

MINUTES OF BROTHERHOOD COUNCIL
held at
THE WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY, MARION, INDIANA
JUNE 6, 2023

The 2023 Annual Conference of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church (New Conference) was held this year at the Wesleyan University at Marion, Indiana. The weather was very pleasant as we gathered on Friday evening. There was very adequate provision for all of our lodging needs. There were talks given in the main Sanctuary on Friday evening by various brethren regarding outreach efforts that are being engaged in, to keep all informed.

The meeting began on Saturday, June 3, with preaching services at 10 am, and concluded Tuesday afternoon, June 6.

Following 3 days of worship and fellowship, the Brotherhood Council Meeting was held on Tuesday, June 6. Following is a record of that council.

Devotional Service

The Tuesday Council began at 9:00 am. A Conference Committee of 9 elders had been selected Saturday afternoon to preside over this meeting. After an inspiring opening, devotional thoughts entitled "A Passion for Glorifying God" were offered. Drawing from Psalm 27, Psalm 8:1, and other scriptures. We were asked, "What is the purpose of the Church in the world?" We were pointed to I Cor. 10:31. The purpose of the Church in the world is to bring glory to our God.

The moderator then offered appropriate introductory comments before entering into the business of the meeting.

Letter of Greeting

New Covenant District

To the brethren and sisters assembled at Annual Conference of 2023 at the Wesleyan University in Indiana, greetings.

We of the Scottville district, Michigan, send love and greetings to all. Our prayers are with you, and it is our hope that the results of this conference may be summed up for all with these words, "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us..." Acts 15:28a. This is our prayer. May the Lord bless you and keep you as you labor together in His kingdom work.

May the labors of this meeting
Be regarded as divine;
May they send both joy and greeting,
To the church in every clime.
May thy people be united
In sweet bonds of joy and love;
And may strangers be invited,
To secure a home above. (from hymn 45)

On behalf of the church at Scottville,
Minister William Mustard
Trustee Leon Nead

Letter of Greeting

Lower Twin District

The members of the Lower Twin district in Preble County, Ohio send greetings in the name of Jesus to the fellowship of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church, New Conference, assembled at the 2023 Annual Conference at the Indiana Wesleyan University, Marion, Indiana.

Our congregation has chosen to send representation from our district by way of letter in lieu of messengers this year. We send our love, support, and blessings to this assembly. It is our desire that the Holy Spirit will guide and direct the labors of this brotherhood to the glory of God, the exaltation of His son Jesus Christ, and the edification of His church. May there be a testimony of love and faithfulness from us as we go as light into this present world.

Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Signed on behalf of the church,

Ministers	Deacons
Larry Bower	Kevin Deaton
Curt Wagoner	
Dave Bower	
Clint Brubaker	
Eric Brubaker	

Letter of Greeting

Covenant Valley District

To the Brethren and Sisters of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church—New Conference assembled in conference at Indiana University in Marion, Indiana. We send greetings in the name of Jesus whom is our risen Lord and Savior.

We the members of Covenant Valley district living in the Roanoke and Rocky Mount area of Virginia have chosen to send love and support by encouragement of this letter instead of by messengers.

It is our desire that our beloved brotherhood would continue in worship, and the practice of Jesus Christ as taught in the New Testament written by His own blood.

May the time of worship and discussion for our brotherhood bring glory to God and an intense unity of purpose, practice, and worship that would further His message to a dark world. Our prayer is that each one will receive Godly wisdom in work and strength, that only can unite us as His Kingdom, for His Divine purpose and glory.

Signed on behalf of the church,

Leonard Hubbard	Byron Beckner
Daniel Wisler	Bruce Layman
Beverly Wisler	

**Suggestion to the 2023
Annual Conference**

May 28, 2023

Living Epistle Brethren

To the dear Brethren and Sisters assembled at Indiana Wesleyan University in Marion, Indiana, for the 2023 Annual Conference. We send love and greetings in the wonderful name of Jesus! We offer the following for your consideration and for the edifying of the Body of Christ.

While we all in New Conference come from broad and varied experiences in church life, our desire is that, as a People, we could step into a fresh perspective -- that we as an "extended church family" can dream together and encourage one another in practical, God-honoring ways to walk out the values we have agreed are core.

It seems it would be good for the extended brotherhood to have an open discussion where we collectively share our thoughts and longings, and hear one another's hearts regarding shared values, especially in areas of practically living out biblical principles. Would it be possible for a subcommittee to formulate some points they feel are important so that on Tuesday at council we together could have this discussion?

We have a deep desire to sow encouragement and hope as we look to the future. We have faith and confidence that with the infusion of the grace of God and the direction of the Holy Spirit, this body of believers is fully equipped to wrestle with these things and find blessing and unity in that journey.

It is a self-evident truth that the alignment of values is essential to the alignment of vision, the unification of mission, and walking together in unity with collective purpose in any group of people. May this truth impact us and future generations for the worship and glory of God.

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." Jn. 13:35

"Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." 2 Cor. 13:11

On behalf of the Living Epistle Brethren Church,

Ministers	Deacons
Galen Flory	Josh Bowman
Luke Flory	

**Response of the Messengers to the
Suggestion from Living Epistle**

In response to the letter dated May 28, 2023, from the Living Epistle Brethren, we your Messenger Body present the following:

We appreciate and endorse the spirit of this suggestion and encourage a deep walk of holiness with the Lord according to the scriptures found in 1 Peter 1:13-16 and Ephesians 4:1-6. We acknowledge that healthy communication is essential to the future of this fellowship. We also acknowledge that we will not continue to be united in practice and in living out Biblical principles unless the principles behind our practices are communicated to the next generation. We feel that the type of discussion suggested in this document would be better suited in the local congregation.

In light of this, we suggest the following:

1. That local leaders create formats where this kind of discussion can take place in a safe environment.
2. In reference to encouraging one another in core values, we emphasize the Bible as our greatest authority and recommend the current Faith and Practice document as a practical teaching resource.

A Time for Questions

After the Messenger Body Response was read, a brief time for questions was offered. No voice was taken regarding the work of the Messengers.

Brotherhood Service Committee Report

Indiana Wesleyan University, Marion, Indiana

To the Annual Conference of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church—New Conference:

The Brotherhood Service Committee wishes to commend our young people for their faithfulness to non-resistant principles taught by our Lord in every avenue of their lives.

It is still the responsibility of all young men to be registered with the Selective Service System within 30 days of their 18th birthday. Some states have automatic registration via driver's license. If in doubt or there are any questions, contact your district CO Advisor for help with the registration process.

The current balance in the Brotherhood Service Committee checking account is \$3,898.57. We feel it is necessary to make a brotherhood call for funds of \$4.00 per member.

CASP Update

A successful CASP project was held in Brevard, NC in February/March 2023, which was completely funded by your generosity. We are planning another CASP project in early 2024, the Lord willing, providing we have sufficient interest among staff and draft-age young men. We strongly encourage

our young men between 18-25 years of age to participate in a pilot project, if possible. Contact your local CO advisor should you have an interest in participating.

Thank you to all participants, donors and others for your continued support and prayers.

The current balance in the CASP fund is \$15,127.66. The committee has determined that the CASP project trailer needs to be replaced. The estimated cost is \$15,000. We encourage members to help support this project trailer purchase and the future CASP projects by sending your donations to the Brethren Charity Fund, earmarked “CASP Fund.”

Organization of the current committee is as follows:

- Foreman: Larry Bower
- Treasurer: David Benedict
- Secretary: Arlan Wolf

Please continue to pray for the continued peace of this nation and the freedom to worship and practice as we understand the scripture. We encourage each to continue to love our fellow man as Christ taught us to do.

Brotherhood Service Committee

Larry Bower David Benedict Trent Bowman
Everett Wray Arlan Wolf Dean Crawmer

Question: Will you approve this paper?

Answer: Yes.

Website Advisory Committee **Annual Report**

Greetings of grace and peace to the brothers and sisters at the 2023 Annual Conference. We your Website Advisory Committee, have continued to pursue our vision of using our website to bless users within our fellowship, and as a tool to reach out to seekers. During the past year we have continued to pursue our goal of rebuilding our website. We have been working with a designer, gathering pictures, refining our content, updating verbiage, and preparing to launch the new website this summer.

This new website will feature several changes. The homepage will present real life questions that genuine seekers typically wrestle with. The website will have an improved calendar, making it easier to add or update new events, and will have better ability to sync with your personal calendars. The sermon upload process will be streamlined, which should help make sermons available on our website more quickly after they are delivered. We are also

working on a map feature to help seekers locate our congregations and services for the upcoming weekend. In addition, it will contain a new section which provides some insight into our lifestyle, our history, and outreach. Many seekers are curious, and this section will contain explanations of how we live out basic Biblical principles, supplemented with photography to provide clearer answers to their questions. We also hope to add a church history timeline in the future.

The Advisory Committee and Webmasters consider it a wonderful opportunity and privilege to provide pertinent information to this brotherhood and to use this website as a tool to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There continues to be a great interest among seekers. Over the past year, there have been 88,733 site visits by 31,548 users from 104 countries and all 50 states. Those visits break down as follows:

Calendar feature: 104,262 pageviews
Sermons feature: 40,322 pageviews
News feature: 36,246 pageviews
About feature: 41,245 pageviews
Resources feature: 6,852 pageviews

The Advisory Committee and Webmasters encourage each congregation to keep their calendars updated. New Events or correction can be submitted on the website by anyone for approval by the Webmasters.

The Advisory Committee thanks this brotherhood for their generous financial support over the past year. To cover the cost of ongoing site maintenance and improved functionality we request funds of \$10 per member. Please send funds to Brethren Charity Fund, Inc., P.O. Box 365, Brookville, Ohio 45309.

Brother Gary Miller’s term of service expires in August, and we have chosen Brother Todd Boone as his replacement. We deeply appreciate Gary’s service and his work on this committee.

Our desire is that the brotherhood website be a blessing to our members as well as others around the world who are seeking to know more about Jesus Christ. In the past year we have received over 35 requests for spiritual guidance and information about our brotherhood. Our prayer is that this website will continue to bless our fellowship as well as seekers around the world.

The Website Advisory Committee

Question: Will you approve this paper?

Answer: Yes.

2023 Scheduling Committee Report

Greetings in the name of Jesus.

We would like to thank all those from the Central States Region and all who have assisted in many ways in hosting this conference to make it what it has been. We also would like to thank the Indiana Wesleyan University staff for their hospitality and generosity over this conference. May God in Heaven be glorified.

The Ohio Region will be hosting the 2024 Conference at Cedarville University in Cedarville, Ohio on May 24-28, 2024.

The Eastern Region has agreed to host the 2025 conference.

Your Scheduling Committee

Curtis Flora Rex Cottrell
Kenny Oyler Greg Robbins
Kent Brubaker Greg Kuns
Adam Grover

Question: Will you approve this paper?

Answer: Yes.

Conclusion

The Brotherhood Council Meeting adjourned at 12:31pm on Tuesday. It was a pleasant meeting and came to a close at a convenient time. The noon meal was ready.

After a fitting closing which included song and prayer on behalf of all, and with appropriate comments by the hosting brother in charge, we were dismissed, and left the scene with thankful hearts, grateful for the mercy that has been shown to us by our kind Heavenly Father.

In an age of increasing evil and uncertainty, we rejoice still in our God, and in the fellowship of His People. The Holy Spirit is still moving among us, uniting us, and drawing us close to Himself.

We exalt the Name of the Lord Jesus above every name that is named and renew our allegiance to Him, resolved to follow in His way.

On behalf of the Brotherhood,

Conference Committee—Wes Bauman, Darrell Boyd, Merle Flory, David Rumble, Dennis Wray, Mark Grover (moderator), Lowell Miller (secretary), Larry Bower and Galen Flory (reading clerks).