

**Ohio Conference of Mennonite Church USA  
Credentialing Ministry Team  
GoToMeeting  
Oct. 14, 2020**

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

1. **Welcome/prayer.** Vickie opened the meeting with prayer.
2. **Minutes.** The minutes of the Aug. 6, 2020, meeting were approved as presented.
3. **Reid Short's credential status.** Reid Short was the pastor at Emmanuel Mennonite Church until the church closed its doors at the end of December 2019. He would like to change his credential status from Active Without Charge to Retired. This change was affirmed.
4. **Parish Paper.** Credentialing Ministry has paid for the Conference subscription to *The Parish Paper* for a number of years. It is distributed with *Perspective*. A poll was taken recently to determine if it was being utilized. A few persons download each issue, depending on the topic, but the poll indicated that there was not strong support to continue to pay for the subscription. The decision was made to not renew our subscription to *The Parish Paper*.
5. **Interview procedures.** Interview procedures were reviewed, and question topics were assigned.
6. **Transitioning Into Ministry program.** Dick explained that Terry Shue helped develop a Transitioning Into Ministry program for the denomination for pastors in their first and second years of ministry. It is no longer offered by the denomination, but Terry has offered to create it for Ohio Conference pastors. It is a two-year program. We currently have several pastors that could take advantage of the program. The total cost is \$500 per person and Leadership Team approved Ohio Conference covering one third of the cost of the program for each participant.
7. **Interview with Wendell Slagell** (pastor at Huber Mennonite). Andy Stoner and Tony Doehrmann joined the meeting for the interview. Introductions were made, and Vickie led in prayer.  
**Wendell was approved for ordination.** Tony led in a prayer of affirmation and blessing.
8. **Interview with Nathanael Hofstetter Ressler** (pastor at Maple Grove Mennonite, Hartville). Ralph Reinford joined the meeting for the interviews.  
**Nathanael was affirmed for licensing towards ordination.** Vickie explained that Ralph will find a mentor to work with Nathanael. LaVerne explained about the pastoral scholarships that are available. Ralph led a prayer of blessing and affirmation.
9. **Interview with Patrick and Christine Nafziger** (interim co-pastors at Summit Mennonite). Patrick and Christine were former pastors at Millersburg Mennonite Church, but have been inactive for the last several years. This was an introductory interview to re-activate their ordination credentials.  
**Patrick and Christine Nafziger were affirmed to re-activate their ordination credentials.**
10. **Length of the licensing period.** At some point in the recent past, the decision was made to make the licensing period anywhere from two to five years. Dick reported that this has caused some significant issues. In some cases MLIs must be updated because of the time lapse. Mentors often drop off after the initial two-year period. Additionally, the importance of ordination loses its meaning for some when it is stretched out for so long. **The following recommendation was affirmed: The licensing period will be planned for two years and may be extended, if necessary.**
11. **Misconduct complaints.** Dick reported that the denominational misconduct guidelines do not provide guidance about how to make public the news of misconduct. With the last two cases, we made it public by reporting it in *Ohio Mennonite Evangel*. For this most recent case, it has been posted on our website, and it

will also appear in the next issue of *Evangel*. There are groups waiting for this kind of information so that it can be added to their website lists. One such group is the Mennonite Abuse Prevention List (MAP List). It was suggested that a written policy would be helpful going forward. Dick will work on writing a policy statement.

12. **Next meeting:** The next meeting was scheduled for Jan. 6, 2021, at 9 a.m. via Zoom.

Judy King recorder