
95th Atlantic Southeast District Conference

Of the Church of the Brethren

November 6, 2021

The Multicolored

Wisdom of God

(Ephesians 3:20)



Greetings, ASE Brethren.

Welcome to our 95th District Conference (virtually this year via Zoom)!

Today marks the fulfillment of two dreams – first, that of our beloved Terry Grove, who desired so much for the churches of our various cultures to become more acquainted with each other and to commit to the common mission of Christ’s Church and our District.

Secondly, this day is helping to fulfill my own dream. Since coming to this District in 2005, I have been fundamentally changed. After 35 years of serving in rural and small town churches up north, coming to an urban, multiethnic congregation in Miami literally changed my life and my view of the church. I am thrilled for us to have the opportunity this weekend to affirm seven churches (all ethnic) for congregational status and to welcome one (possibly two) new projects. Martha Beach and Wayne Sutton got me excited about church planting, and being pastor of the Miami First Church for nine years, as well as attending four denominational Intercultural Consultations, got me excited about multiethnic ministry. And since we are supposed to be lifelong learners, I have recently been reading a book by Dr. Derwin Gray entitled (what else?) *Building a Multiethnic Church*. The vision of Revelation 7:9 turns my crank, and I want it to do the same for you. I hope you'll stick it out until the end today to celebrate our ethnic diversity with us.

Our theme comes from a literal Greek rendering of Ephesians 3:20: "(God's) intent was that now, through the church, the multicolored wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms." The NIV uses "manifold" but the Greek word really does mean "multi-colored." Technically, we are not multi-colored. We are multi-shaded, because the fact is, we are all brown, just to different degrees, depending on the amount of melanin in our skin. But we really do have much more in common than we think, even in secular land, but especially in the church, because we share Christ Himself. So yes, let's celebrate!

Some "thank-yous" are in order:

To our 2021 Annual Conference Moderator, Paul Munday, for graciously sharing two messages with us by way of video.

To our stalwart Interim District Executive, Vicki Ehret, for bringing us through the time of loss and change and even moving us forward in the midst of it all.

To our Program and Arrangements Committee (Ilexene Alphonse, Ella Attelus, Bob Chapman, Nate Mattox and Susan Muntain) for their great teamwork in pulling this together.

To our ASE Cross-Cultural Team (Founa Badet, Ashley Carrasco, and Aida Sanchez) who worked with me to provide our discussion of Dr. Tony Evans' book *Oneness Embraced*, who helped to plan today's worship, and who helped to put together the 13-week devotional series leading up to now (Thanks to all the writers, too!)

To Aaron Neff, our District "tech whiz," for helping us to incorporate the video portions of song and spoken word into our worship, and for aiding us in other areas today as well.

We have planned the schedule so that we can conclude by 1:30 pm, if not sooner. Today you can "attend" from the comfort of your own homes or churches. And tonight, we have the added bonus of an extra hour of sleep as we turn our clocks back an hour to standard time.

Enjoy your time here with us today. Please use your cameras so we can see your faces. We need to be able to do that much since we cannot be together. May God richly bless us, and may He also bless you as we share together during this special day.

In Christ,
Ray Hileman, District Moderator

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District Conference Schedule and Agenda

Saturday, November 6, 2021

“THE MULTI-COLORED WISDOM OF GOD” - from Ephesians 3:10.

8:30 Am 9:00 am Gathering Time

9:00 – 9:40 am – Opening worship

Message

Title: “The Great Gathering”

Focus: God dreams of a ‘great gathering’, a ‘grand uniting’ of all peoples, in Jesus.

Scripture: Ephesians 1:5-10 (NRSV)

9:40 -9:50 STRETCH BREAK

10:00 -12:15 **Business Session**

CALL to ORDER

Approval of new congregations:

Gospel Assembly Naples Haitian Nuevo Comeinzo Orlando Haitian

Tabernacle Restoration Unify Christian West Palm Beach

Roll Call & Seating of the delegate body

Consecration of Delegates

Presentation of new church start: **Lorida Iglesia de los Hermanos**

Approval of 2021 Agenda

Approval of the 2019 District Conference Minutes

Presentation of the Slate of Officers

Acceptance of the closure of the Winter Park Church

Recognition of Pastoral service years

11:30-11:40 am BREAK

11:40 AM

Financial Reports:

2020, 2021

Financial Report through end of September 2021

Investments report

2022 Budget acceptance

District Staff and District related Reports

Page 20-21 Interim District Executive and ASE Board Report

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Agency Reports

12:00 – 12:30 pm– Brethren Agencies 15 minutes

Bethany

Church of the Brethren

12:45 pm Closing Worship – Paul Munday

Title: “Surrounded!”

Focus: As we dream God’s dream, we’re surrounded by a ‘cloud of witnesses’ -- great legacy -- cheering us on!

Scripture: Hebrews 12:1-3 (NET)

1:15 pm Dedication of Officers, Passing the Gavel

1:30 pm Adjournment



Church of the Brethren

2021 District Conferences

Dear Sisters and Brothers and of the Atlantic Southeast District,

Grace and Peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. On behalf of the Annual Conference Officers, I want to make sure you know that I thank God regularly for you and your good work on behalf of the Gospel, in whatever form that takes. As you gather for your district conference, whether it be in person or by computer, please know that my prayers are with you, that your worship, study, and work together will strengthen your faith and energize your witness for Christ.

At the time of this writing, I am praying that what some have called our long “covid nightmare” might indeed be behind us, and we can return to what we fondly call, a “real Annual Conference” in Omaha next summer. Not that our virtual gathering in June/July 2021 wasn’t real. Whenever the Church of the Brethren gathers, even with 2 or more, we know God is present. But we proved that we Brethren can adapt, are flexible, creative, and are deeply committed to being the people of God regardless of the circumstances in which we find ourselves and our church.

Our work with the Compelling Vision has reminded us of the ways we already have been Jesus in our neighborhoods and to a hurting world and challenged us to do that more boldly. We will gather in Omaha facing questions about how we live that out as a people who for some 300 years have been committed to sharing Christ with the world through both talk and action. We will explore what it means to live in harmony with one another, respecting each other’s gifts and perspectives, while committed to a saving Christ who calls us to another way of living. Our theme will be “Embracing one another, as Christ embraces us.” I hope it motivates us to consider how to better embrace each other, as we walk together, committed as Paul’s letter to the Romans instructs, to “live in harmony with one another.” (Romans 12:16 NIV). As we do so, we affirm our common commitment to proclaiming the One in whom we live and move and have our being, the One who guides and undergirds our life together, Jesus the Christ.

I have had the privilege of sharing the sights and sounds and inspiration that is our Annual Conference gatherings for the past 30 years, and have seen the impact those gathering, in the name of Christ and for the work of the church, have had on us as a church family. Annual Conference is indeed a large part of what holds us as Brethren together and guides our ministry. We are indeed emerging into God’s adventurous future, with all the promise and potential that brings.

Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together

1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, Illinois 60120 847-742-5100 800-323-8039 Fax: 847-742-6103

Please join those who share this faith tradition known as the Church of the Brethren next summer, as we worship God, embrace our brothers and sisters in the faith, and hopefully return to the kind of large, safe gatherings that have energized us to be more faithful and courageous disciples for our Lord Jesus Christ.

Between now and then, please pray that our gathering will be an opportunity to recall God's promises, recount our shared stories, bolster our unity, and commit our hearts as Christ's witness in neighborhoods and a world of desperate need.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Sollenberger".

David Sollenberger
2022 Annual Conference Moderator

DELEGATE ORIENTATION

I. RESPONSIBILITIES OF DELEGATES

Your responsibilities as delegates include reading this conference booklet, praying for the conference and the decisions which need to be made, being present for each business session, voting on the acceptance of reports from various groups, voting on questions which may come before you, electing people to serve various functions of the district, and voting on appointments. Your responsibility does not stop when Conference is over. You also should report back to your congregation, church board, and stewards concerning the decisions which were made at this conference. This is very important because those who are called to serve the District depend on the churches to support them with their prayers and with finances to do what they have been called to do. In order for this to happen, the churches have to know what you decided here. This may not be one of your responsibilities, but we hope you will urge all of the members of your church family to attend District Conference.

II. PURPOSE OF DISTRICT CONFERENCE

The purpose of District Conference is for worship, fellowship, and conducting business. On Saturday morning, we will open the Business session at 9:00 a.m. .

The conference schedule is on page 4.

Why should there be business to conduct? The District exists for the purpose of helping member congregations do what they are called to do, which is to provide corporate worship, nurture their members, tell the “Good News” in their communities, and ease the burdens of a needy world. In order for the District to do this, some organization is required along with guidelines for operation and people to operate. District Conference, in session, is responsible for setting overall policy and developing those guidelines much like your own church council or business meeting does for your church. You, as delegates, are representing your congregation in “governing” the District.

The District Board is called as servants of the Conference to oversee the operation of the District when Conference is not in session. But, obviously, the District Board does not meet every day so a staff is hired to see that day to day needs of the District are met. Our District staff includes, Vicki Ehret as our Interim Executive Minister and Director of Ministry, Eva Shoemaker as Director of Finance, Founa Augustin Badet as Director of Haitian Ministries, and Aida Sanchez as Director of Programs.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE AT A GLANCE Based on *Robert 's Rules of Order Revised* and Rules Governing Annual Conference

I. THE FIVE ESSENTIAL STEPS THROUGH

1. Presentation of the motion: I move that

2. Seconding the motion: I second the motion (or, I second it).

3. Stating the question (by the moderator) and discussion of it: It has been moved and seconded that ----- . Is there any discussion?

4. Putting the question to a vote: Are you ready for the question? All those in favor of the motion which is . . . say Aye. Opposed, No.

5. Announcing the result of the vote: The motion is carried (lost) and you have voted (not) to

II. MOTIONS: WHO MAKES THEM AND HOW?

1. All members of the district have the privilege of moving and discussing the business of the conference.

2. To make a motion, it is necessary to “obtain the floor ” - that is, to rise after the floor has been yielded and address the presiding officer by her/his official title (i.e., Sister/Brother Moderator). Give your name and the name of the congregation you represent as soon as you catch the eye of the moderator after addressing him.

3. A motion is seconded without obtaining the floor or rising.

III. SOME RULES OF DEBATE

1. All remarks must be addressed to the moderator.

2. All remarks must pertain to the immediately pending question before the conference.

3. All remarks must be of an impersonal nature.

4. No member may speak more than twice on the same question, the first not more than five minutes, and the second not more than three minutes.

IV. NOMINATING AND VOTING

1. Nominations may be made from the floor. However, one must have that person 's permission to present his name in nomination and have a statement about the person 's qualifications to present to the conference clerk.
2. No member can be compelled to vote. Those not voting are not counted in deciding whether it is a majority, two-thirds, or unanimous. All blank ballots are ignored, and thus, not counted.
3. Most votes are taken first by voice or by show of hands, except in the case of motions requiring a two-thirds vote, when a rising vote is taken first.

V. MOTIONS CLASSIFIED & IN ASCENDING ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

1. PRIVILEGED AND INCIDENTAL MOTIONS - motions that take precedence over any pending question although not related to that question. Not debatable.
 - a. ADJOURN OR RECESS Object: to dismiss a meeting or to provide for an intermission. I move that we adjourn (recess while _ _ _ _ _ or until _ _ _ _ _)
 - b. RAISE A QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE Object: to get the attention of the moderator at once, to ask a question or to attend to some matter that cannot wait — I rise to a question of privilege (state your question).
 - c. POINT OF ORDER: I rise to a point of order (state your point).

SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS: motions that are applied to other motions for the purpose of most appropriately disposing of them.

- a. LAY ON THE TABLE — TAKE FROM THE TABLE (second, not debatable, not amendable, simple majority) OBJECT: to lay aside business in such a manner that its consideration may be renewed later. — I move that this matter be laid on the table. I move to take from the table
- b. PREVIOUS QUESTION (seconded, not debatable, not amendable, two thirds majority) OBJECT: to stop debate and order an immediate vote — I call for (or move) the previous question.
- c. POSTPONE, TO SET A TIME (seconded, debatable, amendable although restricted, simple majority) OBJECT: unlike tabling, the business is considered at a later time without needing to be “ taken from the table” I move that this matter be postponed to _ _ _ _ _

d. COMMIT, REFER, OR RE-COMMIT (seconded, debatable, amendable although restricted, simple majority) OBJECT: to place the business in the hands of a few for later reporting to the conference (for major changes). I move that this matter be referred to a committee of _____ to be named by _____ with instruction _____

e. AMEND (seconded, debatable, amendable, simple majority) OBJECT: to change or modify, to "mend" (for minor changes) I move to amend the motion by striking out _____ I move to amend the motion by inserting _____ between _____ and _____ I move to amend the motion by adding _____ after _____ I move to amend the motion by striking out _____ and inserting _____ I move to amend the motion by striking out _____ and substituting (read or state the substitute).

f. POSTPONE INDEFINITELY (seconded, debatable, not amendable, simple majority) OBJECT: to kill a motion I move to postpone this matter indefinitely.

3. PRINCIPAL MOTION - a motion made to bring before the conference, for its consideration, any particular subject. a. MAIN MOTION (seconded, debatable, amendable, simple majority) OBJECT: to introduce business for consideration. I move that _____ I move the adoption (acceptance, approval) of this report.

**Minutes of the 95th Annual District Conference
Atlantic Southeast District
Church of the Brethren
Lorida Church of the Brethren
November 2, 2019**

Opening Worship – message by guest minister -Jan Custer from Southern Pennsylvania District Church of the Brethren

Cameo – musical presentation by Nuevo Comienzo

FIRST BUSINESS SESSION

Call to order:

Moderator Jim Link called to order the 95th Annual Atlantic Southeast District Conference. All delegates and friends were welcomed to the conference.

First order of business was the District Board presenting Iglesia De Los Hermanos Y Centro Familiar, Inc. (Nuevo Comienzo) to be approved as a Fellowship in the Church of the Brethren. By acclamation, Nuevo Comienzo was accepted and welcomed.

ROLL CALL & SEATING OF THE DELEGATE BODY

(x) # of delegates allowed

DNP – Did not participate

ARCADIA – (2)

Richard Longnecker

BRADENTON - GOOD SHEPHERD – (2)

Joseph Henry

CLAY COUNTY – THE ROCK BIBLE – (4)

John Mueller

GOTHA - NEW COVENANT - (2)

Steve Horrell - Karen Neff

KISSIMMEE - NUEVO COMIENZO - (2)

Aida Sanchez - Fausto Carrasco

LEHIGH ACRES – GOSPEL ASSEMBLY - (2) DNP

LORIDA – (3)

Robert Chapman - Karen Mead - Ray Miller

MIAMI 1ST – (2)

Wayne Sutton - Julian Pacheco

MIAMI HAITIAN – (5)

Ilexene Alphonse - Nicole Alcide - Josue Mirttil - Gaston Pierre-Louis - Antonitte Petion

NAPLES HAITIAN - (2) DNP

FIRST CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN, NORTH FORT MYERS – (2)

Danny Miller - Cheri Miller

NORTH MIAMI - UNIFY CHRISTIAN – (2) DNP

ORLANDO COMMUNITY – (2) DNP

ORLANDO HAITIAN – (2)

Renel Exceus

SEBRING – (3)

Dawn Ziegler - Esther Wolfe

ST. PETERSBURG - CELEBRATION OF CHRIST – (3)

Cindy Schuler - Sue Smith

WEST PALM BEACH – (2) DNP

WINTER PARK – (2) DNP

Acceptance of the 2019 District Conference Agenda. Moved and seconded. Motion carried.

Approval of the 2018 District Conference Minutes. Moved and seconded. Motion carried.

Presentation of the Slate of Officers for 2020

***Moderator-Elect – Mark Bausman (2020)**

***District Board Chair – Bill Schaefer (2020)**

***District Board Members – Banon Louis (2022)**

Aida Lymaris Sanchez (2022)

*Program & Arrangements Committee – Kelly Easley (2022)

*Nominating & Personnel Committee – to be appointed by District Board

Approvals

*Clerk – to be appointed by District Board

*Treasurer – Eva Shoemaker (2020)

Ithiel Camp & Retreat Center – Ketia Policape (2022)

David Smalley (2022)

Dawn Ziegler (2022)

Palms Estates Board – Jama Wakeman (2022)

*Recommendation for approval brought by the Nominating & Personnel Committee. Moved and Seconded. **Motion carried.**

Acceptance of the closure of the Venice Church after 35 years of service to the community. Motion made and seconded. **Motion carried.**

Introduction of a new district staff position – Director of Programs

Designated Giving

A motion was made and seconded that designated giving to the District budget not be allowed. **Motion failed.**

Recognition of Minister's Service Years

John Huggett – (35 years)

Patricia Meeks – (15 years)

Jeff Miley – (15 years)

John Mueller – (15 years)

Mary Mueller – (15 years)

National Church of the Brethren presentations

Bethany Seminary – Gail Connerley

BBT – Steve Mason

MMB – Stan Dueck

Lunch

Pie Auction – results \$976 (Funds to benefit the District)

SECOND BUSINESS SESSION:

Compelling Vision update –

presented by Michaela Alphonse, ASE District Standing Committee member and member of the Compelling Vision Team

Cameo – Haitian Church

Presented by Pastor Ilexene Alphonse – Miami Haitian Church

District staff and program

National Jr. High Youth Conference

Q/A time for District Staff and Conference participants

2018 Financial Report

2019 Financial Report through end of October

projected to make budget, if all churches complete their pledges

Investment Report

2020 Budget

after discussion regarding budget classifications, the budget was approved with the District Board asked to re-categorize line items for clarity

Camp Report – Mike Neff

Closing Worship – Jim Link offered prayers for the churches in the District

**Installation and Dedication of the New Officers and District Board Members -
Passing of the Gavel**

Conference adjourned 4:45 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Eva Shoemaker, Acting Clerk

Atlantic Southeast District Leadership Slate – 2022 –

APPOINTED – for one year

District Conference Clerk (appointed) – Ella Attelus

Director of Finance (appointed) - Eva Shoemaker (New Covenant)

District Board –

2022

Lorna Colvard (Bradenton) Board Chair

Cindy Reyner (Bradenton)

2023

Cheri Miller (UNEXPIRED TERM)

2024

Joshue Mirtil (Miami Haitian)

Juliane Ettiene (Tabernacle Restoration)

Moderator Elect – Stephen Horrell (New Covenant)

Standing Committee (2024) – Rick Davis (Miami First Church)

Program and Arrangements Committee

2024 – Stephen Reyner

Nominating Committee

2024 - **VACANT**

Atlantic Southeast District Leadership – 2022

District Board – 16 members (10 with vote and 6 without vote)

2022

Lorna Colvard (Bradenton)

Cindy Reyner (Bradenton)

2023 Cheri Miller (N. Ft. Myers)

Banon Louis (Unify Christian)

2024

Joshue Mirtil (Miami Haitian)

Juliane Ettiene (Tabernacle Restoration)

Ex-officio – with vote

Moderator Elect – Stephen Horrell (New Covenant)

Past Moderator/Vice Chair of the Board – Ray Hileman (Celebration of Christ – St. Petersburg)

District Conference Clerk (appointed) – Emmanuella Attelus (Miami Haitian)

Standing Committee (2024) – Rick Davis (Miami First Church)

Ex-officio – without vote - Moderator – Ilexene Alphonse (Miami Haitian)

District Executive (interim) – Vicki Ehret (Celebration of Christ- St. Petersburg)

Director of Ministry – Ray Hileman (Celebration of Christ)

Director of Programs – Aida Sanchez (Nuevo Comienzo)

Director of Haitian Ministries - Founa Augustin Badet (Miami Haitian)

Director of Finances (appointed) - Eva Shoemaker (New Covenant)

Program and Arrangements Committee

Chair – Moderator – Ilexene Alphonse (Miami Haitian)

Moderator elect – Stephen Horrell (New Covenant)

2022 – Emmanuella Attelus (Miami Haitian)

2023 – Nathan Mattox (Rock Bible Church)

2024 – Stephen Reyner (Bradenton)

Ex-officio

Interim District Executive – Vicki Ehret

District Conference Clerk –Emmanuella Attelus

Nominating Committee

Chair – Moderator Elect ; Stephen Horrell (New Covenant)

Moderator – Ilexene Alphonse (Miami Haitian)

2022 – Jessica Cadette-Dunn (Miami First Church)

2023 –Karen Neff (New Covenant)

2024 - **VACANT**

Ex-officio

District Executive Interim – Vicki Ehret

District Conference Clerk – Ella Attelus (Miami Haitian)

2022 BIOGRAPHICAL SLATE

STEVEN HORRELL

I served as pastor of New Covenant Church of the Brethren in Gotha for ten years, during which time I served as follows:

In 2011 I was elected as moderator elect of the Atlantic Southeast District COB.

In 2012 I served as moderator of the Atlantic Southeast District COB meeting held at Camp Ithiel.

In 2013 I served as past-moderator of the Atlantic Southeast District COB

I have attended about ten COB Annual Conferences around the nation.

I was appointed as chaplain for the COB Annual Conference held in Tampa..

I presently do supply preaching and I continue with a healing prayer ministry in central Florida.

My membership is currently with New Covenant.

LORNA COLVARD –ASE BOARD CHAIR

I have been a member of Good Shepherd Church of the Brethren in Bradenton since May 2020. Previously, I was a member at Frederick Church of the Brethren in Frederick, Maryland. As a member of the Frederick congregation I served on the Global Missions committee and the Evangelism commission. I was able to be a part of global mission teams in Peru, Sri Lanka, and Nepal building houses and sharing the Lord's word. In 2016 I was the team leader for the Sri Lanka mission trip. In addition, I taught Adult Sunday school class for 1 and a half years. At Good Shepherd I participate as a lay reader at Sunday services. I am married to Ben

JOSHUE MIRTIL—ASE BOARD Member

My name is Josue Mirtil, I am a member of the Miami Haitian Church of the Brethren. I am currently serving as the Board Chairman and youth leader. I've been a member of the church since I was 2 years old, so that makes it 28 years as a member. I work as a Software Engineer at Ultimate Kronos Group (UKG). I am very much the stereotypical engineer. Though I may be soft-spoken at times, I am excited to work as a part of the district board.

BIOGRAPHICAL SLATE

Pastor Stephen Reyner, an ordained COB minister, leads Good Shepherd Church of the Brethren in Bradenton, FL. He has served growing churches in the Midwest, the East and the South since the 1980's. He has ministered across the social spectrum: in a large urban focus (downtown Detroit), in Capital cities (Des Moines, IA and Lansing, MI), in small cities (Gainesville, GA) as well as in small towns (Grant Park, IL) and rural settings. He has studied in Costa Rica, Israel and at the University of Cambridge, England. A unique Masters of Divinity is his, being in CHURCH RENEWAL, from the old Evangelical United Brethren Seminary in Dayton, OH (2011). He and his artist-wife Cindy have had a ministry of Church revitalization around the country and are proud to be in the globally diverse ASE.

2021 Atlantic Southeast District Conference

District Board and Interim District Executive Report

Greetings in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior,

2020 and 2021 have been by far the most unusual years for our district. First, there was COVID-19. Then, no district conference nor any other district events (with the exception of Peace Camp which was held via Zoom) due to our situations of quarantine, isolation, social distancing, mask-wearing and so on. We were able to meet as a district board through the modern technology of Zoom. Those meetings have proved most useful to the district board in many ways. That connection allowed us to continue our ministry in the Atlantic Southeast District of the Church of the Brethren.

Under Terry Grove's leadership and with the help of our Director of Finance (Eva Shoemaker), the district was able to participate in the Payroll Protection Plan that allowed us to continue to pay our district employees throughout the pandemic. And, with the help of our denominational agencies many of our pastors and congregations benefitted from CWAP Grants (Christian Worker Assistance Program) and BFIA (Brethren Faith in Action Grants). Terry also started monthly Zoom meetings to connect with pastors to assist with needs and share what is going on in each congregation. Pastors have been able to share ideas with other pastors, pray with each other for needs, and keep up to date about ministry going on in the Church of the Brethren beyond our district.

Sadly, our beloved District Executive unexpectedly passed from this life into the arms of our Loving God on December 5. The district board took on the responsibility of filling the gap left by Terry's departure. We on the board, as I am certain many of you, miss him dearly, but we also rejoice knowing he is with the Father.

In January, the board unanimously called me to serve as interim District Executive. I have continued to serve beyond the initial six month agreed upon contract with the district. During the succeeding months, a Search Committee was formed including the following persons:

Bill Schaefer (New Covenant), Founa Augustin Badet (West Palm Beach), Fradet Pharicien (Naples), Roger Anderson (Rock Bible), and Cindy Schuler (Celebration of Christ). Nancy Heishman, Director of Ministry for the Denomination has served as our resource person. Unfortunately, Bill Schaefer had to step away from his position and the committee asked me to fill the position as chairperson. The board agreed. On August 27, the formal announcement to the denomination was made. We invite you to be in prayer with all of us during this time of waiting for the person God has chosen as our new District Executive.

In other news from our district, the board has been hard at work as follows:

We provided \$5,000 loans to our Haitian congregations who were in danger of losing their meeting places due to unpaid rent during the pandemic when many of their members had lost their incomes.

We called three new board members to fill unexpired or vacant seats on the board:

Joshue Mirtil (Miami Haitian), Lorna Colvard (Bradenton), Ella Attelus (Miami Haitian). Ella is filling a vital role as Clerk of the District. Thanks to all of them for answering the call when asked to serve.

In mid January, Aida Sanchez and Julio Colon (then members of Nuevo Comeinzo in Kissimee) announced that they would like to start a new Hispanic Project in Highlands County. After much prayer and hard work, that ministry launched on August 15 at the Lorida Church. Lorida is the sponsoring church for the project which is called Lorida Iglesia de los Hermanos.

A subcommittee of the board was formed in 2020 to promote better understanding between cultures. The committee consists of Ray Hileman, Founa Badet, Ashley Carrasco and Aida Sanchez. They applied for and received a grant from the Church of the Brethren for the Healing of Racism. The book, *Oneness Embraced* by Tony Evans was selected and used in a three session Zoom discussion between March and July. In addition, the committee developed a 13-week series of email devotionals which will relate to this year's theme. The devotionals were written by a variety of District pastors and leaders.

In April the board approved a loan to the Rock Bible Church for \$50,000 for seed money toward a new structure on their property which will allow for greater worship space, so that the church can remain at two services, and to allow for more space for children and youth ministries in their existing structure.

The Winter Park Church did not meet at all over the past year due to COVID, and in February 2021, the congregation voted unanimously to close the church and transfer the property to the District. Acting for the Board with its approval, I put the property on the market. The sale was completed in August for \$773,000.

Two pastors had a change in status:

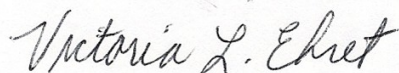
Joe Bougher, interim pastor at N. Fort Myers was called as their permanent pastor and is now Commissioned for term of service.

Nertha Castro moved to Florida from the Atlantic Southeast District. She is a graduate of the SeBaH program of the Brethren Academy. As such, once she receives a call she will be eligible to change her status from licensed to ordained.

In July, Lorna, Kayla, and I presented the revised paper on District Partnerships with new fellowships and projects, as the board had asked them to do. These revisions puts each congregation, fellowship and project on an "even playing field" when partnering with the District for financial assistance in purchasing of property.

WOW, I am tired just writing this report. We have accomplished more than I would have imagined and the year is not yet over. We give thanks to God for guiding us through these last two years and continue to rely on His faithfulness to carry us through to the next journey. It has been a pleasure to work with the Atlantic Southeast District Board and the all the congregations our district represents.

With a grateful heart,



Victoria (Vicki) Ehret, Interim District Executive

Atlantic Southeast District of the Church of the Brethren

Director of Ministry Report to the District Conference

2020-2021

2020 -2021 Years of Service Recognitions:

Two ordained ministers are recognized for 2020:

45 - Ray Hileman Peter Leddy

Seven ordained ministers are recognized for 2021:

65 - Berwyn Oltman Merle Crouse

45 - Benjamin Perez

10- Martha Beach Renel Exceus Karen Neff

5 – Robert Chapman

The following ministers licenses were renewed for 2021 and 2022:

Michaela C. Alphonse – Miami First

Servilia Attelus – Miami Haitian

Julio Colon – Nuevo Comenzio

Marceau Guillaume – Miami Haitian

Marckus Harden –

The following minister was licensed in 2021 and renewed for 2022:

Nertha Castro

The following ministers were commissioned in 2020-2021:

2020 - Gaston Pierre Louis – Miami Haitian

2021 - Joseph Bougher – N.Ft. Myers (term of service)

The following ministers were ordained in 2020:

Aida Lymaris Sanchez – Nuevo Comenzio

Stephen Reyner – ordination transferred from Methodist Church to the Church of the Brethren.

The following licensed ministers are enrolled in approved ministry education programs:

EFSM –Michaela Alphonse

SEB-HAH – Julio Colon

TRIM – Marckus Harden

Bethany Seminary – Nathan Mattox

ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST DISTRICT CONFERENCE 2021

DIRECTOR OF HAITIAN MINISTRIES REPORT

What a year we have had and we are still surviving. I want to thank the district for hiring me to serve in this capacity with the Haitian churches. From July 2020 to August 2021, six of the seven churches have received assistance to apply for the CWAP grant, BDM and BFIA to support the churches and their families. Despite the obstacles and struggles encountered from death, COVID19, and fire, the churches are still meeting and serving their communities.

Their memberships run from thirty to fifty even where there are some members who decide to not attend church anymore. The Great Commission continues. They are doing revivals, and receiving new members. One of the greatest accomplishments was assisting the churches getting their sunbiz renewed with the state of Florida to be ready for the next steps with their leadership in place and paperwork.

We rejoice with two of our churches who were on the verge of losing their place of worship when God turned it around for them in a mighty way and we are continuing to believe in His great work. Communication with the district is the main thing in this position with the churches, and I am happy to report that it is a work in progress. We meet monthly to pray, check-in and discuss.

Traveling to the churches has not been easy with the contact tracing and exposure. However, I am able to worship with West Palm Beach and Tabernacle that are closer to my location. Hopefully I get to visit more of the churches. In August, I shared the pulpit in Sebring during Pastor Smalley's FMLA and I am scheduled to be in St-Petersburg while Pastor Ray rests during his vacation in November.

May you receive this report and rejoice with me for the great work our district is doing for such a time as this by the grace of our mighty God.

In His Love,

Founa Augustin Badet

Director of Haitian Ministries

ASE Budget 2022

INCOME	LANGUAGE	2022
CHURCHES		
Arcadia	English	300.00
Bradenton - Good Shepherd	English	1,800.00
Clay County - Rock Church	English	2,000.00
Highlands County Project	Spanish	300.00
Gotha - New Covenant	English	4,000.00
Kissimmee - Nuevo Comienzo	Spanish	300.00
Lauderdale Lakes	Kreyol	300.00
Lehigh Acres - Gospel Assembly	Kreyol	300.00
Lorida	English	2,000.00
Miami First COB	English	1,000.00
Miami	Kreyol	3,000.00
Naples	Kreyol	300.00
North Fort Myers - First COB	English	1,200.00
North Miami - Unify Christian	Kreyol	300.00
Orlando	Kreyol	300.00
Sebring	English	1,000.00
South Orlando - South Ferncreek Community	English	100.00
St. Petersburg - Celebration of Christ	English	3,000.00
West Palm Beach	Kreyol	300.00
Winter Park	English	
TOTAL - Churches		21,800.00
INVESTMENTS		
Genworth Annuity Distribution		15,220.00
Brethren Foundation Distribution		29,885.00
TOTAL - Investments		45,105.00
MISCELLANEOUS		
Balance Forward		
Loan Interest		6,000.00
Designated		
Ethnic Programs		2,000.00
Churches & Individuals for Youth Programs		1,000.00
Venture Fund Day for Youth Programs		4,000.00
TOTAL - Miscellaneous		13,000.00
PROGRAM		
District Programs:		
AFPT - Balance Forward		800.00
District Conference:		1,000.00
District Conference - Income		2,000.00

District Conference - Expense	-1,000.00
Retreats:	
Woman's Retreat:	200.00
Women's Retreat - Income	2,000.00
Women's Retreat - Expense	-1,800.00
Pastor's:	-1,300.00
Pastor's Retreat - Income	700.00
Pastor's Retreat - Expense	-2,000.00
TOTAL - Programs	700.00
 TOTAL INCOME	 80,605.00

EXPENSES

BOARD

Annual Conference Assessment	780.00
District Contract Staff Travel	1,250.00
District Executive	
CODE & Annual Conference	1,500.00
District Travel	1,000.00
Liability & Property Insurance	1,000.00
Standing Com. Delegate	2,000.00
TOTAL - Board	7,530.00

DISTRICT PERSONNEL

District Executive	
Salary & Housing	24,246.00
DE Medical Premiums	2,064.00
DE Dental Premiums	960.00
DE Insurances	3,405.00
TOTAL - District Executive (1/2 time)	30,675.00
Contract Staff	
Director of Programs	3,600.00
Director of Ministries	3,600.00
Director of Finance	3,600.00
Director of Haitian Ministries	4,800.00
Director of Hispanic Ministries	3,600.00
TOTAL - Contract Staff	19,200.00

MINISTRY & PROGRAM SUPPORT

District - Language Translations	500.00
Carol Grove - Medical & Dental Support	
Scholarships	2,000.00
New Initiatives - Nuevo Comienzo	6,000.00
New Initiatives - Highlands County Project	10,000.00

Training	500.00
Youth Programs	2,500.00
TOTAL - Ministry Support	21,500.00
OFFICE	
Supplies	700.00
Office - Rental & Telephone Reimbursement	1,000.00
TOTAL - Office	1,700.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	80,605.00
NET OVERALL TOTAL	0.00

ASED NET WORTH - As of 9/30/2021

Account	9/30/2021 Balance
ASSETS	
Cash and Bank Accounts	
01 - ASE - OPERATING ACCOUNT	1,831.93
JAX PROPERTY LOAN REPAY	0.00
MIAMI HAITIAN LOAN REPAY	0.00
TOTAL Cash and Bank Accounts	1,831.93
Other Assets	
INVEST - DISTRICT RESERVES	1,238,827.72
INVEST - GENWORTH ANNUITY	289,704.74
LOAN - EGLISE WEST PALM BEACH	5,000.00
LOAN - GOSPEL ASSEMBLY LEHIGH ACRES	5,000.00
LOAN - JACKSONVILLE PROPERTY	263,000.00
LOAN - MIAMI HAITIAN	0.00
LOAN - NUEVO COMIENZO	15,000.00
LOAN - ROCK BIBLE	50,000.00
LOAN - TABERNACLE	5,000.00
LOAN - UNIFY	5,000.00
TOTAL Other Assets	1,876,532.46
TOTAL ASSETS	1,878,364.39
LIABILITIES	0.00
OVERALL TOTAL	1,878,364.39

ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST BUDGET REPORT AS OF 9/30/2021

Category	1/1/2021 Actual	- Budget	9/30/2021 Difference
Income - ASE:Events:AFPT:Income	44,848.80	85,096.00	-40,247.20
Income - ASE	44,848.80	85,096.00	-40,247.20
Income - ASE:Churches	15,167.19	24,300.00	-9,132.81
Income - ASE:Churches:Arcadia	200.00	300.00	-100.00
Income - ASE:Churches:Bradenton - Good Shepherd	1,350.00	1,800.00	-450.00
Income - ASE:Churches:Clay County - Rock Church	1,867.19	4,000.00	-2,132.81
Income - ASE:Churches:Gotha - New Covenant	3,850.00	4,000.00	-150.00
Income - ASE:Churches:Kissimmee - Nuevo Comienzo	300.00	300.00	0.00
Income - ASE:Churches:Lauderdale Lakes	0.00	300.00	-300.00
Income - ASE:Churches:Lehigh Acres - Gospel Assembly - Haitian	0.00	300.00	-300.00
Income - ASE:Churches:Lorida	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00
Income - ASE:Churches:Miami - First Church	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00
Income - ASE:Churches:Miami - Haitian	0.00	3,000.00	-3,000.00
Income - ASE:Churches:Naples - Haitian	300.00	300.00	0.00
Income - ASE:Churches:North Fort Myers - First Church	1,000.00	900.00	100.00
Income - ASE:Churches:North Miami - Unify Christian	0.00	300.00	-300.00
Income - ASE:Churches:Orlando - Haitian	300.00	300.00	0.00
Income - ASE:Churches:Sebring	0.00	1,800.00	-1,800.00
Income - ASE:Churches:South Orlando - Ferncreek Community	0.00	100.00	-100.00
Income - ASE:Churches:St. Petersburg - Celebration of Christ	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00
Income - ASE:Churches:West Palm Beach - Haitian	0.00	300.00	-300.00
Income - ASE:Churches:Winter Park	0.00	300.00	-300.00
Income - ASE:Events	970.00	3,460.00	-2,490.00
Income - ASE:Events:AFPT	800.00	960.00	-160.00
Income - ASE:Events:AFPT:Balance Forward	960.00	960.00	0.00
Income - ASE:Events:AFPT:Expense	-260.00	0.00	-260.00
Income - ASE:Events:AFPT:Income	100.00	0.00	100.00
Income - ASE:Events:District Conference	170.00	1,500.00	-1,330.00
Income - ASE:Events:District Conference:Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00
Income - ASE:Events:District Conference:Income	170.00	1,500.00	-1,330.00
Income - ASE:Events:Women's Retreat	0.00	1,000.00	-1,000.00
Income - ASE:Events:Women's Retreat:Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00
Income - ASE:Events:Women's Retreat:Income	0.00	1,000.00	-1,000.00
Income - ASE:Investments	24,639.00	41,666.00	-17,027.00
Income - ASE:Investments:ASE Brethren Foundation	13,224.00	26,446.00	-13,222.00
Income - ASE:Investments:Genworth Annuity	11,415.00	15,220.00	-3,805.00
Income - ASE:Miscellaneous	7,297.84	15,670.00	-8,372.16
Income - ASE:Miscellaneous:Balance Forward	-1,442.17	-830.00	-612.17
Income - ASE:Miscellaneous:Designated Gifts	8,442.55	9,500.00	-1,057.45
Income - ASE:Miscellaneous:Designated Gifts:Ethnic Programs	1,240.05	4,500.00	-3,259.95
Income - ASE:Miscellaneous:Designated Gifts:Individual & Church Gifts for Youth Prog	760.00	1,000.00	-240.00

Income - ASE:Miscellaneous:Designated Gifts:Venture Fund Day for Youth Programs	0.00	4,000.00	-4,000.00
Income - ASE:Miscellaneous:Loan Interest	297.46	7,000.00	-6,702.54
Income - ASE:Property Sale - Income & Expense	-3,225.23	0.00	-3,225.23
Income - ASE:Property Sale - Income & Expense:Property Sale - Expense	-776,507.75	0.00	-776,507.75
Income - ASE:Property Sale - Income & Expense:Property Sale - Income	773,282.52	0.00	773,282.52
Income - ASE:Events:District Conference:Expenses	43,016.87	55,222.00	12,205.13
EXPENSES - ASE	43,016.87	55,222.00	12,205.13
EXPENSES - ASE:BOARD	1,579.78	11,182.00	9,602.22
EXPENSES - ASE:BOARD:Annual Conference Assess	750.42	780.00	29.58
EXPENSES - ASE:BOARD:District Contract Staff Travel	638.96	1,250.00	611.04
EXPENSES - ASE:BOARD:District Executive Travel	881.97	6,500.00	5,618.03
EXPENSES - ASE:BOARD:District Executive Travel:CODE & Annual Conference	358.00	2,000.00	1,642.00
EXPENSES - ASE:BOARD:District Executive Travel:District	523.97	4,500.00	3,976.03
EXPENSES - ASE:BOARD:Liability & Property Insurance	-1,162.52	652.00	1,814.52
EXPENSES - ASE:BOARD:Standing Committee	470.95	2,000.00	1,529.05
EXPENSES - ASE:DISTRICT PERSONNEL	27,696.16	31,468.00	3,771.84
EXPENSES - ASE:DISTRICT PERSONNEL:District Executive	0.00	0.00	0.00
EXPENSES - ASE:DISTRICT PERSONNEL:District Executive:Medical & Insurance Premiums	0.00	0.00	0.00
EXPENSES - ASE:DISTRICT PERSONNEL:District Executive - Interim	16,226.11	15,868.00	-358.11
EXPENSES - ASE:DISTRICT PERSONNEL:District Executive - Interim:Interim DE Dental Premiums	147.42	147.00	-0.42
EXPENSES - ASE:DISTRICT PERSONNEL:District Executive - Interim:Interim DE Housing	14,955.37	14,598.00	-357.37
EXPENSES - ASE:DISTRICT PERSONNEL:District Executive - Interim:Interim DE Medical Premiums	111.00	111.00	0.00
EXPENSES - ASE:DISTRICT PERSONNEL:District Executive - Interim:Interim DE LTC Insurance	1,012.32	1,012.00	-0.32
EXPENSES - ASE:DISTRICT PERSONNEL:Executive Staff	11,700.00	15,600.00	3,900.00
EXPENSES - ASE:DISTRICT PERSONNEL:Executive Staff:Director of Finance	2,700.00	3,600.00	900.00
EXPENSES - ASE:DISTRICT PERSONNEL:Executive Staff:Director of Haitian Ministries	3,600.00	4,800.00	1,200.00
EXPENSES - ASE:DISTRICT PERSONNEL:Executive Staff:Director of Ministry	2,700.00	3,600.00	900.00
EXPENSES - ASE:DISTRICT PERSONNEL:Executive Staff:Director of Programs	2,700.00	3,600.00	900.00
EXPENSES - ASE:MINISTRY & PROGRAM SUPPORT	11,085.55	11,392.00	306.45
EXPENSES - ASE:MINISTRY & PROGRAM SUPPORT:Carol Grove - Medical & Dental Support	2,277.56	2,892.00	614.44
EXPENSES - ASE:MINISTRY & PROGRAM SUPPORT:Ministry Scholarships	1,808.00	1,000.00	-808.00
EXPENSES - ASE:MINISTRY & PROGRAM SUPPORT:New Intiatives	6,999.99	6,000.00	-999.99
EXPENSES - ASE:MINISTRY & PROGRAM SUPPORT:New Intiatives:Highlands County	2,499.99	0.00	-2,499.99
EXPENSES - ASE:MINISTRY & PROGRAM SUPPORT:New Intiatives:Nuevo Comienzo	4,500.00	6,000.00	1,500.00
EXPENSES - ASE:MINISTRY & PROGRAM SUPPORT:Training Events	0.00	500.00	500.00
EXPENSES - ASE:MINISTRY & PROGRAM SUPPORT:Youth Programs	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
EXPENSES - ASE:OFFICE	2,655.38	1,180.00	-1,475.38
EXPENSES - ASE:OFFICE:Office Expenses	1,779.98	700.00	-1,079.98
EXPENSES - ASE:OFFICE:Office Rental & Telephone Reimb	875.40	480.00	-395.40
Net Difference:	1,831.93	29,874.00	-28,042.07

**ASED
Brethren Foundation
Investment Portfolio Update**

Date	Beginning Balance	Contributions	Distributions 2021	(Admin Fees)	Interest & Dividends	Market Fluctuation	Ending Balance
5/31/21	\$ 463,370.11				\$ 771.84	\$ 1,440.34	\$ 465,582.29
6/30/21	\$ 465,582.29			\$ (782.58)	\$ 671.25	\$ 8,721.56	\$ 474,192.52
7/31/21	\$ 474,192.52				\$ 517.76	\$ 9,357.07	\$ 484,067.35
8/31/21	\$ 484,067.35	\$ 773,269.83			\$ 1,651.70	\$ 17,280.95	\$1,276,269.83
9/30/21	\$1,276,269.83	\$ 15,000.00	\$ (6,612.00)	\$ (1,029.49)	\$ 1,582.56	\$ (46,383.18)	\$1,238,827.72

DISTRICT RELATED REPORTS

Standing Committee—Kayla Alphonse



The officers preside over the virtual Annual Conference from a head table at the Church of the Brethren General Offices in Elgin, Ill.: (seated from left) moderator-elect David Sollenberger, moderator Paul Munday, and secretary James Beckwith. Operating the camera is Aidan Replogle. Photo by Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford

Church of the Brethren Virtual Annual Conference ■ June 30-July 4, 2021

Wrap Up

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



Graphic designed by Donita Keister and Nicole Keister-Hornig

By the numbers

Registration: 519 delegates from congregations and districts and 705 nondelegates for a total registration of 1,224

New fellowships and church projects:

- 1 new fellowship: **Centro Ágape en Acción (Los Baños)** in Pacific Southwest District
- 3 new projects: **Nueva Visión la Hermosa Iglesia de Los Hermanos** and **Conexión Pasadena** in Pacific Southwest District, and **Light of the Gospel Fellowship** in Atlantic Northeast District

Offerings received as of July 4:

- \$3,705** for the Core Ministries of the Church of the Brethren
- \$2,745** for church rebuilding in Nigeria
- \$2,665** to support the Conference budget
- \$1,445** for translation of Conference documents and simultaneous translation
- \$1,195** for the expenses of volunteers leading children's activities at Conference
- \$1,170** for new furniture and supplies for children's activities at Conference
- \$250** for the Minister's Assistance Fund
- \$250** for Intercultural Ministries
- \$200** for the Office of Global Mission
- \$150** for Discipleship Ministries
- \$100** for the Global Food Initiative
- \$55** for the Haiti Medical Project
- \$200** to be divided among daily offerings

Virtual blood drive: 42 pints including 2 double reds, and 6 donations of platelets. Some 22 others have pledged to donate. The drive continues through July.

Minimum Cash Salary Table for pastors:
2 percent cost-of-living increase for 2022

See www.brethren.org/news/coverage/annual-conference-2021 for full coverage of the 2021 Annual Conference. Order the Annual Conference Wrap-Up DVD for \$29.95 and Sermons DVD for \$24.95 each from www.brethrenpress.com.

Annual Conference affirms compelling vision statement

The 2021 delegate body affirmed the compelling vision statement for the Church of the Brethren, shown above. This was the only substantive business item coming to the delegate body beyond elections and reports.

The 2021 Annual Conference was the first fully online annual meeting of the Church of the Brethren. Presiding were moderator Paul Munday assisted by moderator-elect David Sollenberger and Conference secretary James Beckwith.

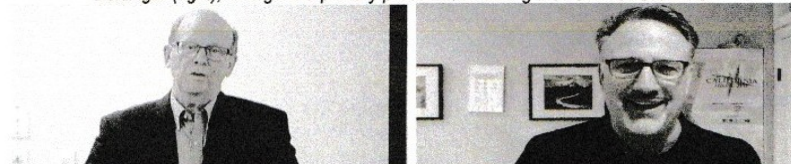
The affirmation of the compelling vision ended a years-long process of conversation and data gathering that involved some 3,000 Church of the Brethren members in numerous gatherings and venues across the denomination, including conversations around the tables at previous Conferences.

Conversation about the compelling vision continued at this Conference in small online groups who met in virtual break-out rooms or "tables." Both delegates and nondelegates who registered for the full Conference were invited to participate in the small-group conversations.

The "tables" discussed and submitted responses to a number of questions posed by Rhonda Pittman Gingrich, co-chair of the Compelling Vision Team along with Church of the Brethren general secretary David A. Steele. Also on the team were Michaela Alphonse, Kevin Daggett, John N. Jantzi, Brian Messler, Colleen Michael, Alan Stuckey, Kay Weaver, former moderators Samuel Sarpiya and Donita Keister, 2021 moderator Paul Munday, and Conference director Chris Douglas.

A question for small-group conversation at the start of the Saturday morning business session—"How might we be known," (continued on page 2)

Screenshots of guest resource speakers Michael Gorman (left), who led daily Bible studies, and Tod Bolsinger (right), who gave a plenary presentation during the business sessions.



Church of the Brethren News Services ■ 1451 Dundee Ave., Elgin, IL 60120 ■ 800-323-8039 ext. 326 ■ cobnews@brethren.org

DISTRICT RELATED REPORTS

Standing Committee—Kayla Alphonse

Wrap Up ■ Church of the Brethren Virtual Annual Conference ■ June 30-July 4, 2021

Elections and appointments

Two ballots were elected, the 2021 ballot and a 2020 ballot deferred from the Conference canceled last year because of the pandemic. Those elected from the 2020 ballot, except for the moderator-elect, serve one year less than the usual term. Also below are additional directors, trustees, and other appointments affirmed by or reported to the Conference. An asterisk (*) indicates those nominated to fill unexpired terms, whose terms already have concluded.

Annual Conference moderator-elect
Tim McElwee of Wolcottville, Ind.

Church of the Brethren Leadership Team Torin Eikler, Northern Indiana
District executive, appointed by the Council of District Executives (CODE)

Mission and Ministry Board

* Martha Stover Barlow, Harrisonburg, Va., representing Area 3
Lauren Seganos Cohen, San Gabriel, Calif., Area 5
Barbara Daté, Eugene, Ore., Area 5
John Michael Hoffman, McPherson, Kan., at-large
Josiah Ludwick of Harrisburg, Pa., Area 1
Kathy A. Mack of Rochester, Minn., Area 4
Meghan Home Mauldin, Columbus, N.C., Area 3
* John Mueller, Fleming Island, Fla, Area 3
Karen Shively Neff, Gotha, Fla., Area 3
Joanna Wave Willoughby, Wyoming, Mich., at-large
Rebecca Miller Zeek, Duncansville, Pa., Area 1

Brethren Benefit Trust

Sara Davis, La Canada Flintridge, Calif.;
Janis Fahs, North Manchester, Ind.
Donna March, Carpentersville, Ill.
Gerald (Jerry) Patterson, Fairfax, Va.
Wayne T. Scott, Harrisburg, Pa., elected by Pension Plan participants (Fellowship of Brethren Homes)
David L. Shissler, Hummelstown, Pa.
Kathryn Whitacre, McPherson, Kan., elected by Pension Plan participants (Brethren Ministers Asso. and CODE)

Program and Arrangements Committee
Nathan Hollenberg, Broadway, Va.
Beth Jarrett, Harrisonburg, Va.

Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Advisory Committee

Arthur Fourman, Dayton, Ohio
Gene Hagenberger, Mid-Atlantic District executive, appointed by CODE
Robert S. McMinn, Huntingdon, Pa.

Bethany Theological Seminary

Chris Bowman, Manassas, Va., representing clergy
Mark A. Clapper, Elizabethtown, Pa., at-large
Karen O. Crim, Dayton, Ohio, at-large
John Flora, Bridgewater, Va., at-large
Drew Hart, Harrisburg, Pa., representing laity
Jacki Hartley of Elgin, Ill., representing laity
Steve Longenecker, Harrisonburg, Va., representing the colleges
Richard Rose, Claremont, Calif., at-large

On Earth Peace

Rudy Amaya, Pasadena, Calif.
Ruth Aukerman, Union Bridge, Md.
Irvin R. Heishman, Tipp City, Ohio
Alyssa Parker, Harrisburg, Pa.

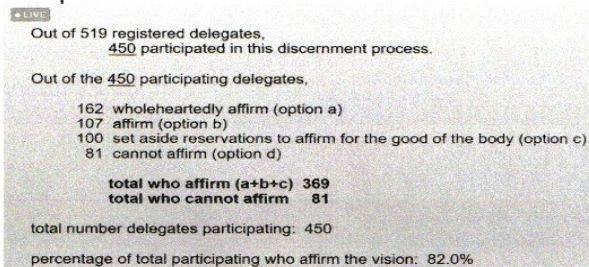
(continued from page 1)

both as congregations and as a denomination, if we truly embrace and live out the vision of Jesus in the neighborhood?”—led into the discernment process that was used to affirm the vision.

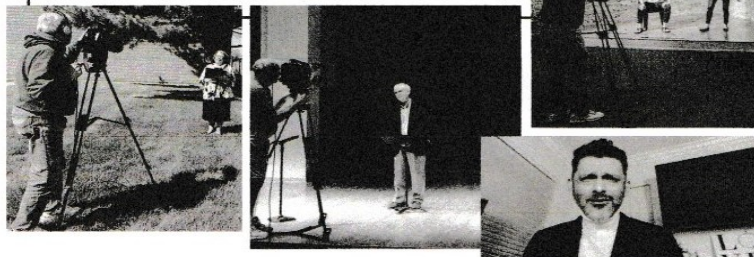
Delegates were offered the choice of four responses: first, “I feel inspired and wholeheartedly affirm the vision”; second, “I affirm the vision”; third, “I have reservations, but will set them aside and affirm the vision for the good of the body”; and fourth, “I cannot affirm the vision.”

Of the 519 registered delegates, 450 participated in making the decision by choosing one of the four options in an online vote. When results were tallied, the statement was affirmed with 82 percent of those participating choosing one of the first three affirmative options.

A screenshot of the announcement of the results is below.



This was the final Conference of director Chris Douglas' tenure, before she retires later this year. Above, a screenshot shows her at the podium with elected members of the Program and Arrangements Committee: Jan Glass King, Emily Shonk Edwards, and Carol Hippias Elmore.



Photographer Glenn Riegel followed along as videographers David Sollenberger and Larry Glick pre-recorded the preachers for four of the five daily worship services. From left: Beth Sollenberger, Paul Munday, Tyler and Chelsea Goss, and Patrick Starkey. At bottom: a screenshot of Richard Zapata's sermon.

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DISTRICT RELATED REPORTS

CAMP ITHIEL - Mike Neff

Camp Ithiel continues in ministry. Summer camp was back in 2021 after a hiatus in 2020. The unsung hero of summer camp was Ketia Policape who recruited and trained counselors, deans and chaplains. The details on each week are below. The camp has faced the fiscal challenge caused by the pandemic and met it while maintaining and caring for the facilities and grounds. Donors have been key, both in the moment and in the past. The camp also took advantage of help offered by the government and the denomination. The pattern for guest use changed, with many postponing or holding events with reduced numbers. This made for a flexible schedule met by director, Mike Neff, who has completed 33 summers at camp. Many more details and pictures can be found at the camp ithiel facebook page.

Summer Camp 2021

Senior High: 18 campers 8 girls, 10 boys Dean: Chris King, Chaplain: Alfred Gaines, Assistant: Michael Camps Worship Leader: Axel Uri, Counselors: Keyon Williamson, Bryan Zayas, Bryan Sanchez, Jade Harris, Jasmin Pinzon, & Lydializ Rivera Program Director/Crafts: Ketia Policape. Photographer: Jack Goras.

Jr. High: 40 campers: 19 girls, 21 boys Dean: Ella Attelus. Chaplain: Michael Camps. Worship Leader Axel Uri. Counselors: Keyon Williamson, Bryan Zayas, Bryan Sanchez, Jade Harris, Jasmin Pinzon, & Lydializ Rivera Program Director/Crafts: Ketia Policape. Photographer: Jack Goras

Jr. Camp: 18 campers: 6 girls, 12 boys Dean: Vonyae Reed. Chaplain: Michael Camps & Axel Uri Counselors: Keyon Williamson, Bryan Sanchez, & Lydializ Rivera Program Director/Crafts: Ketia Policape. Photographer: Jack Goras

ACTION FOR PEACE TEAM REPORT 2020-2021

For the past fourteen years the Atlantic Southeast District Action For Peace team has sought to spread the Christian message of peace. Its guiding mission statement is: violence is not the answer to effectively solve problems in the world, in our communities, in our churches and in our families. The Team has embraced the Church of the Brethren declaration that : “All War Is Sin.” And Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself. For the past two years the Peace Team has focused on sponsoring Peace Camp and distributing educational peace materials throughout the District.

In 2019 a hurricane blew into South Florida over Labor Day and the scheduled Peace Camp had to be cancelled.

In September 2020 a virtual Peace Camp was held. The facilitators for that program were pastor Sue Smith and pastor Makayla Alphonse. The main discussions for the day were an update on the Compelling Vision, racism, and utilizing Moral Imagination. Peace poles were made available to churches and individuals.

In September 2021 the peace sponsored a 5 & ½ hour virtual “Peace Camp” The facilitators were Barbara Date and Linda K. Williams. Barbara is a recent electee to the COB’s Ministry and Mission Board. Linda is an accomplished songwriter from the San Diego Church of the Brethren. Moderator David Sollenberger gave a greeting to participants and expressed hope for healing within the church. At the closing of Annual Conference this year David stated: “that we pledge ourselves on matters where we are not of one mind to let the Holy Spirit draw us together to be of one heart.”

The day’s program began with music from the video “Living Stream- Peace I Leave With You”. Enten Eller assisted in the production of this video. A special thanks and recognition goes to Aaron Neff, who did a yeoman’s job of hosting and providing his exceptional technical expertise and support to the program. Aaron helped weave in singing throughout the day which was wonderful. A reference songbook was made available to participants at the end of the program. Free books are available to churches and individuals at Camp Ithiel and the Haitian Church of the Brethren in Miami. The title of this book is: “Chicken Soup For The Soul: Stories For A Better World”. One of the editors is Linda K. Williams.

The middle of the program highlighted the themes: “What influences us as peacemakers?” and “Embrace one another with tools of compassion.” The theme song for the program was “Ripples and Starfish.” Participants learned microcommunication skills and practiced micro-paraphrasing.

The final training component involved having participants break up into four persona: Truth/Mercy/Justice and Peace. Groups explored the rich meanings of these words and then came back together to address and really listen to each other’s points of view.

Peace Camp concluded with a loving tribute to Rev. Phil Lersch, a founder of the Peace Team and lifelong advocate for peace and justice issues. Tribute was also given to the recent passing of Rev. Dale Brown. These Brethren were much beloved.

This concludes the 2021 Peace Team Report. Blessings to all. Chairperson- Jerry Eller



Church of the Brethren

District Conference 2021

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Greetings to you in the name of Christ our Savior!

It is an honor and privilege to write to you on behalf of the employees, volunteers, and Mission and Ministry Board of the Church of the Brethren. We are praying for you, your congregations, and your district as you gather in person or virtually to worship, sing praises, pray, and accomplish the tasks set before you by your District Moderator.

Our staff have been working hard shifting our programming and events from in-person to virtual. What we have learned over the past year is that while there is something special about in-person events, the virtual world has opened up new opportunities for connecting with those who may not have the time or the resources to travel. I would encourage you to visit the webinar archives at www.brethren.org, where you can access a number of excellent resources to support your ministries. Going forward, we will offer hybrid opportunities for our events where it makes sense to do so.

The Mission and Ministry Board has been laying the groundwork to live into their new strategic plan. Considerable work has been done by the board's Executive Committee to evaluate Church of the Brethren programs and ministries – the first step toward the board's prioritization of our ministry and programming work. By the time you meet for your district conferences, more information will be available about the board's priorities.

As congregations have adjusted their ministries and events out of concern for the health and safety of their members and neighbors, some of the most difficult times were those in which we could not gather in community together to worship and celebrate new life, affirm relationships, or grieve the loss of loved ones. There is little doubt that the pandemic has taken a toll on our families and friends, our communities of faith, and our pastoral and congregational leadership. Yet we have also discovered a new virtual medium for ministry that has opened up new possibilities of being church. It is my hope that each of us will embrace this new evangelism tool to share the light and hope of Christ both near and far.

In this past year I have appreciated the opportunities to deepen my relationships with many dedicated church leaders. Despite the challenges that we face in the church in general, those I work most closely with – our Mission and Ministry Board, our district

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Church of the Brethren

executives, and our staff – continue to give me hope. Even though all things “Elgin” are often misrepresented in some segments of the church, I see Jesus present and central in all our work and ministry together.

I am grateful for the many ways your district and local congregations faithfully strive to live out the Gospel – to simply try to do what Jesus did. The vital ministries of our Church of the Brethren congregations – small to large – are at the heart of our Church. We should never diminish the essential role that each unique part of the body plays in our common ministry together.

With gratitude and hope,

David Steele
General Secretary

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Spring 2021

Greetings to the moderator, delegates, and members of Atlantic Southeast District!

We thank those of you who have entrusted us by using our pension, insurance, and organizational money management services; or who have attended one of our many workshops that are designed to help people be more knowledgeable stewards of their financial resources. Whether we're joining you in person or electronically for this year's conference, we are grateful for the opportunity to serve you. Service to you is why Annual Conference created Brethren Pension Plan, Brethren Insurance Services, Brethren Foundation Funds, and BBT to coordinate it all.

Surprise, adaptability, and pain has been the collective reality within the United States this past year due to COVID-19, and those of us within the Church of the Brethren were not exempt from life changing profoundly, from the loss of friends and relatives to changes in the workplace and in life in general, which might have included financial challenges. In the midst of adapting to the pandemic, your phone calls, text messages, and emails to Church of the Brethren Benefit Trust and its affiliates (Brethren Benefit Trust Inc., Brethren Foundation Funds Inc., and Brethren Foundation Inc.) were answered in a timely manner as our team didn't miss a beat in transitioning to working from home. Some meetings took place over Zoom, while others simply were simply postponed until meetings could once again occur in person.

As we plan to be able to travel this fall and attend district conferences that are held in person, anticipating at this writing in early May of the new normal to which we all will need to adapt, we want to take a moment to describe how we have responded to the pandemic and strengthened our ministries over the past year.

BRETHREN PENSION PLAN

With uncertainty in the economy and a stock market that late in 2020 seemed to be tenuous, many pastors, church workers, and district staff members who participate in Brethren Pension Plan wonder how they should invest their contributions. We have three solutions. First, Ed Shannon is our retirement specialist who works individually with members and presents sessions to groups on how people can prepare for a meaningful retirement. We also have a partnership with Edelman Financial Engines, which allows members three tiers of advice on how they should invest their retirement funds, from a free service to fee-based financial planning services. Finally, we have five options called Target Date Funds that are easy to use; pick the fund with the name that best corresponds to when you want to retire, and the asset allocati

tion will automatically change over your career to first help you grow your funds and then help you preserve those contributions when you are nearing retirement. We also provide a robust website where members can look at their account balances from the previous business day, change their asset allocation, and perform retirement scenario planning. Brethren Pension Plan started in 1943, and decades later the robust plan serves more than 4,400 members with assets of \$455 million.

CHURCH WORKERS' ASSISTANCE PLAN

When the pandemic hit in March 2020, it became clear rather quickly that some pastors and other employees of churches, districts, and camps within the denomination were experiencing financial difficulty. A new component to the Church Workers' Assistance Plan was quickly created to address extraordinary needs in a streamlined manner. In 2020, 50 members of the ministers' group received these new grants, totaling \$218,435. This is in addition to 42 individuals who received \$290,304 in regular Church Workers' Assistance Plan grants last year.

BRETHREN INSURANCE SERVICES

With uncertainty about the future of medical insurance in the United States, BBT in 2020 began working on some concrete steps to eventually be able to offer medical insurance to pastors and church, district, and camp employees. The Brethren Medical Plan has excluded these employees since 2007 when the Annual Conference voted to end that coverage to these staff members. By forging new partnerships and adopting new methodologies, BBT is working to offer this coverage as an option, not a mandate. We will be able to report at your conference how that initiative is progressing.

In the meantime, BBT currently offers a number of insurance products to the members of the ministers' group and employees of agencies and other Brethren-related organizations. These include dental, vision, life (basic and supplemental), accidental death and dismemberment (basic and supplemental), disability (short- and long-term), accident, Medicare supplement, and long-term care. BBT offers medical reimbursement and dependent care accounts for members who use one or more of its insurances. We also provide pet insurance. As of Dec. 31, 2020, Brethren Insurance Services had 2,359 insurance contracts with its members.

ORGANIZATIONAL MONEY MANAGEMENT THROUGH BRETHREN FOUNDATION FUNDS

Helping organizations manage their funds is a service that has been offered to Brethren congregations, districts, and organizations for more than 30 years! With fantastic staff focused on great customer service and a web portal that allows clients to find resources, manage the transfer of funds, and generate customizable reports, BFFI manages assets of organizations from \$10,000 to more than \$10,000,000. This ministry is structured to ensure that clients have numerous investment options, many of which are compliant with Brethren Values Investing guidelines. Assets under management as of May 2021, was \$206 million. Inquire how BFFI can help your organization reach its investment goals.

WE MANAGE YOUR CHARITABLE GIFTS

Brethren Foundation is the BBT ministry that manages deferred gifts and offers charitable gift instruments for Church of the Brethren members who want to leave some of their assets with one or more Brethren organizations as part of their end-of-life decision making process. Assets under management on 4/30/2021 were \$4,744,228 with nearly 120 deferred gift donors. We would be glad to illustrate to you how BFI can help establish and manage such gifts.

BRETHREN VALUES INVESTING

The majority of BBT's assets under management are invested in a Brethren Values Investing manner, in accordance with Church of the Brethren Annual Conference statements. Screened from our portfolios are the 25 publicly traded companies that receive the top U.S. Department of Defense contracts, as well as companies that generate 10 percent or more of their gross earnings from U.S. Department of Defense contracts, firearms and military weapons systems, weapons of mass destruction, abortion, alcohol, gambling, pornography, or tobacco. Companies that are egregious violators of environmental or human rights regulations are also screened. We also practice advocacy with companies in which BBT owns stocks, and with other initiatives, which affect how companies interact with shareholders and with others in the global community. Lastly, we offer a Community Development Investment Fund to asset management clients and Pension members, which is used to invest monies in higher-than-normal risk areas to help stimulate economic growth in inner-city communities and redevelopment areas.

BBT WAS CREATED TO SERVE YOU

We feel blessed that despite the pandemic and the economic upheaval it caused, the assets we manage for members and clients are at an all-time high. Our resolve is to move forward beyond the pandemic boldly, with a plan to strengthen the foundation of BBT's operations; to seek business beyond those we currently serve; to ensure that the right staff are in the right positions; to move permanently into a more nimble office situation for our staff; and to look at our identity to ensure that it reflects the ideals and beliefs that we hold and in which we operate, as we strive to serve people and organizations through the management of their financial resources. The future of this organization remains strong, and its service to the Church of the Brethren is unwavering.

Building financial security

Bettering the world

Together.

That is today's, and tomorrow's, BBT.

Donna Rhodes

Board Chair

Nevin Dulabaum

President



July 2021
Report to the 2021 Atlantic Southeast Conference

Dear Friends in the Atlantic Southeast District,

Despite all the challenges of the past year, it's a privilege to write to you again and look back on a year unlike any other in recent memory at Bridgewater College.

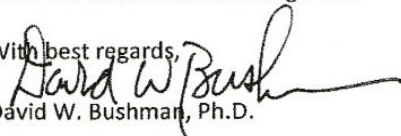
With the perseverance and dedication of our faculty, staff and students, we were able to provide in-person learning and co-curricular experiences for the entirety of the 2020-2021 academic year. I am enormously grateful for the hard work and good will that carried us through the year and culminated in a joyous weekend of in-person commencement ceremonies for the classes of 2021 and 2020 on May 1 and 2.

As we anticipate a more normal 2021-2022 academic year, I am excited and grateful that donor support has enabled us to continue to move forward and build for the future. On July 1, the Bonnie Forrer and John Harvey Rhodes School of Arts and Humanities will officially combine the Division of Communication, Fine Arts and Literature with the Division of Humanities and Social Sciences, creating the College's first endowed, named school. The funds from this transformative gift made by Bonnie '62 and the late John Rhodes will enhance faculty development; strengthen investment in equipment, digital resources, specialized software and computer hardware to support teaching and learning; provide more opportunities for student research and conference travel; establish a new pre-tenure sabbatical program; and establish an endowed chair for the School.

The Screamin' Eagles Marching Band will also take the field for the first time this fall, thanks to the generous support of Judy Nolen Henneberger '64. The marching band program, open to both music and non-music majors, will serve as more than just a musical outlet for students. The opportunities to strengthen leadership and cooperation skills, as well as the mental and academic discipline required, align perfectly with Bridgewater's mission of educating the whole person and graduating engaged, thoughtful and collaborative citizens.

Your support throughout this past year has been greatly appreciated. In 2020-21, 81 congregations and church groups contributed \$39,229 to the College. The 52 Church of the Brethren students enrolled in 2020-21 received \$82,500 in Church of the Brethren scholarships and more than \$1.4 million in College-funded financial aid. Two Atlantic Southeast District congregations donated \$400.

The College remains committed to furthering our shared values, as we educate students who will participate in the work of building a better world. We remain grateful for all that you do for us, and for all of the work that we do together.

With best regards,

David W. Bushman, Ph.D.

BDM REPORT



CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, Colossians 1:3 (NIV)

Indeed, we at Brethren Disaster Ministries are thankful for the overwhelming support we received in 2020 as we stepped out in faith to meet the challenges of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic along with other disasters, including a record-breaking Atlantic hurricane season. Our staff, volunteers and supporters took to heart the messages of adaptability, innovation, and fearlessness in order to meet disaster survivors where they were and walk with them toward recovery.

BDM responded to the COVID-19 pandemic through two new grant programs funded through the Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) designed to help U.S. congregations and churches, and Global Brethren churches and trusted partners, to meet the needs of the vulnerable members of society affected by the restrictions put in place to stop its spread. The grant program for U.S. congregations and districts provided 44 grants spread across 11 districts. The global grant program supported critical humanitarian programs in seven global Brethren communions, four Church of the Brethren mission points, and three partners. These programs, in DR Congo, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Sudan, Spain, and Venezuela, provided distributions of food, hygiene, and safety supplies to marginalized and impoverished people, many of whom depended on daily labor for survival and were overwhelmingly impacted by pandemic restrictions. The pandemic grant programs are continuing in 2021 as long as funds are available.

The pandemic created difficulties deploying volunteers for the Rebuilding Program and Children's Disaster Services, but also brought opportunities for creativity and dedicated detailed planning to meet those challenges. The Rebuilding site in Tampa, Fla., serving Hurricane Irma survivors, closed as scheduled in March. Out of concern for the safety of volunteers, survivors, and partners, and in compliance with local COVID-19 regulations, the sites in North Carolina and Puerto Rico (responding respectively to Hurricanes Matthew and Florence, and Hurricane Maria) also closed in March. Both were nearing their scheduled end and were not reopened.

The diligent efforts of BDM Rebuilding staff and leaders led to the development of COVID-19 protocol and mitigation efforts so that new sites could open safely. The Dayton, Ohio, site, serving survivors of the 2019 Memorial Day tornadoes, opened in July but was paused at Thanksgiving, and is planned to reopen in May 2021. The Coastal NC (Bayboro, N.C.) site opened in September and is assisting Hurricane Florence survivors who have been waiting two years or more to have their homes repaired. Through the end of the year, a total of 296 volunteers served on these projects following strict protocol involving wearing face coverings, social distancing, and rigorous hygiene measures, allowing volunteers to do amazing work without a single person contracting the coronavirus while on site. We praise God for the work and protection!

Although the last few weeks of scheduled volunteers for the Puerto Rico project were cancelled due to pandemic restrictions, the local leadership and contractors completed all homes scheduled for repairs before the official end of the project in June. Even though the official project celebration was postponed until the fall of 2021, we already celebrate the positive impact on the survivor families and the volunteers who served them, as well as the partnership and relationship with the Puerto Rico district during our collaborative response to Hurricane Maria!

In 2020 Children's Disaster Services celebrated 40 years of serving over 100,000 children and their families after disasters. Unfortunately,

CDS was not able to deploy volunteers in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. Undaunted, and determined to continue to serve children, CDS developed the Individual Kit of Comfort (IKOC), a pouch containing multiple activities for children in non-congregate sheltering that encourages creative play and helps begin the healing process. The kits were assembled by volunteers around the country. Over 2,500 were distributed to children through American Red Cross operations to California, Colorado, Louisiana, Missouri, and Texas, and through Partnerships with Native Americans (PWNA) to tribal communities hit hard by COVID-19. All but two of CDS' scheduled volunteer trainings had to be postponed but there is hope that these can begin again later in 2021.

The Nigeria Crisis Response continued to be the largest global response as the Church of the Brethren worked with its two main partners, EYN (Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) and Mission 21. In the midst of the two-fold challenges of the pandemic and ongoing violence in many places, EYN persists in providing both relief and recovery programs for internally displaced persons and those who have been able to either settle in safer areas or return to their homes. Programs center around agriculture, safe drinking water, food and medical assistance, livelihood training, home repairs, education, and trauma and peacebuilding, as well as the strengthening of EYN leadership.

In eight other countries, EDF grants supported responses by partners, Global Brethren Churches, and Church of the Brethren mission points. Two of the largest grants to partners were in response to the major explosion at the port in Beirut, Lebanon, which caused widespread destruction and displacement of people. Church World Service received grants to assist with flooding in Kenya and their continued response to 2019's Hurricane Dorian in the Bahamas. Brethren in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Venezuela were also supported in flood responses. The largest combined response of 2020 supported relief programs by several partners for survivors of the devastating Hurricanes Eta and Iota which struck Central America in November. Support for relief and recovery programs in this area will be continued in 2021.

The total 2020 program expenditures were \$349,021 for U.S. responses, including the Rebuilding Program and CDS (\$127,469 of that amount supported the Puerto Rico hurricane response); \$287,548 for the Nigeria Crisis Response; \$166,000 for all other international responses; and \$422,612 for the domestic and global COVID-19 Pandemic Grant programs.

BDM was grateful for sufficient EDF reserves given by faithful and generous financial giving which enabled us to boldly respond to and walk with those affected by disasters and/or the COVID-19 pandemic 2020. Our Rise Up! appeal at the end of the year brought a heartwarming response that allows responses to continue. How precious you all are to us and to God who loves us all!

Roy Winter, Executive Director for Service Ministries

On behalf of BDM staff – Sherry Chastain, Lisa Crouch, Jenn Dorsch-Messler and Sharon Franzén

Atlantic Southeast District Conference

Bethany At-a-Glance



DEGREE PROGRAMS

- Master of Divinity
- Master of Arts
- Master of Arts: Theopoetics and Writing
- Master of Arts in Spiritual and Social Transformation



CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

- Certificate of Achievement in Theological Studies
- Certificate of Achievement in Biblical Peacemaking
- Certificate in Intercultural Biblical Interpretation
- Certificate in Just Peace and Conflict Resolution
- Certificate in Theopoetics and Theological Imagination



BETHANY ACADEMY FOR MINISTERIAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

- Education for a Shared Ministry
- Training in Ministry
- Educación para un Ministerio Compartido
- Seminario Bíblico Anabautista Hispano-de la Iglesia de los Hermanos

BETHANY QUICK FACTS

- **726** licensed or ordained pastors in the Church of the Brethren are graduates of Bethany Theological Seminary.
- **10 OF 24** Church of the Brethren District Executives are Bethany graduates.
- **22** students graduated with degrees or certificates from Bethany in May 2021 and another **4** completed training through Bethany Academy for Ministerial Leadership.
- **10** percent of our financial support in 2020 came from districts and congregations.
- **4** graduates from Nigeria earned the Certificate in Biblical Peacemaking in 2021 – the first cohort to earn Bethany degrees while taking courses at the Technology Centre in Jos.

ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST DISTRICT CONFERENCE

- Current students: **0**
- Financial support during fiscal year 2021 (as of June 30, 2021):
\$2,300.00 FROM 10 DONORS





2021 District Conference Report



MASST SETS SAIL

For students who hear a clear call and are following a specific path to practical ministry, Bethany has launched a new master's degree program that links spiritual formation with a focus on social change.

The Master of Arts in Spiritual and Social Transformation (MASST) degree program launches in the fall of 2021 and will significantly broaden the Seminary's offerings to students who want to focus and specialize their ministries. The program is designed to serve individuals pursuing careers in non-profit leadership, social services, or spiritual direction. This new program is uniquely positioned to link Bethany's Brethren heritage to the interests and needs of current students. According to Academic Dean Steve Schweitzer, MASST is a natural outgrowth of Bethany's mission and draws on the strengths of the Seminary's stellar faculty. The program is also a thoughtful response to trends across theological education in the U.S., and it is only the second master's program in the United States to focus on spiritual and social transformation in this combination and integrative way.

Students in the MASST program can choose from five "Paths" or concentrations of courses, including Non-Profit Leadership (in partnership with Eastern Mennonite University) and two programs in Spiritual Practices and Direction (in association with Oasis Ministries). Other focus areas are History as Argument and Meditation and Public Theology and Witness. All concentrations will benefit from Bethany's existing strengths, and students will learn alongside those who are seeking certificates, other M.A. degrees, and the M.Div.

As is true for all Bethany degree programs, MASST students will have access to generous financial aid, including the Pillars and Pathways Residential Scholarship, which allows students to earn a graduate degree without taking on additional student or commercial debt.

HELPING STUDENTS ANSWER THEIR CALL

Bethany remains focused on keeping Seminary education accessible and affordable for all. As we celebrated commencement — honoring graduates from both 2020 and 2021 — we were happy to note that our Pillars and Pathways program is helping many of our students earn Bethany degrees without taking on additional student or consumer debt. The Class of 2021 included seven individuals who earned the Master of Divinity degree, as well as eight individuals who earned the Master of Arts or Master of Arts in Theopoetics and Writing degrees. In addition, 11 people earned certificates from the Seminary, including the first cohort of four students who completed their studies at the Technology Centre in Jos, Nigeria. The class includes alumni who will seek ordination in the Church of the Brethren as well as those who minister through writing, social justice advocacy, and additional graduate study.

A RETURN TO IN-PERSON LEARNING

Bethany students and faculty will return to face-to-face classes in fall 2021. After a year of courses held via videoconferencing due to concerns about the Covid-19 pandemic, the Seminary will allow vaccinated students and faculty to gather in person for the August intensive and fall semester courses. Bethany continues to invest in robust technology, and some students will still join classes via Zoom, but the Seminary looks forward to having faculty back in the classroom, meeting in person with residential and connections students.

"We will continue to follow health and safety guidelines in order to protect everyone in the Bethany community," notes President Jeff Carter. "Our priority is to provide an exceptional educational experience to our students, and we believe in-person classes are a great benefit to students and professors alike."





Brethren Volunteer Service Annual Report

Sharing God's Love Through Acts of Service

Working for Peace

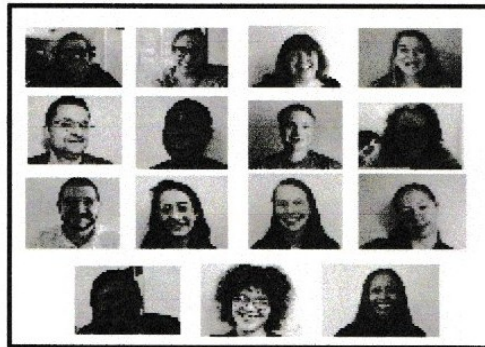
Caring for Creation

Advocating Justice

Serving Human Needs

BVS ended 2020 with 20 volunteers:

- who served in 6 countries: El Salvador, Japan, Northern Ireland, Ireland, Nigeria, and the U.S.;
- placed in 13 U.S. states and Washington, D.C.;
- 54 volunteers served throughout the year.



Unit #325, Summer 2020: Volunteer group photo taken over Zoom

In 2020:

- BVS hosted three orientation units this past year. One was hosted in Newmanstown, Pa., and two were hosted virtually via Zoom due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Partners in Service Award

Each year, BVS presents a Partners in Service Award to an individual, group, or organization that has shown exceptional commitment to the work of sharing God's love through acts of service. The 2021 award goes to Harrisburg First Church of the Brethren and bcmPEACE in Harrisburg, Pa.

Since receiving their first BVS volunteer in 1960, Harrisburg First Church of the Brethren and bcmPEACE have hosted nearly 60 BVS volunteers. They began their partnership with BVS in hopes of being helpful to the migrant community in the area and continue to host BVSers to serve their community today.

The Partners in Service Award is usually presented at the Annual Conference Brethren Volunteer Service Luncheon each July. However, this year it will be acknowledged at the BVS Networking Session on July 1 as part of the 2021 virtual Annual Conference.



Alyssa Parker (unit #321.1) singing with the Harrisburg First choir



New European Coordinator: Sara Cook

Sara Cook began working with BVS as the European coordinator in January 2020. Sara is based in Northern Ireland where she served with BVS from 2001 to 2003 as a part of unit #246. Since her time as a BVSer, Sara has worked to support Northern Ireland's peace process. Her work has included facilitating dialogue encounters between former security forces, paramilitaries, and those bereaved or injured by conflict-related violence. In recent years, Sara has also supported the work of international women peacebuilders and the resettlement of Syrian refugees.

As European coordinator, Sara will continue Kristin Flory's work of supporting BVSers based in Europe, with a current focus on projects in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Though the COVID-19 pandemic brought challenges soon after Sara began her work, she is "really enjoying working with current volunteers based in Belfast." She says, "BVS changed my life. My peacebuilding work, my life in Northern Ireland, and so many of my perspectives and values are due to my time as a volunteer with BVS. It's a privilege to work with current BVSers as they serve with BVS."

BVS During COVID-19

In March 2020, along with the rest of the world, BVS was forced to shift all of its programming to a virtual format in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The first pivot was the annual volunteer mid-year retreat becoming an online experience. Volunteers and BVS staff gathered virtually for a day of fellowship, games, and respite.

BVS staff then got to work at shifting its 2020 orientations to a virtual format. Instead of a three-week, in-person orientation, the summer unit #325 and fall unit #327 were hosted via Zoom. Volunteers and BVS staff met weekly in the month preceding orientation for pre-orientation, a time of connection and project discernment. Volunteers then traveled to their project sites and attended orientation virtually for 14 days, which doubled as a quarantine time. BVS staff will carry some of the changes from this year forward as they continue to seek innovative ways of training volunteers.

Amidst the programming changes, BVS also experienced a transition in staff. In addition to the usual turnover in staff volunteers, in July 2020, Jocelyn Siakula resigned from her role as orientation coordinator, a position she had held since 2015. Pauline Liu, unit #319, stepped into the role of interim volunteer coordinator following Jocelyn's departure. Pauline served with L'Arche Kilkenny in Ireland as a live-in assistant during her BVS term in 2018-2019. She remotely joined the BVS team in May 2020 as the orientation assistant before taking on the role of interim volunteer coordinator. Pauline holds a B.A. in Psychology with a minor in Leadership Studies from the University of Colorado Boulder, and recently completed a master's degree in Educational Psychology - Human Relations at Northern Arizona University.



Photo courtesy of Alex McBride



Photo courtesy of Deb Wilson

Alex McBride (unit #322) at SnowCap Community Charities in Portland, Ore. (left), and Deb Wilson (unit #327) wrapping gifts at Project PLASE in Baltimore, Md. (right).

Workcamp Ministry Name Change



In November, the workcamp ministry changed its name to Faith Outreach Expeditions (FaithX). This name change came from a several-year process of determining the future for the short-term service program. In the new name, the word "faith" expresses that these experiences are a place for theological exploration, discernment, and spiritual growth. The word "outreach" speaks to the experience of becoming the hands and feet of Christ to the world. The word "expeditions" emphasizes the sense of adventure and fun that we hope all participants experience while serving.

The breadth of the new name speaks to the hope of expanding short-term service opportunities beyond the summer programming for youth and young adults. Additionally, for those outside the Church of the Brethren, or those not as familiar with the short-term service program, this name encompasses the program's mission and goals. The name Faith Outreach Expeditions speaks to the spiritual component of the program, the emphasis on service, and the sense of adventure that is promoted as participants travel to new places and try new things.

FaithX Update



Chad Whitzel and Alton Hips (at right) are serving as the FaithX coordinators in the BVS office. They began their work in August of 2020 and are part of the first group of volunteers to live in the newly-purchased Elgin BVS house located near the general offices.

The 2021 theme is "Step Out: Seeking New Paths," and Chad and Alton are working to plan eight in-person and virtual FaithX experiences for the 2021 summer season.

Brethren Volunteer Service
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BVS is a ministry of the Church of the Brethren

2021 CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN DISTRICT CONFERENCE REPORT

Greetings!

The Church of the Brethren is called a *historic peace church*. On Earth Peace sees the possibility of our beloved denomination claiming a call to be a *living peace church* - a people spiritually formed and practically equipped to respond with agape love, power, and creativity to the crises and opportunities in our times. This update invites you and your congregation to this vision and lets you know how you can get involved.



The entire Christian story is one of breaking through barriers - between people and God, and between people and other people! Sometimes those barriers are in the heart - hardness of heart, prejudice, hatred, apathy. Sometimes they are practices or policies that continue to leave some at the side and prevent full flourishing for all people (in our congregations, and in the communities where we do ministry). A church alive in Christ's power knows it has the call and power to dismantle barriers and open way for all of God's people to experience agape love and flourishing life.

A church that comes alive in Christ's way of peace with justice. . .

- equips people spiritually and biblically to hear and act on God's call to seek peace
- handles conflict and decisionmaking in healthy ways
- develops leaders who are ready for the task of community engagement
- analyzes and addresses the ways it informally or formally discriminates or otherwise prevents full participation of all people
- works to include and celebrate all people, on their own terms
- connects faithful discipleship to active engagement with the problems of the world
- inspires members to acts of transformational love

Are you interested in this vision?

What value or resources does On Earth Peace offer my congregation or district?

- We provide training and leadership development in an approach called Kingian Nonviolence Conflict Reconciliation, which offers a connection to the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Our interns support and develop Learning Action Communities on a variety of justice issues. (Find them on Facebook by typing "OEP" into the search bar.)
- We consult with congregations & districts to build capacity to work for peace and reconciliation
- We provide community engagement mini-grants and webinars for youth groups
- Since the pandemic started, we've published more than 70 Read Aloud videos which families and churches are using to support children's peace formation
- We provide many community-building and educational events - see current and past events listed at www.OnEarthPeace.org/events



Quick Facts

What is On Earth Peace?

OEP is a 46-year-old 501c3 nonprofit ministry that equips and walks with individuals and communities who work for justice and peace.

Who works with OEP?

We have 4 long-term staff and about 20 interns; a board of 12 members, of whom 25% are elected through the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference; and an internal Anti-Racism Transformation Team which helps us grow toward being a fully multi-racial and multi-cultural organization.

What is OEP's relationship with the Church of the Brethren?

We are an agency of the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference. Through our agency responsibilities and opportunities, we seek to embolden the Church of the Brethren to become a living peace and justice denomination.

What do you do?

We work with churches and community groups, and youth and young adults. We work with both individuals and groups to develop leadership and support/inspire/equip for faithful, effective work that builds a reconciled world and seeks justice for all people.

What does that look like?

Here are some examples from 2021 so far:

- Leaders in 8 countries are developing skills in through our Kingian Nonviolence Level One Trainer Certification program.
- Youth groups in three states are developing projects and building skills through our Community Engagement Mini-Grants
- Brethren and Quaker racial justice workers in a 12-week racial justice accountability program practiced new skills and made plans for their community work

What do you mean by Kingian Nonviolence?

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King said, "There is a power in love that our world has not discovered yet. Jesus discovered it centuries ago...that love has within it a redemptive power." His six principles of nonviolence and the six steps of a campaign were grounded in the love Christ embodied. Many are choosing to act out of that transformative love by learning more about Kingian Nonviolence. Kingian Nonviolence Conflict Reconciliation helps individuals and groups address issues of conflict, violence, and injustice with lessons from the black-led freedom struggle. It builds from the work of the Rev Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his many colleagues in the movement for civil and human rights. This approach has a particular Brethren connection: David Jehnson (Living

Peace CoB, Columbus, OH) is co-author of the curriculum.

What is your funding source?

We receive the bulk of our funding from individual donors. We also receive funding from congregations who add us to their annual budget or send periodic special offerings. Please consider becoming an individual or congregational supporter.

To learn more about how you can support or be involved in our work, contact Matt Guynn, director of church and community organizing, at mgynn@OnEarthPeace.org

Commissioning of the Delegates

- Leader:** District Conference is the gathered church in the Atlantic Southeast District. We have come to discern the will of God for our ministry.
- Delegates:** We believe we are to seek to be led by the Holy Spirit, both as we conduct business and as we worship here this weekend. We gather to worship, pray, and discern together as God's people.
- Leader:** We are instructed by scripture that as the Body of Christ, we are to keep "the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace" and as "God's chosen people to clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience."
- Delegates:** We will strive in our thoughts, words, and actions to protect the unity of the Body.
- Leader:** The Church of the Brethren believes that we best understand God's will through the Body and that we should constantly seek God's guidance through the study of scripture and discernment together.
- Delegates:** We will seek to be faithful to scripture and be open to the Holy Spirit. We will seek to do God's will as we are led to understand it. We pray that the Holy Spirit will be a real presence in us, that this District Conference and our local congregations may be energized and empowered by the Holy Spirit for new life in Christ.
- Leader:** The Atlantic Southeast District is a diverse body with a variety of views and understandings, but we are held together by our sense of community and mutuality as we serve our Savior.
- Delegates:** We will seek to be fair, affirming the positive and communicating concerns and differences of understanding kindly. We will respect the opinions and work of others; we will seek to support our leadership and staff; and we will work to build up the Body of Christ, through our decisions.