

Southern Ohio District Conference
October 11, 2013
Trotwood Church of the Brethren

Friday, October 11, 2012

Moderator Julie Hostetter called us to order at 6:30 pm. Pastor Paula Bowser, Trotwood, welcomed us to Trotwood.

NOTE: All reports were on the district website: www.sodcob.org

Seating of delegates and consecration: Moderator-elect Tom Bowser led the Consecration of Delegates

Adoption of the Agenda: Moderator Hostetter presented the agenda posted on the district website for adoption. The agenda was approved.

Review of District Conference Minutes

- 1 The minutes posted on the district website for the District Conference held on October 19-20, 2012 were approved.
- 2 Many delegates had not seen the minutes posted on the district website from the District Conference held on July 27, 2013. District Clerk Wendy Noffsinger Erbaugh read the minute of the action taken at this meeting. The minutes were approved.

Affirmation of District Leadership Slate: Burt Wolf Moderator Hostetter gave the opportunity for delegates to make nominations from the floor. None were made. Slates were distributed. Burt Wolf led the group in prayer. The slates were returned.

Proposal from the Eaton Church of the Brethren

- 1 As an employee of two groups mentioned in the letter, Julie recused herself from helping Program and Arrangements Team to prepare the response and from moderating this discussion at District Conference. Tom Bowser facilitated this item of business.
- 2 Wendy Noffsinger Erbaugh read Eaton's question: "What should our response as a district be concerning recent decisions and/or actions by various denominational agencies, departments, committees, and educational institutions of the Church of the Brethren that are in conflict with the 1983 Annual Conference paper on Human Sexuality? A specific issue would be booth space provided at Annual Conference to the Brethren/Mennonite Council for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender interests."
- 3 Nan Erbaugh read the Program and Arrangements Team's response: "Regarding the writing of statements and other actions on the part of Annual Conference Agencies and related organizations, we the Southern Ohio District encourage wisdom and discretion, striving to keep with the spirit of Annual Conference decisions and we authorize the District Clerk to send copies of this resolution to the Mission and Ministry Board, On Earth Peace, Brethren Benefit Trust, Bethany Theological Seminary, and the Annual Conference office."
 - 3.1 Nan explained how the Program and Arrangements Team came to their response.
- 4 The motion was made and seconded to accept the Program and Arrangement Team's response. A time of discussion followed.
- 5 A voice vote was taken to accept the Program and Arrangement Team's response and was inconclusive. A written ballot was distributed to the delegates. 58 people affirmed the response. 52 did not affirm it. The motion passed.

Results of slate: Burt Wolf. The District Slate was affirmed, although not unanimously.

Recommendation regarding the closing of Poplar Grove Church of the Brethren: David Shetler.

- 1 Poplar Grove has unanimously requested to disband on or before June 30, 2014.

2 A vote was taken to accept the request. The motion passed.

Announcements; adjournment for evening worship

Saturday

Moderator Hostetter called the business session to order. Paula Bowser led us in opening devotions.

Order of the day

- 1 Brethren Retirement Community: John Warner brought greetings from BRC. He shared a video about the BRC's Senior Fit program. He also thanked the district for its ongoing support.
- 2 Denominational Report. A video was shared highlighting the work of the denominational agencies.
 - 2.1 On Earth Peace: Rick Polhamus presented the report. Glenn Timmons shared about how the Agape Satyagra program is being used in the Peace Place ministry of the Trotwood congregation.
 - 2.2 Bethany Theological Seminary: Monica Rice shared about Bethany's new president, Jeff Carter, it's new emphasis on the missional church and evangelism, and its developing reconciliation studies program. She also noted a new structure to the curriculum that allows students to be more creative in how they complete their studies and as they look to future ministries.
 - 2.3 Time was given to ask denominational representatives questions.
- 3 The conference sang "Praise God from Whom" in acceptance of the reports from the denominational agencies.

District Board Commissioned Assessment Report for Camp Woodland Altars

1. Gerald Harley was commissioned by the District Board to assess the condition of Woodland Altars. He presented his findings to District Conference.
2. Time was given for questions of clarification. The following responses were given:
 - 2.1. Numbers in the report were based largely on having outside contractors. It was assumed some of the work would be done by volunteers.
 - 2.2. Any open electrical boxes are considered unsafe.
 - 2.3. The health and life safety issues named in the report should be done before having campers onsite. Other repairs and replacements could be prioritized and spread out, but nothing in the report should be delayed for long.
 - 2.4. Trails and bridges were not looked at for this report.
 - 2.5. The buried gas tank mentioned in the report is not currently registered. Part of the cost of removal would be to register the tank. We cannot sell the property without caring for the tank.
 - 2.6. The life safety and health safety issues named in the report would probably come to bear on insurance costs.
 - 2.7. Radon was not addressed in this report. There was not any significant mold in living areas. It seems that maintenance has done good job keeping the mold away.

Proposal to amend Code of Regulations (required 2/3 majority): Randy Tomlin, Administrative Body Chairperson at Brookville.

1. Time was given for questions of clarification. The following response was given.
 - 1.1. The change to the Code of Regulations would be necessary to move forward with the "Recommendation concerning Woodland Altars and Outdoor Ministries" because that involves creating a new board separate from the District Board.
2. Carl Eubank presented the District Board's response. The District Board asked delegates to reject the recommendation to amend the code of regulations. Concern was raised that the requested changes could create boards without stewardship or organizational accountability to the district conference. The recommendation does not define how these boards would be structured, how they would function, or define their responsibilities. Having multiple boards

would create competition for time, talent, and resources.

3. Time was given to ask questions of clarification. The following responses were given.
 - 3.1. The proposed changes are different from the structure and accountability that BRC has with the district. BRC is still responsible to member churches in district, having its annual meeting at district conference. Most of the income from BRC comes from individuals, not congregations. Camp is not able to work that way. The number of employees and the number of people served requires a different structure.
 - 3.2. Randy Tomlin offered a point of clarification. The first recommendation changes the Code of Regulations. The second recommendation outlines how the board would work.
4. Time was given for three minute statements of affirmation and opposition.
5. The vote was taken by written ballot. Jonathan Shively served as head teller. Of the 121 ballots received, 41 affirmed the proposal and 80 did not. The recommendation failed; the motion did not carry forward. There will not be a change in the Code of Regulations.

Recommendation concerning Woodland Altars and Outdoor Ministries (requires simple majority vote) This was not addressed because the changes to the Code of Regulation needed to make this possible did not pass.

Order of the day: Presentations by Southern Ohio District Board

1. *Gifts Discernment: Report: Karen Garrett* This year Gifts Discernment put together the District Conference slate, has worked on a database of individuals and their gifts for ministry, and has helped find Annual Conference volunteers. In addition to the Moderator-Elect and Past Moderator, Rhonda Scammahorn, Justin North, and Sandy Dobberstein will be serving for 2014. Delegates were asked to help identify individuals to serve within the district. Mark Bowman and Charlene Foster asked delegates to submit names for the 2014 Annual Conference ballot, outlining that process.
2. *Camping and Retreat Transition Team: Art Fourman, Chair* This team deals with Outdoor Ministries' management, operation, and programming. At Woodland Altars, this team has overseen building winterization and making the necessary repairs to keep chalets open. Vonda Jones serves as an onsite presence.
3. *New Church Development: Ron Wenzel, Chair* Irv Heishman continues to work with Hispanic ministries. Terri Griffith is working with 10 Wilmington Place, a residential senior living facility. David Shetler has been approached by a pastor with a vision for restarting Wolf Creek. He has been working on developing a partnership between this pastor, the congregation, and the district. Deb Oskin and Nancy Heishman have also been working with this Commission
4. *Missional Renewal: Susan Fitze, Chair* Commission members include Trent Smith, Jon Keller, Belinda Yingst, Tara Hornbacker, and Brian Gilvin. This commission meets with congregations and leadership teams about congregational renewal. They have put together a toolkit of articles, books, and speakers to serve as resources for congregations. They are also working to bring the Vital Ministry Journey, a Biblically-based congregational renewal program, to Southern Ohio.
5. *Resource Development: Carl Eubank, Chair* Commission members include Mary Boone, Doug Donohoo, Nan Erbaugh, Susan Liller, David Shetler, Burt Wolf, Jane Woodie, and Larry Tyner. The campaign that was planned to offset last year's negative budget was put on hold due to other challenges facing the district. This year's budget doesn't look much different than last year's. District Board members and ex-officio members have pledged \$21,200 towards the 2014 operating budget. Delegates were also given the opportunity to make a pledge. The budget presented to District Conference will factor in these pledges.
6. *Shared Ministries: Mindy Tipton, Chair* Commission members include Judy Boles, Jim Moore, Rudy Easterling, Helen Wolf, Seth Hendricks and Ron Scammahorn. This commission sponsored the first "Empowering Disciples" event, focused on finances, and various youth events. They are also co-sponsoring "Peace, Pies, and Prophets" with Happy Corner. They oversee work with Brethren Disaster Ministries and Brethren Helping Hands. Special thanks were given for the many years Dick and Pat Via served leading BDM in Southern Ohio.

Saturday Afternoon

Order of the day: Presentation from the Ministerial Leadership Team: Sandra Jenkins, Chair

Commission members include Janet Jullian, Geneva Price, Ty Pyles, Tom Bowser, Rosie Combs, Katie Polzen, Andrew Wright, and Nick Beam. This commission sponsored "Shoes of the Fisherman," an event for those discerning a call to ministry and will have another one in 2014. They also oversee the TRIM and EFSM programs in our district. This year, they have been developing a more comprehensive mentoring program for licensed ministers.

Recognition of Ordination Anniversaries – Congratulations!

5 years: Nan Erbaugh, Barbara Menke, Randy White

10 years: Wendy Noffsinger Erbaugh, Bob Tyndall, Ben Walters

20 Years: Elizabeth Kee, Mary Sue Rosenberger

25 years Todd Hammond, Kathryn Reid

35 years: Steve Stone

Recognition of leaders serving the district David Shetler, District Executive, recognized Mark Bowman's service on Standing Committee the past 6 years and Burt Wolf as past District Moderator. Larry Tyner, District Board Chair, recognized Deb Oskin, Belinda Yingst, and Ron Wenzel for their service to the District Board. Burt Wolf, member of Gifts Discernment commission recognized Karen Garrett's service on that Commission.

Recognition of pastoral placements within the district: David Shetler Brody Rike (West Alexandria), John Sgro (Oakland), Jon Keller (Troy), Carla Gillespie (Associate Pastor for Visitation, Trotwood), Todd Hammond (Interim, West Milton), and Ron Flemming (White Cottage)

Prayer for the 2014 Annual Conference moderator: Andrew Wright Andrew led the conference in a prayer of blessing for Nancy Sollenberger Heishman in her duties as the 2014 Annual Conference moderator.

Presentations by Southern Ohio District Board, continued

1. Delegates were given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the presentations given by the District Board.
2. The conference sang "Praise God from Whom" in acceptance of the District Board reports.

District Executive's Report: David Shetler Robin Waddell needed to end the lease he had on Woodland Altars by several years. This meant that schedules and work needed to be adjusted. How to take camp back over became the focus of District ministry, derailing and delaying other ministries. However, good things do continue. New pastors were called. David has been working with the Wolf Creek restart and with churches all over the district. David thanked the conference for the continuing opportunity to serve with and among the people of the district. Time was given for questions.

Director of District Communications' Report: Mary Boone Mary talked about the different forms of communication within district ministries: the district website, and monthly bulletin inserts. Due to circumstances outside of her control, planned changes in communication didn't happen. Deadline for newsletter articles is the 15th of each month. Time was given for questions.

Interim Camp Directors' Report: Karen Dillon Karen and Tom Dillon have been doing maintenance and upkeep for the camp. This year's camp theme was "All Things New." No one at camp required a trip to hospital due to illness or injuries. Volunteers offered strong leadership, especially Charlene and Ted Foster. The weather was delightful. Next year, the theme will be "Get Real: Finding your True Self in Jesus." The goal is to have 200 campers of all ages. Upcoming events include a Woodcutting Weekend on October 26. The Volunteer Appreciation Dinner will be held at the Brookville Church of the Brethren on November 3. Time was given for questions.

Treasurer's Report: Susan Liller Susan reviewed financial activity in 2012, highlighting church (\$74, 406) and individual (\$13, 500) contributions. We did experience a net loss in 2012 and used money from the Extended Ministries Fund to cover the loss. She also reviewed a draft report of financial activity in 2013. For the first nine months of the year, we were behind budget. However, we have received more in individual giving than expected. She also highlighted activity in different funds in the report. Time was given for questions. The following responses were given.

1. Timber funds are invested in bonds. Resource Development Commission is looking at an investment policy.
2. Financials are not audited.

A motion was made to accept the District Board and District Staff reports. There was unanimous acceptance.

Presentation of 2014 district budget: Carl Eubank

1. Based on pledges received at District Conference, Carl proposed increasing line item 40602 to 25,200. A line item would be added for District Conference pledges totaling \$2650. This would change the total General Fund revenue line to \$126,962. The General Fund Net Income/Loss would become -\$25,500. Carl asked for a motion from the floor to accept the amendments to the budget. There was a motion and a second. Time was given to discuss the amendments to the budget. The motion carried.
2. Carl named that the presented budget is a negative budget. The capital campaign was put on hold until decisions could be made concerning the future of Woodland Altars. With direction from District Conference for Woodland Altars, the district can move forward with capital campaign. The presented budget contains a smaller deficit this year than last.
3. Time was given for questions and comments. The following comments/responses were given.
 - 3.1. There are additional expenses in the budget to pay for the staffing levels we are receiving
 - 3.2. An individual was concerned that 70-80% of the budget goes to salary packages. The Board was challenged to think how we can spend more of our money on outreach and programming, even if it means cutting some staffing expenses. Others believed it was a mistake to lessen salary packages.
 - 3.3. Larry Tyner, District Board Chair, said that the District Board will continue to look at; creative ways to finance the district. He reminded delegates that if we cannot create a balanced budget 2015, then we will have to take other measures.
 - 3.4. An individual encouraged the board to plan for a time when the timber funds have been used up.
 - 3.5. A District Board member encouraged churches to prayerfully consider giving to the district.
4. A vote was taken to approve the 2014 district budget as amended. The vote passed.

Offering for the district budget: Burt Wolf

Conference Wrap Up

2013 Moderator Julie Hostetter thanked the district and conference for the privilege of serving as moderator. She transferred leadership to 2014 Moderator Tom Bowser and Moderator-Elect Mark Bowman.

The 2014 District Conference theme will be "We are God's servants working together."

The 159th Southern Ohio District Church of the Brethren District Conference adjourned at 4:03 pm.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Wendy Noffsinger Erbaugh
District Clerk**