

# Spring Assembly Celebration

Virtual Delegate Session \ \ \ April 17-19, 2020

## Minutes

The Spring Delegate Session was conducted online through a prerecorded video and electronic voting form, both of which were available to delegates April 17-19, 2020. Documents and action items were sent to delegates 30-days in advance with an invitation to send comments or questions beforehand.

Reporting from prerecorded delegate video:

1. **Welcome:** Cindy Petersheim (moderator, Conestoga) provided a welcome and reminder about the online voting form to be completed by delegates after viewing the video.
2. **Congregational realities:** Joanne Dietzel (conference minister, Ridgeview) reflected that, though we are not meeting in person, we are still the Church, scattered though it may be. We are not alone during this time and all are dearly loved by God.
3. **Staff realities:** Merv Stoltzfus (executive conference minister, Ridgeview) shared that, like congregations, ACC staff members are finding new ways to stay in touch and are adapting to working while physically separated.
4. **Youth Realities:** Dwight Rohrer (youth minister, Neffsville) shared about some of the ways that congregational youth leaders are finding ways to connect with their youth and with fellow youth leaders.
5. **Receive Fall 2019 Assembly Minutes:** Cindy invited delegates to review and receive the Fall 2019 Assembly minutes as presented by appropriately responding to the electronic voting form. Received unanimously.
6. **Year-end Finance Report:** John Bomberger (treasurer, Neffsville) shared a financial update, referencing documents made available to delegates electronically:
  - a. Year-to-date budget, March 31, 2020: John reported that income, including congregational giving, is significantly under budget, presumably as a result of uncertainty caused by COVID-19. Not reflected in this report are funds expected from the Paycheck Protection Program. Expenses are slightly under budget as staff expenses have been decreased. The total operations surplus is \$9,532 under budget.
  - b. Sale of the Reservoir Hill House of Peace, Baltimore: The sale of this building to North Baltimore Mennonite Church is recorded as a gain on sale of property. The sale income will be realized as the mortgage is paid directly to ACC, resulting in \$10,800 of income each year over 20 years.

- c. Additional comments: The finance committee hopes to match income and expenses from operations by the end of the fiscal year (June 30, 2020). Congregations were asked to continue contributing to the conference budget to help realize this goal.
  - d. Statement of Financial Position: John gave updates on the positive cash position (reserve fund of \$81,191 and the line of credit available, the decrease in the overall balance of the Congregational Leadership Fund as markets have declined, and the overall assets at \$624,903.
  - e. John invited delegates to receive the Year-to-date budget as presented by appropriately completing the electronic voting form. Received unanimously.
7. **Annual Budget Proposal, 2020-2021:** John Bomberger (treasurer, Neffsville) also presented the budget proposal. The Finance Committee drafted and the Executive Committee recommended the budget to delegates before the current level of financial uncertainty. Due to the uncertainty, the Executive Committee is now recommending that delegates approve this budget while also giving the Executive and Finance Committees authority to adjust the income and expenses as needed and to provide an update at the Fall 2020 Assembly. John invited delegates to approve the 2020-2021 Annual Budget as presented by appropriately completing the electronic voting form. Received unanimously.
8. **Proposed Bylaw Amendment:** Jon Carlson (assistant moderator, Forest Hills) shared one of 15 bylaw amendments that Executive Committee originally planned to present for delegate approval. The other 14 will be presented at the next in-person delegate gathering. The one amendment being presented for an electronic vote reads:
- a. *The Conference, from time to time, may appoint a team of individuals to investigate allegations of ministerial misconduct. Members appointed to investigate allegations of ministerial misconduct shall be volunteers of the conference. Any person who is appointed by the conference to investigate allegations of ministerial misconduct and to provide findings and make recommendations based upon an investigation shall be entitled to the same indemnification as the Conference's directors, officers and employees.*
  - b. This amendment follows recommended best practices by forming a standing team to investigate a case of alleged ministerial misconduct.
  - c. Jon invited delegates to affirm this bylaw amendment by appropriately completing the electronic voting form. Received unanimously.
9. **Nomination of 2020 ACC Leaders:** Lyndell Thiessen (Gifts Discernment Committee chair, Blossom Hill) shared an overview of the work of the Gifts Discernment Committee and invited delegates to submit nominations for open committee positions to be voted on at the Fall Assembly. Lyndell invited delegates to submit nominations by completing the appropriate spaces on the electronic response form. Open positions:
- a. Missions Committee chair
  - b. Finance and Stewardship Committee chair
  - c. Mennonite Women chair
  - d. Gifts Discernment Committee members (two needed)
10. **Brooklyn Peace Center & Church Update:** Ruth Yoder Wenger (conference minister, North Bronx) shared about the emerging church and center to be launched Summer 2020. "Brooklyn is our place, Peace is our purpose, Christ is our promise." This is the church's tagline found on its website. It is continuing to define its leadership and accountability structures and exploring how

to do peace together in their context. The Center will serve as a convener of organizations doing peace in Brooklyn. The Center will house the new church, the New York Mennonite Immigration Program, a Garifuna congregation, an MCC thrift shop, and Radical Living's Summer youth program, in addition to other community programs originating from the Center itself.

11. **Closing:** Ruth Yoder Wenger shared a closing prayer on behalf of the conference followed by a sending benediction by Merv Stoltzfus.

*Recorder, Brook Musselman*