

**Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA
Credentialing Ministry Team
GoToMeeting
Jan. 15, 2020**

Present: Dick Barrett, Tony Doehrmann, Doug King, Ralph Reinford, Myron Weaver, Vickie Yoder (chair), LaVerne Yousey, Miriam Zehr, Judy King (recorder)

1. **Devotions.** Vickie shared a devotional and led in prayer
2. **Introduction of New Member.** Myron Weaver gave a brief introduction of himself.
3. **Minutes.** The minutes from the Sept. 24, 2019, meeting were approved as presented.
4. **Healthy Boundaries.** Vickie spent a lot of time contacting the Ohio Conference pastors that have not yet taken the Healthy Boundaries training. Some noted that they simply had trouble making the training sessions that were scheduled. Vickie has been in touch with Jon Bohley from Springhaven who did our previous trainings. He is willing to present or co-present another training in Ohio. She will work with him to get another session scheduled. Dick reported that prior to pastors' week at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in March, training will be offered on Monday, March 2, and they will offer the training annually thereafter. The training is also available online from FaithTrust Institute at a cost of \$249 per person. This online training may be an option for anyone that cannot attend an in-person training event.

We have stated and Leadership Team has affirmed our intention to suspend the credentials of pastors that have not yet taken the mandatory Healthy Boundaries training, with the intention of reinstating the credential once the training has been completed. Vickie will send the letter of notification to the Credentialing Ministry and ministerial staff for their input before it is sent to the pastors.

5. **Mentors.** It was clarified that the Credentialing Ministry Team is responsible for making sure mentors are provided to those that are licensed, but it is the responsibility of the regional pastors to find the right person with whom to match them up.
6. **Credentialing actions.** Due to the withdrawal of Pike Mennonite Church from Ohio Conference, approval was given to withdraw the ordination credential of Darwin Hartman. Glenn Martin is a retired pastor from Smithville Mennonite. Smithville Mennonite withdrew from Ohio Conference several years ago and because of this, approval was given to withdraw Glenn's ordination credential.
7. **Pastoral Scholarships.** Dick explained that the Stewardship Ministry Team recommended to the Leadership Team that for this year, pastoral scholarships approved by the Credentialing Ministry Team would come from the earnings of the Endowment Fund. Leadership Team approved this action at their December 10, 2019, meeting. LaVerne Yousey continues to be the contact person for the scholarship policy. Although persons participating in the Journey program will also be subsidized with monies from the Endowment Fund, participation in that program does not need to be approved by the Credentialing Ministry Team. Dick Barrett has been keeping track of those participants.
8. **Pastor Peer Groups.** There was an extended discussion regarding attendance at pastor peer groups, as not all pastor peer groups have the same expectations for who may or may not attend. Some groups have retired pastors participating. Some do not. Some groups have pastors attending who are not presently active in a pastoral role. Some do not. There are no written policies or guidelines in place at the present regarding attendance. It was noted that when a pastor leaves an assignment, without a pastor peer group to connect with, it is important for that person to have a spiritual outlet or mentor to fill the void that is created. For now, the conference minister and regional pastors will meet and continue the discussion about this issue.
9. **Next meeting.** The next meeting was scheduled for April 16, 2020, at the Kidron office.
10. **Annual Conference Assembly.** Annual Conference Assembly (ACA) is scheduled for March 7, 2020, at Sharon Mennonite.

11. **Conference minister report.** Dick shared the following:
- A progress report listing those pastors needing to schedule the psychological assessments, which pastors have completed the assessment and the review, and which pastors have completed the process and have been ordained.
 - Lynn Miller and Dick have been in contact with Dee Custar who is retiring from Salem, Waldron, at the end of the month. She reported that there are still some hard feelings towards Conference about how the misconduct case was handled. The situation at Salem is much better, but there is still some pain. Lynn is planning to attend this Sunday to represent Conference, to offer an apology and to show that we are standing with them as they walk through a pastoral transition. Dick and Lynn have worked on a prepared statement from Conference which Dick shared. Affirmation was expressed for the statement.
 - A couple of congregations are looking for an interim or transitional pastor. Because the pool of available persons is small, there was a question about using persons in that role that are not credentialed in Ohio Conference or even within our denomination. There was hesitation to approve persons that are not credentialed within our denomination, but looking at persons from other area conferences was affirmed.
 - Dick, Judy and Vickie will work on the list of pastors in new ministerial assignments who will need to be introduced at ACA.
 - Walter Campbell will be starting at Sharon Mennonite in the role of associate pastor on Feb. 1, 2020.
12. **Closing.** Vickie closed the meeting with prayer.

Judy King, recorder