from the Savings Fund
 - \$94,000 increase over 2022 and based on a 5% draw from the five-year average of the Savings Fund balance
- Budgeting a \$252,000 transfer from the BSC Quasi-Endowment
 - \$2,000 increase over 2022
 - Based on a 7% draw from the five-year average balance of the BSC Quasi-Endowment
- Budgeting use of \$186,000 from designated funds
 - An increase of \$119,000 from the approved budget parameter in July
- Budgeting use of \$293,000 in redirected one-time designated funds to meet the 2022 budget parameter
 - If a portion of the 2022 designated funds transfer is unused at the end of this year, these funds would be available for use in 2023
- Using a five-year average on draws in support of Core ministries has helped us reduce volatility in transfers and our budget amounts have been consistent with actuals – very helpful in providing steady income

Core Ministries expense changes

- The 3% salary and benefits increase makes up most of the increase in the departmental budgets
- Budgeting \$2.18 million expense for the General Secretary's area
 - \$40,500 increase in printing and postage for Mission Advancement
 - Brethren Press budgeting \$25,000 less income for 2023
- Discipleship Ministries is budgeting \$690,000 for 2023
 - Increase of \$128,000 from 2022, primarily to support the new Executive Director position
- Global Mission is budgeting \$506,000 for 2023
 - Increase of \$53,000 from 2022
 - Budgeting fewer transfers from restricted funds in 2023
- Service Ministries is budgeting \$308,000 for 2023
 - Increase of \$32,000 from 2022
- Organizational Resources is budgeting \$1.65 million
 - \$5,500 higher than 2022
 - Most of the Organizational Resources budgets are static in comparison with other program budgets, but can be more susceptible to product cost and contract variances

Total Core Ministries expenses budgeted to be \$5.34 million

- Increase of \$377,000 from 2022
- Anticipating 2023 to be a more “normal” year regarding the fulfillment of our Core ministries and programs

Net Income and Expense changes – all ministries

An overall net income is being proposed for all ministries – moving from a 2022 budgeted expense of (\$18,000) to a budgeted income of \$9,000 for 2023.

Core Ministries

- Brethren Press budgeted expense of \$39,000
 - Brethren Press is budgeting with both caution and optimism. Sales projections are lower than 2022, but higher than sales in the two pandemic years before

Self-funding ministries

- Budgeting a net income of \$40,000 for Material Resources
 - Rationale: increase in service fees, volunteers returning, more donation pickups for Lutheran World Relief, and increase in trucking and processing income from Church World Service
- Budgeting a (\$31,000) net expense for the Conference Office
 - Uncertainty about income from registration fees and district assessments
 - Increased costs for travel and A/V equipment
- Brethren Disaster Ministries is a breakeven budget with a transfer from the Emergency Disaster Fund
 - Project allocation expenses are budgeted to be \$212,000 higher than in 2022
 - Increased budget for Nigeria Crisis Response due to high inflation rates, impact of the Ukraine war, and 2023 national elections in Nigeria
 - Grant line increased due to anticipating additional grants for the Ukraine war
 - Grant line increased for Children’s Disaster Services, anticipating need for EDF to fund volunteers previously funded by Red Cross
- Global Food Initiative budget is a breakeven budget with a transfer from the Global Food Initiative Fund
 - Budgeting a \$15,000 increase in expenses
 - Mission Advancement staff send one appeal mailing per year for GFI

Revised 2023 Budget Parameter for Core Ministries

Original 2023 Budget Parameter approved by Board in July:	\$5,217,000
Additional designated funds transfer:	<u>119,000</u>
Revised 2023 Budget Parameter:	\$5,336,000

2023 Budget Recommendation

All Church of the Brethren Ministries:

- Total income of \$8,538,570
- Total expense of \$8,529,600
- Net income of \$8,970

Includes:

An additional \$119,000 transfer from Designated Funds to cover an increase in the Core Ministries budget parameter over the \$5,217,000 approved at the July Board meeting.

An allocation from the Emergency Disaster Fund of \$1,943,020 for projected net operating expense for Brethren Disaster Ministries (includes \$168,960 for Ministry Enablement Contribution) and \$227,740 from the Global Food Initiative Fund for projected net operating expense for Global Food Initiative (includes \$22,180 for Ministry Enablement Contribution).

During the meeting, Ed highlighted his video budget presentation, noting:

- To date, we have not used any of the \$293,000 designated funds transfer for 2022. Any portion of these funds not needed this year would be available for use next year.
- We had budgeted a 6% increase in medical insurance premiums but learned that the medical insurance premium expense will only be 3.7% (\$22,000).
- A break-even budget would mean our net asset balance for Core Ministries would be approximately \$2.04 million (assuming that 2022 ends as our budget anticipates).

Ed responded to Board members' questions.

Q: What would your best prediction be of how much of the \$293,000 set aside might be spent this year?

A: I anticipate needing to use some of it. I'm hopeful it will be under \$100,000.

Jeff Carter, Bethany Theological Seminary President, provided a pre-recorded video report for Board members to view in advance of the meeting. Highlights included:

**Bethany Theological
Seminary Q&A**

Students and enrollment

- 107 students enrolled for fall semester
 - Enrollment has doubled over the last 5-6 years
 - Shows a path of continued growth in the majority of Bethany's programs, particularly
 - Master of Arts in Theopoetics and Writing

- Master of Arts in Spiritual and Social Transformation
 - MDiv program is primarily Church of the Brethren
 - More ecumenical students than in the past
- Seminaries in America continue to face challenges, with one every other month moving, merging, or closing
 - Bethany's growth is largely due to innovative program and recruitment strategies

Technology

- Added a technology space in gathering area, providing access to activities regardless of location
- Upgraded two technology classrooms and added sound barrier
- Modified large classroom into a technology classroom
 - Used for meetings and classes
 - Can be divided into two classrooms
- Enhancements allow greater participation in Bethany community by trustees and students
- Plan to use one technology classroom to test latest technology, then implementing it in other classrooms in a rotating fashion
- Students are learning technology, which is needed in congregations today

New faculty

- Dr. Maggie Elwell – assistant professor of Peace Studies
- Dr. Tamisha Tyler – Louisville Institute Postdoctoral Fellow for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 academic years
 - Will teach classes in Theopoetics
 - Scott Holland is emeritus faculty and will continue to teach in Theopoetics

Building Bridges: Facing Division, Embracing Diversity

- Program powered by a \$1 million grant from the Lilly Foundation
 - Conversations between pastors and faculty about what is happening in the church today
 - Enhancing Bethany neighborhood, adding a service component
 - Partnerships that will bring theological and racial diversity and greater institutional reach

Additional news

- Erika Clary – part-time social media person
- Looking for full-time Institutional Advancement staff

During the meeting, Jeff noted that travel has been heavy and that it has been great to be out in congregations and districts again. He highlighted some points from his video presentation and responded to Board members' comments and questions.

Q: Does the Lilly Grant need to be spent in just one year?

A: It is for a period of five years. We are in the process of hiring someone to find non-traditional avenues of service and ministry formation placements. We will be considering how to make the program sustainable in the future.

Comment: Appreciated hearing that there is not a “one and done” attitude about the technology upgrades.

A: That is the attitude throughout the seminary; not simply checking things off, but considering how to meet the changing needs of programs and staying relevant.

Q: In the partnership with New Brunswick Seminary, were you referring to Muscat, Oman, and the Center for Christian-Muslim Dialogue?

A: Yes. And because all seminaries are facing challenges, it puts us in a position where collaboration has a multiplying effect.

Carl Fike expressed his appreciation to Jeff for his report and for the work being done at Bethany.

Heather Gentry Hartwell brought a report from the Brethren Faith in Action committee.

**Brethren Faith in
Action report**

Stan Dueck and Russ Matteson serve with Heather on the committee, which continues to meet about once a month.

A variety of outreach projects have been funded, including:

- Upgrades to technology to allow virtual access to programming
- Using a camp kitchen for preparation and distribution of meals
- Providing resources for churches to better make their presence known in the community

The committee has approved 12 applications in 2022 and has nine more pending. Available funding for 2022 is \$157,311.85, and grants to date have totaled \$39,531.29.

Heather expressed appreciation to Stan and Russ for their assistance and responded to Board members’ questions.

Q: About how long does it take from the time an application is received until the time a grant is given?

A: About three weeks, if the congregation has furnished all the necessary information. More information is needed from about 50 percent of the applicants.

Carl Fike introduced a recommendation from the Executive Committee, which had been tasked with bringing clearer guidelines for Brethren Faith in Action (BFIA) grants. He explained that the recommendation is the

**Brethren Faith in
Action
recommendation**

result of work done both by the BFIA committee and the Executive Committee.

(Exhibit 4)

He reminded the group that the grants are funded by a portion of the proceeds of the sale of the upper campus of the Brethren Service Center and were to honor the work done there. Grants were initially available to congregations only and had a matching funds requirement. In 2020, eligibility was expanded to include camps, due to the effects of the pandemic.

Carl highlighted the recommended changes to the guidelines. Substantive changes included:

- Continued eligibility of camps, but limited to \$2,500 grants on alternating years, with a requirement that the camp match at least half of the grant amount
- The addition of a sliding scale for the matching funds requirement for congregations (developed by the BFIA committee)
- Committee to meet at least semi-annually, rather than monthly
 - Recognizes that in some years there may be limited funds available, and meeting less often would allow the committee to consider all applications received over a longer period of time.
- In general, grants are not intended for capital improvements or remodeling projects

Carl invited questions and discussion.

Q: When would the new guidelines take effect?

A: January 1, 2023

Q: Congregation's income (page 1 on document) and congregation's total budget (on application) are not necessarily the same numbers. Which figure is it actually asking for?

A: Both could be relevant, but it seems that income is what is being asked for.

Q: If a congregation has received three grants totaling \$15,000, is that all they can receive?

A: It is by project, not by congregation. They can ask again for a different outreach project.

Q: Some congregations are remodeling to create space for a new ministry project. Would that kind of project still be eligible with this change?

A: That would be repurposing for a new ministry and would be eligible.

Q: Heather asked for further clarification for the committee: If a space is currently being used for outreach but needs repairs to remain functional, would that qualify?

A: This fund is not purposed to maintain existing facilities. But the committee can come to the Executive Committee with cases they think might qualify.

Comment: Are we also offering educational resources as to how Brethren do evangelism? Atlantic Northeast District has some great community engagement projects that might be defined as Brethren evangelism.

Carl noted that the Board's action on the guidelines would not preclude changes that need to be made to the application form.

The Mission and Ministry Board had consensus and approved the changes to the Brethren Faith in Action guidelines and application as presented.

Affirmation

Matt Guynn, interim co-executive director for On Earth Peace (OEP), provided a pre-recorded report, prepared for district conferences, for Board members to view in advance. Highlights of the report included:

**On Earth Peace
Q&A**

- 1,000 Brethren Kingian Nonviolence training project
 - Kingian Nonviolence is built from the experiences and insights of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and leaders of the Black freedom struggle
 - Curriculum is co-authored by Church of the Brethren member David Jensen
 - Hoping to train 1,000 Brethren in Kingian Nonviolence, in turn revitalizing and channeling our faith heritage
- End Gun Violence campaign
 - Monthly meet-ups, relational networking, and resources
- On Earth Performers drama club
 - Children's theater group focused on social justice themes
 - Taking place via Zoom on select Saturdays this fall
- Paid internship program
 - Averaged 15 paid interns at a time this year, age 18-24

During the meeting, Matt brought a few updates and responded to Board members' questions and comments.

He noted that the goal of the End Gun Violence campaign is to support On Earth Peace constituents in their local communities by connecting them with gun violence initiatives – building community, capacity, and commitment.

He shared about a training session for community leaders, held at the Westminster Church of the Brethren in September, focusing on racial justice.

The effort to train 1,000 Brethren in Kingian Nonviolence is part of OEP's vision of a church ready and able to respond to conflict and to provide leadership in our communities on issues of crisis.

Q: How many Brethren have been trained in Kingian Nonviolence so far?

A: 100 to 150 have been involved in some way. Matt noted that it is less about the metric and more about the desire to create critical mass.

Q: How many trainers do you have?

A: About seven or eight Brethren currently, and about 10 Brethren trainers of trainers. There is also a group of six or seven others that they work with regularly.

Kathy Mack gave the report of the Sustainability Committee.

Sustainability Committee report

She reminded Board members that the blue envelopes found on each table could be used to make a donation to the Church of the Brethren.

Committee members are Kathy Mack (chair), Kayla Alphonse, Joel Peña, and Karen Shively Neff. Staff members Traci Rabenstein, Nancy McCrickard, and Josh Brockway also joined the committee's recent meeting, as did Board Chair Carl Fike.

The committee's purpose is "To assure that the Mission and Ministry Board is a sustainable organization that calls forth committed support from congregations and individuals."

At their recent meeting, the committee:

- heard a report from the office of Mission Advancement
 - They are traveling again, including district conferences and visits to individuals and congregations
- reviewed two specific Strategic Plan items for Foreground Vision #3
 - Liaison role of Mission and Ministry Board members
 - Congregational "self-allocation" process going forward

The committee considered the following recommendation from the Mission Advancement team:

Recommendation

Decommission the self-allocation process and direct intentional focus, over the next three years, to the re-establishment of covenant relationship with one another, strengthen education to members and lay leadership concerning the missions and ministries, and better understand congregation needs and financial situations.

The committee affirmed the recommendation and determined it did not need Board approval, and that the Mission Advancement team can move forward with making this change.

Q: Will there be a report at the end of the three years?

A: Traci Rabenstein responded that her goal is to provide an annual update to the Sustainability Committee.

Q: What does “de-commissioning” mean and how will it be communicated?

A: There will be communication to the districts and congregations that the self-allocation process will be stopped.

A concern was raised that there still needs to be a creative way to ask for money. If you don't ask, you won't receive. Traci responded that staff are planning to do an annual campaign for individual donors and for congregations to keep them engaged.

Kathy reported that the committee also discussed ways to equip Mission and Ministry Board (MMB) members to be ambassadors for the work of the Church of the Brethren. Efforts would include:

- Ambassador framework
 - MMB members assigned to a specific district/area of the denomination
 - MMB members to communicate regularly with district boards, district conferences, district members
- Ambassador packets (provided by Mission Advancement)
 - Purpose is to provide consistent message about the MMB and denomination's activities
- Ambassador training (provided by Mission Advancement)
 - Fireside chat with General Secretary in November 2022

Q: Will part of the packet be talking points mindful of the communication guidelines?

A: Yes. It will include things like encouragement to subscribe to *Messenger* and links for signing up for our blogs and Newline.

Q: Will Board members be told where they are to go?

A: Where there is overlap, there would need to be some coordination among the Board members to ensure that all districts are covered.

Rhonda Pittman Gingrich, Annual Conference director, brought the Annual Conference Office report.

**Annual Conference
Office report**

She reflected on Annual Conference as our “ritual of encounter,” where we come face-to-face with God in the face of one another. It is where we are reminded that we are in relationship and that we are one body.

These are uncertain times for Annual Conference.

- Departing congregations
- Among remaining congregations, a growing sense that Annual Conference is irrelevant
- Financial challenges, in part because of reduced attendance

New and renewed efforts and initiatives

- Program and Arrangements Committee (P&AC) met with Intercultural Ministries Advisory Council.
 - Evaluating welcome and inclusion at Annual Conference 2022
 - Being more intentional about planning for welcome and inclusion at Annual Conference 2023
- Rhonda met with Jeanne Davies (Anabaptist Disabilities Network) and Rebekah Flores (contractor with Discipleship Ministries) to evaluate accessibility services for 2022 and plan ahead for 2023.

P&AC had conversation about how to revitalize the exhibit hall. Among the things they are considering are:

- Mini-concerts
- Art installation that changes and grows throughout the week
- Silent auction to benefit Disaster Ministries
- DunkerPunks recording studio for their podcast

Other highlights of Rhonda's report included:

- Conversations about how to better welcome new attendees.
- Ways to promote fellowship and relationship throughout the week
- Worship Planning Team made up of Beth Jarrett, David R. Miller, Laura Stone, Don Mitchell; Kyle Remnant is music coordinator
- Work to enhance experience of virtual participants through partnership with Bethany Theological Seminary

Rhonda asked Board members to encourage people to come to Annual Conference in Cincinnati in 2023, noting the planning already being done by a team from the So. Ohio/Kentucky District. She also invited Board members as leaders in the denomination to participate in the nomination process for the Annual Conference ballot.

Rhonda responded to Board members' questions and comments:

Q: How many participated online in Annual Conference 2022?

A: About 150 non-delegates registered in advance; about 50 others made last-minute switches, including some who were present in Omaha.

Rhonda noted that a hybrid conference is very complex and very expensive. She added that Annual Conference 2022 appointed a study committee around Breaking Down Barriers, which will look into some of the challenges.

Board members affirmed having someone preach in Spanish with a translator, as well as incorporating different languages into the music. Rhonda responded that P&AC is committed to working intentionally at better representation and diversity.

Tim McElwee brought the moderator's report.

Annual Conference Moderator's Q&A

The theme for Annual Conference 2023 is "Living God's Love," based on Ephesians 5:1-2. The logo states the theme in Spanish, Creole, Hausa, and English.

Tim brought the following updates on business:

- We know of no queries coming from districts thus far.
- A couple of items will be coming from Standing Committee related to the nominations process.

Tim reported that he has been involved in six district conferences to date and has two more to go. He also participated in a Zoom session with young adults, with the help of Becky Ullom Naugle.

He plans to organize a series of interactive discussions that will focus on the health of our faith community. The discussions will involve a variety of representatives, including African Americans, differently abled people, women, youth and young adults, LGBTQ sisters and brothers and their family members, and indigenous people and other ethnic groups. He hopes that through the discussions we will learn about our unique gifts and lived experiences, how much we share in common, and how the church can more fully affirm, call forth, and celebrate the gifts they bring and how we can love them better.

Tim responded to Board members' comments and questions.

Colin Scott gave a status report on the work of the Foreground Vision Initiative #8 task team.

Foreground Vision Initiative #8 update and work session (Exhibit 5)

The team was given the task of developing a plan for getting 100% of director-level staff and Board members trained in Kingian Nonviolence (KNV) and present the plan to the Board at the October 2022 meeting. Team members are Colin Scott (convener), Barbara Daté, Meghan Mauldin, and Joanna Willoughby. Josh Brockway serves as the staff liaison.

The group broke into small groups to discuss their hopes and concerns about the KNV training and provide the task team with feedback.

Feedback from Board and ex officio table conversations:

- Looking forward to gaining the skills and addressing/moving beyond the emotion
- Some have already had KNV training

- Having Samuel Sarpiya lead us at this meeting was helpful
- Looking forward to exercising it in our own lives and our church lives
- Goal to be able to tie KNV principles to our identity as a peace church and discipleship as peacemakers
- Challenges/concerns include:
 - Some people don't know what is meant by "Kingian"
 - 16 hours is a massive commitment
 - Logistical challenge
 - Is online the most helpful way to do the training?
 - Reservation about the optics of Board doing a program promoted by OEP
- Hope that the facilitator be a person of color
- Hope to gain confidence to have hard conversations, even among Board members
- Trainer needs to customize the training to our work, focusing on making us better church leaders
- If the trainer is non-Brethren, they need to have an understanding of the Brethren
- Expectation of 100% participation; what is Plan B if something comes up for a participant?
- Hope that it is timely – not taking forever to accomplish
- Hoping it helps us deal with conflicts in our own congregations and districts in a better way
- Allowing God to work with us in ways we cannot yet envision
- Hope it will make us better people and a better Board
- Would be helpful to have an "elevator speech" about KNV
- Giving us permission to name conflict and give us tools to address it
- Is there a plan for training future Board members?
- What is the purpose? What role do ex officios play?
- Questions for Matt Guynn about how OEP board members and interns are trained
- Might be nice to have some core pieces "in the can"
- What if all denominational leadership was trained?
 - Common vocabulary shared among denominational leadership groups
 - Common starting points when working on issues
- CODE or district leadership could also do this; possible professional group opportunity

Colin noted that staff also participated in the discussion and would bring a different perspective. He encouraged the group to share additional thoughts with the task team as they arise.

Carl Fike reported that the Board addressed the item "Authority on Matters of Faith and Practice" in closed session, where they had an engaging, informative, and enlightening conversation.

Authority on Matters of Faith and Practice

Carl Fike reported that there has been no name put forth at this time to serve on the Germantown Trust.

Germantown Trust

Mission and Ministry Board members adopted by unanimous consent a resolution for the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN – Church of the Brethren in Nigeria), to take place in Nigeria in 2023. Each voting Board member hand signed the resolution, which will be prepared for presentation to EYN leaders at the centennial celebration in the spring of 2023.

**EYN resolution
(Addendum to
minutes)**

Each in Our Own Language (Plan for Recognizing Injustice)

**Foreground Vision
Initiative #6 update**

Thomas Dowdy joined the meeting via Zoom and brought an interim report on Foreground Vision Initiative #6 (FVI#6).

The task team's assignment was to develop a road map/game plan for creating a curriculum resource by the July 2021 Board meeting to help congregations identify aspects of racial injustice that may be present in their contextual settings.

Following the task team's report in June 2021, the Executive Committee reappointed the task team to implement the "Identify" step of its road map with Board and staff by the March 2022 Board meeting.

Thomas shared that the task team, made up of Thomas Dowdy (chair), Heather Gentry Hartwell, Roger Schrock, Christina Singh, and Wendy McFadden (staff), is multi-cultural.

The task team brought in Bob Gross to assist with a survey of staff and Board members of color over the past 20 years. The survey was designed by the task team to provide numerical data that could be tabulated, as well as open-ended questions that invited additional input. The process was designed to maintain confidentiality. The survey was sent to 32 individuals, with about a 40% response rate to date. Respondents include five of 12 Board members, seven of 20 staff, and one intern. Data from the survey will be reviewed and an executive summary will be submitted for the next Mission and Ministry Board meeting.

The task team also completed a parallel task of defining "whiteness." The task team felt it important that Board members and staff be equipped with an "elevator speech" for explaining this background vision, which has been challenging for some. The definition was submitted to the Board Chair.

Two of the task team members – Thomas Dowdy and Christina Singh – asked to be dismissed from the team. The others would remain on the team to complete the task and to submit the executive summary.

Thomas expressed appreciation to all the members of the team, to Bob Gross for his assistance with the survey, and to the Board for entrusting the team with the task.

Carl thanked Thomas for the report and dismissed Thomas and Christina from the task team with appreciation.

Paul Schrock brought the report from the Strategic Planning Committee's recent meeting.

Strategic Planning Committee report

Committee members are Paul Schrock (chair), Lauren Seganos Cohen, Heather Hartwell, Roger Schrock, and Joanna Willoughby. Staff members David Steele and Stan Dueck and Board Chair Carl Fike also met with the committee.

Paul reminded the group that the Board owns the Strategic Plan, but the Strategic Planning Committee monitors it, bringing recommendations for updates and new initiatives and making sure the Board receives progress reports.

Recognizing the heavy workload of staff, the committee did not bring any proposed new initiatives. The committee:

- will meet 2-3 times before March
- will consider how to proceed with the work of the FVI#6 team
- will work with the Executive Committee for replacements for Thomas Dowdy and Christina Singh on the FVI#6 team

Paul reported that he provided an overview of the Strategic Plan for new Board members during their orientation. He encouraged Board members and staff to think of things that could be done to push the Strategic Plan forward. He responded to comments from Board members.

Comment: Matt Guynn noted that On Earth Peace (OEP) conducted an audit of institutional racism within their organization. He affirmed the work being done and offered to share OEP's journey if it would be helpful.

By This All People Will Know (*Understanding Discipleship*)

Foreground Vision Initiative #7 update

Josh Brockway, co-coordinator of Discipleship Ministries, brought an update on Foreground Vision Initiative #7 (FVI#7).

Josh reminded the group of the definition of Discipleship:

Discipleship is the intentional journey of becoming like Jesus through practices at the intersection of Word, Worship, and World that forms new selves, new social relationships, and a new social imaginary.

Since meeting with voting Mission and Ministry Board members and staff in January, Josh and Stan have engaged the topic by:

- Meeting with Strategic Leadership Team around the image of "Learning to Wash Feet," an essay written by Josh for *Basin and*

Towel. In that setting, they discussed the definition of discipleship with the following goals in mind:

- Reengage the scope of the definition
- Attend to personal stories
- Explore personal and professional reactions to the definition
- Begin imagining possibilities for our ministries
- Presenting an Annual Conference equipping session with 20 people attending in person and five online. This was also framed around “Learning to Wash Feet” and the definition of discipleship.

Josh described the task as a process of building a shared vocabulary. Although the original objective was to have a single conversation, they recognize there are ways to engage the conversation in a variety of ways and to build opportunities to share it with the wider church.

Josh invited questions.

Q: Do you feel the task is completed?

A: Yes. The Foreground Vision Initiative is completed, but the work of resourcing and pushing it out into the church is next.

Paul Schrock moved that the Board accept the Foreground Vision Initiative #7 report with appreciation and dismiss the task team.

The Mission and Ministry Board had consensus and dismissed the FVI#7 task team with appreciation.

Nevin Dulabaum provided a pre-recorded video report from Eder Financial (formerly Brethren Benefit Trust) for Board members to view prior to the meeting. In it, Nevin reported:

- Eder continues its commitment to the Church of the Brethren
 - Worked with Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Advisory Committee (PCBAC) and Office of Ministry to produce a pastoral compensation online calculator
 - Administers the Church Workers Assistance Plan, which pays out about \$400,000/year to pastors and church workers with financial need
 - Provides insurance benefits for Church of the Brethren staff, with minimal premium increase for 2023
 - Manages Church of the Brethren, Inc., reserves
 - Initiated low-cost Eder Values Investing index funds for Church of the Brethren staff pension accounts
 - Provides personal support to Church of the Brethren staff enrolled in the Pension Plan for their retirement planning
 - Logo incorporates a cross, showing Christian values
 - “Eder” hearkens back to Brethren beginnings

Eder Financial’s five strategic goals:

1. Growth as opposed to maintenance
2. Marketing and promotion

**Eder Financial
Q&A**

3. The right people in the right positions
4. Permanent work-from-home, allowing staff hires across the country
5. Identity change

Nevin reported that one retirement community has recently joined the medical plan and another is coming into the pension plan.

New staff:

- New marketing director
- Communication director
- Looking for a sales director
- Data manager

Other news:

- Eder will continue to maintain some office space at the General Offices for the foreseeable future
- Changing articles of organization and bylaws, following recent change related to Annual Conference agencies
 - Will work with Standing Committee to finalize an agreement to be brought to Annual Conference in 2023
- Eder continues to have clean audit opinions

Nevin noted that the downturn in the markets presents a challenge as people become skittish. He also invited feedback on the following:

- Should Eder stay with the same guidelines for Eder Values Investing as created by the Church of the Brethren, or perhaps go beyond that?
- How can Eder better serve the Church of the Brethren?
- What are the distinctives of Eder Financial?

During the meeting, Nevin noted that with identity change in May came:

- New resources/tools
- Revamped newsletter
- Added new pension funds

He highlighted the following from his video report:

- Insurance open enrollment is coming, with a minimal premium increase
- Dedicated concierge service
- Added new staff in communications, marketing, and data

Nevin responded to Board members' questions and comments:

Q: Will Eder continue to maintain the pastoral compensation calculator?

A: Eder works closely with the Office of Ministry and PCBAC and saw the need. An Eder staff member wrote the program and Eder will continue to support the tool.

Q: As the Church of the Brethren works at establishing a global presence, will Eder be listening to global partners' concerns related to investing?

A: We have not had engagement with global partners, but that is something to consider.

Nevin reported that the Eder board will continue to work at its partnership with the Church of the Brethren. He reiterated that Eder is first and foremost a Church of the Brethren agency.

Carl Fike presented the proposed 2027 Mission and Ministry Board spring and fall meeting dates:

March 12/13-15 (Elgin, Ill.)

October 15/16-18 (Elgin, Ill.)

Approve 2027 MMB meeting dates

The Mission and Ministry Board had consensus and affirmed the spring and fall 2027 meeting dates as presented.

Affirmation

Colin Scott brought the report of the Board Development Committee.

Board Development Committee report

Committee members are Colin Scott (chair), Barbara Daté, Meghan Mauldin, and Josiah Ludwick. Nancy Miner provides staff support and Board Chair Carl Fike attended the recent meeting.

At the meeting, the committee's functions guided the discussion:

- Final wrap-up of new member orientation
 - Colin expressed thanks to Meghan for leading the orientation; to Paul Schrock for his overview of the Strategic Plan; to Ed Woolf for his financial presentation; and to Carl Fike and David Steele for their participation.
- Considered nominations for the 2023 at-large member
- Discussed communicating the Board's specific needs to Standing Committee's Nominating Committee
- Discussed future growth and training opportunities
- Considered ideas for individual growth opportunities
- Reviewed information from the exit interviews of departing Board members

The open session adjourned at 5:05 p.m. Central Time and the Mission and Ministry Board met in closed session to consider the call of the Chair-elect and the 2023 at-large member.

Adjournment

Paul Schrock offered a prayer for the evening meal.

Prayer for the meal

Church of the Brethren
Mission and Ministry Board
General Offices, Elgin, Illinois
October 19-22, 2018

Mission and Ministry Board – Minutes

Sunday, October 16

Members present: Carl Fike (chair), Colin Scott (chair-elect), Michaela Alphonse, Barbara Daté, Lauren Seganos Cohen, Joel Gibbel, Heather Gentry Hartwell, John Hoffman, Josiah Ludwick, Kathy Mack, Meghan Mauldin, Karen Shively Neff, Rosanna McFadden, Joel Peña, J. Roger Schrock, Paul Schrock, and Joanna Wave Willoughby

Ex officios present: Tim McElwee (moderator), Madalyn Metzger (moderator-elect), David Shumate (Annual Conference secretary)
(in person)

Ex officios present: Jeff Carter (Bethany president), Matt Guynn (OEP interim co-executive director), Nevin Dulabaum (Eder Financial president), Torin Eikler (Council of District Executives representative)
(via Zoom)

General Secretary: David Steele

Recorder: Nancy Miner

Josiah Ludwick and Michaela Alphonse led a time of worship through scripture, guided silent reflection, song, and prayer.

Worship

Scriptures used were from 1 John. Questions for reflection were:

- What must I confess before the Lord today?
- What emotions or thoughts come with knowing that we are God’s children?
- What is the Holy Spirit asking of us this morning?
- How can we better show love toward others?
- What assurance does our faith give us today?

Torin Eikler, Council of District Executives representative, provided a pre-recorded video report for Board members to view in advance of the meeting.

Council of District Executives Q&A

Torin reported that the Council of District Executives:

- has been in a three-year cycle of redefining, recreating, and renewing following a large amount of turnover in the Council
- is in the final stages of approving documents on how the Council will work together and how they will handle conflict within the Council.

He noted that there is a general feeling among district executives that there seems to be a dearth of appropriate candidates for pastoral placement and for district executive placement. As a result, there have been some creative approaches, with districts using ministry teams to accomplish what district executives once did. This has created new challenges for the Council, but has brought about some creative changes, as well. Torin invited Board members and their congregations and districts to pay attention to the gifts around them and to name them.

Torin joined the meeting via Zoom to respond to Board members' questions and comments.

Q: Has there been a lot of turnover within those districts that have moved to a team ministry approach?

A: The districts with teams have been pretty stable, partly because responsibilities are shared and there is less pressure. The team approach creates some interesting challenges for the Council, given recent issues around trust and confidentiality. It also stimulates some creative thinking.

Carl Fike commented that Torin's comment about a dearth of candidates for pastoral and district leadership resonated with him. He offered the Board's availability for collaboration with the Council as appropriate. Torin noted that he does not believe that there are fewer pastors per capita than there used to be, but that congregations are half the size they used to be, and many are not interested in merging or having less than a full-time pastor.

Carl Fike presented the 2023 Budget proposal for the Board's consideration and action.

**2023 Budget
proposal
(Exhibit 3)**

2023 Budget Recommendation

All Church of the Brethren Ministries:

- **Total income of \$8,538,570**
- **Total expense of \$8,529,600**
- **Net income of \$8,970**

The Mission and Ministry Board had consensus and approved the 2023 Budget as presented.

Affirmation

Church of the Brethren staff provided pre-recorded video reports from the following ministry areas for Board members to view in advance of the meeting:

**Ministry Sharing in
small groups**

- Brethren Disaster Ministries
- Discipleship Ministries
- Global Mission
- Office of Ministry

Staff from each of these areas spent time with Board members in table conversations, giving the opportunity for Board members to learn more about each of these ministry areas.

Carl Fike reported that during the previous day's closed session the Mission and Ministry Board called Kathy Mack to serve as Chair-elect, beginning after Annual Conference 2023.

Call of Chair-elect

Joel Peña and Karen Neff gave the Governance Monitor's report.

**Governance
Monitors' report**

Joel highlighted the various committees and the Board members that serve on each. He pointed out the ethnic diversity of those serving on the Board.

Karen shared that the Governance Monitors have the task of monitoring the business of the Board meeting. She shared a few photos, noting:

- Good to have the opportunity to tour the facility
- Beauty of the meeting room
- Helpful to have the meeting in a hybrid format
- Board leadership

A list of questions guides the Governance Monitors in reviewing the meeting. Karen and Joel responded to the questions:

- Holding committee meetings in advance by Zoom is helpful
- The agenda was well-crafted, relevant, appropriate, and clear
- The meeting was balanced and discussions appropriate
- New members were engaged from the beginning
- Some topics (e.g., financial reports) can be difficult to understand, but were presented clearly
- The Board did not encroach on staff functions
- The Board Chair facilitated the discussion well
- Input from resource persons, staff, and ex officios was helpful
- Pace and time allotments were good until the final item on Saturday, which took more time than allotted
- There were no duplications between the work of the committees and that of the Board
- Committees did not encroach on Board work
- Consensus model worked well; explanations were helpful
- Presentation of proposals was helpful and did not stifle discussion
- Appreciated Samuel Sarpiya's presentation
- Fellowship was good and valuable
- Food was great
- Games at the hotel were fun

Carl Fike thanked each Board member for their significant effort to be at the meeting and for being prepared and engaged.

**Board Chair
comments**

He expressed deep appreciation for the work of General Secretary David Steele. He noted that the job is a difficult one, and he encouraged the Board to pray for David and the entire staff.

Carl Fike offered a prayer for David Steele and for the mid-day meal.

Prayer for the meal

The meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m. Central.

Adjournment

Recorded by Nancy Miner

Approved and respectfully submitted by:

David K. Shumate
Secretary

Date

DRAFT

Mission and Ministry Board of the Church of the Brethren
Resolution on the Centennial of Ekklesiyar Yan’uwa a Nigeria

We, the Mission and Ministry Board of the Church of the Brethren in the United States, representing our members, congregations, and districts, praise God for the centennial of Ekklesiyar Yan’uwa a Nigeria.

The year 2023 marks the 100th anniversary of Ekklesiyar Yan’uwa a Nigeria. From its beginnings in 1923 in Garkida, with H. Stover Kulp and Albert D. Helsler, Mr. Garba, Mr. John, and Mr. Danboyi, and through many joys and trials, the church has stood firm on Jesus Christ.

Since the first baptisms in Nigeria of Risku Zidiku Madziga and Pilasar Mshelsawa and others in 1924, hundreds of thousands have been baptized. Since the first pastor, Madu Mshelia, was ordained in Nigeria, thousands of pastors have been ordained. Since 1947, the church has held an annual Majalisa. In 1972, Ekklesiyar Yan’uwa a Nigeria became an independent denomination.

Many have joined together in the building of churches and districts, primary schools, a technical school, Kulp Theological Seminary, a leprosarium, dispensaries and hospitals, the Lafiya rural health program, agricultural and community development programming, well-digging projects, Theological Education by Extension, a women’s program, and so much more.

Ekklesiyar Yan’uwa a Nigeria has been an important contributor to the wider Christian community in Nigeria through its ecumenical involvements in the Theological College of Northern Nigeria, the Christian Association of Nigeria, and other organizations and contacts—even extending into interfaith dialogue.

We in the Church of the Brethren in the United States are humbled and inspired by the harvest the Lord has reaped through Ekklesiyar Yan’uwa a Nigeria, and are proud of the positive efforts our church members and mission workers have made toward Ekklesiyar Yan’uwa a Nigeria’s success. We also repent of the errors we have made along the way. We resolve to do better in the future, with God’s help.

We see the hardship and suffering of the people of Nigeria and resolve to continue our walk together as sisters and brothers in Christ—to weep with you, to rejoice with you, to pray with you, to work alongside you, to give freely of our gifts, and to receive your gifts for us with gratitude.

Adopted by unanimous consent by the Mission and Ministry Board at its fall meeting on Saturday, October 15, 2022.