

MINUTES OF BROTHERHOOD COUNCIL

held at
INDIANA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY
on
June 7, 2016

The 2016 Annual Conference of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church (New Conference) was held this year at the Indiana Wesleyan University in Marion, Indiana. The setting was very adequate, and provided a comfortable environment for all ages. This meeting was filled with very inspiring preaching, various gatherings and meetings for the blessing of all, and spiritual fellowship with families and friends. The Meeting commenced on Saturday, June 4th, with preaching services, and came to a conclusion on Tuesday afternoon, June 7th. Following three days of worship, fellowship, and communion, the Brotherhood Council Meeting was held on Tuesday. The following is a record of that Council.

Devotional Service

The Tuesday morning council began at 9:00 am. A Conference Committee of nine elders had been previously chosen by the Messengers, to preside over this meeting. This council began with a devotional service, with thoughts taken from Hebrews 1:9, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." An expository journey was taken through that verse, with exhortation to all to be sure that before our own thoughts, we are holding Jesus uppermost, and see Him and His ways clearly. Following this devotion, the organization of the Conference Committee was announced. The Moderator then offered appropriate comments before entering into the business of this meeting.

Conference Committee Statement

On Friday, June 3rd, papers of complaint that involved elders and deacons had been given to Brotherhood elder body, and had been read in their hearing, so that those who received the papers could seek counsel. This development seemed to place a cloud over the Conference. Because of the resulting grief that was felt, the Conference Committee presented the following statement in behalf of the elder body:

Due to difficulties that have arisen from the Elders' handling of incoming papers prior to Conference, we feel to offer an explanation of the recent events relating to these difficulties.

There were papers that came to 5 brethren across the brotherhood within the last 10 days prior to this conference. These letters were dated May 16th, and were addressed to the New Conference elder body. Included was a cover letter that named the elders that these letters were sent to. These elders that received this paper had a conference call concerning this matter. They did not feel like they had the liberty to deal with this themselves. They decided to bring this to the Elders meeting that had been previously scheduled for Friday, June 3rd.

The June 3rd meeting had been appointed at the January Elders meeting so that the Elders could consider the "We Believe" paper that the church had been adjusting for final presentation. As normal procedure when brethren work together, there was a committee of 5 elders chosen by the elder body to preside over this meeting. The "We Believe" paper was adjusted some by the elder body, and completed for presentation to the Tuesday assembly.

The administration team chosen on Friday, June 3rd, after reading the papers containing charges to elders and deacons, presented them to the elder body. After reading these charges, we had a season of prayer. At this point, the elders charged in the papers did not feel they should be involved further in the meeting, and excused themselves.

We feel the pain that has resulted from this development. Though the intent of the elders that received the papers was to receive counsel from the elder body as to what to do, we feel grieved by what has now taken place.

We are very sorry that this has caused a disruptive atmosphere in the Conference setting, and we want to take ownership of our part in this.

Following the reading of this statement, opportunity was given for any voluntary comments or confessions on the part of the elders. There were several who did make comments and apologies. The Conference Committee then made the following statement, to move forward in resolving this:

These papers were addressed to the Elder Body who have read the charges. The Elders agreed on Friday that they would be willing to consider a resolution to these papers on Tuesday afternoon after this council. We plan

as elders to work together to accomplish that. The elders will discuss how or whether to report that.

Following the reading of this statement, the Assembly was asked whether it could be appropriate to place this matter into the hands of the elder body to resolve, instead of opening up this congregation's matters on the conference floor. By a show of hands, a very large majority was willing. The elder body assembled at 4:00 pm to further consider this matter.

The "We Believe" Paper for the Website

The "We Believe" paper that the church has been considering for the Website was presented. After a brief reading of the paragraphs that had been adjusted on Friday, the reading clerk read the entire document. After a time for questions, the assembly passed the Paper for placement on the Website with a very large majority. (see "We Believe" Document, attached to minutes)

The Vision Statement

The Vision Statement that the brethren have been working on was read, for the purpose of information. This statement is not finalized yet, but is a work in progress. The final vision statement will be brought back for Conference approval.

The Website Advisory Committee Report

Greetings to our brethren and sisters at the 2016 Annual Conference in the name of Jesus Christ, the eternal Word of God whom we proclaim. Since being selected at the 2015 Conference to provide counsel and spiritual oversight to the website webmasters, we have been corresponding via conference call at least once a month. The following is an overview of the Website Advisory Committee activities.

1) Overview of Advisor Activities

a) We've agreed on the following purpose statement for the website: "To provide a place on the Internet where those with an interest in this fellowship may find information relating to the activities and beliefs of the members of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church (New Conference)."

b) We have organized a method of responding to numerous inquiries and requests for contact which are received on the website. We have solicited and received commitments from several volunteers to respond to questions regarding our fellowship. Both Glen Landes and Dr. Marcus Miller have been fielding the inquiries pertaining to Brethren history. Wes Bauman, Curt Wagoner, and Denny Wray respond to doctrinal and theological questions. Leonard Meador has taken responsibility to see that operational and practical inquiries receive adequate response. Thank you, volunteers!

c) Together we have developed a general criteria for what can be posted on the website, as well as a basic pattern of approval which involves the direct activity of the webmasters and the oversight of the web advisory committee.

d) One of our ambitions has been to use this website as a platform for sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. In order for this to be a convenient, free, and reliable point of reference to those seeking the Lord and those interested in our fellowship, we felt to expand and clarify a description of what we as a group believe. This led to the formulation of a 'We Believe' document, which was sent to your districts for feedback and more recently was handed off to the responsibility of an elder committee.

2) Update of the Status of the Website

By utilizing web analytics, we can track the usage of the New Conference website. Here is some of the information we have found:

a) This website is of interest to seekers from 111 different countries around the world. For example, one of those seekers from Iceland was mentored by one of our minister volunteer brethren and plans to travel to the Modesto area this summer.

b) On the average, there are over 7,000 visits to the website per month and 19% of them are from first time users.

c) Over the last year, the site was accessed by over 17,000 unique users.

d) Many missionaries outside the United States rely on our sermon repository to listen to English speaking sermons not available in the countries where they work. There have also been local cases of individuals coming to worship services with us by way of finding locations and schedules on the website.

3) Upcoming goals and plans

a) *We are looking at a complete renovation of the website. You may have noticed that the Sermon link has not been functional for some time. There have also been numerous calendar glitches. The technical platform running the website is outdated and increasingly unserviceable by our webmasters. Thank you for your patience and communication regarding these difficulties. For these reasons we are pursuing an updated website rebuild. Currently we are working with a web site design firm and expect to be ready for launch by early 2017.*

b) *We have recently sent a request for funds, and the total amount for the rebuild project was nearly met. Thank to each one for their contribution! To cover the remaining expected costs and ongoing maintenance, we are requesting \$5.00/member. Donations should be made to the website account at the Brethren Charity Fund.*

c) *John Sink will soon be retiring from his webmaster position. We sincerely thank John for initiating and managing the website since 2009. Kevin Jamison has responded to the request for help in this position and will be integrated into the webmaster team.*

d) *Reuben Huffman is changing to a different church fellowship. We appreciate Reuben's contribution as secretary on the website advisory We have selected Vince Tye to replace Reuben subject to the approval of this conference.*

In conclusion, we solicit your support in prayer with us that this website can continue and increase as both a useful resource for God's people and an avenue of gospel announcement and hope for the lost world far and near.

*Your Website Advisory Committee,
Grant Fullmer, Chairman
Tim Deaton, Treasurer
Reuben Huffman, Secretary
Leonard Meador
Gary Miller*

This Report was approved by this Conference.

Testimony Committee Report

The Testimony Committee offered some thoughts to the Assembly regarding a proposed section in *The Testimony* entitled "A Sermon". This section will include sermons sent in by the ministry that have been reduced in size for printing. This section will be inserted as material is received. No voice was taken regarding this. This was for information and encouragement only.

Brotherhood Service Committee Report

To the Annual Conference of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church – New Conference. The Brotherhood Service Committee wishes to comment to our young people for their faithfulness to non-resistant principles taught by our Lord in every avenue of their lives.

It is still a legal requirement for all young men to register with the Selective Service System within 30 days of their 18th birthday. Registration of young women is being considered by Congress. We will continue to follow the situation.

We hope to hold a CASP project in 2017. We covet your prayers and support for this project as we plan for the future. We encourage your input and participation. There will be need for staff, and young men volunteers and funds. Thank you to all participants, donors and others for your past support and prayers. Brother Billy Boone has submitted his resignation from this committee. We thank him for his many years of service. Brother Arlan Wolf from Western Kansas was selected to serve on the committee, to represent the Western Districts, subject to brotherhood approval.

The current balance in the Brotherhood Service Committee account is

\$8,179.79

The current balance in the CASP fund is

\$5,003.24

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.

The Brother Service Committee

This report was approved by this Conference.

The Scheduling Committee Report

Greetings in Jesus' name.

Thanks be unto God and all the servants willing to host this Annual Conference, that we may worship and fellowship together. May God add his blessings.

Next year the Ohio districts will host the 2017 Conference at Cedarville University, on May 27-30, Lord willing.

The California districts have agreed to host the 2018 Conference.

The Ohio districts have again been voiced and are willing to host the 2019 Conference at Cedarville University.

We wish to extend our sincere blessings to Indiana Wesleyan University and all their staff for their facilities and services that made our worship and fellowship sweet.

In behalf of the Scheduling Committee,

Ed Sink, Secretary

The Scheduling Committee Report was approved by this Conference.

Conclusion

The 2016 Conference was concluded with brief closing comments by one of the older elders present, and with song and prayer at approx. 2:50pm. Many then lingered on the campus and enjoyed the remaining hours of the day with each other. This meeting was a testimony of God's goodness to us, and the memory of good preaching and sweet fellowship will remain long in our memories.

We praise our God for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! Truly we have a Saviour worthy of our praise! May our lives and our lips give Him glory!

In behalf of the Brotherhood,
Conference Committee -- Larry Bower, Ron Bowman, Randy Brubaker, Galen Flory, Norm Layman, Dennis Wray, Mark Grover (moderator), Lowell Miller (secretary), and Gary Peters (reading clerk)

We Believe

The Bible, in its original autographs, is the divinely inspired Word of God. It is infallible and inerrant, revealing God and His will in the Old and New Testaments. It is not the privilege of men to add to or subtract from any of its words or teachings. The New Testament is God's further and final written revelation to man. Its authority supersedes all other revelations, insights, and counsels. Ps 119:105; Mark 13:31; 2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Rev 22:18-19

We believe what the Bible says about . . .

God - There is one eternal, self-existent God who exists in the perfect oneness of the Trinity as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is perfect and glorious in all His attributes; the heavens and earth are full of His glory. Gen 1:1; Deut 4:35, 39, 6:4; Matt 28:19; 1 Tim 1:17; 1 John 5:6-7

The Father - He is the first person of the Trinity, the invisible, unbegotten Father of whom are all things. He is the source of every good and perfect gift and in Him is no variableness or shadow of turning. For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen. Rom 11:36; 1 Cor 8:6; Eph 1:3; James 1:17

The Son - Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the eternal Word of God and is equal with the Father. He became incarnate through the miraculous conception of the Holy Spirit, was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, suffered and died for the sins of all humanity, and was resurrected from the dead. Being both fully divine and fully human, His work is entirely satisfying to God and eternally sufficient for the redemption of mankind. Isa 7:14, 53:11; Luke 1:35, 24:1-7; John 1:1-3, 14; 1 Cor 15:20; Col 2:9; 1 Tim 2:5-6; Heb 1:1-3; 1 Peter 2:22-24

The Holy Spirit - He is the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, and the Breath of God. He comes to convict of sin, quicken the spiritually dead, indwell the saints and enable the believer to live a holy life. He equips His people with gifts for the work of the ministry and brings them into the image and glory of Jesus Christ. He is the earnest of our inheritance. John 14:26, 16:7-14; Ac 1:8, 2:1-40; 1 Cor 12:4-11; Eph 1:14, 4:1-16

Creation - In the beginning, by His word, God created the heaven and the earth in six literal days. He created all things for His pleasure and called it very good. He made man in His own image with a free will. Gen 1; Ex 20:11; Neh 9:6; John 1:1-10; Col 1:16-17; Rev 4:11

Man - Adam, the first man, enjoyed unbroken fellowship with God until he sinned through disobedience. By Adam's sin death came into the world. Man, as a sinner, is self-centered, darkened in heart and mind, not seeking after God, dead in sins, and unable to redeem himself. Gen 3; Ps 14:2-3; Rom 3:10-18, 23, 5:12,19; Eph 2:5

Redemption - Jesus shed His blood, died as our substitute on the cross at Calvary, and paid the ransom for sin. He was resurrected from the dead, ascended to heaven triumphant over death, and is seated at the right hand of the Father as our intercessor. He gave himself as the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God! The sinless Christ was made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Isa 53:4-6; John 3:16; 2 Cor 5:21; Col 1:20-22; Heb 7:25, 9:11-14; 1 Pet 3:18

Salvation - Salvation is by grace through faith in Christ and is freely granted by God to all who believe in Jesus, repent of their sins, and are baptized. As this gift is received, the believer is made a new creature in Christ Jesus. John 3:3-7; Rom 6:1-7, 10:9-10; 2 Cor 5:17; Eph 2:8-10

Justification - On the merits of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God forgives the sinner, counts his faith as righteousness, and receives him as His child. The forgiven sinner is completely acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Ac 13:38-39; Rom 3:24-26, 4:5-8, 5:1-2; 1 Cor 6:11; Phil 3:9

Sanctification - For His own holy purposes, God sets the believer apart. This is both a position in Christ and a progression in holiness of life for the child of God. John 17:17-19; 2 Cor 7:1; 2 Thess 2:13-14; 2 Tim 2:21; 1 Peter 1:2, 15-16

Glorification - Salvation culminates in the promise that the redeemed will be fully conformed to the image of Christ when they are ushered into the presence of God. Rom 8:17-30; 1 Cor 15:40-54; Phil 3:21; Col 3:4; 1 John 3:2-3; Rev 22:5

Believer's Baptism - Upon confession of faith in Jesus Christ and His redemptive work, the repentant sinner is commanded to be immersed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit for the remission of sins through the blood of Jesus Christ. Water baptism is the answer of a good conscience toward God and represents our death to sin, burial of the old man, and resurrection to new life. Matt 28:19; Mark 16:16; Ac 2:38, 10:44-48; Rom 6:3-6; Col 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21

The Church - The church consists of those who are born again and who continue to walk in faith and obedience to the Word of God. It is the pillar and ground of the truth, and the body of Christ, of which He is the head. While the church is both invisible and universal, yet it is clearly to be experienced and portrayed in a visible manner in a local, congregational setting. Eph 1:22-23, 2:19-22; Col 1:18; 1 Tim 3:15; 1 John 1:7

Church Leadership - Within the church, God has given specific leadership roles. Some men are called to serve as elders, ministers, or deacons, and they are expected to shepherd God's people, to care for the flock, to teach the Word, to administer ordinances, and to be examples of the believers. In all things, they are to diligently and tenderly care for the saints, as Jesus taught and lived. 1 Cor 14:29-32; Eph 4:11-16; Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4

Evangelism - Christ commanded the church to take the Gospel to the world, make disciples of all men, teach them to walk in obedience to him, and minister to the needs of all people. Ps 96:3; Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Ac 26:16-18; 2 Tim 4:5

Communion and Lord's Supper - Jesus instituted the bread and cup as emblems of His broken body and shed blood. These emblems are to be shared by congregated believers in close communion with the Lord and with each other in a time of sober reflection and joyous expression of Christ's redemptive work. The Lord's Supper, distinguished from the communion, is a common meal; yet it is to be observed within the same setting in accord with the Biblical record and early church history. Matt 26:26-28; John 13:1-30; 1 Cor 10:16-21, 11:20-26

Feet-washing - Jesus taught both by example and by commandment that feet-washing is a symbol of brotherhood, service, cleansing, and humility, and should be observed literally. John 13:3-17; 1 Tim 5:10

Holy Kiss - The holy kiss is to be practiced as an expression of Christian love and commitment among the believers, brother with brother, and sister with sister. Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Thess 5:26; 1 Peter 5:14

Headship - The head of every man is Christ and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God. Though created of equal value before God, Scripture teaches that man and woman are designed for and ordained to uniquely different roles and responsibilities. This order is to be respected and honored. In recognition and acceptance of this relationship, when praying or prophesying a man's head is to be uncovered and a woman's head is to be covered (veiled). 1 Cor 11:1-16; Eph 5:23; 1 Tim 2:11-15; 1 Peter 3:1-7

Anointing with Oil - Anointing with oil, accompanied by the prayer of faith, is honored by God in the forgiveness of sins and the healing of sickness, in accordance with His will. James 5:14-15

Marriage - Marriage is instituted by God to be the union of one man and one woman for life. According to our Lord's instruction, remarriage after divorce is forbidden if there is a living, former spouse. Believers should marry only in the Lord. Gen 2:21-24; Matt 5:31-32, 19:4-9; Mark 10:6-12; Rom 7:2-3; 1 Cor 7:39; Heb 13:4

Two Kingdoms - Earthly governments and the kingdom of heaven are separate entities ordained of God. Christ clearly taught that His kingdom is now in the hearts of believers and is to be distinguished from the kingdom of this world. Citizens of Christ's kingdom are to refrain from political involvement, living separate from the world's value system. Believers are called to obey earthly governments where their laws do not conflict with the laws of God and are to honor and pray for earthly authorities. Luke 17:21; John 17:14-16; Rom 13:1-7; 1 Tim 2:1-2; 1 Peter 2:13-17

Nonconformity - One who is conformed to Jesus Christ will be non-conformed to this world. God desires His people to live as strangers and pilgrims in this world, seeking a city not made with hands, eternal in the heaven. As such, modest lifestyles are to be reflected in the life of believers as they purpose to avoid the entanglements of worldly fashion or adornment, carnal entertainment and amusement, and the pursuit of material wealth. Rom 12:1-2; 2 Cor 6:14-7:1; 2 Tim 2:4; Heb 11:8-16; James 4:4; 1 Peter 2:11; 1 John 2:15-17

Sanctity of Life and Nonresistance - Followers of Jesus should not take part in the destruction of human life for any reason nor in any acts of retaliation. Instead, they should live in a defenseless manner, demonstrating the love of Christ toward their fellow man, and their dependence upon God. Matt 5:39-46; Luke 6:27-31; John 13:34-35, 18:36; Rom 12:17-21, 13:10; 1 Peter 2:19-23

Honesty and Non-swearing - In accordance with Jesus' teaching, his followers are to speak the truth in love, swearing not at all. Matt 5:33-37; Eph 4:15; James 5:12

Unity in Practice - Jesus has an intense desire that His church be of one accord and of one mind in Him. Out of this harmony will flow a visible demonstration to the unbelieving world of our union with Him. When questions arise regarding practical application of Biblical principle, His people are to prayerfully seek the mind of the Spirit, consider relevant Scriptures, and submit to each other in love in reaching agreement. John 13:34-35, 17:20-23; Ac 15:1-31; Rom 14:15-19, 15:5-6; 1 Cor 1:10; 2 Cor 13:11; Eph 4:1-6; Phil 1:27, 2:1-3; 1 Peter 3:8

Discipline and Restoration - When trespasses and offenses occur in the church, a patient attempt at restoration should be undertaken in accordance with Scriptural teaching. If a brother or sister remains unrepentant, the assembled church, after much forbearance, removes them from fellowship in the spirit of love. Upon a change of heart, a sincerely repentant individual is to be joyfully received back into fellowship. Matt 18:10-17; 1 Cor 5:1-13; 2 Cor 2:7-8, 6:14

Return of Jesus Christ - The glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ, when the redeemed are to be gathered to Him eternally, has been the hope of the saints in all ages. His return will be heralded with a shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, culminating with the gathering of the faithful, both dead and living. 1 Thess 4:16-17; Titus 2:13; Rev 22:20

Judgment Day - Each soul will give an account of himself to God and shall be individually judged, for it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. The righteous will be resurrected to life eternal and the unrighteous will be banished to everlasting punishment. Matt 25:46; Rom 14:11-12; Heb 9:27; Rev 20:11-15

Satan - Created upright by God in the angelic realm, Lucifer rebelled and became Satan, the adversary of God and man; as such, he is now working in the world as the prince of the power of the air. He continually attempts to thwart the plan of God, enticing and tempting man to turn from God. His judgment was secured by Christ's death and resurrection, and he will ultimately meet his eternal damnation in the lake of fire. Isa 14:12-15; Matt 4:3-11; 2 Cor 4:4; Eph 2:1-2, 6:12; Heb 2:14; 1 Peter 5:8; 1 John 3:8; Rev 12:9-10, 20:10

Eternity to Come - Anticipating an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled and never-fading, the redeemed look forward to a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. There, forever in the presence of the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb, all things will become new. Rom 8:18-23; 1 Cor 15:24-26; 1 Peter 1:3-5; 2 Peter 3:13; Rev 21-22

This brief summary of doctrine is not intended to be exhaustive or comprehensive. Rather, it is to provide a basic overview and a Biblical answer to those who ask.

(The "We Believe" Document as Approved by Conference 06-07-16)