

- GATHERING MUSIC** Ryan Arndt, pianist and Joy Brubaker, chorister led the congregation in gathering music.
- CALL TO ORDER** At 8:30 a.m. on October 6, 2018, the 49th Annual District Conference Business Session of the Atlantic Northeast District of the Church of the Brethren, was called to order by Moderator Misty Wintsch. The theme of the session focused on “Think About Good Things” from Philippians 4:8. Pastor Wintsch introduced the officers and administrators of the conference.
- CONFERENCE OFFICERS PRESENT** Brian Berkey, Moderator-Elect; Ray Flagg, Treasurer; Dr. Douglas L. Nyce, Clerk; Misty Wintsch, Moderator
- ADMINISTRATORS** Galen Brumbaugh, Parliamentarian; Jennifer Balmer, Timekeeper; Pete Kontra, District Executive; Christine Dugan, District Conference Manager
- WELCOME** The Moderator, Pastor Misty Wintsch, welcomed delegates and non-delegates, reminding that all may ask questions and participate in discussion. She emphasized the importance of preparation for the session through prayer and reading through conference materials.
- PROCEDURAL CHANGE** Pastor Wintsch noted that Conference Officers and the District Board recommend a procedural change of two minutes for first time speeches and one minute for second time speeches on the same topic.
- MOTION** The procedural change was moved and seconded. The procedural change was adopted with three delegates opposed.
- PROCEDURES** Pastor Wintsch noted that delegates must complete the form in their packet of materials and give to an usher in order to make an amendment. Verbal amendments will not be accepted. Speakers should use the microphone and not speak from the floor, addressing the moderator as Sister Moderator, with their name and congregation. Pastor Wintsch emphasized the importance of commenting with the temperance of grace and peace, noting that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. She emphasized the importance of basing comments on the study of scripture. No applause should be given for speeches. Finally, she emphasized the importance of following the Brethren Way of discernment through community, open minds and listening to each other.
- MOTION** The agenda was moved and seconded to be approved as revised and presented in the delegate packet with no breaks other than lunch times and a full hours set aside for each significant policy. The delegates also approved a motion to pass the two significant policies with a 2/3 majority vote. The agenda was adopted with one delegate opposed.
- GROUP PRAYER** The Moderator led a group prayer and time for sharing what good things God is doing within our congregations (referenced on page 10 of the conference booklet).

- DIRECTOR OF ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE** Bonnie Martin welcomed the delegates and other attendees on behalf of Elizabethtown College. She brought greetings from Jeff Bach, Director of the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies
- DISTRICT EXECUTIVE** Pete Kontra, District Executive, reported as recorded on page 78-81 in the conference booklet. Mr. Kontra emphasized encouraging one another, lifting up the name of Jesus. He encouraged the conference to listen to His voice, listen to His word, listen to your brother and sister next to you and across from you, listening not just to the words, but to the heart.
- JUNIATA COLLEGE** David Witkovsky reported on Juniata College, especially noting the shift from majors to POA's (programs of emphasis). He noted that he would be leaving Juniata at the end of December after 20 years of service. He commented that Juniata is a special place to be and that he will miss his brothers and sisters.
- DISTRICT BOARD CHAIR** Jeff Glisson, District Board Chair, reported as recorded on pages 75-77 in the conference booklet and through a skit utilizing PowerPoint and videos. He informed the conference that the District Board is responsible for managing and administering the work of the District to fulfill the District vision "to create spiritually healthy New Testament congregations who covenant and network together to further the Kingdom of God." The District Board fulfills this responsibility by providing overall direction for the work of the District and establishing district-wide policies. A significant part of the District's ministry occurs through the five Commissions and eight staff persons. Jeff Glisson reported that the District Board held one special meeting before District Conference to consider the business items coming before the congregation that day. He also encouraged the congregation to identify one ministry that the ANE offers that excites them. He encouraged all to share the good news with their home churches.
- COMMISSION ON MINISTRY** Pete Kontra, District Executive, reported as recorded on pages 82-83 in the conference booklet and through a skit utilizing PowerPoint and videos. Pete informed the conference about all of the ways that the District can help if one feels called to serve in ministry. He explained that if you are ordained, there are many other opportunities in addition to being a pastor. Since the last District Conference, the ANE celebrated four licensing's, six ordinations and one person for commissioning. He also noted there is a District-wide calendar in place so that churches can pray for each other on a rotating basis.
- COMMISSION ON CHURCH DEVELOPMENT AND EVANGELISM** Don Mitchell, Director, reported as recorded on pages 84-86 of the conference booklet and through a skit utilizing PowerPoint and videos. Andy Hamilton, Chair, along with Jere Cassel, Secretary, were also present to report. Collectively, they communicated that their commission works to offer encouragement and assistance to the district fellowships and projects. They reported that the Sanford Fellowship, Maine and the Source of Grace Mountain of Glory Project in Massachusetts are doing very well. The Commission members reported that two local fellowships in

Pennsylvania were down to less than ten regular members and they have gone through a period of renewal and are growing.

COMMISSION ON NURTURE

Donna Lefever-Hoover, Chair, reported as recorded on pages 87-89 of the conference booklet and through a skit utilizing PowerPoint and videos. She reported that the Nurture Commission has had a busy year and offered many excellent events including the Global Leadership Summit, an occasion for life-long learners and leaders to gain education and inspiration to maximize their fullest potential. Donna reported that the commission partnered with the Women's Fellowship Cabinet to plan a women's camp held at Camp Swatara this year. They are also working together to plan a women's spring fellowship event in March of 2019. The ANE youth took part in many events offered by the Nurture Commission including a Junior High and Senior High retreat and a Junior High lock in. All were well attended and meaningful messages and fellowship prospered. Donna informed the conference that on March 30, 2019 there will be a CPYU event about understanding today's youth. She encouraged all to attend.

**COMMISSION ON WITNESS
AND OUTREACH**

Mary Etta Reinhart, Director, reported as recorded on pages 90-92 of the conference booklet and through a skit utilizing PowerPoint and videos. She informed the conference that the Urban Ministries Initiative Planning Committee organized a praiseworthy Faith and Fellowship Conference this year. It was an opportunity for worship, learning and fellowship among our widespread and widely diverse urban churches. Two attendees reflected on what they learned and shared their thoughts through video recordings. Mary Etta also reported that the Atlantic Northeast District works closely with Brethren Disaster Ministries. Many work groups from the district traveled to the work sites to serve and assist with the rebuilding that is necessary in Puerto Rico, St. Thomas, North Carolina and South Carolina. She noted that opportunities for participation can be found on page 71 of the conference booklet. The Witness and Outreach Commission also assists churches through *Helping Hands Benevolence Fund* and the *Church to Church* ministry. The *Helping Hands Benevolence Fund* is available to support churches financially with a small project or community outreach effort. This fund was recently used to support two congregations that had persons within their church dealing with significant personal challenges. The *Church to Church* ministry is in place to encourage churches to work together on various project needs in a local congregation.

**COMMISSION ON
STEWARDSHIP**

Kay Weaver, Director, reported as recorded on pages 93-95 of the conference booklet and through a skit utilizing PowerPoint and videos. She reported that the Stewardship Commission is practicing good fiscal responsibility. Kay reported that the Stewards worked along with the Witness and Outreach Commission to provide financial support through the *Barnabas Fund* to inner city congregations. They continue to grant funds to four congregations in need annually. The Stewards also work with the Church Development and Evangelism Commission to provide financial assistance through the *Seeds of Faith Fund*. This fund is in place to assist new Atlantic Northeast church plants and fellowships and encourage leadership growth. This fund supports congregations that desire to rebirth and revitalize their ministry. Kay reported that since last year's District Conference, the *Seeds of Faith Fund* granted

more than \$13,000 for Hispanic ministers training and leadership development. Additionally, Kay explained that our heritage is very important to us and some ways that we preserve it are through the Germantown Trust and the Atlantic Northeast Historical Committee. She reported that Stewardship University will be held again in March of 2019. She encouraged the conference to attend this educational and inspirational workshop that offers practical and relevant information about how to be good stewards. Kay concluded her report by encouraging the conference to review their church's congregational giving and advocated for everyone to contribute to the district ministries.

COMPELLING VISION

Pastor Donita Keister, 2019 Annual Conference Moderator, and Brian Messler, Pastor of Ephrata CoB, presented the Compelling Vision Process. They emphasized needing to find a new way, a third way suggesting the remedy of having peoples' voices heard, engaging in conversation and community building, finding those core values about which we agree on and shaping a vision for the future of our denomination.

FINANCES

Ray Flagg, Treasurer, reported on the finances of the ANE District and the 2019 ANE District Ministry Investment Plan as recorded on pages 113-124 in the conference booklet.

MOTION

The District Board recommends the adoption of the Ministry Investment Plan. The plan was adopted unanimously.

MOTION

The District Board recommends the adoption of the \$55.00 per member recommended fair share and a stretch goal of \$60 per member. The fair share recommendation was adopted with two delegates opposed.

2019 SLATE

Heather Landram, Chair of the Gifts Discernment Team, presented the 2019 slate as recorded on pages 23-39 of the conference booklet. Heather thanked the individuals who agreed to serve in 2019 and also thanked the Gifts Discernment Team. The ushers distributed the slates. Moderator Misty Wintsch, led the congregation in prayer. The slates were then collected from the delegates.

SHARING AND HYMN

Twelve delegates and attendees shared what good things God is doing in their congregations' ministries. Ryan and Joy led the congregation with the hymn *God of Grace and God of Glory*.

CAMP SWATARA

Joel and Linetta Ballew, Co-Administrators, reported as recorded on pages 48-49 of the conference booklet, including a report on the Building Bridges Capital Campaign having reached over \$1,000,000 gifted or pledged. They also shared SWATARA as an acronym for **S**imple living, **W**orship, **A**uthentic relationships, **T**eaching leadership skills, **A**ppreciation for creation, **R**ecreation and adventure and **A**rtistic expression.

STANDING COMMITTEE

Mark Baliles reported on the actions of Standing Committee as recorded on pages 68-69 of the conference booklet. Mr. Baliles shared his experience of Standing Committee as 2 ½ days in January with eight persons from all over the country working together, providing a balanced ballot, not posturing, looking out for every

viewpoint and geographic representation. He noted that Standing Committee is a model for having a room of diversity looking out for each other's interests.

**BRETHREN DISASTER
RELIEF AUCTION**

Evelyn Dehmey reported on the Brethren Disaster Relief Auction as recorded on page 102 of the conference booklet. She noted that from September 21-23 this year over \$440,000 were raised, including a special gift from an estate of \$62,000. She thanked all of those giving leadership to the auction and to those who serve, those who make donations and all of our patrons. She noted that it is the largest all volunteer auction in the country and reminded the congregation of Jay Whitman's vision of Brethren gathering for a purpose to honor and glorify God.

**YOUTH PRESENTATION
AND HYMN**

The youth cabinet shared how important it is to participate in District wide youth events and encouraged all Atlantic Northeast congregations to partake. The youth concluded their presentation by leading the conference with the hymn *Will You Let Me be Your Servant*.

COBYS FAMILY SERVICES

Mark Cunningham and Don Fitzkee reported on COBYS as recorded on pages 50-51 of the conference booklet. Don noted that he is concluding his work at COBYS after nearly 17 years of serving with Mark. They quoted Dickens in noting that this year was the best of times and the worst of times. They thanked the conference for the pile of donations in the lobby. They rejoiced that COBYS now employs 126 staff, including 52 full-time. Referencing their recent mailing, they noted that same sex couples were rejected in the past but may now adopt through COBYS if they fulfill all requirements. This is due to the COBYS Board's decision to comply with a PA state mandate rather than lose the ability to continue to operate. Mark and Don further noted that many relationships have been tattered or torn over this, but this difficult decision to comply with the mandate should not trump caring for children. They encouraged the conference to view this decision in the context of our relationship and continue the support of COBYS.

HYMN AND PRAYER

The conference sang *Sanctuary/Take My Life*. Pastor Misty Wintsch concluded the morning session by leading the congregation in prayer.

LUNCH

The morning session was adjourned for lunch with a District ministry offering taken at the doors. There were three insight sessions offered for those that were interested. The three "Lunch and Learns" were offered on campus. Pete Kontra presented a session entitled "Meet Pete" where brothers and sisters could ask questions and learn about his vision as the newly appointed District Executive. Dr. Dave Coryell presented "Hugging Porcupines: A Ministry of Nurture Amongst Plugged in Youth". This session offered insight about how congregations can come alongside and support the youth within their church. Jeff Bach led a tour of the Young Center and offered an opportunity for people to learn about the history of Anabaptist and Pietist groups and communal societies.

ATLANTIC NORTHEAST DISTRICT CONFERENCE
Leffler Chapel, Elizabethtown College, Pennsylvania

October 6, 2018
Saturday

- HYMN AND PROCEDURES** The afternoon session was called to order through the singing of *Revive Us Again*. Moderator Misty Wintsch reminded the delegate body of the two and one minute speech procedure, that delegates must sit in the delegate section and that there was to be no clapping for other people's speeches.
- BETHANY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY** Kesla Klinger reported on Bethany Theological Seminary as recorded on page 52 of the conference booklet.
- MISSION AND MINISTRY BOARD** Traci Rabenstein reported on the activities of the Mission and Ministry Board as recorded on pages 107-108 of the conference booklet.
- SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY MINISTRY CENTER** Donna Rhodes reported on the activities of the Susquehanna Valley Ministry Center as recorded on pages 60-62 of the conference booklet.
- VERITAS FELLOWSHIP** Don Mitchell and Pete Kontra reported on the status of the Veritas Fellowship. They shared that the fellowship would be brought to Annual Conference in 2019 for affirmation by the brotherhood as a congregation.
- SHARING AND HYMN** Moderator Misty Wintsch shared that the ANE District has 488 Facebook followers. She encouraged the conference to get out their phones and push it to 500. Six more congregational representatives shared news of good things that God is doing in their congregations. The District Conference sang *My Hope is Built on Nothing Less*. Moderator Misty Wintsch reminded the conference that comments should be tempered with grace and peace; that we've all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. She suggested that each attendee begin with the assumption that every opinion shared was arrived at by someone with a Bible open, even if the opinion doesn't match a personal one. She suggested that the Brethren way is to work in a community of open-minded discernment of the will of God.
- POLICY ON SAME GENDER MARRIAGE** Jeff Glisson presented the Policy on Same Gender Marriage developed by the District Board and recorded on pages 40-42 in the conference booklet. He shared the context of the policy's development as having begun with inquiries made to the ANE District Office in 2017 about what the action would be for an ordained CoB minister performing a same sex marriage within the ANE District following the 2017 Annual Conference actions. In 2018, the Ministry Commission began developing a policy that was affirmed by the Board and presented at six sectional meetings. Following the meetings, it was clear that there was no consensus. The proposed policy in the conference booklet was approved at the June meeting by the District Board. The Board voted that it is of such significance that it will have to be approved by a 2/3rds vote at District Conference to be implemented. He asked for questions of clarification.
- QUESTIONS** Jamie Nace inquired as to whether voting was to be using a hand count or paper ballot. Moderator Misty Wintsch noted that a paper ballot would be utilized. The floor was opened for thoughts and responses to the presented paper.
- RESPONSES** Fifteen brothers and sisters presented their views of the paper.

- MOTION TO AMEND** Nate Myer of the Chiques congregation moved an amendment. The amendment was seconded.
- AMENDMENT** Add “or promoting and accepting the practice of homosexuality as a lifestyle that is approved by God.” to the conclusion of Page 2, point 1.
Add “and/or promotes and accepts the practice of homosexuality as a lifestyle that is approved by God.” after “The District Executive (DE) receives a report based on direct knowledge that a minister has performed a same-gender marriage”
Add “promotes and accepts the practice of homosexuality as a lifestyle that is approved by God” later in the same paragraph after “The minister who performs or officiates the marriage or” on page 2.
Add “or promote and accept the practice of homosexuality as a lifestyle that is approved by God,” to point 3.a. after “If a commitment is made to no longer perform or officiate any same-gender marriages”
Add “or promoting and accepting the practice of homosexuality as a lifestyle that is approved by God,” to point 3.b. after “If the minister cannot commit to cease performing same-gender marriages”
Delete “will be free to resume normal ministry duties while accepting the consequences for any future actions” and replace with “will be immediately terminated of ministry credentials.” in point 3.b.
- DISCUSSION** Five brothers and sisters presented their views of the amendment.
- MOTION TO CALL THE VOTE** It was moved to call the vote. This motion passed with one delegate opposed to calling the vote.
- HAND COUNT** A vote by hands was taken, but was too close to call.
- POINT OF ORDER** It was asked whether delegates from congregations that made it known that they no longer wish to remain Church of the Brethren would be permitted to vote. It was explained that all delegates seated are currently a part of the denomination and that delegates must be seated in the delegate section in order to vote.
- PAPER BALLOT** 191 votes were cast. 101 affirmed the amendment. 90 did not affirm the amendment. 4 delegates abstained. The amendment passed with a simple majority.
- MOTION CALLED** The motion was called by the floor. All but 6 delegates were in favor of calling the motion. Paper ballots were distributed.
- PROCEDURES AND PRAYER** The Moderator instructed delegates that ballots were to be marked yes, no or abstain as is printed on the ballot. The Moderator led the congregation in prayer.
- PAPER BALLOT** 184 votes were cast. 106 affirmed the motion as amended. 78 did not affirm the motion as amended. 11 delegates abstained. The motion failed to reach a 2/3rds majority and the paper as amended did not pass.

**REPORT ON MIDWAY
CONGREGATIONAL
WITHDRAWAL**

The ANE District Board Subcommittee presented their report as recorded on pages 106-107 of the conference booklet. It was noted that Midway has scheduled a vote to withdrawal for October 28, 2018. The ANE District would take trusteeship of the buildings and assets of the Midway CoB if the vote is in favor of separating. It was further noted that the ANE District Board does not want to take trusteeship of the building and assets and is working toward a solution.

**PROCEDURAL OUTLINE
FOR CONGREGATIONAL
WITHDRAWAL**

Pete Kontra and Jim Nolt reported a Procedural Outline for Congregational Withdrawal as recorded on pages 43-47 of the conference booklet. They suggested that perception, assumptions, opinions and pride stand in the way of a solution. They noted that they see no scriptures that give guidance on how to separate. They noted that they do see scriptures that speak to how to stay together. They noted that we have difficult situations come up, but that congregations are in a covenantal relationship and that separation would be like a marital divorce with the separating group breaking the covenant. There are three stakeholder groups: district members, the group that does want to separate, the group that does not want to separate. The Board's goal is to move forward in a Christ-like way. They noted that the Board is a group of volunteers serving as representatives for all of us, holding each other accountable. Property stewardship and ownership are also responsibilities.

COMMENTS

Two brothers spoke.

MOTION TO AMEND

Enten Eller of Ambler CoB moved an amendment. The amendment was seconded.

AMENDMENT

In Part A, regarding Christian Ministry take the two bolded sentences under Step 5 and move to before the final sentence preceding Step 1. Strike the second sentence (of the two bolded sentences just moved).

In Part B, regarding division of property and assets, replace "the remaining assets will be divided between the District and the congregation with 10% going to the District and 90% to the withdrawing congregation" with "the remaining assets will be divided between the District and the congregation as follows: 10% will go to the District; 75% will go to the withdrawing congregation; and the remaining 15% will go to the withdrawing congregation in direct proportion to the congregation's support of the district, as determined by figuring the percentage of the congregation's giving toward the Fair Share per-member assessment averaged over the previous five full calendar years."

DISCUSSION

Two brothers spoke.

HAND COUNT

The amendment was opposed in the majority by a hand vote. The amendment failed.

MOTION TO AMEND

David Superdock of Midway CoB moved an amendment. The amendment was seconded.

AMENDMENT

Delete the division of properties and assets paragraphs and replace with a simple \$100 contribution/member departing the denomination.

POINT OF CLARIFICATION	Enten Eller asked if the contribution is to be to the District or from the District.
AMENDMENT TO THE AMENDMENT	David Superdock reworded the amendment as “\$100 contribution paid to the District per member departing the denomination.” The second concurred.
POINT OF CLARIFICATION	Liz Bidgood Enders of Ridgeway CoB noted that the amendment is still not clear as amended.
FRIENDLY AMENDMENTS	Several friendly amendments were suggested and rejected.
DISCUSSION	Three brothers and sisters spoke.
CALL THE VOTE	Moderator Misty Wintsch called the vote. The body affirmed.
HEAD COUNT	Those in favor of the amendment as amended stood to express their vote. 78 affirmed the amendment as amended. 97 did not affirm the amendment as amended. The amendment as amended was not affirmed.
DISCUSSION OF THE MOTION	Ten brothers and sisters spoke.
CALL THE QUESTION	Moderator Misty Wintsch called the question. The body affirmed.
INSTRUCTIONS	Paper ballots were distributed. The Moderator instructed the delegates that affirming means that the paper is made official for the ANE District Board to use. To not affirm means that the issue is sent back to the District Board for reworking.
PAPER BALLOT	75 affirmed the paper. 97 did not affirm the paper. 12 delegates abstained. The motion did not pass.
CLERK’S REPORT	Friday Night Worship Service Attendance: 249 COBYS Offering: \$1456.00 Bible Study Attendance: 24 Saturday Morning Attendance: 338 Saturday Afternoon Attendance: 389 District Ministry Offering: \$1632.00 Delegates: 203 present out of 204 registered Total possible delegates: 256 Non-delegates: 173 Congregations and Fellowships: 68 present out of 62 registered Represented out of a possible: 77 (note this does not include Projects)
SLATE PRESENTATION REPORT	189 slates returned 137 affirmed 52 exceptions
MOTION TO ACCEPT	Reports were accepted as submitted by a hand vote.

ATLANTIC NORTHEAST DISTRICT CONFERENCE
Leffler Chapel, Elizabethtown College, Pennsylvania

October 6, 2018
Saturday

**CONSECRATION AND
TRANSFER OF LEADERSHIP**

Leadership was transferred to the Moderator-Elect, Mr. Brian Berkey. The theme for the 2019 conference was announced as centering on Job 29:2-3. Brian encouraged all to read Job in the coming year, about his struggles and how they were resolved.

CLOSING AND HYMN

Thanks were given to God and for the work of Joy Brubaker and Ryan Arndt in keeping the conference in the spirit of worshipful discernment. Thanks were also given to the staff, especially to Christine Dugan, District Conference Manager, who ensured that every detail was well cared for. It was reported that the Facebook page received 506 likes as of the conclusion of conference. Participants were encouraged to submit evaluation forms as important feedback for the Program and Arrangements Committee. The congregation concluded the 49th annual District Conference by singing *For Christ and the Church*.

Respectfully submitted,
D.L. Nyce, Clerk