

**Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA  
Credentialing Ministry Team  
South Union Mennonite Church, West Liberty, Ohio  
Aug. 7, 2018**

**Present:** Jacob Dodson, LaVonne Hartman (part-time), Ralph Reinford, Andy Stoner, Vickie Yoder, LaVerne Yousey, Miriam Zehr, Judy King (recorder)

1. **Devotions.** Vicki Yoder shared a devotional from Psalm 23:1, focusing on trust and discernment.
2. **Misconduct Policy Review.** Terry Shue joined the meeting to review the survey results evaluating the Ministerial Sexual Misconduct Policies and Procedures and the implementation of them in two cases in Ohio Conference.
3. **Minutes.** The minutes from the Aug. 7, 2018, meeting were approved as presented.
4. **Potential new candidates and interviews.**
  - Ralph reported that there will likely be several candidates ready for interviews at the next meeting.
  - Good Shepherd has requested ordination for Israel Aguilar, and that is in process. They have also called for a continued license for specialized ministry for Hector Velez. Hector will also be invited to meet with the Credentialing Ministry Team (CMT).
5. **Pastoral calling and Leadership Development.** Credentialing Team received a report from Ralph regarding the need for ways or opportunities for ministerial leadership development within Ohio Conference congregations. We talked about options and want to encourage growth in this area. Several ideas were discussed, including approaching the Ministry Development Team (MDT) to create a resource team. Ralph will take the request to MDT to create a resource team to help us with leadership development. It may be helpful for a member of CMT to sit on this team.

Ralph noted that we have some pastors filling the pulpit that are credentialed with other denominations. What are our expectations and stipulations for them? It is important for them to receive some Anabaptist training and to support Anabaptist theology in their teachings. It was noted that there is a denominational protocol for pastors that come from outside our denomination. (See *A Shared Understanding of Ministerial Leadership*.)

Akron Swahili Community Church. Ralph explained that there is a group of resettled Congolese Mennonites in Akron, Ohio. They first reached out to Lee Heights Community Church, who connected them with Ralph. Several members of MDT have visited their worship service and they participated in a joint worship service at Central Christian School on World Communion Sunday along with numerous Mennonite churches in the area. Ralph and Andy met with their four credentialed pastors that day who are interested in being credentialed with us. Ralph reported that there is another Congolese group in Lakewood on the west side of Cleveland that meet at Lee Heights. These groups have identified themselves as Mennonite and are looking for a place to plug in. Several CMT members expressed interest in attending a worship service in Akron. Ralph has invited them to join us at Annual Conference Assembly in March.

6. **Pastoral psychological assessments update.** Andy has received signed copies of the contract for pastoral psychological assessments from both Shalom and SpringHaven. The process will involve one four-hour block for assessments and interviews. A second appointment, several weeks later, would involve a sit-down with the counselor to go over the results of the testing. It was recommended that someone attend that appointment along with the pastor (the regional pastor, conference minister or a member of CMT).

The assessment fee of \$700 will be shared as follows: Ohio Conference – \$300; the congregation – \$200 and the pastor – \$200. Ohio Conference will pay the bill and invoice the pastor and congregation for their portion. Andy will compose a letter explaining the purpose of the assessment and outlining the process, including the breakdown for covering the cost. The letter will be sent to both the pastor and the congregational chair.

7. **Parish Paper.** Affirmation was given to renew for another year at the subscription price of \$150.
8. **Healthy Boundaries training.** Judy reviewed the list of persons that have not yet received the Healthy Boundaries training. This list includes newly licensed pastors. We will poll these pastors to see which of several date options in March or April will work best. We will notify the pastors of the training date and explain that those who do not participate in the training will not receive new ministerial identification cards when they are renewed next summer, and their credentials will be placed on probation.
9. **Next meeting.** The next meeting was scheduled for Jan. 8, 2019, with Feb 12, 2019, scheduled as a backup date in case of inclement weather.

Judy King, recorder