

MINUTES OF BROTHERHOOD COUNCIL

held at
CEDARVILLE UNIVERSITY, CEDARVILLE, OHIO
on
JUNE 1, 2010

On Saturday, May 29, 2010, brethren and sisters, accompanied by many children and friends, met from across the nation to worship, fellowship and counsel together. Long to be cherished are the memories of the Spirit moving mightily in our midst – providing Bible-based messages on a variety of topics pertinent to victorious present-day living, promoting the savor of genuine Christian fellowship, and privileging more than a thousand brethren and sisters the opportunity to surround the table of the Lord for a Sunday evening communion. Hearts were filled and words would fail to adequately describe the outpoured blessing of God as the Lord Jesus was magnified by old and young alike. And in the aftermath of the meeting, the harvest of souls has been noticeable.

After a refreshing three days of worship and fellowship, a session of counsel was engaged. The following is a record of the Tuesday council.

Introduction

The meeting had been prepared for and was presided over by a Conference Committee of nine elders previously selected by the messenger body. After suitable devotions, the organization of this committee was announced, and the moderator gave instructions relative to the anticipated proceedings of the day. The concluding focus of these instructions to the brotherhood about to engage in counsel, was taken from James 3:13-18: *"Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."*

Letter of Thanks

We, the Pennsylvania members of the Eastern District, desire to express heartfelt gratitude for the

support from the servant body we have had in holding meetings, for the many visitors we have had from over the brotherhood, and for many prayers and other efforts given in our behalf. We give God the glory and pray you will be greatly blessed as we have been. We welcome one and all to worship the Lord with us.

David A. Heffley
Paul Hawbaker

Query #1 (from the Eastern District)

One of the ten points of procedure approved by all the districts for use at our Annual Conference was related to sisters giving their voice in council. We support this change but propose consideration of the following points:

- 1) We as a fellowship are committed to upholding the doctrine of God's order of headship as found in I Corinthians 11:3: *"But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God;"* and revealed further in I Corinthians 14:34-35: *"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church;"* and I Timothy 2:11-12: *"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence."*
- 2) In light of this commitment, there are some among us who sincerely question the consistency of this change and have not had opportunity to share their concerns with the body on this doctrinal issue.
- 3) If indeed this change aligns our practice more closely with the New Testament, clear scriptural explanation to that end should not be difficult and would serve to strengthen both our unity and our witness.

The following questions are presented either for direct answers or as a guideline for general counsel. In Matthew 18:17 our Savior teaches, as the final

attempt to reconcile differences, one should "tell it unto the church, but if he neglect to hear the church let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." When our Savior referred to the church in this passage did He mean to infer that consisted of brethren only?

If sisters are given the sober responsibility of discernment in matters of church fellowship in the local council, would any issue at any level be weightier than this?

How do the passages of Scripture in point #1 above relate to sisters participating in discussion and voicing?

Are there any other Scriptures that apply to sisters voicing?

May the Lord grant us direction as we seek His truth.

<i>Ministers:</i>	<i>Deacons:</i>
Leonard S. Hubbard	Larry E. Boone
Billy W. Boone	Tom Eller
James E. Bryant, Jr.	David A. Heffley
	Paul Hawbaker

Answer to Query #1:

1. According to Scripture, women are not to preach or teach the Word of God before an open church assembly. It is here that the man is ordained to preach Christ the Word with all authority, and is commanded to reprove and rebuke with all longsuffering and doctrine. The woman is not to assume this position or usurp authority over the man. 1Cor 11:3; 1Cor 14:34-35; 1Tim 2:11-12

2. In a home or similar group setting, the older women in the faith are instructed to teach the younger. The younger can share and learn from the older. The younger women are to respect the older. All are to respect the position that God has given to the man. All are to love and respect the Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, Who is the Son of God. Tit 2:3-5

3. In council meetings, either local or brotherhood, women should prefer men in all matters. They may, however, request to speak on matters that they may well be involved in such as food preparation, lodging, nursery or custodial-type duties and any other material functions or issues that become important to the church. They are at liberty to speak and give their voice along with the men on these issues.

4. In council meetings that involve doctrinal issues, the Bible is clear that the Word of God came through men, and not women. It would be safe, therefore, for women to refrain from speaking on issues that are clearly doctrinal in nature. While the value of a woman's soul is equal to a man's (in Christ there is neither male nor female), God has given man the responsibility to preach and teach the Word so that Christ's doctrine be established. Man should take the initiative to maintain this responsibility. Therefore, women need not speak on doctrinal issues. This is not meant to minimize the value of a woman's mind or opinion. She has every right to judge righteously as the brethren speak. Thus, she can give her voice with an attitude of quietness and submissiveness when the time comes for the church assembly to act on anything that concerns the whole body. This could include voicing for a servant to serve the church, or voicing the third step of Matthew 18 that a brother or sister must reconcile to the member that they have sinned against. Though women are admonished not to speak on doctrinal issues in public assembly, we believe it appropriate that they have liberty to voice. Just as they listen to brethren preach and silently order their lives accordingly, likewise might they listen to the brethren discuss and give their voice accordingly.

In summary, we believe this counsel harmonizes with Scripture, is decent and orderly and will result unto the edification of the whole assembly, both men and women working in the same body from their respective position unto the praise and glory of God.

Query #2 (from the Columbia River District)

The Northwest churches have given their approval to hold the 2011 Annual Meeting in their area. Would this brotherhood be willing to support the 2011 Annual Conference in the Northwest?

<i>Ministers:</i>	<i>Deacons:</i>
Elwin E. Young	Clint Brubaker
Ben E. Root	Bradley A. Lavy
Everett W. Wray	Aaron Young
Aaron Deaton	

Answer to Query #2:

Because of the need for advance planning, we propose that we hold our conference at Cedarville at least two more years, with the Ohio districts being voiced for consent during this discussion. This

labor would also be shared with any others who may wish to help. We propose that the labor of preaching during these conferences be considered an equal privilege and responsibility for the entire ministry, regardless of geographic location.

We do recommend supporting the conference being held by the districts in the Northwest, or other locations in the future.

As we move forward, we feel it would be good to plan for the conference locations two years in advance.

The members of the Ohio churches were voiced during the discussion on this query and were very willing to support future Conferences at Cedarville in 2011 and 2012. An additional statement was made by the brotherhood relative to ongoing contact with the staff at Cedarville University. This statement is given in the paragraph below.

The Ohio Servant Body should select a Scheduling Committee of three Ohio brethren. The responsibilities of this committee would be to:

- 1) Schedule any future Annual Conference to be held at Cedarville University.*
- 2) Work with any new Committee of Arrangements on introducing them to Cedarville University, and provide any necessary contact required in behalf of a remotely-located Committee of Arrangements.*

This committee would be sustained by one brother going off each year in which the meeting is held at Cedarville, starting with the oldest in 2011, and being replaced by a selection from the committee each year, subject to the approval of the brotherhood.

Service Committee Report

The Service Committee wishes to commend our young people for their faithfulness. We encourage our young men to demonstrate the faith and nonresistant principles taught by our Lord in every avenue of their lives.

We presented a list of three questions to the brotherhood for approval regarding the future of this committee.

The Committee was given information regarding possible public service opportunities for young men through C.A.S.P. (Conservative Anabaptist Service

Program). If pursued, the C.A.S.P. program could provide options for service opportunities in lieu of military service in the event of reinstitution of the draft. This will be given consideration in the coming year.

Currently, we know of no pending changes in the status of the draft. However, this situation could change rapidly. We strongly encourage and advise our young men to sign an adherent form at the age of 16 and a membership form when they are baptized. These forms are available from the CO Advisor in each district or area.

We continue to urge our young men to register with the Selective Service System within 30 days of their 18th birthday, as required by law.

In behalf of the Service Committee,
John Fall, Secretary

The report of the Service Committee was accepted.

The following questions were then presented to the brotherhood and were each given approval:

- 1) Does this brotherhood desire a permanent Service Committee? "Yes"
- 2) Does this brotherhood desire to retain the present makeup of the Committee? (present members: Kenneth Hopkins, Billy Boone, Larry Bower and John Fall) "Yes"
- 3) Will this brotherhood approve the addition of Brother Everett Wray? "Yes"

Letter from the Steering Committee

Under the responsibility of the New Conference Steering Committee, we have discussed ways to be open and transparent as we all work toward sharing our vision of the New Conference brotherhood.

Many of us have much respect for our past expressions of New Testament principles, and others see some opportunity for change. The congregations, of course, have liberty to send specific questions to the Annual Conference for counsel, but perhaps an open discussion would also have merit.

The Steering Committee would therefore suggest that the Conference Committee consider, at some place on the agenda of the Tuesday business meeting, an open discussion of subjects such as:

- 1) The Polity Statement
- 2) Church discipline
- 3) District autonomy and brotherhood unity
- 4) Outreach efforts

The suggestion is that this would be a time of sharing and listening to one another. Perhaps an open, kind and respectful discussion without coming to a binding conclusion would allow each to hear their brothers' heartfelt concerns and help us all to voluntarily moderate our opinions and actions to promote peace and unity. It could also be a way to bring into focus a vision for the future.

(signed) The Steering Committee

A general discussion was held on the topics suggested in this letter. Brethren spoke kindly and listened respectfully to each other as they shared concerns. No conclusions were reached, nor were they requested. An atmosphere of love and good will appeared to reign over this discussion, and many acknowledgements were offered of the blessed hand of our God directing us in these last days.

2011 Annual Conference Organization

Because the Steering Committee who had labored during the past year had concluded its efforts and had been terminated, and because it was the Steering Committee who arranged for the meeting of the messengers at the 2010 Conference, questions had arisen as to the method of organizing the messengers anticipated to gather at the 2011 Conference. A proposal had been presented for the 2010 Conference Committee to make necessary provisions for the 2011 meeting of messengers; others had expected the 2010 Conference Committee's labors would be finished at the conclusion of the 2010 Conference. A question was presented to the brotherhood (and approval was given) as to whether the labors of the 2010 Conference Committee were completed. "Yes"

Supply of Minutes

A statement was made that the minutes of this council will be made available to the brotherhood. One copy of these minutes is intended to be supplied to the presiding minister of each congregation – who, in turn, will be expected to provide the necessary additional copies needed in his district.

Conclusion

The 2010 gathering of the Old German Baptist Brethren Church – New Conference concluded at an early hour on Tuesday, June 1. Most of the brotherhood lingered on the beautiful campus of

Cedarville University for an evening meal and the final vestiges of the sweet fellowship experienced during the course of the meeting. It was a historic time, and emotions and gratitude flowed and ebbed with swells and surges as the saints of God eventually bade fond farewell to each other. It must be readily acknowledged that He brought us together, He blessed us together, and He will bind us together by His Spirit at work in the inner man. May Jesus Christ continue to be exalted in all our councils and meetings together.

In behalf of the brotherhood,
Conference Committee – Billy Boone, Darrell Boyd,
James Bryant, Roger Rapp, John Wolf, Elwin Young,
Mark Grover (moderator), Curt Wagoner (secretary)
and John Rumble (reading clerk)