

The Ministry Development Team (MDT) had another busy year as we strove to live out our calling to develop ministry within Ohio Conference. This happened in a variety of ways in the 2017-2018 year. As has become a regular MDT practice, we helped developing ministry ideas in Ohio Conference churches by awarding financial grants. This year we approved \$22,100 to these initiatives:

- Branches of Hope-Ramas de Esperanza, a Millersburg Mennonite ministry to the Hispanic community in Holmes county — \$6,000 approved with a match of up to \$2,000 additional possible
- Reading the Bible with Jesus, a weekend of scriptural study with Bryan Moyer Suderman — \$2,600 approved
- Toledo chapter for RAW Tools, a non-profit focused on peacemaking, a collaborative effort of Toledo Mennonite, Shalom Counseling and Mediation Center and others — \$4,000 approved
- Five Church marriage retreat — up to \$3,000 approved
- Wheelhouse — A Christian Bicycle Cooperative — \$6,000 approved
- *Laughter is Sacred Space* presentation in Springfield — \$500 approved

MDT also oversaw the continuation of the “Year of Mission” as it became “Gathered and Sent.” The leg work for Gathered and Sent was done by Cliff Brubaker, Alysa Short, Jacob Dodson, Jessica Schrock-Ringenberg, Paula Snyder-Belousek, Jamie Rye, Joel Shenk, Myron Weaver, Dan Hooley, Marilyn Rossiter, and Bob Sauder. These folks did an excellent job of both gathering Ohio Conference folk together as well as empowering us to be sent to our communities. A big part of their work is the planning of the pre-ACA event which last year featured Deborah and Alan Hirsch. This year Meghan Good and Marvin Lorenza will be coming to Ohio Conference for our pre-ACA missional conference. Thank you, Gathered and Sent folks, for the good work you are doing for Ohio Conference!!

Along with all of the above, MDT has provided support to our staff to make sure that there is a steady diet of engaging and supportive events for Ohio Conference constituents. This past year this took the form of a pastor-spouse retreat as well as working on planning a new pastor orientation (this event was postponed due to low sign-ups) to go along with cluster meetings and periodic all-Ohio Conference pastors’ meetings.

It has been enjoyable work that MDT has been a part of. It is exciting to bless good ideas with financial grants, it is exciting to see our conference get formed missionally, it is exciting to see relationship develop amongst Conference — and we’d be excited to have you join us. If you are passionate about any of these things, contact someone on Gifts Discernment!

Thomas Dunn, assistant moderator and MDT chair