I don’t know about you, but those anonymous quotes gleaned from this year’s General Conference evaluation form give me goose bumps! It’s easy to put too much stock in a one-week experience that we repeat only annually. But this General Conference was different! So, what was it? What’s different now as a result of our encounter that week?

It was an “Ah-ha” moment. For several years now, we have been hearing about the NEW DAY vision for the Brethren Church. We know that this vision is all about transformation, about leaders, congregations, and communities. We know that it has to do with an external focus as individuals and congregations. We know that this vision is only possible as a work of the Holy Spirit. And from all accounts God (graciously by the work of his Spirit spoken through his messenger) gave us a clear and compelling heart picture of what it might look like to see a NEW DAY in our lives, in our congregations, and in our communities.

We saw God as the Lord of the harvest! Certainly he is Lord, and we want him to be Lord of our lives and of our churches. But his heart is with his lost children. We were able to imagine what it would look like to join him in his harvest field.

We saw ourselves for what we can be. We can be transformed in our thinking and in our behavior as leaders and whole congregations. We began to see ourselves as people of blessing. We were comforted, equipped, and challenged.

We were comforted in the thought that the “ missional renaissance” of Brethren congregations will be no small task. We were equipped with solid approaches to the kind of conflict that is often encountered in congregational transformation. We were challenged to confront the change barriers in our midst and begin to move out as God’s people of blessing.

It was an experience in practically applying what we know into what we need to do. There was no vagueness in the idea of going home and adopting a local school. No question about how to ask someone how we can bless them. There was a clearer picture of the harvest that exists all around us, and how to begin working in God’s harvest field.

Will it take hold and produce fruit? Before conference had ended, some had already scheduled an initial meeting with the local school principal to see how their congregation could be a blessing. Several more of our pastors have shared praises of the tremendous response of local teachers and administrators to offers of tutoring, filled backpacks, and various levels of support—and blessing! The Good News ought to be genuinely good for those who are working alone to bring blessing into the lives of others. It ought to indeed be good news to those who are lacking some of the basics to survive and thrive in our society. We can tell our story, or we can show the love and care of One who first loved and continues to care for us. We can live out that story in practical ways that will transform lives, both in the here and now, and in the hereafter forever as well!
Shaking Off the Dust!

Tim Garner, IN District Pastor

It was the shaking that caught my attention during the opening worship service of General Conference. A five-foot fern on the back right side of the stage shook. I realized that it shook to the rhythm of the worship team’s drummer. The fern’s fronds had to be dust free by week’s end! For me, the fern symbolized my experiences during 122nd General Conference: I, too, had some dust shaken off and felt many good vibes.

The music and singing, led by Pastor Mike Woods and the Grace Community Church worship team (Winchester, VA) prepared the way for the messages from our brilliant and humorous author-speaker, Reggie McNeil. Reggie challenged us to connect with our world by being people of blessing. He offered three ways to do this. (We need not limit ourselves to just these options.)

First, be people of blessing. He illustrated it in this way: when your restaurant waiter brings your food, say, “I’m going to ask a blessing for my meal in a moment. How can I bless you?”

Second, he challenged each church to adopt a public elementary school, noting, “Every problem in our culture manifests itself first in our public school kids.” He urged us to start small. Each local church plugged into a public school can make a difference. I heard that one pastor, while still at conference, called a local school principal to set up an appointment to talk about this “adoption” relationship.

Third, McNeil suggested that we go to a public place—a park, a mall, a grocery store and observe people for an hour or so. Ask the Lord to reveal people’s needs and concerns. What can I do to bless or serve people like those I am observing? Like the drummer to the fern, Reggie launched challenging vibes and gently shook my soul.

My fronds even quivered a bit during our business sessions, which included conversation and subsequent approval of a reorganization plan for the denomination. The new organizational structure seeks to create greater flexibility and make better use of people’s giftedness and passion, a bottleneck of the previous structure. Leaders lead and doers do. Our new structure will place leaders on the Executive Board of the denomination who can establish vision and policy, evaluate our progress and guide the mission of the Brethren Church. This releases the doers to serve. Doers, rather than sitting on the leadership boards or in meetings, can implement specific ministry efforts and work in the trenches with teams of others who have similar passions. The Brethren Church has several illustrations of like-minded people serving on passion-driving ministry teams:

1. Bill Ludwig (leader) and the MissioChurch team provide an environment that allows church planters to plant with appropriate guidance, support and resources.
2. Phil Lersch (leader) and those who have joined the causes and issues related to the Brethren Peace Initiative work on a variety of peace and justice issues.
3. Mission trips this summer to India and to Peru birthed groups that desire to actively support these two Global Partners.

Reflection: Where can each church/individual find one new way to plug into its community?

With the wonderful new AU football stadium as the site, an all-conference picnic hosted by MissioChurch, Ashland University, AU Religious Life, and Ashland Seminary engaged the BYIC (Brethren Youth in Christ) Conference and the Adult Conference. The Pump House (Bruce Wilkinson) prepared all the food except for the meat. John Steiner (Smithville Brethren Church) barbecued tasty pork loin sandwiches and hot dogs. Proceeds from the meal will support church planting. Games such as Corn Hole, a punt pass and kick competition, Frisbee games, and life-sized Jenga were played on the soft green artificial turf of the football field. Whether the adults watched the youth play or joined them, the next generation of the church’s leadership is alive and well.

Reflection: I offer this prayer, “Lord, let our love for Jesus Christ conquer that which seeks to divide us along generational lines: digital technologies, music, language, fads and trends. Help us create opportunities to relate to, and to serve side-by-side with one another with openness and wonder. You have marvelously gifted each generation. We all have so much to contribute to the mission of the church. Give us eyes to see the power of unified generations of believers transforming the world through the good vibrations sent from your Holy Spirit’s drumming on our souls. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.”

Jim Miller led a life-giving interactive prayer time on Wednesday evening. An outline of the USA taped on the floor of the display room in Upper Convo covered most of that large room. Small signs located various ministries, church planters and newly certified coaches geographically across the “taped”
Reflections on General Conference 2010

The Blessing People

No Agenda. Just Serve.

It is General Conference 2010 and The Brethren Church is gathered again at our annual meeting place. I listen intently to the main speaker, along with the 250-some (?) Brethren as Reggie McNeal’s words reverberate through the chill of the room, “Be a People of Blessing in this world ….”

And though my heart and mind are fully engaged, his words cause my mind to shift for a moment to a place back home in Levittown (PA). I am at a local chain of the penny-pinching genre of food store called Aldi. I approach the line of shopping carts, and I am overcome with the deflated feeling of not having the magic 25¢ coin to insert into the shopping cart lock to set it free, in ransom for the return of that cart after I have completed my shopping experience. The sign on the window reads, “It saves us —the Aldi shopping community—money.”

Thank you, Aldi, for saving me some money. But what I really needed was a shopping cart.

I smile, and think, “Or the local Aldi building? Or the city police station?”

I am snapped back into the Conference stage just as Reggie closes with his jests, his humor preparing us for a corrective in our expectations of seeing the fruit of our Blessings labor. “We are trying to harvest an unseeded transformation at my local Aldi store. My thinking goes into overdrive with the mantra, Don’t Just Return It; Return It with the Quarter! It may take a while, years even, of leaving the quarter in the cart lock, but what if one day I arrived at the line of shopping carts and see the locks all loaded with quarters? What if a plan of serving our community with the Don’t Just Return It; Return It with the Quarter mission seeded an entire Aldi shopping community to leave a blessing for the next Aldi shopper arriving without a 25¢ coin? What if an entire community of shoppers are transformed because of this simple act of Blessing!?”

I am lured back to General Conference as we again explode in laughter at Reggie’s jests, his humor preparing us for a corrective in our expectations of seeing the fruit of our Blessings labor. “We are trying to harvest an unseeded people. We need more conversations before we see conversions … God is taking a much longer time with people’s lives. It may take a decade or more … Our short-sightedness …”

“…”

As I reflect on this year’s version of General Conference, I was refreshed and encouraged, “Spirit of the Living God, shake the dust off any of us who have sat on the shelf and been mere observers. Send us good vibrations through the Holy Spirit, so that we live as people of worship, people of blessing, people of transformative action, and people of prayer. We can only do this through the power and presence of Jesus Christ.” And all God’s people said … What will God’s people called Brethren say (and do)?

Jayne Wilcox, Pastor
Highland Park
Community Brethren Church

Update: Upon returning from General Conference 2010 to Levittown, Jayne approached the line of shopping carts at Aldi, and found a quarter in the cart lock. The local mission has taken hold.
Let me start with the fact that I am sure you have read somewhere of churches who make claims of planting a church where they go in and right away find a boatload of money, find a plot of ground or a building that is practically given to them and within a week build their core team of seasoned individuals. They immediately launch their plant and within the first six months have an attendance of over 250 people!

Well, if they make that claim all I can say to them is “good for you.” However, my suspicion would be that they are not telling you the whole story or they are stretching the truth just a bit (or a lot), or maybe a combination of the two!

I admit that this might have happened somewhere in the history of church planting, but I am pretty convinced it is not the norm. Please understand this is not meant to discourage you from church planting, but to just give you a reality check. If God has called you to this, he has put a high calling in your life. You must have the “right stuff” if God has enough confidence in you to call you to plant a church! But there are some things that you need to be made aware of as you follow this call.

I wrote in the last article about some of the issues we have faced (and are still facing) in the process of the church plant in Stockton. While several of those issues are resolved, one of the biggest issues at hand is that we are continually dealing with helping the folks who are coming here understand how to transition from the life of Buddhism to the life of Christianity. It is a whole new world to them and in all actuality a culture shock because of the great amount of difference in the two belief systems.

Your plant may not look like this, but regardless of where you plant a church you will face the same thing. I think it is safe to say that generally when you plant a church you are attempting to reach a people group who are previously unreached by the church. So as you meet with them and get to know them and their culture, bear in mind the transition you are asking them to make. It is never easy (and for some pretty scary), because you are asking them to totally expose themselves to the living God, and going from a life that pretty much ignored the true God to becoming one of his disciples can be quite daunting.

It is important to understand this because it will be one of the main issues you will face that will cause people to come and go as you make your plant. As you notice this revolving door in the initial months of your plant, I want to encourage you to persevere and not let it be a tool used by the enemy to disrupt your ministry. When you make contact with the people who leave, you may be tempted to ask them what you or the ministry did wrong. While self-evaluation is important, be very careful how you do it because as you talk with these folks you will most likely find that they have no real reason for not coming around anymore, other than that they are not interested in meeting the true God. It interferes with the way they were previously living, and that has little or nothing to do with you.

I suppose you can beat yourself up about why they do not come anymore and perhaps look to yourself and try and figure out what you did wrong, but it is my opinion that this will only serve to discourage you and quite possibly be the beginning of the end for your plant and your ministry. You must be in it to win it, and as you stay faithful to the calling God has placed in your life, he will replace those who have left with faithful brothers and sisters who share your vision to meet and impact the people in the community where God has called you to plant. And bear in mind, they most likely will not be seasoned Christians, but people who while new to the faith, are gifted by the Holy Spirit and willing to make themselves available to God!

We have watched several people come and go in this process, and at first got caught in trying to figure out what we weren’t doing. But Viseth recently told me how he came to the realization that instead of spending all of his time chasing these people down, that he would continue to invest in those who stayed and we have
found that God is now bringing people to the Cambodian church plant who are interested in serving, learning, growing and giving. This does not mean that the battle is over—not by a long shot—because now those who are involved in this church plant have just decided to start praying that God will remove the Buddhist Pagoda so that they can build a Cambodian church on the very ground on which it stands! With this vision and these saints working, I have no doubt that God is going to do something spectacular here (He is in that kind of business you know)!

So as you undertake the task of church planting, prepare yourself for a fight. Pray for the spirit of perseverance because you will need it; but you will reap the blessings of God as you stand your ground and do not second-guess or doubt what God has called you to do. James reminds us in James 1:2-8, “Consider it pure joy my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. This man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.”

So, with all that said, the question remains, are you in it to win it? You better be or I suggest you don’t even bother starting. If you expect that church planting will be neatly packaged and easy to do PLEASE rethink what you are doing. You are going up against the very enemy of God and he is not going to stand by and let you just snatch people from the fire without giving you a fight. But let me simply encourage you to be “strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go!” Somebody say AMEN!

The recession of the past two years has been devastating for many families. Jobs have been lost, incomes have decreased, and many families struggle to put food on the table. Things are no different here in Ashland County. In light of this harsh reality, we at Garber Brethren Church decided to undertake a missional ministry in order to address this need. We began to open up our doors and serve a free hot meal to the community every second and fourth Friday of the month.

Overall, response from the community has been overwhelmingly positive. On any given Friday evening, we usually serve 40 to 60 people. We have received donations from several area companies, such as WalMart, Archway, and Bob Evans for our meals, and have recently been able to partner with the Cleveland Food Bank. Even people in the community who are not involved with the church or with the meals are touched when they hear about what we’ve been doing.

But more important, this gives us the opportunity to show God’s love in a practical way to people who are hurting. Being able to come and receive a free meal can hopefully serve as a reminder to these people that God still loves them, and so do his people. Several people, after finishing their meals, have stopped to express their appreciation for our willingness to reach out to them. I remember one woman in particular, who came to me after she and her husband had finished eating, and proceeded to tell me about their situation. Both had been out of work for a long time, and things had gotten so bad that they hadn’t eaten in two days. Although they weren’t sure where their next meal would come from, they were both extremely grateful not only for the kindness they had received, but also the dignity with which they had been treated.

In Matthew 25, Jesus teaches us that whatever we have done (or not done) for the least of these among us, we have done (or not done) these things for him. At Garber Brethren Church, this is what we seek to do: serve God by serving others. We constantly seek to be renewed and transformed by the working of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and it is amazing to see the impact we have not only on those we serve, but also the impact this type of service is having on our own lives. By reaching out and serving others, our own congregation is experiencing transformation. We hope to continually experience this transformation as well as seeing it in others as we journey toward Christlikeness.
Any Size

part 2

Remember the Ain’ts? If you follow football at all, you’ll recognize this as the lovable former nickname for the New Orleans Saints (former, because they won this year’s Super Bowl. Wasn’t too awfully long ago that Saints fans wore paper bags over their heads at home games because they were so embarrassed of their team! That’s harsh! You’d almost think they were Cubs fans (okay, that was uncalled for)! Have you ever wanted to do that, to slip a bag over your head when it comes to your church?

I said last time that I’m concerned about pastors and people from smaller churches feeling relegated to the sidelines of insignificance by the “bigger-is-better” standards of our culture. The truth is that size does not need to have a bearing on passion or effectiveness. You can be a vibrant, life-transforming outpost of the kingdom at 50 or 500. God wants to take each of our churches, in its unique character, personality and community, and use us to advance his purpose. To do that, we need to buy into a renewed understanding of who we are.

We need a kingdom mindset. I need to see Oasis Community Church as part of something much larger than itself, part of the kingdom that Jesus himself has established, against which not even the gates of hell can prevail. We pound on this all the time here, that all of history is part of God’s larger story of restoration, and each of us plays a role in that story.

This leads to a missional mindset. Like Reggie McNeal says, instead of making every member a minister, we need to make every member a missionary, to see our purpose for existence in the overall purpose of God to rescue mankind. A church can be missional at any size, just as it can miss its purpose at any size. The point is not how big you are, it’s do you have a heart for those whom God loves?

We need to take steps to help us focus on that mission. I have suggestions for a starting place for you, but it’s really radical and I don’t know if you’re ready to do something this drastic, but here it is: Pray! (If I were texting that to you, I’d write PRAY!!) Find a group of people who are willing to pray about the people each of you knows who need to know and fall in love with Jesus; to pray that God would provide opportunities for you to invest in the lives of lost people; to pray that he would lead your church to one way that you could focus on his greater purpose; to pray for the rescue efforts of (gasp) other churches in your communities and around the world.

Then look for one way you can turn your vision outward, one way to support something that promotes the kingdom of God. My home church in Pennsylvania, a church of about 25 people, has given over $7000 to Oasis over the past eight years through an annual fund raising effort. They have played a vital role in the lives that have been rescued through our church. That’s a kingdom vision. I believe God delights in answering us when we ask how we can lovingly become friends of sinner in our communities.

We need to find contentment in how God is using us right now. It does no good for me to lament over how small we are (and really, no matter how big you are, there’s always someone bigger!) or to set goals for my “preferred future” that are out of our control and rarely met. I need to be content with what God has made us at this moment in time. Sounds very existental, doesn’t it? That means I may need to stop apologizing for how small we are. Or to stop bragging about it, as though we are somehow more “spiritual” than others who are larger. I find myself wanting to prepare people who want to visit for what they’ll find at Oasis. Even now I want to tell you all the reasons we’re small, the circumstances that explain our size. But that still panders to the same standard of “bigger-is-better” that we’re trying to get away from. We are what we are, and that needs to no longer be an excuse for unfruitfulness. The important thing is how we are joining with God in his purpose of rescuing our community. Whatever our size as a church, are we pursuing the God-given mission of making more and better disciples? If we are, then ultimately the results are up to him.

The next time I see you and you ask me, “How’s Oasis doing?” (and we all know that’s pastor-speak for “how many people are attending there?”), I’m going to tell you about the family church families has and is now loving, of those kids have accepted Christ as a result.

Jim Miller, Pastor
Oasis Community Church, Gilbert, Arizona
4 Post-Conference Opportunities

Realizing that the vast majority of Brethren people are not able to attend General Conference in Ashland every July and benefit first-hand from the many rewarding experiences and materials and opportunities to participate, Brethren Peace Initiative offers you the following four practical opportunities to become involved in peace-related activities and support—right there at your home base.

1. **Request a Packet of FREE Peace Literature** from our Conference display table, plus a color snapshot of the attractive backdrop we now use each year, plus a copy of our 2010 BPI Report as it appeared in the Program Book. The literature will include pages of Peace Bible verses, new words for “God Bless America,” Brethren historical peace materials, Welcome Home Project for veterans, peace quotes, and much more. It will be just like you were there (well, not quite... but close!).

   Please send your request for these materials to PhilLersch@verizon.net OR 6301 56th Avenue, N., St. Petersburg, FL 33709.

2. **Make a Donation to Brethren Peace Initiative.** As reported previously, we receive no funds from the denominational budget, but must raise our own support. Thankfully, contributions from individuals since 2008 have totaled about $1,000. Expenses for making copies, envelopes and postage, literature, bumper stickers, and shipping some supplies have reduced that balance to about $500 at the present time. Additional funds are needed to continue those expenses, plus the possibilities of sponsoring a special speaker sometime, expanding support for peace emphases on the local and district levels, and providing support for local church programs with a peace-centered emphasis. All personnel are volunteer, of course. Contributions are always greatly needed and appreciated.

   Please send your gifts, written to Brethren Peace Fund, to Stan Gentle, 524 College Avenue, Ashland, OH 44805. Thank you very much.

3. **Peace Enrichment.** Read, ponder, and share the following peace-related quotes:
   - Which of you desires life, and takes delight in prosperous days? Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking guile; turn from evil and do good; seek peace, and follow after it. (Psalm 34:12-14)
   - Hatred does not cease by hatred at any time: hatred ceases by love. This is an unalterable law. (The Dhammapada)
   - Strive for peace with all, and for that holiness without which no one can see God. (Hebrews 12:14)
   - It is certainly a greater and more wonderful work to change the minds of enemies, bringing about a change of soul, than to kill them. (St. John Chrysostom)
   - Become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. (2 Corinthians 13:11)

4. **Pray for Peace.** This suggestion is not mentioned last to minimize it in any way, but rather to emphasize the need and wisdom of carrying concluding thoughts with you the longest. When I was in a peace meeting recently, we discussed “What prayer thoughts do you have for us to think about today?” These are some which that group shared on that day: PRAY FOR
   - a positive peace message
   - elimination of injustices
   - a vision of the kingdom of peace
   - removal of the blocks to peace
   - peace in personal conflicts
   - peace in conflicts within ourselves
   - appreciation for resources
   - (God’s presence, God’s Word)
   - more compassion in the world
   - the opening of a better way

For what, and how, do you pray regularly for peace?

Thank you for visiting BPI today. Meanwhile, **Keep Peace in Mind.**

Phil Lersch, Facilitator for the Brethren Peace Leadership Team
It was a blessing to visit with missionaries who serve in the US.

Nancy Hostetler and Becky Baker from Riverside Christian School in Lost Creek, KY, were welcomed Tuesday morning. Nancy told of the challenges at RCS, even to someone questioning the accreditation of the school last winter. She said, “All they had to do was look at our students teaching in the public schools or serving in public offices!” Always there is the need for more teachers. She asked for our continued prayers during the Lord’s testing, that their faith remain strong.

Nancy has a grape vine in her house where she hangs your notes and cards. In this convenient location not only do they decorate, but they are also a constant reminder of your prayers and encouragement for the faculty, staff, and students. These are greatly appreciated by everyone at RCS.

Chris Rufener and Benjamin Frank, husbands of Leigh Ann Rufener and Shannon Frank, are co-pastors at the New Hope Church in State College, PA. We touched base with Tracy Ruggles, also a wonderful friend. And we heard from several ladies around the denomination about our friends in India. Other friends shared stories about travels to South America and others talked about the work of God in their lives. It was just a great time to give a friend a hug whom we have not seen since last Conference.

I have friends whom I see almost every day or every few days. Others have moved far away and I only keep in touch through e-mail, Facebook, Christmas cards, etc. Some friends have gone to heaven.

(Continued on page 11)
President Phyllis Roussakis opened the 122nd Conference of the Women's Missionary Society with prayer, asking God’s blessing upon us. Cheryl Schmiedt, vice president, introduced the theme and scripture of the week, “Fearfully and Wonderfully Made” based on Psalm 139:13-14. Throughout the week, Cheryl talked about color and her colored scarf coincided with her devotions. “God colored His world beautifully with each one of us.” This morning her scarf was rose color, like an early morning sunrise. She stressed our color inside is what counts, not our outside color. “We are God’s precious work of art, He doesn’t create junk,” she reminded us. We sang the theme song, “Oh, How He Loves You and Me,” and it was beautiful a capella.

In Thursday’s devotions, Cheryl talked of God’s love. Her scarf was pink and she was full of life, “in the pink” because God created us out of His love.

Again this year, Phyllis asked each society to vote on two items of business. It is much better to have the total membership choose, since we ask for total support, instead of only the delegates who attend Conference.

This year’s questions were:

(1) Should $5,000 of the WMS investment be withdrawn from the Brethren Revolving Loan Fund and given for missions? The vote was yes. The Board chose to give this amount to the Cross Bars after-school program in Mishawaka, IN. The program is entitled Life Skills for Children.

(2) Should the Legacy Fund ($3,250) be used for a day-care center in Lima, Peru, or a retreat and counseling program for church planter wives? The vote was for the day-care center in Lima where Luis and Zoraida DeMorillas serve. They want to get kids off the streets while their parents work.

Phyllis expressed her sincere appreciation to you for voting and indicating your support of the use of these funds. Forty-one out of the 56 societies responded. Thanks!

Joanne Kroft presented certificates to societies with special achievements:

**Increased Membership**

**Increased Giving**
- Berlin, Burlington, Canton, Sr., Cerro Gordo, Dutchtown, Falls City, Gratiot, Gretna, Johnstown III, Lanark-Neoma, Linwood, Loree I, St. James, Tuscon.

**Increased both Membership and Giving**

Congratulations to each society!

Cheryl Schmiedt, editor of the Devotional Guide, said the theme for the year’s meditations is also “Fearfully and Wonderfully Made.” Each meditation is to be read during your meeting. This is different! It is brief so you may take time to think and reflect on the meditation. With each meditation, Cheryl has given thought provokers which will lead to discussion stimulators.

Lynn Herendeen, general secretary, presented the statistical report. 41 societies reported with a total membership of 717. This is a decrease of 88 members. Fifteen societies met all the goals! Good for you, ladies. We pray that you are blessed as you serve others.

Phyllis thanked the ladies who served on the committees:

**Registration Committee:**
- Judith Lybarger, Janet Hoffman, Kaye Williams, OH; Pei Burns, IN.
- Registrants totaled 42 delegates, 12 officers, 8 guests.

**Auditing Committee:**
- Joy Blake and DeAnn Oburn, IN.
- They audited the books of the financial secretary and found them correct and in order.
- The treasurer’s books were audited by a CPA firm in Loudonville, OH, and were accurate and in order.

**Nominating Committee:**
- Grace Grumbling, NE; Joanne Kraft, OH. The nominee for vice president was Sherry VanDuyne, OH, and for treasurer were Grace Grumbling, NE, and Janet Rufener, OH.

Phyllis acknowledged and appreciated the district presidents and representatives:
- Northeast........ Grace Grumbling
- Ohio.................... Norma Waters
- Indiana.............. Cindy Hanson
- Central.................. Gini Peterson
- Midwest ........... Helen Arnold
- Southwest........ Iris McKinney
- N. California .......... Carolyn Bennett

The Board recommended the appointment of the following to serve in 2010-2011:

**General Secretary**
- Karen Weidenhamer

**Assistant Secretary**
- Lynn Herendeen

**Literature Secretary**
- Corky Fisher

**Devotional Guide Editor**
- Lynn Herendeen

**Newsletter Editor**
- Joan Ronk

Elected and re-elected officers are:
- President.................... Phyllis Roussakis
- Vice President........ Sherry VanDuyne
- Financial Secretary ...... Joanne Kraft
- Treasurer................... Janet Rufener

The proposed change to Article X of the WMS Constitution — Annual Reports — was approved. Please make this change in your Devotional Guide, p. 41. The date is May 31.

**SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

The WMS luncheon was Tuesday noon; as usual, a highlight! Carrying out the theme, “Fearfully and Wonderfully Made,” and the realization that God made each of us different, ala colors, the table centerpieces were an herb plant with crayons decorating the herb pot. Several colored bouncy balls were scattered on the table and pastel colored napkins added the finishing touch. Thanks to Park St. Joy for the table decorations. The menu was baked potato chip soup, beef sandwiches, and rainbow gelatin parfait. Beautiful and good!

Cheryl’s scarf was green because green is a sign of life.
She introduced Dr. Dawn Morton, a professor at ATS and director of Christian formation. She gave a dramatic reading of Psalm 139, giving new emphasis to thoughts we usually hear that are “just read.” She reminded us that we are created in His image and no other thing is created like God! Because we are wonderfully made, we should be satisfied with our spot “in the color box,” we are called to be where we are. Just as the colors of the rainbow work together, each of us needs to be thankful and accept who I am. Accept His plan for you. Do not covet nor be jealous of one another. It does not matter what color we are and she repeated, “Be satisfied with your spot in the color box.”

The project and the thank offerings were received at the luncheon. In addition to baskets for the two offerings, a large glass bowl was in the center of the head table. Cheryl explained it represented the world. As Cheryl read society names, ladies presented their offerings for Camp DeQuecito and benevolences. They also put the colored bouncy balls into the glass bowl, demonstrating that as we go into the world, we color it.

Thursday, leading into the memorial service, Cheryl directed our thoughts to God’s love. Wearing a pink scarf, she reminded us that God is love. He created us out of His love. It was love for others that led to the formation of the Woman’s Missionary Society in 1878. She lit a tall taper and, although it flickered, the light never went out. So it is with WMS. Members come and go, but the light never went out. So it is with God is love. He created us out of His love. Wearing a pink scarf, she reminded us that our thoughts to God’s love. Wearing a pink scarf, she reminded us that God is love. He created us out of His love. Wearing a pink scarf, she reminded us that our thoughts to God’s love. Wearing a pink scarf, she reminded us that God is love. He created us out of His love. Wearing a pink scarf, she reminded us that God is love. He created us out of His love. Wearing a pink scarf, she reminded us that as we go into the world, we color it.

FINANCES
Janet Rufener, treasurer, presented the budget, which the Executive Committee recommended. Copies were distributed to the members Tuesday for consideration. As always, this is a faith budget. Only the money received last year is disbursed this year.

Janet explained two line items: (1) Conference expenses are budgeted approximately $600 less, since no day-care for young children was offered this year. WMS usually paid $600 toward that cost, enabling young families with children to attend. (2) 88 fewer members means less dues and less thank offering to budget for benevolences.

Money received from dues and general receipts (interest earned from checking, savings, and investments) is budgeted toward the costs of producing the Devotional Guide, the Newsletter, and operating costs of WMS: postage, mileage, conference costs, etc. This budget was approved:

Benevolence $11,938
ATS 2,003
World/Home Missions 2,710
AU, Campus Ministry 1,200
Riverside School 1,200
Legacy Fund 3,225
AU, Scholarships 1,000
Ministerial Student Aid 600

Publications $8,015
Salaries 1,800
Devotional Guide 1,687
Newsletter 4,350
Subscribe, Sec’y Postage 40
Social Security Tax 138

Other Expenses $2,247
Conference expenses 650
Gifts 100
Postage 200
Mileage 900
Bank charges 20
Audit 100
Bonding 120
Printing 100
Phone calls 20
Hardship dues 17
Supplies 20

TOTAL $22,200

Gifts received to date for the project offering are $7,713.16 and for the thank offering are $7,633.77. If your society has funds to give, please send them to Joanne Kroft, 608 Twp. Rd. 1151, RD 5, Ashland, OH 44805.

Cheryl Schmiedt suggested a project for Todd and Tracy Ruggles, who are completing 18 years of ministry in Mexico City. It is recommended that they and their two sons, Benjamin and Johnathan (who are Mexican citizens), participate in a re-training program to help them acclimate to the US. Cheryl made the motion that each society raise funds toward the cost of this program for the Ruggles family. The motion was seconded and passed. The goal is $5,000. The deadline is January 2011. Send your gift to Joanne Kroft and designate it for the Ruggles.

Missionary Miscellany (continued)

transition. It is a new culture. She and Todd began their ministry 18 years ago — think of the changes we have! Their two sons, Benjamin and Johnathan were born in Mexico City. They have a lot to learn! Tracy gave thanks for the vision of the women and for their support in their ministry.

April McClung and her husband, Jeremy, moved to Huntsville, Ontario, 3 years ago to start a ministry where very few knew Christ. After one year of establishing friendships and living Christ in this community, they started a church. Most of their members had never gone to church, but now are happy with their new lives!

April and Jeremy have 3 children; their son is 9 and their daughters are 4 and 1. Your prayers and your cards and notes are very much appreciated.

Linda Immel spent part of the summer traveling in South America. She first visited the Quieroga family in Santiago, Chile. Mrs. Quieroga (Zulema) said so often your cards and notes arrive just when she needs them, facing a hard decision or a problem. Then someone writes, “We are praying for you!” What a blessing!

In Lima, Peru, Linda visited the DeMorilllas family. She (Zoraida) said their day-care brings families to church — first the children and then
Missionary Miscellany (continued)

the parents and grandparents.
Rebecca and Italo Abuid in Puerto Maldonado are very alone, so your cards fill their lives with encouragement. They read and re-read your notes. She asked that you continue to send cards especially to David. They are important to him.

Gary Castro and the church in the Philippines are the missionaries-of-the-month for August. Gary wrote:

“IT’s been one year and 9 months since I got back in the Philippines. My first four months were not easy. I had to relearn the context of ministry in the Philippines, had to build and rebuild relationships, and had to relearn about the community. But the good thing is that I am now more confident to do God’s ministry because of my training in Ashland Theological Seminary. I am very thankful for ATS.

Allow me to give you a glimpse of the Brethren Church congregations here in the Philippines. The name of the Brethren Church here is Jesus Our Firm Foundation Brethren Church (JOFFBCP).

JOFF Bocaue, the “Mother Church,” is a seven-year old congregation. One of the callings of Bocaue is to train people who can plant new congregations. We have seen this happen when we started Deparo and Pulilan, where Bocaue was able to provide pastors and leaders to lead these church plants. Bocaue has an average worship service attendance of 120 people, 80 are adults and 40 are children. Children’s worship service is conducted Saturday afternoon.

JOFF Deparo, our first daughter church, is 3 years old. They currently hold two worship services on Sunday—one in the morning and one in the afternoon—because of the limitation of space in their location. Their current place can accommodate a maximum of 40 persons. Deparo’s average Sunday worship attendance is 85 persons, 55 are adults and 30 are children. Children’s worship service is also held on Saturday.

May 2009, with the help of Pastor Paul (Stanley) and Carson Oaks Community Church, the Brethren Church Philippines was able to plant JOFF Pulilan through the leadership of Pastor Anthony Caluag. Pulilan has an average attendance of 52 persons, 37 adults and 15 children. Pulilan recently celebrated its first anniversary.

Some of our goals are: to preach the gospel to our community, increase our giving so we can support our ministries, train more leaders, and plant new churches.

Finally, I would like to thank the many people who helped me when I was in the U.S. Allow me to mention Grandma Doray of Carson Oaks Community Church (Stockton, CA), Grandma Grace, also from COCC, and Grandma Doray helped me get started on my first few weeks in US. I am sad to inform you, though, that Grandma Doray passed away at the age of 85. She may be gone physically, but I will never forget the things she did to me. This is a proof that women are truly a big part of God’s ministry. To all the women who helped me when I was there, thank you so much for all your help. You all had a great impact in my life. Your work is not in vain. Keep on keeping on!

In Him,
Gary Castro

The Editor’s Ending

Dear Friend,

Conference was special! It was a joy to visit with missionaries serving in the US. Their joy was evident, too, when they spoke about your notes and cards, realizing that you prayed for them! You are blessed as you pray for them and they, in turn, are blessed as they serve the Lord.

Continue praying for each missionary family and for the Ruggles, for their strength, guidance in decisions, health, courage, and encouragement, as well as for the new leaders in the Mexico City church. God has called leaders whom He is preparing to continue His ministry.

2011 Conference dates are July 13-17, Wed. to Sun. Schedule your vacation so you may come.

As you meditate and serve through WMS, remember you are “fearfully and wonderfully made.” You are a miracle!

Your friend,
Joan Rufener, WMS Treasurer

(Continued on next page...)
Six Brethren Elders Ordained

Steven Cole
Northgate Community Church
Manteca, California

Steven Cole was ordained as a Brethren Elder on May 15, 2010, at Northgate Community Church in Manteca, California. Speaker for the ordination service was Rev. Ricky Bolden, who is currently pastoring in LaGrange, Georgia, where Steve was formerly on staff with the student ministry.

Steve has been married to his wife Beth for nine years and has two children. Maggie is six years old and their foster son Patrick is 11 months. After moving to California, Steve and Beth felt God leading them to adopt a child. They hope to finalize Patrick’s adoption by the end of 2010.

Steve is 37 years old, and grew up in the panhandle of Texas and in eastern New Mexico. He attended Texas A&M for two years and transferred to Wayland Baptist University upon being called to the ministry. While working at New Community in LaGrange, Georgia Steve earned his MA in Transformational Leadership from Bethel Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota.

After eight years at New Community, God called the Cole family to Northgate. Ministry in California has been transforming for Steve and his family. He loves what God is doing in the church and prays that God will use them to impact the community and California for Christ!

Paul Cherry
Albion Brethren Church
West Salem, Ohio

A service of ordination was held for Paul Cherry on June 16, 2010. Rev. Ken Hunn, Rev. Vickie Taylor, Rev. John Swope, and Dr. Dale Stoffer participated in the service, with Dr. Arden Gilmer delivering the ordination message.

Paul Cherry was born in Norwalk, Ohio and raised in the Mansfield area. He graduated from South Central High School in 1997, Ohio Christian University in 2003, and Ashland Theological Seminary in 2007. He grew up in the church, but didn’t come to know Christ until age 17.

Paul and his wife Traci just celebrated their tenth anniversary. They have a 3½ year-old son, Theaden, and a two-month-old daughter, Evelyn.

Paul and Traci became connected with the Brethren Church after searching for a year for a denomination whose doctrine they felt was the most biblically accurate. They found the Brethren Church to hold to the truths of Scripture firm and again, despite the consequences. Paul is currently senior pastor at Albion Brethren Church in West Salem, Ohio.

Jason Barnhart
Park Street Brethren Church
Ashland, Ohio

Jason “Barney” Barnhart was ordained at Park Street Brethren Church on Sunday, July 18, 2010. Rev. Fred Miller delivered the ordination message challenging the congregation to recognize that God has a calling on each believer’s life and it’s as simple as using whatever God has gifted you with, wherever he places you. Dr. Jerry Flora did the ordination vows for Jason, and Dr. Arden Gilmer did the vows for his wife, Allison.

Jason is originally from the Mt. Olive Brethren Church in McGaheysville, VA. In 2001 he came to Ashland to attend Ashland University, where he graduated in 2004 with a Bachelor of Arts in Religion with a double minor in Psychology and Ethics. Jason then attended Ashland Theological Seminary where he graduated in June 2008 with a Master of Divinity degree. Jason is currently Associate Pastor at Park Street, having been on staff there since 2005.

He and his wife live in Ashland with their rambunctious one year old, Mliers.

Timothy Craver
Garber Brethren Church
Ashland, Ohio

Timothy Craver was ordained as a Brethren Elder on Sunday, July 18, 2010. The service was held at the Garber Brethren Church with Dr. Fred Finks preaching the ordination message.

Tim is a 2002 graduate of Bridgewater College and a 2009 graduate of Ashland Theological Seminary. He is the son of Brethren Elder Richard and Maxine Craver of the Maurertown, Virginia Brethren Church in the Southeastern District.

Diana Wyant and Tim Craver were married October 23, 2004. They have one son, Daniel, age 18 months.

Tim has served as pastor at Garber since July 2008.
**Brethren Elders continued**

**Kurt Snyder**
First Brethren Church
Roanoke, Indiana

Kurt Snyder was called to ministry with the Church of the Brethren in 1983. Following the urging of the Holy Spirit and confirmation of his gifts and call from others, Kurt served at Inwood, Virginia until 1987 and then in Roann, Indiana—where he was ordained with the Church of the Brethren—until 1999. Resigning from ministry, Kurt entered secular employment until 2008. From 2005-2008 he was part-time pastor at the Roann Brethren Church. In April 2008 the Roanoke Brethren Church (Indiana) called him into full-time pastoral ministry, where he currently serves.

An ordination service was held on July 25, 2010 at the Roanoke Church, officiated by Indiana District Pastor Tim Garner. Kurt’s close friend, Pastor Norman Replogle (West Goshen Church of the Brethren) preached the ordination message from John 2, the wedding at Cana. Kurt’s prayer is that the congregation will move with God’s Spirit to do greater things with their calling and partnership.

Following the service a carry-in meal and reception was held, where Pastor Kurt was presented with a mantle clock for his office.

**John Drexler**
First Brethren Church
Goshen, Indiana

A service of ordination for Pastor John M. Drexler was held at the Goshen First Brethren Church on Sunday, August 22, 2010. Indiana District Pastor Tim Garner officiated with the ordination message delivered by Rev. Billy Hesketh of the First Brethren Church of Milford. He used John’s love of baseball and Psalm 51 to encourage John to “have great stats”.

John Drexler is a graduate of Philadelphia College of the Bible. He pastored in Royal Center, Indiana for 15 years and then entered secular employment with Coachmen Industries until being called in 2002 as interim pastor at Goshen. He assumed the pastorate permanently in January of 2003.

John was presented with a shepherd’s staff as a symbol of his responsibility to guide and shepherd his congregation. Following the service a reception was held in the church fellowship hall.

**ATS Acquires Rare Pietist Books**

In mid-April 2010, Dr. Dale Stoffer of Ashland Theological Seminary was hosting a meeting of the Brethren Encyclopedia group when he learned of a gigantic book auction that was to be held April 27-30 in Germany.

After a rather steep learning curve, we were successful in acquiring several early Pietist books, which finally arrived in the US about two weeks before General Conference. One of the most exciting acquisitions was a set of Berleburg Bibles, a revision of Martin Luther’s original translation in eight volumes, that was published from 1726-1742.

Additional authors in this acquisition include Francke, Bengel, Spangenberg, Reitz, and Simons. All of these recent acquisitions will become a part of the ATS rare book collection housed in the vault of the Brethren Church Archives in the basement of the national offices.

To date about three-quarters of these acquisitions have been funded with above-budget gifts. If you would like to help, please contact Dale Stoffer (419-289-5985) or Jim Hollinger (574-535-4715).
Jim Thomas

Pastor James Lowell Thomas of Peru, Indiana went to be with his Lord on Thursday, August 19, 2010. After a four-year battle with ALS (“Lou Gehrig’s Disease”), he has found his eternal “Victory in Jesus”.

Jim was born January 24, 1950 in Wichita Kansas, one of eight children of Rev. Wilbur and Martha Thomas. On June 29, 1970 he married Elaine Combs. They celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary in June.

He was the proud father of Aaron (Ana) of Tampa, FL. and Amanda (Anthony Brunnemer) of Peru. Jim and Elaine have seven grandchildren. He is survived by a sister, Nancy (Glenn) Grumbling of North Carolina, his mother-in-law June Combs, and two sisters-in-law.

Jim worked as an LPN and a Peru firefighter before entering the ministry in 1980. He served as pastor at the First Brethren Churches in Falls City, Nebraska, Peru, and Loree, Indiana. In March of 1999 he started Eagles Nest Christian fellowship at the Bunker Hill Air Force Base in Peru where he served until retiring due to ALS.

A funeral service was held on August 23, with pastors Larry Baker, Diana Teusch, and Steve Fieck officiating.

Dana Hartong

Rev. Dana Paul Hartong, age 81, of Sturgis, Michigan passed away Thursday, August 12, 2010.

He was born March 25, 1929 in Uniontown, Pennsylvania. On August 29, 1948 he married Valette Eppley in Wabash, Indiana where they resided until moving to Roann, Indiana in 1955, and then to Sturgis in 1969.

After a farm accident in 1954, Dana returned to, and graduated from Manchester College with a teaching degree. He was called into the ministry in 1959 and pastored for the next 44 years, serving Center Chapel and Wabash First Brethren Church in Wabash, Indiana and Florence Church of the Brethren and New Hope Community Church in Michigan.

In 1972 he founded the Saint Joseph County Fair Youth Rally on Sunday evenings, hosting such speakers as Nicky Cruz, Rosie Greer, Tom Lester (Eb from Green Acres) and Tom Netherton. In 1982 Dana and Val founded the ministry New Hope for Broken Marriages, and co-authored a book by the same title.

Surviving are his wife, Valette; children Sue (Herman) Behrends, Beth (David) Behrends, Brad (Christine) Hartong, and Jayne (Jim) Hover; 18 grandchildren; 27 great-grandchildren; and three sisters.

Services were held on Sunday, August 15 at New Hope Community Church, Sturgis, Michigan.
In Memor y

A Tribute to Ricardo Rivero

Ricardo Rivero was born in Rosario, Argentina on May 25, 1928 of parents that had immigrated to Argentina from Spain. In 1944 an evangelistic tent was purchased by the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church through Dr. C. F. Yoder, who was serving as a missionary in Argentina. The tent was installed in an empty lot almost right across from the Riveros’ home. After a few nights of gospel preaching, Ricardo Rivero accepted the Lord as his personal Savior. His decision was not easy; his parents were strong Roman Catholics.

After the tent was gone, a property was rented just a block away. In those days, Ricardo became involved with the central church in Rosario, and active in the outreach efforts of our Brethren Church in Argentina.

In 1950 he enrolled at the Buenos Aires Bible Institute (Christian Missionary Alliance). There he met Nelly D’Angelo, who eventually became his wife. For his internship he went to pastor the church in Victoria, E.R. From there he was asked by the National Church to go and become the pastor of the Cordoba church, at which time Ricardo and Nelly were married.

A few years later he returned to finish his degree at the Bible school and became the pastor of our church in Gerli. After graduation he and Nelly were called to pastor the church in Villa Constitucion. As he was traveling on a motorcycle to do some secular work (support from the USA was not available. At that time churches were not able to pay pastors so we all had to work secularly), he was run over by the truck and lost his right leg six inches below the knee. He suffered physically and emotionally from that loss. He was able to use a prosthetic leg for all those years until his death. It was not easy with the problems of supply and delivery of the proper prosthetic leg by government socialized medical programs, and not having present-day technologies, but with God’s provision of patience and his grace, Ricardo was able to overcome most of the time. Eventually he was called to pastor the Nuñez church, where he had a good ministry.

During the years of ministry, he served the Brethren Church in Argentina in many capacities, including working with the Evangelistic Tent, serving as Adult and Youth Camps Director, and director and teacher at many Pastors’ Conferences, etc. We can say that he served the church in all capacities as needed, and many times did things that others did not want to do.

Ricardo became Argentina National Church Coordinator and served as such for many years in conjunction with being the pastor of churches like Nuñez. For years he was Chairman of the Board of Elders (Consejo de Ancianos), and also President of the National Church. These responsibilities kept him traveling away from home, family, and his local church.

For twelve years Ricardo was the editor of Testigo Fiel (The Faithful Witness), from 1970 till the end of 1982. During those years he became a prolific writer on Brethren Church doctrine and practices. Mostly for financial reasons the magazine could not be sent to a printer, so he ran it off on the old mimeograph that missionary Bob Byler brought to Argentina in the late 1940s.

In 1982 the Riveros received an invitation from the National WMS and attended General Conference. This invitation was the highlight of their lives. Pastor Rivero reported on his work as Coordinator, and Mrs. Rivero shared in the National WMS meetings. From Ashland they traveled in the Evangelistic Mobile Unit (EMU)—newly provided by the Jefferson Brethren Church—with Juan Carlos and Maria Miranda to visit the Pasadena, CA church, and then to the Tijuana, Mexico work. From there they flew to Mexico City for preaching and teaching as well.

There are many stories that can be shared about Ricardo’s zeal for the gospel. As an example, back in 1947 when he had only been a Christian for less than three years, at the time of the dedication of the Amenabar church sanctuary in Rosario, a young man and his twelve-year-old sister accepted Jesus as their personal Savior. A few days later, having become aware that Maria was eager to learn...
Sharon Heestand and Gary Diehl were commissioned for special ministry on Sunday, May 16, at the First Brethren Church of North Georgetown. Guest speaker for the event was Rev. Lynn Mercer, formerly from the North Georgetown area.

Commissioning in the Brethren Church involves a formal setting apart of a person for leadership of a particular area of ministry in the local church or beyond. The process includes a call by the congregation, examination by the district ministerial examining board, and a formal service of commissioning by the congregation. Both Heestand and Diehl were approved for commissioning by the Ohio District board in March.

Heestand was commissioned as a ministry specialist for First Brethren Church of North Georgetown. She has served as Director of Ministries for the

Rivero, continued

more about the Bible, he went to visit the family and handed her a brand new Bible. Eight years later, Maria became Mrs. Juan Carlos Miranda.

In the late 1980s, several years after joining the ranks of Social Security but not retiring, Ricardo resigned as pastor of the Nuñez church and the family moved to the city of San Fernando (about 20 miles north) where they were able to purchase a second floor apartment. This was his last earthly address until he was called to meet his Lord and Savior July 5, 2010.

He is survived by his wife Nelly; one son, Augusto; two daughters, Adriana and Patricia; and four grandchildren. Pastor José Rivero is the nephew of Pastor Ricardo Rivero.

*This biography and tribute to Pastor Ricardo Rivero was written by Dr. Juan Carlos Miranda and his wife Maria from their memories of years of friendship (since 1944), growing together in the faith at the Rosario church and later at the Bible Institute, followed by decades of ministering together both in Argentina and internationally.

A Blessing Moment?

The light turned yellow in front of him. He did the right thing, stopping at the crosswalk, even though he could have beaten the red light by accelerating through the intersection.

The tailgating woman was furious and honked her horn. She screamed in frustration as she missed her chance to get through the intersections. She dropped her cell phone and makeup on the floor.

As she was still in mid-rant, she heard a tap on her window and looked up into the face of a very serious police officer. The officer ordered her to exit her car with hands up.

He took her to the police station. She was searched, fingerprinted, photographed, and placed in a holding cell.

Diehl and his wife Nancy serve as deacons in the North Georgetown church. They have four children and four grandchildren.

Rev. Lynn Mercer’s commissioning message was entitled, “Well Done, You Good and Faithful Servants.” He is currently pastor of First Brethren Church of Pleasant Hill, Ohio. He grew up in the First Brethren Church of North Georgetown. He also served as best man in the weddings of both Heestand and Diehl and has been a lifetime friend of each.

A carry-in dinner and reception followed the service in the church fellowship hall.

After a couple of hours, a policeman approached the cell and opened the door. She was escorted back to the booking desk where the arresting officer was waiting with her personal effects.

He said, “I’m very sorry for this mistake. You see, I pulled up behind your car while you were blowing your horn, flipping off the guy in front of you and cussing a blue streak at him. I noticed the ‘What Would Jesus Do?’ bumper sticker, the ‘Choose Life’ license plate holder, the ‘Follow Me to Sunday School’ bumper sticker, and the chrome-plated Christian fish emblem on the trunk, so naturally ... I assumed you had stolen the car.”

-via email
Engage was a total blessing this summer! It was good to get out of my own comfort zone and truly worship with the future leaders of this denomination. Every night was a huge blessing and pure worship, the way it should be!

~ Paul Stanley

“Worship was awesome!”

“Bless others. Simple, doable, memorable!”

“Lots of great ideas and concepts that can be applied to my church.”
"Attending conference was such a unique experience. There was a great blend of hands on learning on about God, worship and personal time with him that it fostered spiritual growth more than anything I’ve been to before." ~ Matthew Whitney

"There is a wind blowing, and it is blowing in every corner and every tribe, every place. And we are profoundly privileged to be alive at this point—to see this new world that is coming into being." ~ Reggie McNeal
Brethren Ministry

Annual Fund

Our Annual Fund exists because so many of you have a desire to support the mission and ministries of the Brethren Church above and beyond your support to your local congregation. In these financially uncertain times, this “over and above” support is so much needed to keep our vision on track.

We believe that leaders make the difference in our local churches, and we further believe that the hope of each community is the church. That’s why we continue to work diligently at encouraging and equipping local church leaders, and then keep working to strengthen existing and plant new churches. We know that our world is being transformed as the church goes on mission locally and globally.

If you feel the same way, then we ask that you prayerfully consider a gift to the Annual Fund. Your support means so much to us here at the Brethren Church National Office, to all of us who join together in this vision, and to a needy world. Your gifts make a difference for now and for eternity! Thank you for your gift to the Annual Fund!

The Brethren Church
524 College Ave.
Ashland, OH 44805
1-877-289-1708

Yes! I’d Like to Help

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Home Church

Please complete the information above, detach this form, and mail it to the address below, or call the toll-free-number. Secure contributions may also be made online through PayPal by going to www.brethrenchurch.org/contributions. Scroll down to “Annual Fund” and follow the prompts.

Thanks for contributing to the Annual Fund.