

Report of the Bishop Committee presentation at the 1997 Spring Ministers Meeting Arthur, Illinois.

Our chairman Bennie Byler received a death message and was called home.

1. Perry gave a report on the questionnaire returns seeking direction for the future of the committee work. He further reported having had some contact with various ministers and bishops relating to the committee work.
2. Had some discussion whether to continue the committee effort. A strong support was confirmed to continue.
3. After some open discussion the majority favored to start rotating committee members, replacing one each year.
4. A ballot was prepared to determine how the present members should terminate and a new member chosen.
5. Dannie Diemer and Howard Kuhns counted the votes.
 - Eugene Eichers term would expire this year.
 - Leonard Overholt in one year.
 - John Mast in two years.
 - Bennie Byler in three years.
 - Perry Troyer in four years.
6. Six brethren were then chosen by ballot to form a slate and voted on by the ministerial body. The six brethren were: Ernest Hochstetler, Ivan Beachy, Henry Hershberger, Eli Kauffman, Jonas J.E. Miller, Elmer Gingerich.
7. Ernest Hochstetler was elected for a five year term.
8. Decision was made by the ministerial body that out going members would not be eligible for reelection for two years.
9. Committee would work on the job description by Spring 1998.
10. This committee would not replace the traditional practice of a three member Bishop Committee chosen by churches when assistance or counsel is needed.
11. William McGrath
 - a. We gave an expression of appreciation and support for the work of the evaluation panel, and that we would not be interested in reentering with a full scale investigation. Although recognition could be given to areas of concern surfacing that was not covered by the panel.
 - b. Brother Williams moral conduct seems to be in question and we gave expression of concern, and any assistance given would be in a redemptive spirit.

Specific mention was made that we are not interested in sweeping any wrong or sin under the carpet, but at the same time we need to be careful to not exaggerate or place false accusation against a brother. Mention was also made that we are not authorized to take any measure of action on this matter. There was no further discussion on this issue.

Your servant,

(Gregory)