

**Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA
Credentialing Ministry Team
Oak Grove Mennonite, West Liberty, Ohio
July 16, 2019**

Present: Dick Barrett, Verle Brubaker, Doug King, Vickie Yoder, LaVerne Yousey, Judy King (recorder)

Absent: Miriam Zehr

1. **Devotions and reflection.** Verle shared some verses from Acts 6 and also from 1 Timothy 3:14 and reviewed the purpose of the team. The Credentialing Ministry Team is responsible to care for our pastors. The team is responsible for three areas: credentialing, education and nurture for our pastors, and to vision the future. Most recently, the majority of time has been spent on credentialing. There has been some brainstorming about nurture and the team has sponsored various educational events. The team was encouraged to keep all three areas in mind in their planning.
2. **Minutes.** The minutes from the April 30, 2019, meeting were approved as presented.
3. **Status of credentials.**
 - The status of several individuals was reviewed.
 - It was noted that further conversation about transitional pastors is needed.
 - Dick will check with Doug Luginbill to see what Central District Conference might be offering by way of Healthy Boundaries training. In addition to the few that did not take the training yet, we have several new pastors that will need the initial training prior to the offering of the second round of training.
4. **Upcoming interviews.** The list of possible upcoming interviews was reviewed.
5. **Education and nurture.**
 - Verle previously sent out a Pastoral Self Care Proposal for consideration. It is something regional pastors could go over with pastors on a regular basis. It could be introduced at pastor peer meetings or the next credentialed pastors' meeting. It is a way to support our pastors.
 - Journey program. Dick sent an email out to the Ohio Conference pastors to explain this program from AMBS (Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary). Wooster Mennonite has a person in the second year of the program. Marilyn Rossiter is also mentoring someone in the program. We have become a sponsoring conference which will give Ohio Conference participants a price break. Our cost will be \$450 per year instead of \$600 plus the cost of the retreat. It was suggested that participants should be paying part of the cost. Congregations could also contribute, and it was suggested that Ohio Conference might also contribute. It would be helpful for congregational leadership to also be aware of this opportunity. Dick will check with Stewardship Ministry about where Conference funds might come from.
6. **Vision and future.**
 - What is the future for pastoral leadership in the Conference? What should it look like?
 - It was suggested that the regional pastors could delegate some of the responsibility of the pastor peer groups since they have so many other responsibilities. Someone within the group could be responsible for finding the place to meet each time. Others could do the devotions each month. Encouraging more self-management might provide better buy-in. Pastor peer groups still need the regional pastor to be a pivotal part, but the detail work could be delegated to others.
 - We are going to have churches that look different in the future. How can we train pastors for that role? Jerusalem to Antioch – what will it look like and what kind of leadership is needed? Verle has recently discovered online training sessions from the United Methodist Church called Fresh Expressions. It provides a valuable way of looking at the church, encouraging the legacy church to broaden itself. It might be beneficial to look at this resource with pastor peer groups. How can we make it more organic, calling pastors and their gifts? Because our congregations are getting smaller, being able to pay pastors full-time will be more difficult. How do we support bi-vocational pastors? How do we stay connected to them? These are all things to be thinking about.
7. **Interviews.** Verle reviewed the process for conducting interviews and it was decided who would be asking which questions.

8. **Interview with Ramon Lianez** (associate pastor at Central Mennonite). Introductions were made, and Verle led in prayer. Cliff Brubaker, regional pastor, was present.
Ramon Lianez was approved for licensing towards ordination.
9. **Interview with Alex Dye** (associate pastor at Oak Grove Mennonite, West. Liberty). Introductions were made, and Vickie led in prayer. Regional Pastor Cliff Brubaker was present.
Alex Dye was approved for ordination.
10. **Next meeting.** The next meeting was scheduled for Sept. 24, 2019.

Judy King, recorder