

Beachy Amish Ministers' Business Meeting Minutes

March 25-27, 2008

Arthur, IL

Wednesday, March 26, 2008

Moderator: Menno Kuhns

2:15 Introduction Of the newly ordained

The following 21 newly ordained brethren introduced themselves giving their office, date, and place of ordination:

1. Marlin Yoder, ordained to the office of minister at Bastrop, TX on Dec 16, 2007.
2. Lee Nisly, ordained to the office of bishop at Cedar Crest Amish Mennonite, in Hutchinson, KS in Oct 2007.
3. Kenneth Kanagy, ordained to the office of minister at Calvary Fellowship Mennonite in Blackville, SC in Mar 2007.
4. John Beiler, ordained to the office of minister at Light of Hope Christian Fellowship in Wythville, VA on Dec 16, 2007.
5. Anthony Miller, ordained to the office of minister in at Dayspring Christian Fellowship in Taylorsville, NC in Oct 2007.
6. Nate Yoder, ordained to the office of minister at Haven Fellowship in Plain City, OH in Mar 2007.
7. Roger Hostetler, ordained to the office of minister at Canaan Fellowship in Plain City, OH in Sept 2007.
8. Dave Stoltzfoos, ordained to the office of bishop at Weavertown Amish Mennonite in Bird-In-Hand, PA in Nov 2007.
9. Merlin Beachy, ordained to the office of minister at Mountain View Mennonite, in Salisbury, PA, in Oct 2007.
10. Jonathon Overholt, ordained to the office of minister in Franklin Mennonite Church, in Franklin, KY, in April, 2007
11. Norman Yoder, ordained to the office of minister at Pilgrim Fellowship, in Nottawa, MI in 2007.
12. Joel Gingerich, ordained to the office of minister at Christian Fellowship in Minerva, OH in Oct 2007.
13. Jay Mark Miller, ordained to the office of minister at Faith & Light Christian Fellowship in Leesburg, OH in Oct 2007.
14. Stan Nisly, ordained to the office of minister at Cornerstone Mennonite in Oswego, KS in June 2007.
15. Ben Stoltzfus, ordained to the office of bishop at Pequea Amish Mennonite in Narvon, PA in 2007.
16. Jonathon Raber, ordained to the office of minister at Antrim Mennonite in Freeport, OH in May 2007.
17. Marion Miller, ordained to the office of minister at at Antrim Mennonite in Freeport, OH in May 2007.
18. Leon Troyer, ordained to the office of minister at Still Waters Mennonite in Georgetown, OH in May 2007.
19. Elmer Glick, ordained to the office of bishop at Slanesville Community Mennonite in Slanesville, WV in Jun 2007.
20. Alan Byler, ordained to the office of minister at Melita Fellowship in Utica, OH in May, 2005.
21. Laverne Miller, ordained to the office of minister at Rosewood Fellowship at Shipshewana, IN on Dec 2, 2007.

Beachy Amish Ministers' Business Meeting Minutes

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2:37 MIC Presentation - by Marvin Weirich

Expressed appreciation to the congregations for support. Signup sheet on display table to receive MIC Prayer Support and Missionary letter. Newsletter is also available via email, upon request.

1. Faith Mission Report - by Paul Beiler

Discussed ongoing change required by aging Faith Mission resident population. Over the years the ministry of Faith Mission Home has undergone change and added programs to accommodate disabled residents as they age. In response to this need, Redbud Manor operates as an assisted living facility for an older group. Staffing challenges have led to changes at Redbud Manor, contributing to current staff needs for seven single staff sisters by end of May 2008, as well as a married couple.

2. Believer's Fellowship Report - by Darrel Nisly

Gave overview of ministry among First Nations people of Northwestern Ontario. Among current challenges and blessings, God has provided an extra-large lot in the right part of town to replace existing housing which was sold. Current worker needs are few but urgent; need a married man for school principal. Also couple to assist at Red Lake; housing would accommodate a smaller family or semi-retired couple. Believers Fellowship is planning to celebrate 50 years of ministry in summer of 2008. Calling on former workers to participate and attend. Reaching a 50 year milestone causes us to not only reflect upon the past, but look ahead to the future. Expressed goal of learning to become an organization of prayer. Expressed appreciation for financial support and prayer.

3. Ireland Report - by Edward Yoder

Greetings from Dunmore East congregation in Ireland. Services are becoming multi-national, with some attendees from Eastern Europe. School has been a ministry outreach to children from broken homes. Dan Yoder's work with Choice Books is progressing. Non-Catholic Bibles are offered for sale in Waterford for first time. The mission is exploring the possibility of establishing a Boy's Camp in Ireland. Wes and Karen Sensenig, a couple formerly associated with Bald Eagle Wilderness Boy's Camp is now living in Ireland to pursue this goal. They hope to begin by September 2008 with two boys in a day camp, then eventually build to a residential camp as government regulations permit. The mission is also planning a possible family camp in fall 2008. On a personal note, Lois (Mrs. Edward Yoder) has been touched by the Great Physician and healed of her illness. Expressed appreciation for prayers during this time of illness and uncertainty.

4. Hillcrest Home Report - by Ken Nisly

Discussed staff needs; Hillcrest is seeing a trend toward a shorter terms of service, from 3-6 months. Asked if ministers would encourage longer terms to volunteers from their churches. Extreme commitment required to serve aged people. Explained the current "culture change" in nursing home operations, which requires some operational changes affecting facility and staff. Observation: Hillcrest residents desire relationships with the v.s.'ers, and also v.s. youth express desire for relationships with parents and church leaders. Let us rise to the challenge.

3:06 Nominations for Bishop Committee - by Menno Kuhns (Moderator)

Current Bishop Committee is John U Lapp, Tim Miller, Roman B. Mullet, Raymond King, and Joseph Peachey. Joseph Peachey's term expires in 2008, and by policy an outgoing member is ineligible for reelection for a period of two years. Nominations were taken by ballot to develop a slate of three candidates to be voted upon at the business session tomorrow.

Beachy Amish Ministers' Business Meeting Minutes

March 25-27, 2008

Arthur, IL

3:07 AMA Presentation – by Earl Peachey

1. Board member election

Vernon Miller's board member term expires in 2008, and he requests to not stand for reelection. Cast ballots for new board member to replace Vernon Miller from slate of Philip Beachy, Bennie Byler and Virgil Kanagy. Philip Beachy was elected by ballot vote of the ministers present to a four year term.

2. Financial Report – by Ivan Beachy

Due to accountant's schedule, 2007 Financial Report will be available in July 2008. If you want a report before the 2009 Ministers meeting, please contact Ivan by email and a copy will be sent. After a decline in funds through the year, AMA did end 2008 with a balance of \$263,000 in the general account, so the savings account remained untouched. Savings of \$100,000 actually covers less than one month operations. Total 2007 receipts were \$2,100,000. \$280,000 (12%) was spent on programs in Belize, \$309,000 (14%) was spent on programs in El Salvador, \$184,000 (8%) was spent on programs in Paraguay, and \$1,097,000 (50%) was spent on programs in Kenya. The other 7% of expenditures is comprised of various programs, some simply pass-through. As donations seem to drift down, the board of AMA is open to instruction in how to respond to lower levels of support.

3. Recruiter's Report - by Vernon Miller for Ray Stutzman

Expressed appreciation for workers supplied by congregations. Confident God will provide human resources for all our mission endeavors. Current needs are school teachers, maintenance men, social workers, etc.; positions that can be filled by mature singles. Couples are needed for various needs in Belize, El Salvador, and Paraguay. Especially several short term "fill-ins are needed to bridge staffing gaps and furloughs.

4. General Missions Report – by Earl Peachey

Reported on ordination in El Salvador. Potential bishop ordination upcoming in fall 2008 in Cayo, Belize. Kenyan churches have been impacted by tribal clashes related to the disputed Kenyan presidential election. Not aware of any injuries to church members, but some have undergone threats and property loss. With current ordinations there are now ten ordained Kenyan brethren. Unmet opportunities for growth and expansion in Kenya continue. Noted that the enemy of our souls makes progress against the church when our attention is turned from needs in our mission programs to tensions within our own churches at home.

3:30 Calvary Bible School Presentation - by Aaron Lapp, Jr.

1. Board member election - by Aaron Lapp, Jr.

Paul A Miller has served for two years completing a five year term to which Gary Raber was elected in 2003. This term is expires in 2008. Chairman Aaron Lapp, Jr. proposed to waive developing a slate of nominees and conducting a board member election this year, and appoint Paul A Miller to a five year term, expiring in 2013. Unanimous approval by floor vote of ministers present.

2. Principal's Report - by Floyd Stoltzfus

In general, 2008 Calvary Bible School went smoothly, with Spiritual fruit exhibited in lives of students. The addition of a new staff position of Dean of Students has contributed positively to working relationships among staff, students and teachers. Reported the following attendance:

Term 1 - 79 students, with 133 on campus including staff and faculty

Term 2 - 108 students, with 137 on campus including staff and faculty

Term 3 - 60 students registered for the 6 week term.

Beachy Amish Ministers' Business Meeting Minutes

March 25-27, 2008

Arthur, IL

Related Artem Skvortsov's testimony of restoration in Term 1. Related other unusual incidents which took place this year, through which God has provided and protected. Expressed the blessing of groups of students fasting for current needs and concerns in our churches.

3. Financial Report by Tim Stoltzfus

Opening balance	\$ 21,559	As of April 1, 2007
Total receipts	\$168,508	
Total Expenditures	\$163,293	
Ending balance	\$ 26,774	As of March 26, 2008

Noted that \$66,000 of receipts are from donations and offerings and \$63,000 of receipts are student tuition. CBS spent \$19,000 for LP gas and \$15,000 for groceries. Average cost per meal is between .50 and .60. This reflects the generous food donations from churches. Also noted that 2008 building projects will require funding this year.

4. General Report – by Aaron Lapp, Jr.

2008 projects include: Septic system problems continue. Flooding in boy's dorm will require remedial action to repair damages, plus preventative measures need to be taken. Roof on main building has been repaired but continually leaked over the years, and leaked more than ever during heavy rains this year. Have concluded a new roof is needed. Seeking volunteers (10 or more) for re-roofing project during fourth week of April, 2008. Contact Robert Byler from Mountain View, AR if able to help at 870-668-3074. Building materials and funds are needed to cover these expenses.

3:50 Peace & Service Committee Presentation - by Elmer Miller

Explained the Conservative Anabaptist Service Program (CASP). The Beachy Amish portion of this program is currently in operation starting Mar 24th in New Orleans. Expressed that poor solicitation led to not enough volunteers initially, but eventually the Beachy Amish program started with sixteen Alternative Service Workers (ASW's). Prayers and funds are needed. Projected expenses were \$15,000, but it is now apparent actual expenses will be approximately \$20,000. Current operations are being funded by a line-of-credit. ASW's are unpaid volunteers, but their travel expenses are reimbursed at .20 @ mile. Staff includes Dan B Miller as coordinator, and Perry Beachy family as house parents. Other staff is Eli J and Verna Miller and Rachel Raber. Staff are paid nominal allowances. ASW's are from Virginia, Pennsylvania, Arkansas, Iowa, Indiana, Tennessee, and Ohio.

Explained that several years ago Bishop Tim Miller was added to the Peace and Service Committee to eventually replace David L. Miller on this committee. Raymond King's term on this committee expires in 2008. Proposed that Tim Miller be appointed to serve a 3 year term to replace Raymond King. Approved by floor vote.

1. General Report – by David L. Miller

The Selective Service office was contacted prior to this meeting, with no new developments to report this year. Noted that CASP is designed so each Anabaptist church group can provide their own administration while on project. On a positive note, CASP has encouraged inter-church relationships as we cooperate in this service program. Observed that CLP distributes a church directory which lists "in-between" groups of approximately 37,000 members. These are groups which are "in-between" the mainstream Mennonite and Old Order Amish churches. Approximately 25% of these in-between members are listed as Beachy-Amish. Also observed that positive changes are taking place among Amish churches as shown by literature distribution, etc.

Beachy Amish Ministers' Business Meeting Minutes

March 25-27, 2008

Arthur, IL

4:07 **Shepherds' Institute Report – by Chester Weaver**
Introduced Shepherd's Institute purpose and program. Many pastors feel ill-equipped to address the needs of their congregations. Role of Shepherd's Institute is to provide a week of concentrated study and training in pastoral responsibilities. Three primary areas of focus are preaching, pastoring, and theology. 2008 institute will be held in Berlin, OH area. Courses for 2008 include two theological and one pastoring. Evening sessions are open services and will include Anabaptist History and Theology in 2008. Brochures not completed at this time. Contact Chester Weaver for brochures and further information at 817-866-3692.

4:14 **Book Promotion – by Simon Schrock, Elmer Glick, and David L. Miller**

4.3 **Announcements and Adjournment**

Thursday, March 27, 2008

Moderator: Willis Bontrager

2:30 **Bishop Committee Presentation – by John U. Lapp**

1. Election to Bishop Committee

Slate of candidates from yesterday's business session is Philip Miller and Monroe Gingerich. Philip Miller was elected by ballot vote to a five year term to replace Joseph Peachey on the Bishop Committee.

2. Leadership Failure statement

Several years ago the Bishop Committee was requested to address how our churches should respond in cases of leadership failure. At the 2006 Ministers Meeting a first draft was presented of a Leadership Failure Statement. The Bishop Committee now presents an updated proposal with minor changes further defining Articles IV and V of the Leadership Failure Statement. (see document) The Leadership Statement with updates was affirmed by unanimous floor vote of the ministerial body which was present at this meeting.

3. Special Report – by David Yoder

This past year a committee comprised of David Yoder, David L. Miller, Glenn Yoder and Daniel Bontrager were invited by the Pleasant View congregation to assist in resolving difficulties among the ministry and congregation. The initial difficulty was related to determining the appropriate measure of discipline which should be exercised with an erring member. In time the tension spread beyond the immediate issue to ultimate dysfunction among the ministers and congregation. The investigative committee found within the congregation a nucleus of brethren eager to see their congregation move forward in brotherhood and unity. A large measure of reconciliation was achieved, though it is with regret that not all of the ministerial team nor congregation are in fellowship at Pleasant View at this time. Brethren Howard Kuhns and Willis Bontrager gave testimony to the report, after which John U Lapp prayed a blessing upon these brethren and the Pleasant View congregation.

4. General Report – by John U Lapp

Noted need for Biblical counseling among our churches. While we observe generally good counseling methods used in the counseling centers among us, we must be aware of some unbiblical methodology.

Beachy Amish Ministers' Business Meeting Minutes

March 25-27, 2008

Arthur, IL

Posed the question, "Is an ordination charge valid for lifetime when the person changes affiliation or doctrinal beliefs which differ widely from his pre-ordination position?" It is important for church leader to exercise great care in giving ordination charges. Encouraged the constituency to keep others informed when a ministering brother is under discipline in his home congregation to avoid false reports and awkward situations which may arise under these circumstances.

3:08 **Calvary Publications Presentation – by Elmer Glick**

1. **Election of Board Member**

Present board of Calvary Publications is Glenn Yoder, Ralph Miller, Enos Stutzman, Nathan Yoder, Elmer Glick and David L. Miller. Enos Stutzman's term expires in 2008. In view of Enos Stutzman's office of corporate secretary and statutory agent in the state of Ohio, the board of Calvary Publications proposes that Enos Stutzman be appointed to another five term. Unanimous approval by floor vote of ministers present at this meeting.

2. **Presentation**

Last year Calvary Publications reported a \$6,000 decline in donations. A funds appeal was made in the Calvary Messenger in 2007 and churches responded with double the donations of the previous year. Circulation currently stands at 4700 per month. Reported on various books and tracts currently available or in production. Affirmed editor Paul L. Miller and Circulation Manager Mark Beachy in their respective roles with Calvary Messenger. David L. Miller has declined to serve a five year term, and so has been appointed as a board member on a year-by-year basis.

3:15 **Conservative Anabaptist School Board Institute Report – by Elmer Glick**

The CASBI operates under the oversight of the Calvary Publications board which is responsible to the Beachy Amish ministerial body. The School Board Institute was held at Maranatha Fellowship in Holmes County, OH., on Feb 29 – Mar 1, 2008, with attendance from many states and Mennonite Church communities. Would be open to invitations to host this institute with an interest in moving around to other geographical areas. Committee members are Daniel Lapp, Nathan Yoder, Elmer Glick and Jonas Sauder. If you are not on the mailing list of either the Conservative Mennonite Teachers Institute or Conservative Anabaptist School Board Institute, please sign up at Elmer Glick's CLP book stand. Christian education is an important part of our ministry, and we must encourage excellence in school administration.

3:22 **Youth Fellowship Meetings Committee Report – by Donald Miller**

Present committee Titus Wagler, Luke Stutzman, Donald Miller, Simon Bender and Verlynn Yoder. Titus Wagler's term expires in 2008. Cast ballots for new committee member from slate of William Miller, Manfred McGrath, and Wayne Nisly. Wayne Nisly was elected to a five term, representing the South East district. 2008 Youth Fellowship Meetings are scheduled from July 25-27, 2008 in the following communities:

North East District	Valley View Amish Mennonite, Belleville, PA
North Central District	Melita Christian Fellowship, Utica, OH
North West District	Believer's Fellowship Mennonite, Grove City, MN
South West District	Cedar Crest Amish Mennonite, Hutchinson, KS
South East District	Calvary Fellowship Mennonite, Blackville, SC

Encouraged that crossover among districts be minimized.

Beachy Amish Ministers' Business Meeting Minutes

March 25-27, 2008

Arthur, IL

- 3:27 **Penn Valley Christian Retreat Report – by David S. King**
PVCR is operated by a seven member board, elected by congregational vote. Members of the board are Alvin Beachy – Chairman, David Beachy – Vice-chairman, Reuben Yoder – Sec-Tres, Andy Hostetler, Paul Ray Miller, Paul Beachy, and Mel Stoltzfus. The present PVCR pastoral committee is , David S. King, Homer Zook, and Elmer Schrock., serving three year terms. There are no term expirations in 2008. The role of the pastoral committee is to ensure that the teaching of PVCR remains Scriptural and is accountable to the larger ministerial body.
Due to donations and church offerings, PVCR is operating in the black at this time. Presented a number of staff needs. The annual board and planning meeting is to still to be scheduled for 2009; attendance is encouraged. Gave update on renovation project being planned. Estimated cost is 150,000. A building fund has been established; presently waiting on permits and sufficient funding. Hoping to utilize volunteer labor for this building project, commencing sometime in August 2008. Please contact PVCR if interested in volunteering labor or providing funds. Covet prayer support for this ministry. In recent years there is growing attendance from non-Beachy church groups from within the Anabaptist family. As of now, fund raising requests are directed to our constituency rather than the general mailing list of PVCR. Gave free attendance for a seminar of choice to two ministers who have not yet attended PVCR.
- 3:35 **Master's International Ministries Report – by Nathan Yoder**
Reported what the Word of God is doing in a country where a few decades ago a Communist regime repressed Christianity and persecuted Christians. Three congregations established in Ukraine. Kiev Evangelical Mennonite Church – staffed by David and Ruth Miller, Berezyaka Church - staffed by Lloyd and Betty Troyer, and Chernovtzi Church – staffed by Bruce and Ruth Ann Jantzi. See great openness and hunger for truth; invitations to “come establish a church in our village”. Purchased land in village of Gordeske to establish a fourth congregation as staff and resources allow. Ministries include children's ministries, and winter seed team for evangelization. Newsletter is available; stop at table in back to ensure your churches are on the mailing list. Weekly missionary diaries are available via email. Contact Nathan Yoder to schedule a Missions Awareness program at your church to learn more about Masters International Ministries. MIM has need for human and financial resources.
- 3:41 **Faith Builders Report – by Dave King**
Serving as “grandparents” for the coming school year. FB serves the Anabaptist community in training youth and church leaders in discipleship. Engaged in the development of personnel for needs such as are presented by our missions here at the ministers meetings. Explained TAP (Teachers Apprenticing Program) and MAP (Missions Apprenticing Program). Explained that 38 FB courses have been evaluated and are college level courses that can be transferred for college credits. Also numerous short term programs are offered. Financial support is needed. Pick up newsletters and/or sign up to receive them regularly. David Yoder gave a report of his two week attendance at FB this year. 75% of students were Beachy Amish; only one other minister present. These classes provided a greater understanding of Anabaptism. To fully understand Anabaptism one must go beyond reading accounts of suffering to develop an Anabaptist world view. Gave challenge that we must study Anabaptism and teach our youth a clearly defined Anabaptist world view. There is a battle today against authentic Anabaptist Biblicism.

Beachy Amish Ministers' Business Meeting Minutes

March 25-27, 2008

Arthur, IL

- 3:54 **MCC Representative – by Roy Jimenez, Plainfield, IL**
Extend greetings on behalf of MCC. Read Matt 25:41-46. Gave overview of some current MCC projects in Somalia.
- 4:00 **Ministers Meeting Coordinator – by Willis Bontrager for Paul A. Miller**
We have been invited to Sunnyside Mennonite in Sarasota, FL, for the 2009 Ministers Meetings. They are scheduled from March 24-26, 2009. We would be open for an invitation to host the 2010 meetings in your community. Please contact Paul A Miller if your community would be willing to host us. Phone number and email address is listed in the ministerial directory.
- 4:02 **Choice Books Report – by Simon Schrock**
Gave overview of the start of the vision to take Christian books into the public marketplace. Related how in Nov 22, 1968, the first ten titles were placed on a rack in the National Airport in Washington D.C. Explained the growth of the Inspirational category in the secular book stores. Today there are eight Choice Books distributors in USA. Over 5 million books sold per year by the whole Choice Books organization. More than 3,300,000 books were distributed by Choices Books – Northern Virginia and Choice Books – Kansas, two organizations under Beachy Amish direction. Christian literature is an effective way to promote the gospel of Jesus Christ. Related current operational challenges both practical and spiritual. Chart of staff needs available is available. Presented need for funds for the Ernest Witmer family who has vision to establish an Anabaptist witness in Los Angeles as they work for Choice Books in greater LA. Brochure is available at Choice Books table.
- 4:19 **Misc. Follow-up and announcements – by Willis Bontrager**
1. Mountain View nursing has urgent need for single staff fellows
 2. Minerva, OH is in need a school teachers
 3. Reported that 48 people from 5 states listened to the preaching last evening on the call-in line.
 4. Reported that Neil Beachy fell as he was departing the meeting last evening and is currently Hospitalized. Please pray for his recovery.
- 4:22 **Meeting Adjourned**
1. Dismissal for Supper Break with prayer by Ernest Hochstetler