



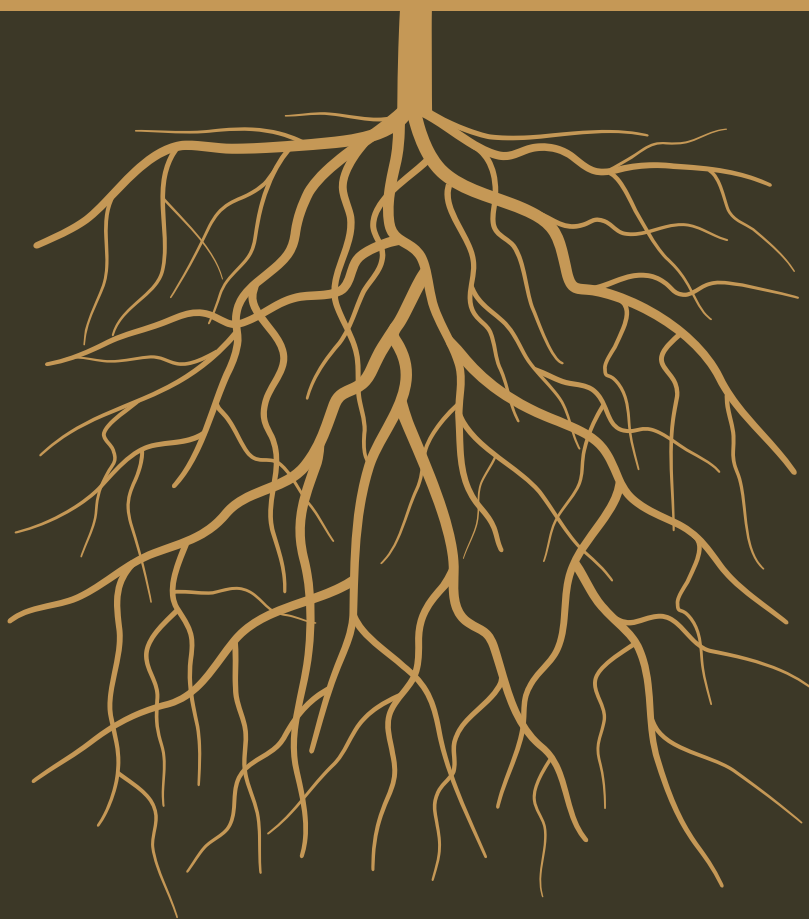
Brethren in Christ U.S.

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2020

# ROOTED READY

INSPIRED BY THE PAST • POSITIONED FOR THE FUTURE



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MINUTES

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2020

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ROOTED READY

INSPIRED BY THE PAST • POSITIONED FOR THE FUTURE

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# Welcome

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Brothers and sisters,

Welcome to the 126th General Assembly (formerly General Conference) of the Brethren in Christ U.S.

Over two hundred and forty years ago, a small group of people started a new religious society that blended their understanding of the Church and the Christian life learned from their Anabaptist heritage and their experience of the new birth encountered in revivalistic pietism. Since those early days, our dominant self-understanding and language has been that of family — brothers and sisters who are committed to one another as we seek to know, love, and follow Jesus. Over the years, General Assembly was a wonderful time for the family to gather for worship, fellowship, teaching, and preaching, and to conduct the business items of the Church. It is therefore with great sadness and regret that, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact across the country, this General Assembly will break the tradition of gathering together physically and will, instead, be an electronic gathering of the family.

Planning the first electronic/online General Assembly has certainly been interesting. How do you replace or substitute the various aspects of an assembly that so many people enjoyed and appreciated? While we have done our best, there simply is no adequate replacement for being together. In spite of the shortcomings of this online format, it is my hope and prayer that each of us will experience something positive and encouraging about what God has been doing in and through our denominational family. I also pray that we will be challenged and motivated by what we believe God is calling us to be and to do in the coming years.

Please remain prayerful for our “gathering.” Pray that God will be honored and glorified in all that occurs.

Alan Robinson  
*National Director*

AROBINSON@BICUS.ORG

*All dollar amounts listed in this Agenda are assumed to be in U.S. dollars unless otherwise noted. Unless otherwise noted, all financial statements presented in this Agenda reflected audited results and are presented with years ending December 31.*

# **Part 1:**

## **Conference Opening**

## A. Call to Order and Welcome

National Director Alan Robinson called the 126th (24th biennial) General Assembly of the Brethren in Christ U.S. to order and welcomed participants. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not possible for General Assembly to take place in Salina, Kansas as originally planned. Alan explained the event would be facilitated by himself and Cathy Musser, chair of the General Conference Board. He also stated that modifications to the usual schedule were made to accommodate the online format. He expressed thanks to The Meeting House (TMH), a Brethren in Christ congregation in Carlisle, PA, for providing the technology and personnel needed to host the event online.

## B. Worship

General Assembly began with a time of music led by The Meeting House worship team. This was followed by preaching from John 4 which was brought by Heather Beaty, a Susquehanna Regional Conference minister.

## C. Recognition of Guests

The following individuals registered for General Assembly as guests and/or representatives from other ministries:

Michelle Armster, *Mennonite Central Committee U.S., Central States*  
Stephen Badiger, *BIC West India*  
David Barreras, *BIC Guatemala, Ministerios Rios de Dios Guatemala*  
Mynor Barrios, *BIC Guatemala, Iglesia Morada de Jehova Guatemala*  
Sarah Brooks, *Pacific Conference, Pacific Christian Center*  
Vladymir Bucaro, *BIC Guatemala, Iglesia la Gracia Guatemala*  
J. Ron Byler, *Mennonite Central Committee U.S.*  
Kelvin Estrella, *BIC Dominican Republic, Jehova Jereh Dominican Republic*  
Eddy Gutierrez, *BIC Venezuela*  
Rosiris Hamburger, *BIC Colombia*  
Gerald Hildebrand, *Mennonite World Conference*  
Kenneth Hoke, *BIC Historical Society*  
Omar Morales, *BIC Guatemala, Ministerios Rama de Olivo Guatemala*  
Milka Osoria, *BIC Dominican Republic, Jehova Jereh Dominican Republic*  
Pauline Peifer, *Awaken Network*  
Marleni Portela, *BIC Guatemala, Ministerios Mahanaim Amatitlán Guatemala*  
Otto Rodriguez, *BIC Guatemala, Ministerios Mahanaim Amatitlán Guatemala*  
Cesar Ruiz, *BIC Guatemala, Ministerios Ciudad de Refugios Guatemala*  
Curtis Stutzman, *Messiah Lifeways*  
Pedro Taveras, *BIC Dominican Republic, Manantial de Vida Dominican Republic*  
Mercedes Velez, *BIC Dominican Republic, Bethel (Tasajera) Dominican Republic*  
Darrell Winger, *BIC Canada*

## **D. Memorial Service**

A video presentation honored those who have served as BIC U.S. ministers and passed away since the 2018 General Assembly. Ryan Brown, representing the Commission on Ministry and Doctrine (CMD), introduced the presentation and concluded the time with prayer.

Wilbur Benner

Curtis Bryant

Verna Mae Climenhaga

Jesse Dourte

Eugene Heidler

Glenn Hensel

William Hoke

Joe Laher

J. Robert Lehman

James Leshner

David Musser

Sarah Oldham

Dale Singer

Edward (Ted) Slattery

Michael Stine

Geoff Twigg

Esther Book Ulery

# Part 2:

## Brethren in Christ U.S. Reports

The ministry of the Brethren in Christ U.S. (BIC U.S.) is multifaceted. The most fundamental and critical facets of BIC U.S. are the ministries of local congregations across the United States and the ministries of missionaries and mission locations around the world. BIC U.S., sometimes called “the denomination,” exists as a support to congregations, pastors, and missionaries. We believe that life and ministry are better together than carried out in isolation. Together, we are a better reflection of the community of faith. Together, we find support and accountability. Together, we can accomplish more than any one of us can accomplish alone.

The following reports focus on the denominational activity of the BIC U.S. during 2018 and 2019. Each of these reports focuses on part or parts of our multifaceted oneness. They are presented separately for the purposes of clarity and focus, but they must be understood as a holistic unity that, together, provide a picture of our ministry.



## A. General Conference Board Report

Every biennium has its own unique challenges and joys. These past two years have followed this pattern. We began this biennium with the excitement of the success of the Honor the Past: Build the Future campaign. As we experienced the joy of that success, we also began to deal with the reality of decreased Common Ministry giving. General Conference Board (GCB) has worked with the Finance Committee to address these concerns. We appreciate the work of the Finance Committee and Mitch Martin to reduce spending and work creatively to keep us on track with our limited finances. Thanks goes to Julie Stout for her work serving as chair to the Finance Committee. This committee includes Mitch Martin, Julie Stout, Kevin Noll, Daryl Musser, Dave Witmer, and Nick Hankins. We are also greatly appreciative of the support of the BIC Foundation, as they made a significant gift to common ministry this year. We end the biennium in the midst of a global pandemic, which has significantly affected the way we operate at the local level as well as on a national level.

We spent much time the past two years to continue to work on Manual of Doctrine and Government (MDG) updates. We are extremely grateful for Adam Forry's leadership guiding the Governance Committee through this process. This work can be very tedious at times, but we believe that it is very necessary to give us the tools we need to move forward as a church.

We continue to be a part of conversations with Alan Robinson and Leadership Council concerning policy and doctrinal issues. We appreciate the wisdom from our national director and Leadership Council as we process these difficult issues. We also appreciate the work that CMD (Commission on Ministry and Doctrine) has done to help process these weighty issues.

One of the responsibilities that GCB takes very seriously is the oversight of the national director. When we moved to one national leader, we created a new job description in an effort to combine two jobs into one. As Alan began his second term, we realized that it was appropriate to revisit the job description, now that we had a number of years of experience with the new structure. Emerson Leshner led us as we reviewed and updated the national director job description and evaluation tool. He was a valuable resource to us on this important project. We also spent time with Alan in goal setting for the next biennium. We are grateful for Alan's thoughtful leadership as we continue to walk through new challenges. His wisdom and servant heart have been a great asset in these difficult times.

One of the highlights of the past two years was taking our Leadership Council and GCB meeting to Southern California in February. We had a great time getting out of Mechanicsburg and getting to see first-hand what is happening in the Pacific Conference. During the course of our meetings, we had a taco dinner with the Pacific Conference pastors and leadership. It was a great night of fellowship as well as an opportunity to hear directly what is happening at the ministries and institutions in the conference. The directors of Pacific Lifeline, Pacific Community Center, Upland Manor, and Mile High Pines all shared with the group what God is doing in their ministries. Board members were hosted by local families, which was another way that we were able to connect with local members. It also helped to make the trip more financially feasible. It was a good connection with the conference. We

had very good feedback from board members as well as local pastors and leadership. It is my hope to continue to move our February meeting to a different conference every two years, if finances permit.

One of the greatest challenges we have faced, not only as a church, but as a country has been the COVID-19 pandemic. This has necessitated a lot of change at the local, regional, and national levels. One significant change will be the need to have General Assembly livestreamed rather than gather together in one place. Our legal counsel confirmed that our bylaws allow for meeting in this way. Due to this change, we will focus on only essential business this year and push the non-essential business to 2022. We moved a good portion of the MDG revisions to 2022, so that we will be able to have better discussion time for questions.

We, as a board, take our responsibilities very seriously and continue to pray for wisdom for us as we represent you during the biennium. We also continue to pray for our leadership, congregations, and national director. We believe that God has exciting things in store for the BIC in this next biennium.

It is my honor and privilege to serve on the General Conference Board along with Rachel Diaz, David Espinosa, Sherri Flohr, Adam Forry, Ron Kramer, Tom Law, Emerson Leshner, Kevin Noll, Jeff Piepho, and Julie Stout. We are a bit smaller in number at this time. Carlos Alfaro tendered his resignation, due to his local commitments. We also mourn the loss of Gary Lebo as he went home to be with the Lord this past year. The perspectives of both Carlos and Gary are greatly missed around the table, but we believe that God will bring us the right people to serve in their place.

Cathy Musser  
*Chair, General Conference Board*

BIC@BICUS.ORG

## B. National Director's Report

It continues to be a privilege for me to serve in the role of national director of BIC U.S.

As in past years, this report focuses on the aspects of the ministry of BIC U.S. that are undertaken by the denominational office in Mechanicsburg, PA. However, the primary ministry of BIC U.S. is undertaken in the local contexts of congregations across the country and mission locations around the world. The denominational office exists to guide, direct, and support the ministry in all these local contexts.

There are many other reports that are part of the 2020 General Assembly. Each report focuses on one area or topic of our ministry. They include reports from our seven Regional Conferences, World Missions, the Commission on Ministry and Doctrine, the General Conference Board, and financial reports. All of these reports illustrate some of the breadth of what we do together—our Common Ministry. I am indebted and deeply grateful to all of the persons who work so hard in the ministries these reports represent. However, these reports do not detail the ministry of our congregations across the country and the missions and missionaries around the world. It is in these very local contexts that lives are transformed. I give thanks to God for each one and for the significant ministry that is done in each and every situation.

In addition to the typical reports that are part of our General Assembly agenda, we also have a special report—Project 250. This report is a summary distillation of the feedback received from across BIC U.S. as we asked pastors, missionaries, and congregational leaders to prayerfully reflect on what we believe God might be calling us to prioritize in the years leading up to our denominational 250th birthday in 2028. Many pages of detailed responses were received. Leadership Council (LC) spent many hours reading and reflecting on the feedback and looked for common themes. LC prayerfully selected the themes they felt should guide our structure, efforts, activity, and resource allocation for these next eight years. *Thank you* to each person who participated in this communal process of seeking God's direction. I pray that all this work will bear much fruit in the coming years.

Please refer to the report on Project 250.

The 2020 General Assembly is unique in that it is the first time all our business will be done in an online format. The decision to not meet in person was difficult because we deeply value the wonderful fellowship we enjoy when we come together. However, the global Covid-19 pandemic forced this move to an online format. We deeply regret that we are not present in Salina, Kansas for our Assembly. Our brothers and sisters in Salina had been working so hard to prepare for the event. However, I am glad for the decision that our next General Assembly, to be held in 2022, will be hosted in Kansas.

### General Conference Board

The General Conference Board (GCB) provides governance for BIC U.S. Members of GCB are nominated from across the church and are asked to provide oversight to the entire denomination in the U.S.

We were deeply saddened by the death of Gary Lebo, GCB member from the Susquehanna Conference. Gary was a godly man whose life deeply impacted many people. He was an

excellent GCB member and is greatly missed. Bishop Bob Beaty and the Susquehanna Conference BOD are working to nominate a replacement.

Several other GCB members will also transition from the board this year. The Governance Committee of GCB, chaired by Adam Forry (Senior Pastor at Elizabethtown BIC, PA) have been working to provide nominees to be appointed by General Assembly to serve on the GCB. Please refer to the Nominating Committee Report for further details.

The Governance Committee has also been working on amendments to several sections of the *Manual of Doctrine and Government* (MDG), including:

- The Congregational Handbook section
- The Ministerial Credentialing section

These proposed amendments have been reviewed by Leadership Council and by the Commission on Ministry and Doctrine (CMD). Rather than attempting to bring all the amendments to this General Assembly when our conversation together would be hindered by the online format, the Governance Committee will only recommend some amendments this year and will hold others until the 2022 General Assembly.

In addition to these MDG amendments, work has also begun on producing a standardized set of Regional Conference Bylaws that will be used by all regional conferences. The operational principle is that it will be best to have standard Bylaws in all regions and then for each region to also have its own regional ministry operations documents or handbook. The Bylaws of each region, and any amendments to them, have always needed GCB approval and this will not change. The ministry operations documents are under the authority of the region and do not require GCB approval.

## **Leadership Council**

Leadership Council (LC) is the primary leadership and management group of BIC U.S. It is comprised of the bishops of each of the seven regional conferences, the Director of Missions, the Director of Finance and Shared Services, and the National Director. Members of LC provide leadership and direction of each of their respective areas and, collectively, provide leadership for BIC U.S.

Several Regional Conference bishops will complete the end of their current term on July 31, 2020. During the last year I have worked with members of the Boards of Directors of the respective regional conferences to process the end-of-term evaluations and make decisions for the next term. Following my work with the conference BODs the following recommendations were made to the General Conference Board and were approved:

- Ron Howell, Midwest Conference, 6-year term beginning August 1, 2020
- Perry Engle, Pacific Conference, 6-year term beginning August 1, 2020
- Bryan Hoke, Atlantic Conference, 6-year term beginning August 1, 2020
- Aner Morejon, Southeast Conference, 6-year term beginning August 1, 2020
- Rob Patterson, Allegheny Conference, 6-year term beginning August 1, 2020

We welcome Ron Bowell as a new member of LC with his appointment to a first term as bishop of the Midwest Conference. We also express our gratitude to Perry Engle for his 18 years of service as bishop of both the Pacific Conference and the Midwest Conference. As Perry's current term was coming to an end this year it was decided that rather than one person serve two regional conferences, we would transition to a bishop for each of the two regions. However, given the size of each regional conference and the resources available both roles are half-time positions as opposed to full-time. We are thankful that Perry and Ron agreed to accept the nomination to serve in this way.

During 2019 we also conducted performance evaluations for Jonathan Lloyd, Director of BIC U.S. World Missions and for Mitch Martin, Director of Finance and Shared Services. These were both very positive reviews. Jonathan and Mitch will end their current terms on July 31, 2022.

In mid-June 2020 I received confirmation from Bob Beaty, bishop of the Susquehanna Regional Conference, that he was willing to accept the invitation to return to congregational ministry by accepting the position of senior pastor of The Meeting House (Carlisle and Dillsburg, PA—formerly Carlisle Brethren in Christ Church). Bob had been serving as interim senior pastor since the summer of 2019 in addition to continuing his role as bishop for the regional conference. The governing board of The Meeting House (TMH) asked Bob to consider becoming available for the vacancy and this led to an extensive search process that concluded with Bob being offered and accepting the position. He will conclude his service as bishop on July 31, 2020. I will be working with the board of directors of the Susquehanna Conference to provide bishop oversight and direction for the conference.

## **Finance and Shared Services**

In 2019 the GCB asked us to assess the financial sustainability of BIC U.S. We concluded that the current model for financing our Common Ministry is sustainable if, and only if, pastors and leaders and congregations will choose to make it a priority to contribute 10% of their undesignated income to support the ministry that we do together, our Common Ministry. A challenging reality is that some congregations chose not to do this. Sometimes it is because of a lack of resources within the congregation, but sometimes it is because the congregation chooses to prioritize other ministry endeavors—either their own ministry endeavors or the ministry of other organizations.

In addition to requesting each BIC U.S. congregation to contribute (undesignated) 10% of their undesignated revenue to support our Common Ministry, our funding model also relies on contributions from individuals. Thank you to each congregation and to each individual who has supported our Common Ministry.

We are deeply grateful to everyone who contributed to the *Honor the Past: Build the Future* campaign. This campaign was intended to (1) *Honor the past* by providing funds to meet the obligations of our defined benefit pension plan for retired and near-retirement pastors and missionaries, and (2) *Build the future* by providing funds for forward-looking ministry initiatives. In addition to providing new funds for forward-looking ministry initiatives, having sufficient funds to meet the needs of the pension also helps to build the future because

we no longer need to subsidize the pension plan with an annual allocation of \$250,000 from current Common Ministry contributions, or allocate all undesigned bequests to the pension fund.

Please refer to the financial reports for more detailed information.

## **Proposed Boundary Changes for the Great Lakes and Southeast Regional Conferences**

The 2018 General Assembly approved regional conference boundary changes so that the state of Kentucky would be in the Great Lakes Conference rather than the Southeast Conference (where it had been since the Southeast Conference was formed). Since 2018 conversation has continued with the congregations in Tennessee about a similar boundary change. In the early part of January 2020, Lynn Thrush and I met with leaders representing all four Tennessee congregations and discussed the possibility of a boundary change. Lynn continued discussion with two congregations following the meeting. As a result of this work GCB has approved that the agenda for the 2020 General Assembly will include a recommendation for a boundary change for the state of Tennessee so that it will now be part of the Great Lakes Conference. This recommendation has the support of the Southeast Regional Conference Board of Directors and the Great Lakes Regional Conference Board of Directors.

## **Open Theism Report**

For several years there has been a church-wide discussion about a theological perspective commonly titled “Open Theism” or “Openness Theology” and its compatibility with the Brethren in Christ *Articles of Faith and Doctrine*. A report of the conversation was brought to the annual meetings of regional conferences that were held in March and April 2019. Based on feedback received, the Leadership Council and the Commission on Ministry and Doctrine (CMD) appointed a task force with two LC members (Rob Patterson and Jonathan Lloyd) and two CMD members (Ron Bowell and Zach Spidel) and the National Director (Alan Robinson) to write a recommendation to be brought to the 2020 General Assembly. The recommendation was developed through multiple drafts with input from LC and CMD on each draft. The final draft was approved by CMD, LC, and GCB. The report was provided for information and feedback to each of the 2020 annual meetings of the seven regional conferences. The report will be part of the agenda of the 2020 General Assembly.

Please refer to the report on Open Theism.

## **Human Sexuality**

The Commission on Ministry and Doctrine and Leadership Council continue to recognize that our congregations increasingly face ministry situations created by changing societal perspectives on human sexuality and marriage. LC is currently working to develop a way in which we can help congregations minister with grace-filled wisdom within the BIC U.S. framework of our biblical understanding as stated in the *Articles of Faith and Doctrine* that “human sexuality is affirmed within the chaste single life or a lifelong marriage between a man and a woman” ( Article II, Relations in Creation).

## **250th Anniversary of the Brethren in Christ**

As noted above, 2028 will mark the 250th anniversary since the birth of the Brethren in Christ. We recognize this is an anniversary not only for BIC U.S. but for the Brethren in Christ around the world. We have begun to talk about how best we might celebrate this important event.

### **Connections with Other Ministries**

In addition to my work with the diverse leadership groups within BIC U.S., a good amount of time is spent representing BIC U.S. in various settings. These include the Messiah College Board of Trustees, the International Brethren in Christ Association (IBICA), Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), the Global Wesleyan Alliance (GWA), and the Wesleyan Holiness Connection (WHC).

It continues to be an honor and privilege to serve in this role. I am grateful to my wife, Sharon, who has been my partner in ministry for 36 years.

Alan Robinson

*National Director, BIC U.S.*

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## C. Allegheny Conference

### 1. General Report

The Allegheny Conference is currently comprised of 39 congregations located in western Pennsylvania, central and western Maryland, south central Virginia, and eastern West Virginia. Almost all are rural or semi-rural. Thirty-four of them average 150 or less in Sunday morning attendance. Spanish is the primary language of three.

Administratively, the conference is overseen by the bishop and a board of directors (BOD). Functionally, four councils (Discipleship, Evangelism, Ministry, and Worship) provide support to pastors and congregations. Annually, our councils are charged with reviewing their past and current activities, as well as projecting upcoming initiatives and goals. Their duties include things such as starting, revitalizing, and enhancing congregations; working on leadership development; fostering Spirit-led worship; providing clergy-care; creating training opportunities; resourcing local bodies with people and materials; and much more.

A total team of 69 ministers functioning in a variety of capacities provides pastoral care to our conference family; 35 of those individuals are lead pastors, and of those, 21 are in full-time assignments. During 2018 and 2019, I placed six lead pastors, and we currently have four congregations who are in search mode.

Overall, in the past two years we experienced a net decrease of three congregations. According to the information reported each year, attendance declined slightly compared to the previous biennium: 9,046 as opposed to 9,499. The number of reported conversions was also less: 424 versus 524. Certain other measurables, such as monetary giving and baptisms, increased. The number of reported baptisms in 2018/2019 was 284; an increase of 50 over 2016/2017. Total giving to congregations was \$14,989,021, compared to \$14,536,302 during the two previous calendar years. Congregational giving to Common Ministry across the same period, however, decreased from \$1,445,212 to \$1,175,781.

Our vision is to live lives that are worth imitating. We want to be able to say with confidence, “Follow us as we follow Christ.” We want to attain all that he has planned for us. To that end, we continue pursuing a fruitful ministry pleasing to the Lord. By his grace, we will be a family of healthy congregations, led by healthy leaders, advancing the kingdom of God throughout our assigned region, in Jesus’ name. We thank God for the opportunity to partner with him in his work, and to be on mission together with our brothers and sisters in Christ!

Rob Patterson  
*Bishop*

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## 2. Financial and Statistical Report

Sites	2019	2018
Total number of sites	40	40
Under 25	6	6
25–50	6	6
51–75	8	9
76–100	5	4
101–150	9	10
151–200	-	-
201–300	2	2
301–500	1	1
501–750	2	1
751–1,000	-	1
1,001–2,000	-	-
Congregations started	-	-
Congregations closed	1	1
Congregations adopted	-	-
<b>Pastors</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Full-time lead pastors	23	23
Bivocational lead pastors	12	13
<b>Profile</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Membership	4,036	3,864
Attendance	4,437	4,609
Baptisms	139	145
<b>Percentage of unrestricted congregational income given to Common Ministry (CM)</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Percentage given to CM from congregations that reported	7.7%	8.0%
Estimated percentage given to CM from congregations that did not report*	**	**
Aggregate total	7.7%	8.0%

Compiled from 2019 and 2018 end-of-year reports. Discrepancies in figures from year to year may be due to lack of congregational reporting. Contact regional conference office if you have questions.

\*For congregations that didn't report in a given year, income numbers from other years were used to calculate these percentages. Congregations that failed to complete the BIC U.S. end-of-year survey for the past three years were excluded.

\*\*All congregations reported this year.

## D. Atlantic Conference

### 1. General Report

The pastors and congregations of the Atlantic Conference focus on *Following Jesus on Mission, Multiplying Missional Sites, and Developing Leaders*. God is good in all circumstances and his faithfulness to us as people has been abundantly clear. That has not meant that all of the experiences of the past two years have been easy or encouraging. And yet, his influence on our lives and his impact in local communities and around the world through our congregations continue to wonderfully advance the Kingdom of God.

One key way I resource local churches for mission involves pastoral placements. The health and fit of local pastors is certainly one of the greatest indicators of ongoing mission and strength for the church. In 2018, I facilitated lead pastor searches at four congregations. In 2019, that number expanded to five. I also engaged with multiple boards and pastors in areas of new opportunities or concerns.

In the past two years we closed more congregational sites (5) than we had in some years. While that is discouraging, one of the ministry locations also turned into an opportunity for multiplication. A nearby church, which has been growing and reaching their community for the last number of years, agreed to begin a satellite congregation in that location to see if an infusion of different ministry DNA could help revive what Jesus is doing in that location. Many from the previous congregation agreed to stay and be part of that new work. A new church is also in the process of being planted in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Based on the location of other BIC congregations in our region, that is a pioneering effort for the conference and for the couple who moved from Arizona to start that new church. We have also teamed up with FORGE AMERICA to become a church planting hub and receive coaching and additional resourcing for church planting. This resource has benefited many of the churches in our conference who are just a few years old.

NextGen Ministries, a ministry of the conference, continues to develop leaders in multiple congregations across the conference. Over the past two years we had 52 internships across a number of congregations. Young adults are receiving practical experience in church settings which helps to shape their path forward and discern what God may be asking of them in the future.

I serve with a great team and board in the Atlantic Conference. I am able to surround myself with gifted and passionate Jesus followers in the office and across all levels of the conference structure. That is a gift and joy. I find the same thing at home in a partnership with my spouse Kerry and our expanding family in the next generation. I am grateful to serve in this way and honored to say “yes” to another term of service. In it all, Kerry and I continue to lean on Jesus and each other; believing we are where we are to be for now and we desire to be faithful to him in those places.

Bryan Hoke  
*Bishop*

BHOKE@BICUS.ORG

## 2. Financial and Statistical Report

Sites	2019	2018
Total number of sites	45	46
Under 25	6	7
25–50	7	4
51–75	4	5
76–100	7	7
101–150	5	6
151–200	4	5
201–300	3	4
301–500	5	4
501–750	4	4
751–1,000	-	-
1,001–2,000	-	-
Congregations started	2	1
Congregations closed	3	2
Congregations adopted	-	-
<b>Pastors</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Full-time lead pastors	32	32
Bivocational lead pastors	11	12
<b>Profile</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Membership	5,508	5,260
Attendance	6,924	7,460
Baptisms	164	144
<b>Percentage of unrestricted congregational income given to Common Ministry (CM)</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Percentage given to CM from congregations that reported	7.5%	7.6%
Estimated percentage given to CM from congregations that did not report*	**	10.7%
Aggregate total	7.5%	7.7%

Compiled from 2019 and 2018 end-of-year reports. Discrepancies in figures from year to year may be due to lack of congregational reporting. Contact regional conference office if you have questions.

\*For congregations that didn't report in a given year, income numbers from other years were used to calculate these percentages. Congregations that failed to complete the BIC U.S. end-of-year survey for the past three years were excluded.

\*\*All congregations reported this year.

## E. Great Lakes Conference

### 1. General Report

These five affirmations describe life in the Great Lakes Conference:

- A. Our annual meeting was conducted electronically in 2020 because of the pandemic, illustrating the call that form ought to follow function. Our conference mission to “bless all the families of the earth” through Jesus Christ (taken from Gen. 12:3; Acts 3:25; Gal. 3:8) is, as these texts declare, the gospel. Fundamentally our conference behavior is missional.
- B. We have embedded mission conversation into our structure. All mid-term assessments and all end-of-term assessments, for pastors and church boards, gather around the four questions: How are you increasing in competency? How are you increasing in capacity? How are you increasing in connections? What are the dreams and visions you are receiving from the Holy Spirit?
- C. We deputize leaders, some with titles: Dr. Matt Lewis serves as the Director of Practical Theology and Ministry. He oversees all mid- and end-of-term conversations with pastors and church boards. Christina Embree serves as Minister of Generational Discipleship for the Great Lakes Conference. She will be the resource person for the 2020 GLC Pastors/Spouses Retreat. Christina Bosserman and Krista Dutt have shepherded a conversation around missional and sustainable ministry within the conference.
- D. We affirm biblical/theological commitment to serving settings of need and encourage creativity for reorientation of ministry to serve the present culture. Underserved locations, ministry rooted in smaller gatherings, new ministries (for example a food pantry), and the necessary embrace of technology during the pandemic that in church after church is connecting much farther than previously, all illustrate deep commitment to Christ’s missional call to make disciples of all people groups.
- E. We celebrate the conference-wide ministry that is The Seed, an internet-based church and resource center for the Great Lakes Conference, led by Pastor Vicki Podjasek. This platform is the featured story from the Great Lakes Conference found in a link elsewhere in this 2020 General Assembly agenda. We are observing that this ministry form is powered by the same Holy Spirit that meets us when we gather in other ways. Whether training/discipling, teaching, playing games together, eating together (while separate), praying together, and more, these functions are being served by The Seed, and we celebrate its emerging and expanding influence.

With gratitude to Jesus, Lord of the Church.

Lynn Thrush  
*Bishop*

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## 2. Financial and Statistical Report

Sites	2019	2018
Total number of sites	40	38
Under 25	16	15
25–50	12	11
51–75	9	9
76–100	1	1
101–150	2	2
151–200	-	-
201–300	-	-
301–500	-	-
501–750	-	-
751–1,000	-	-
1,001–2,000	-	-
Congregations started	2	-
Congregations closed	-	1
Congregations adopted	-	-
<b>Pastors</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Full-time lead pastors	13	13
Bivocational lead pastors	27	25
<b>Profile</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Membership	1,094	1,157
Attendance	1,451	1,328
Baptisms	26	34
<b>Percentage of unrestricted congregational income given to Common Ministry (CM)</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Percentage given to CM from congregations that reported	8.6%	7.5%
Estimated percentage given to CM from congregations that did not report*	3.3%	5.4%
Aggregate total	8.1%	7.5%

Compiled from 2019 and 2018 end-of-year reports. Discrepancies in figures from year to year may be due to lack of congregational reporting. Contact regional conference office if you have questions.

\*For congregations that didn't report in a given year, income numbers from other years were used to calculate these percentages. Congregations that failed to complete the BIC U.S. end-of-year survey for the past three years were excluded.

## **F. Midwest and Pacific Conferences**

### ***1. General Report***

The Midwest (MWC) and Pacific (PC) Conferences comprise two distinct administrative regional conferences in the BIC U.S., overseen by one bishop. Beginning August 1, 2020, these two regional conferences will have separate bishops.

The Midwest Conference is comprised of 17 congregations in 4 states, and includes 2 institutional ministries. The Pacific Conference is comprised of 23 congregations in 3 states and one U.S. territory (Guam), and includes 4 institutional ministries. Together, the Midwest and Pacific Conferences consist of 40 churches located in 7 states and one U.S. territory (Guam).

Two churches were adopted in the past biennium (MWC - Heart of Worship, Albuquerque, NM; PC - Karis Church, Chino, CA).

Recent MWC church plants include Broken Walls Fellowship, Kirtland, NM; Aliento de Vida satellite congregation in Lyons, KS; and NewLife, Solomon, KS. A recent PC church plant includes a satellite congregation of El Monte Calvario (Salem, OR) in Woodburn, OR.

There were transitions in the Midwest Conference. Kimbeto Valley Church, Nageezi, NM closed this past year following the loss of their lease on Navajo Nation land. Pastor Jeanette Edway and the Kimbeto Valley leadership team determined the cost to retain a lease on the land was too expensive to warrant keeping the church open. Aliento de Vida (Lyons, KS) Pastor Cecilio Murillo and his wife Ofelia returned to Mexico to invest themselves more fully in Ofelia's ministry of convalescent care.

There were transitions in the Pacific Conference. Agua Viva, Riverside, CA – Pastor Domingo Fernando and wife Maria were installed as pastoral couple following the retirement of founding pastor, Luis Arias. Solid Ground Church, Alta Loma, CA – Mike and Marie Collins, took over the reins of leadership following the call of Bob and Heather Beatty to the role of Bishop of the Susquehanna Conference.

The Midwest/Pacific Conferences are also home to 6 institutional ministries: MWC - Navajo BIC Mission, and BIC Overcomers (New Mexico); PC - Pacific Christian Center, Pacific Lifeline Women and Children's Shelter, Mile High Pines Camp, and Upland Manor Senior Housing (all located in California).

Staff for the two conferences includes Ana Preciado (administrative assistant). The Midwest/Pacific Conference office also houses the Donor Relations Director and Immigration Program Coordinator for MCC West Coast.

### **Transitions**

On July 31, 2020, I will conclude 18 years as bishop over the Midwest and Pacific Conferences. On the same date, after four years in her current role, Ana Preciado will conclude her time as administrative assistant of the Midwest and Pacific Conferences. Ana is currently in the process of finishing up her Masters in Social Work at the University of Southern California, and within a few months will be transitioning into full-time work in that field. I

want to take this opportunity to publicly celebrate Ana's perseverance in this pursuit of her vocational dream. I am so proud of her as she is the first person in her family to graduate from college and will be the first ever to be awarded a post-graduate degree. *Dios te bendiga mi Hermana!*

As stated above, beginning August 1, I will be entering into my own job transition, and most likely the final season of my ministerial career. I will have two part-time jobs - if there is any such thing as a part-time job in ministry. I will be continuing as bishop of the Pacific Conference for one more term, and will also assume a new role as teaching pastor at the Upland BIC Church in Upland, CA.

To the Midwest Conference I want to say THANK YOU from me and Marta and the girls for showing us so much kindness, grace, and love over the past 18 years. I know that it has not always been easy having someone from California overseeing churches and ministries in America's heartland. But throughout this journey, I have done my very best to be not just another guy from the 'Left Coast,' but hopefully, a true brother in Christ. That is what the churches in the Midwest Conference will always be to me and my family – our forever coworkers, friends, and extended brothers and sisters in Christ.

Perry Engle  
*Bishop*

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## 2. Midwest Financial and Statistical Report

Sites	2019	2018
Total number of sites	17	15
Under 25	3	3
25–50	4	3
51–75	2	2
76–100	2	2
101–150	3	2
151–200	1	1
201–300	1	1
301–500	1	1
501–750	-	-
751–1,000	-	-
1,001–2,000	-	-
Congregations started	-	1
Congregations closed	1	-
Congregations adopted	-	1
<b>Pastors</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Full-time lead pastors	13	11
Bivocational lead pastors	4	4
<b>Profile</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Membership	764	731
Attendance	1,741	1,598
Baptisms	55	51
<b>Percentage of unrestricted congregational income given to Common Ministry (CM)</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Percentage given to CM from congregations that reported	9.5%	9.2%
Estimated percentage given to CM from congregations that did not report*	4.6%	1.0%
Aggregate total	8.4%	7.7%

Compiled from 2019 and 2018 end-of-year reports. Discrepancies in figures from year to year may be due to lack of congregational reporting. Contact regional conference office if you have questions.

\*For congregations that didn't report in a given year, income numbers from other years were used to calculate these percentages. Congregations that failed to complete the BIC U.S. end-of-year survey for the past three years were excluded.



### 3. Pacific Financial and Statistical Report

Sites	2019	2018
Total number of sites	21	20
Under 25	5	5
25–50	7	6
51–75	4	4
76–100	2	2
101–150	2	2
151–200	1	1
201–300	-	-
301–500	-	-
501–750	-	-
751–1,000	-	-
1,001–2,000	-	-
Congregations started	-	-
Congregations closed	-	-
Congregations adopted	-	1
<b>Pastors</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Full-time lead pastors	16	15
Bivocational lead pastors	5	5
<b>Profile</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Membership	801	809
Attendance	1,260	1,325
Baptisms	22	28
<b>Percentage of unrestricted congregational income given to Common Ministry (CM)</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Percentage given to CM from congregations that reported	7.5%	7.8%
Estimated percentage given to CM from congregations that did not report*	3.3%	n/a
Aggregate total	6.8%	7.8%

Compiled from 2019 and 2018 end-of-year reports. Discrepancies in figures from year to year may be due to lack of congregational reporting. Contact regional conference office if you have questions.

\*For congregations that didn't report in a given year, income numbers from other years were used to calculate these percentages. Congregations that failed to complete the BIC U.S. end-of-year survey for the past three years were excluded.

## G. Southeast Conference

### 1. General Report

Two years ago when we had our previous General Assembly in Pennsylvania, nobody imagined that this one in 2020 would have this very different and distant format. It took us by surprise, but not God, and he gives us a strategy so that his work does not stop. It remains my privilege and responsibility to be the Bishop of the Southeast Conference, and all the work is done in unity, as our national director emphasizes: “We are one.”

Summarizing all the work of two years in a few words is difficult, and especially because of the extension of our region to various Latin American countries. As of today, we serve 52 congregations within the Southeast Regional Conference and 44 international congregations throughout Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Venezuela. In general, congregations have been healthy and experiencing growth; some more than others.

Amidst so many doctrinal influences, we continue to emphasize the doctrine and values of Brethren in Christ U.S. This is a continuous task, therefore, our theme this last year has been “We are BIC!” where we continue to highlight the Biblical foundations that make up our family of faith.

On the financial side, some congregations struggle to meet their monthly obligations; this results in the lower than desired cooperation that we as a region have had with Common Ministry. The financial struggles resulted in having to sell the property of the Monte Calvario congregation and we are also in the process of selling the Cristo Fiel y Verdadero property. As always, we are grateful to the BIC Foundation for their guidance during this process and their care for our congregations during this pandemic.

During this season, we have only been able to plant three (3) new congregations. I say “only” because our desire is to be able to multiply the Kingdom of God every year. We have felt an urgent need to prepare in record time a new generation of young people with a genuine calling for church planting, as is the desire of the denomination for its 250th anniversary celebration.

This report would not be complete without mentioning how our region, like the others, faced this time of quarantine. And one of the things that stands out is how in times of need the pastors have remained aware of the needs of their members, just like our board of directors with our pastors. It is in times of human despair that we as a body can reflect Jesus and share the hope that is within us.

The overall report from our local and international congregations is that during this difficult time, the gospel continues to spread in innovative ways and what seemed to be bad, as our God always does, has turned out for good (Romans 8:28).

Aner Morejon  
*Bishop*

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## 2. Financial and Statistical Report

Sites	2019	2018
Total number of sites	54	57
Under 25	14	14
25–50	13	17
51–75	9	8
76–100	5	1
101–150	1	3
151–200	2	2
201–300	3	6
301–500	4	2
501–750	2	3
751–1,000	1	1
1,001–2,000	-	-
Congregations started	1	1
Congregations closed	2	4
Congregations adopted	-	-
<b>Pastors</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Full-time lead pastors	25	25
Bivocational lead pastors	29	32
<b>Profile</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Membership	3,938	946
Attendance	5,409	5,737
Baptisms	161	55
<b>Percentage of unrestricted congregational income given to Common Ministry (CM)</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Percentage given to CM from congregations that reported	1.2%	1.5%
Estimated percentage given to CM from congregations that did not report*	2.1%	n/a
Aggregate total	1.3%	1.5%

Compiled from 2019 and 2018 end-of-year reports. Discrepancies in figures from year to year may be due to lack of congregational reporting. Contact regional conference office if you have questions.

\*For congregations that didn't report in a given year, income numbers from other years were used to calculate these percentages. Congregations that failed to complete the BIC U.S. end-of-year survey for the past three years were excluded.

## H. Susquehanna Conference

### 1. General Report

The past two years have been marked by many changes in the Susquehanna Conference. Some of these have been challenging, but we have marveled at God's constant faithfulness and at the growth in our conference in the midst of these challenges. Our three main emphases this year have been nurturing healthy pastors, healthy churches, and multiplication efforts.

Many of our Susquehanna pastors have been involved with quarterly regional pastoral cluster groups where we share what God is doing in each of our communities, discuss ideas and initiatives that we are using for outreach and discipleship, and pray together. Ministry Development Days have also been instrumental in equipping our pastors as well as creating a greater sense of unity, connection, and passion for ministry. Two of the highlights this year have included a session with Tod Bolsinger, author of *Canoeing the Mountains*, and a day with Michael Frost, Australian missiologist and theologian, which was co-hosted with the Atlantic Conference. In addition to these opportunities for growth and encouragement, we also had five pastors who elected to join a year-long "Pastors of Excellence" initiative.

Not only is the health and growth of our pastors a priority in the Susquehanna conference, but we are also celebrating healthier churches. Three of our church plants became fully self-supporting ministries this year and continue to grow and expand. We have a number of churches who have been partnering together in community service and outreach events. Other churches have been exploring creative connections through shared preaching and teaching endeavors. Still others have been working with a group called 95Network to better define their church's purpose and processes.

Lastly, we continue to pursue healthy multiplication in both congregations and leadership. The Susquehanna Conference welcomed two new pastors this year and will be installing two more shortly. We are also celebrating a growing diversity in leadership. Our conference now has four growing Hispanic churches and newly-credentialed Hispanic pastors. Across the conference, almost one-third of our pastoral staff positions are filled by women, many of whom are also in the credentialing process. As a conference, we will keep striving to reflect the full community of faith in leadership positions. As we pursue congregational multiplication, we continue to dialogue about the potential for a new church launch in Baltimore and we're praying as to where our next Susquehanna Conference churches will be planted.

Bob Beaty  
*Bishop*

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## 2. Financial and Statistical Report

Sites	2019	2018
Total number of sites	35	42
Under 25	7	9
25–50	10	12
51–75	2	5
76–100	3	3
101–150	2	3
151–200	1	-
201–300	5	6
301–500	3	2
501–750	1	1
751–1,000	-	-
1,001–2,000	1	1
Congregations started	-	1
Congregations closed	4	1
Congregations adopted	-	-
<b>Pastors</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Full-time lead pastors	19	19
Bivocational lead pastors	15	19
<b>Profile</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Membership	3,101	3,545
Attendance	4,653	5,287
Baptisms	178	175
<b>Percentage of unrestricted congregational income given to Common Ministry (CM)</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Percentage given to CM from congregations that reported	9.1%	8.6%
Estimated percentage given to CM from congregations that did not report*	6.1%	5.9%
Aggregate total	8.9%	8.5%

Compiled from 2019 and 2018 end-of-year reports. Discrepancies in figures from year to year may be due to lack of congregational reporting. Contact regional conference office if you have questions.

\*For congregations that didn't report in a given year, income numbers from other years were used to calculate these percentages. Congregations that failed to complete the BIC U.S. end-of-year survey for the past three years were excluded.

## I. Commission for BIC U.S. World Missions

Risk, adventure, joy, God's majesty, just a few of the words that come to mind when thinking about the global mission of which we have the privilege to be a part. For over a century we have been serving, learning from, and proclaiming the gospel to groups of people around the world. Today we have ongoing relationships in more than 20 countries, and help to equip, send, and support more than 70 missionaries.

Since our last General Assembly in 2018 we have been a part of some powerful examples of God's redemptive work around the world.

The BIC church in Spain has seen new believers begin to reach out to others.

*"Mateo showed up on a Tuesday night for a regular church prayer meeting - a guest of his friend, Chuck. For a long time Mateo had been searching for a spiritual awakening but just didn't know how to find it. He had dabbled in drugs, Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, all kinds of things to fill that void inside. That night in our little prayer meeting, we simply prayed and interceded for each other and for others. Mateo was taken aback that we would talk to God so naturally, and also surprised by God's Spirit touching his own heart. Mateo is a talented musician, and now he dedicates his music to the Lord and to talk about the Spirit of God. He is learning to walk in step with what God wants for his life. He has begun what he calls an ecumenical house group for Spiritual seekers. Each Thursday young adults get together to talk about their spiritual journey, and Mateo and his girlfriend, Olalla, share about their new life in Jesus Christ. In his concerts, he has everyone singing, "Holy Spirit, come and touch my life."*  
~Merly Bundy

Mark and Maggie Roth moved to Macha, Zambia in the fall of 2019. Mark planned to learn the needs at Macha Mission Hospital and contribute with his skills as a general surgeon. Maggie, a speech therapist with a rich international experience growing up in Morocco, was looking for the ministry God was preparing for her. They arrived in Zambia in a time of famine, and Maggie quickly took on a leading role in helping the church to respond with famine relief. Mark unexpectedly became the Medical Superintendent of the hospital in April, when many expatriates left Zambia due to COVID-19. Mark and Maggie are living out Christ's love and compassion at Macha in many tangible ways.

In every location where BIC U.S. missionaries work, we see evidence that God's love is reaching through them to touch and transform lives.

- In Colombia, Glenn and Glenda Moyer, Allison Conrad, and Zach Dalton invest deeply in the lives of students at El Camino Academy. Many of these students are from influential families in Colombia.
- Mike and Lori Cassel planted a church in Guatemala. Mike also meets with leaders of the BIC congregations in Guatemala to help pass along his skills in evangelism and discipleship.
- Nathan and Cathy Bert train church leaders and support church planters in the BIC church in Honduras.

- In Thailand churches were planted in an area where less than 1 in 300 people are followers of Jesus. Recently a Buddhist Monk asked our missionaries to teach him more about Jesus.
- In Mozambique, Laston Bissani, a BIC missionary from the Malawi church, traveled to Northern Mozambique. With assistance from Orville and Cheryl Hade, Bissani supported our BIC family in the Cabo Delgado province, an area where Christians are being persecuted and many were impacted by Cyclone Kenneth.
- In India and Nepal where Christians represent such a small percentage of the population, we partnered with the local church to help provide food, lodging, and Christian house parents to more than 800 children through the SPICE program. We also provided scholarship funds, so that local pastors can be trained for evangelism and discipleship.
- In the Middle East we built relationships with refugee families, engaged young people in soccer, and facilitated training in the area of child safety.
- In the U.S. young Navajo men and women are discipled as they prepare for their GED tests. Others are receiving counsel, discipleship, and encouragement as they journey in recovery or readjust to life after prison. In Kentucky and Philadelphia international students are being invited into missionaries' homes to experience the kindness of Christians and learn what it means to follow Jesus.
- In Malawi there are now 22 village Bible studies among the Yawo people group. In the city of Blantyre, pastoral students are trained at the Evangelical Bible College of Malawi.
- In Spain, our workers provided leadership in BIC churches while also working professionally. During the COVID-19 quarantine, they began relationships with neighbors they hadn't known before.
- In Zambia, clean water was provided in ways that affirmed the dignity and capacity of the community. John and Esther Spurrier continue to spend several months of every year serving the hospital and the BIC church in the Macha region.

Behind the scenes of these ministry impact moments are global workers making daily decisions to invest in witness, learning, and friendship – sometimes in the midst of significant difficulty. And you are part of their ministry - as you pray, give, stay connected, and encourage them. Visit [bicus.org/missions/global-team](https://bicus.org/missions/global-team) to learn more and sign up for updates.

We have continued to submit our future plans to God and ask for his guidance so that our work aligns with his interests. Each year in January we gather the Commission for World Missions and spend time together in prayer and reflection. In addition to discussing the goals and plans at specific ministry locations, we review the goals that we believe God has given to us as a missions organization. Here are just a few of those goals, a brief progress update, and an opportunity for greater involvement.

- **Goal:** Be available to assist BIC U.S. congregations engaging in cross-cultural mission activity. We will be invited into conversation with at least 35% of our congregations on an annual basis by the year 2021.

Update: In 2019 our missionaries and staff members responded to requests to engage with 70 different BIC U.S. congregations. This represents about 30% of our congregations.

Opportunity: If your congregation has not had a missionary visit, or if you would like a staff person to speak, or to engage with your board in developing your global mission engagement we would love to hear from you. Email us at [missions@bicus.org](mailto:missions@bicus.org).

- **Goal:** Partner with the global BIC community. Some examples of the ways we are partnering:
  1. Providing leadership training scholarships for international pastors and missionaries – more than 100 scholarships per year in 2018 and 2019.
  2. Sending missionaries that meet a strategic need identified by the host conference.
  3. Compassionately responding to needs for relief

Update: Here are just a few of the ways the Global Compassion Fund has provided assistance around the world.

1. \$36,590 released for essential supplies amid COVID-19 pandemic to six different countries
2. \$41,873 released to Zambia for food relief in a drought-stricken area
3. \$39,000 distributed to Mozambique in emergency aid after the devastation of Cyclone Idai

Opportunity: Your gift to the Global Compassion Fund allows us to continue to show the love of Jesus in tangible ways around the world. To learn more, visit [partnership.bicus.org/project/global-compassion-fund](https://partnership.bicus.org/project/global-compassion-fund).

- **Goal:** Explore several new ministry opportunities to which we believe God is leading us:
  1. Missions work among refugees and immigrants
  2. Business As Mission

Update: We have taken two fact-finding and service trips to Greece where we served in refugee camps and met with numerous ministry leaders working among refugees. We are looking for partnership opportunities to establish a long-term presence in the area. We are also learning about Business As Mission (BAM) from other agencies, and we are exploring BAM opportunities in Spain. We have deployed one intern to Dearborn, and we are in active conversation with Great Lakes Conference leaders about how God may be leading us to establish a long-term BIC presence in that city.

Opportunity: Pray for wisdom and God's provision of people and resources for our existing work as well as these new initiatives. Sign up for prayer resources at [bicus.org/resources/prayer](https://bicus.org/resources/prayer).

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" Revelation 7:9-10.



This great multitude will stand before the Lamb in part because of the faithfulness of the children of God to carry out his mission of making disciples in all people groups. I count it both a privilege and a joy to take part in this mission – and I hope you know that you are part of it as well.

Jonathan Lloyd  
*Director, BIC U.S. World Missions*

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## Personnel Assignments

Personnel assigned to service under the Commission for World Missions since 2018 General Assembly. Dates indicate beginning of assignment or start of new term.

Category of Service	Name	Country/Region	Date
Missionary	Josué and Mercy Abreu	Spain	2014
	Estol and Kristen Bathurst	Malawi	2019
	Tony and Veronica Beers	Zambia	2018
	Nathan and Cathy Bert	Honduras	2017
	Bruce and Merly Bundy	Spain	2016
	Mike and Lori Cassel	Guatemala	2019
	Denise Conway	New Mexico	2020
	Zachary Dalton	Colombia	2019
	Kris G.	Thailand	2019
	D. and M.G.	Sensitive environment	2018
	L.H.	Sensitive environment	2018
	Orville and Cheryl Hade	Mozambique	2019
	Earl and Lois Hess*	Malawi	2018
	Chris and Kara K.	Spain	2019
	T.M.*	Sensitive environment	2018
	Doug and Barb Miller	Malawi	2017
	Glenn and Glenda Moyer	Colombia	2018
	Brian and Rochelle Myers	New Mexico	2018
	Jason and Rebekah Oberholser	New Mexico	2020
	Jonathan and Rebecca Owen	Malawi	2019
	P. and H.R.	Sensitive environment	2019
	Mark and Maggie Roth	Zambia	2019
	Jake and Nancy Shenk	Zimbabwe	2017
	Jay and Judy Smith	International	2017
	Ben and Eunice Stoner*	New Mexico	2017
	Sophie T.	Thailand	2018
Covenant missionary	A.H.	Sensitive environment	2017
	David and Patricia Miller	Québec	2017
	Ben and Lindsey Newton	Sensitive environment	2019
	T.S.	Sensitive environment	2019
	T. and A.W.	Sensitive environment	2017
Global volunteer	Allison Conrad	Colombia	2018
	Glenn and Eileen Musser*	Mozambique	2019
	John and Esther Spurrier*	Zambia	2020
	Miriam Stern	Philadelphia	2018
	Silk W.	Thailand	2019
Interns	C.F.	Michigan	2019
	Andrew Rinker*	Pacific Conference	2019
Medical review officer	Dr. Curtis Hershey	n/a	2019

The following missionaries are employed by other sending organizations but maintain an associate relationship with BIC U.S. World Missions.

Category of Service	Name	Country/Region	Date
Associate missionary	Chris and Marlys Book	Zambia	2020
	Jonatan and Jennifer Cordova	Mexico	2019
	Dan and Karen D.	India	2018
	Bryan and Karah Leaman*	Germany	2017
	Weston and Jess Martin	Minnesota	2016
	Yosuel and Jacqueline Medina	Ecuador	2017
	Paul and Anita Pawelski	Mexico	2018
	Amanda Schwartzentruber	Zambia	2019
	Francis and Audrey Sims	Rwanda	2017
	Eric and Corie Thuma	Zambia	2019
	Matt and Julie Walsh	Sensitive environment	2020
	Larry and Cindy Williams	United States	2020

\*Service already completed

## **J. Commission on Ministry and Doctrine**

The Commission on Ministry and Doctrine (CMD) exists to administer the credentialing process, to facilitate the equipping of our ministers, and to give attention to the doctrinal integrity of the church. This is so that we have a continually renewed cadre of men and women who are able to lead our congregations and ministries in the biblical and balanced understanding of Christian faith for which the Brethren in Christ have long been known.

In order to achieve these objectives, the CMD utilizes a number of strategies and tools. These include a This I Believe form, Doctrinal Questionnaire, an oral interview, and four Core Courses that equip individuals with Brethren in Christ understandings in specific theological and practical theology matters. The Directed Study Program meets the requirements for ordination for those who do not have the necessary theological education. Ministry training also provides courses and seminars that facilitate lifelong BIC learning and development for our pastors and leaders.

### **Credentialing**

The Commission reviewed and revised the process by which an individual can explore ministerial credentialing and service with Brethren in Christ U.S. The current process places responsibility with each bishop to meet with potential ministry candidates at the beginning of the process. The bishop's recommendation is necessary for the individual to receive a three-year provisional license and to proceed in the credentialing process. The Commission met with members of Leadership Council to review how well the process is working and what further revisions would be helpful.

During this biennium the Commission issued 69 provisional licenses and reviewed 40 doctrinal questionnaires. The Commission conducted 37 oral interviews and approved 37 of these candidates for six-year licenses. Two commissioned minister certificates were issued. In consultation with the Leadership Council, the Commission authorized 18 ordinations.

In addition to the issuing of licenses, the Commission is responsible for the review of ministerial credentials. Currently a minister's credentials are reviewed every six years. At the time of renewal the credentialed person must submit completed documents that confirm his/her ongoing commitment to Brethren in Christ U.S. and also his/her understanding of our *Articles of Faith and Doctrine*. In addition, the individuals must also list their completion of lifelong Brethren in Christ learning. Occasionally, in the review of these documents, the Commission finds that further conversation with an individual is required before a final decision can be made on the renewal (or not) of a minister's credentials.

### **Ministry Training**

Eighteen years ago the Commission on Ministry and Doctrine (CMD) established the Equipping for Ministry team to provide theological education for the denomination. Today the CMD makes theological education opportunities available to both credentialed and lay persons in the U.S.

In 2018 and 2019 the total enrollment for the Core Courses was 129 and 127 respectively.

In addition to the courses being offered in English, we also offered them in Spanish in Oregon, California, and Florida.

The 2019 Impact Seminar was a dialog regarding the 250 Project in each regional conference.

The Directed Study Program (DSP) was launched in fall 2004. The enrollment was 115 in 2018 calendar year with 98 for 2019. To date there have been 80 graduates and about fifty percent of whom have been ordained or are serving in some staff capacity. Currently about forty-five percent of those taking courses are laypersons. The fact that about twenty percent of those who “graduated” continue to take courses is an indirect testimonial to the value of the Directed Study Program. The graduates this biennium are: Absalom Mabhena, Antonio Luis Branco, Esther Cohick, Sifelani Ngwenya, Michael Dickert, Jason Oberholser, Sarah Sikhu Sibanda, Phillip Madison, and Jaylene Shannon.

We are grateful for the volunteer work of members of the Commission – Ron Bowell, Ryan Brown, Alan Claassen Thrush, Lynda Gephart, Blaine Lougheed, Jose Rodriguez, and Zach Spidel. They are diligent in reading doctrinal questionnaires, tackling theological issues with diligence and discernment, as well as honoring deceased ministers in the memorial service at General Assembly, and facilitating the equipping of our ministers.

The Commission has helped equip 21 seminarians and pastors with financial assistance so that they could continue their education.

In all of its work, the Commission on Ministry and Doctrine desires to credential and equip men and women of God who faithfully live and passionately proclaim the gospel call to know, love, and follow Jesus. Knowing that the biblical convictions the Brethren in Christ espouse will fade if not continually reinforced and retold, the CMD desires to train pastors and teachers who are able and ready to pass on the biblical and balanced understanding of the Christian faith described in our *Articles of Faith and Doctrine*.

Ordained during the 2018–2020 biennium:

Heather Brickner	Frank Juarez	Ryan Showalter
John Courchesne	Jonathan Lloyd	Dustin Sider
Paul Dauenbaugh	Phillip Madison	Drew Strayer
Tim Diehl	Jonathan Owen	Jeff Williams
Luke Embree	James Rainwater	Jeff Wright
Matthew Hahn	Teresa Rodriguez	James Yutzy

Licensed during the 2018–2020 biennium:

Christopher Ashley	Troy Grider	Diana Reinert
Melissa Beal	Thomas Grosh	Ron Remke
Corinne Bergmann	Chris Hall	Kevin Richardson
Dan Bisbee	Ericka Henry	Rudy Rodriguez
Christina Bosserman	Kenton Hock	Zachary Salazar
Maureen Brown	Merle Brandon Horton	Elias Martin Sanchez

Mark Brown  
Matthew Bushoven  
Ryan Cagno  
Preston Chronister  
Ryan Cobb  
Marie Collins  
Michael Collins  
Garnet Cook  
Ron Crawford  
Carmen Dones  
Krista Dutt  
Christina Embree  
Domingo Fernando  
Angela Fickes-Mountz  
Eileen Flenner  
Denise Fogelsanger  
Dwight Gehman

Casey Hurst  
Bryan Kelley  
David Knowles  
Jonah Langenderfer  
Bryan Leaman  
Evan Lebo  
R. Misael Lopez  
Lori Lower  
Scott MacFeat  
Yosuel Medina  
Anler Morejon  
Orlando Morejon  
Sean Muldowney  
Alexis Munoz  
Esteban Nieves  
Garrick Paden  
Melita Ramsey

Zoila Garcia Sanchez  
Miguel Segura  
Clay Shade  
Jesse Smith  
Peter Song  
Millyellen Strayer  
Tony Streeval  
Jill Thompson  
Brieanna Thompson  
Nathaniel Thorne  
Yaciel Toledo  
Geoff Twigg  
Phillip Unti  
Gabriel Valencia  
Bradley Vater  
Alejandro Zapata  
Filiberto Zapata

Alan Robinson  
*National Director, BIC U.S.*

AROBINSON@BICUS.ORG

## K. BIC U.S. Financial Reports

### Condensed Statement of Activities

Ministry Receipts	2020*	% OF TOTAL	2019	% OF TOTAL	2018	% OF TOTAL
Undesignated Giving	\$ 2,879,769	59%	\$ 2,660,864	55%	\$ 2,572,216	50%
Designated Giving	1,875,362	38%	2,112,462	44%	2,478,509	48%
Registrations and Other	148,253	3%	56,817	1%	129,845	3%
<i>Total Operating Receipts</i>	<i>\$ 4,903,384</i>		<i>\$ 4,830,143</i>		<i>\$ 5,180,570</i>	
Endowments	\$ -		\$ 51,664		\$ 2,000	
Bequests	9,000		223,737		100,848	
Investment Gain/(Loss)	436,306		1,713,784		(340,786)	
<i>Total Other</i>	<i>\$ 445,306</i>		<i>\$ 1,989,185</i>		<i>\$ (237,938)</i>	
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$ 5,348,690</b>		<b>\$ 6,819,328</b>		<b>\$ 4,942,632</b>	

### Common Ministry Expenditures

Regional Ministry	\$ 1,412,644	27%	\$ 1,384,556	29%	\$ 1,423,843	29%
National Ministry	620,767	12%	391,278	8%	490,881	10%
Global Ministry	2,481,874	47%	2,115,680	44%	2,034,085	42%
Shared Services	682,465	13%	639,847	13%	634,239	13%
Related Agencies	55,333	1%	53,078	1%	51,235	1%
DB Pension Costs	-	0%	271,942	6%	197,683	4%
<b>Total Common Ministry Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 5,253,083</b>		<b>\$ 4,856,381</b>		<b>\$ 4,831,966</b>	

### Ministry Projects

Receipts	\$ 408,460		\$ 772,701		\$ 548,851	
Disbursements	(408,460)		(598,962)		(424,511)	
<b>Total Ministry Projects</b>	<b>\$ -</b>		<b>\$ 173,739</b>		<b>\$ 124,340</b>	
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 95,607</b>		<b>\$ 2,136,686</b>		<b>\$ 235,006</b>	
(Increase)/Decrease in Pension Underfunding**	-		(123,216)		(146,876)	
<b>Total Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 95,607</b>		<b>\$ 2,013,470</b>		<b>\$ 88,130</b>	

For more information, please visit: [vimeo.com/432974641/d2ee38a3f8](https://vimeo.com/432974641/d2ee38a3f8)

\*Figures based on 2020 budget

\*\*The net unfunded liability of the defined benefit plan was \$3,424,921 and \$3,029,763 at December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively. This liability is offset by the Honor the Past: Build the Future Campaign balance, \$3,971,103 and \$2,999,087 at December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively.

## Net Asset Roll Forward

	2018 Ending Balance	2019 Receipts	2019 Expenditures	Transfers In/(Out)	Investment Gain/(Loss)	Pension Underfunding (Inc)/Dec	2019 Ending Balance	Change in Net Assets
<b>Undesignated</b>								
Regional Ministry	-	-	\$ (1,362,172)	-	-	-	-	-
National Ministry	-	-	(352,705)	-	-	-	-	-
Shared Services	-	-	(639,847)	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Undesignated</b>	<b>\$ 2,253,120</b>	<b>\$ 2,717,682</b>	<b>\$ (2,354,724)</b>	<b>\$ (24,084)</b>	<b>\$ 40,005</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$ 2,631,999</b>	<b>\$ 378,879</b>
<b>Designated</b>								
Global Ministry General	\$ 2,024,729	\$ 773,062	\$ (998,580)	\$ 47,671	\$ 70,188	-	\$ 1,917,070	\$ (107,659)
Global Ministry Endowments	3,806,274	2,120	(117,427)	25,656	664,797	-	4,381,420	575,146
Global Emergency Risk Management	535,343	-	(6,680)	-	15,178	-	543,841	8,498
Global Donor Designated Support	1,619,246	1,988,447	(1,608,571)	(47,204)	-	-	1,951,918	332,672
<i>Total Global Designated</i>	<i>\$ 7,985,592</i>	<i>\$ 2,763,629</i>	<i>\$ (2,731,258)</i>	<i>\$ 26,123</i>	<i>\$ 750,163</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>\$ 8,794,249</i>	<i>\$ 808,657</i>
National Ministry Endowments	\$ 1,927,953	\$ 51,664	\$ (76,924)	-	\$ 274,060	-	\$ 2,176,753	\$ 248,800
National Donor Designated Support	27,688	22,719	(20,495)	(2,039)	91	-	27,964	276
<i>Total National Designated</i>	<i>\$ 1,955,641</i>	<i>\$ 74,383</i>	<i>\$ (97,419)</i>	<i>\$ (2,039)</i>	<i>\$ 274,151</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>\$ 2,204,717</i>	<i>\$ 249,076</i>
Honor the Past: Build the Future	\$ 2,999,087	\$ 322,551	-	-	\$ 649,465	\$ -	\$ 3,971,103	\$ 972,016
Less: Pension Liability	(3,029,763)	-	(271,942)	-	-	(123,216)	(3,424,921)	(395,158)
<i>Honor the Past; Build the Future, Net</i>	<i>\$ (30,676)</i>	<i>\$ 322,551</i>	<i>\$ (271,942)</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>\$ 649,465</i>	<i>(123,216)</i>	<i>\$ 546,182</i>	<i>\$ 576,858</i>
<b>Total Designated</b>	<b>\$ 9,910,557</b>	<b>\$ 3,160,563</b>	<b>\$ (3,100,619)</b>	<b>\$ 24,084</b>	<b>\$ 1,673,779</b>	<b>\$ (123,216)</b>	<b>\$ 11,545,148</b>	<b>\$ 1,634,591</b>
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 12,163,677</b>	<b>\$ 5,878,245</b>	<b>\$ (5,455,343)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$ 1,713,784</b>	<b>\$ (123,216)</b>	<b>\$ 14,177,147</b>	<b>\$ 2,013,470</b>



## L. BIC Pension Fund - Defined Benefit Plan

### Statement of Net Assets Available for Benefits

Assets	2019	2018
Cash in Financial Institutions	\$ 157,177	\$ 100,893
Investments	5,045,453	5,360,553
Receivables	23,611	21,296
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 5,226,241</b>	<b>\$ 5,482,742</b>

### Liabilities and Net Assets

Accounts Payable	\$ 11,939	\$ 22,728
Net Assets Available for Benefits	5,214,302	5,460,014
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 5,226,241</b>	<b>\$ 5,482,742</b>

### Statement of Changes in Net Assets Available For Benefits

#### Additions to Net Assets

Available for Benefits	2019	2018
Net Appreciation (Depreciation) in FMV of Investments	\$ 270,985	\$ (109,779)
Interest and Dividends	141,934	137,179
Defined Benefit Contributions	8,213	66,447
<b>Total Additions to Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 421,132</b>	<b>\$ 93,847</b>

#### Deductions from Net Assets Available for Benefits

Annuity Payments to Participants	\$ 620,119	\$ 630,792
Lump Sum Payments to Participants	26,495	80,008
Administrative Expenses	20,230	32,831
<b>Total Deductions from Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 666,844</b>	<b>\$ 743,631</b>

#### Net Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets Available for Benefits

	\$ (245,712)	\$ (649,784)
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# **M. Brethren in Christ Foundation**

## ***1. General Report***

The Brethren in Christ Foundation (Foundation) exists to serve the Brethren in Christ U.S. (BIC U.S.) and its congregations and members through lending, investing, and planned giving. The Foundation has helped congregations large and small, old and new, continue to grow and to serve God's Kingdom for over 45 years. Our members have made it possible to meet this need through faithful investing and giving.

During the past three years, the Foundation has focused on improving our internal processes, increasing our visibility throughout the BIC U.S., and expanding services offered to the denomination. Though we have made progress, there remains a great deal more to accomplish. We look forward to the challenges the future holds.

### **Securities**

We continue to focus our efforts on growing our investor base. Since 2017 the amount invested in the Brotherhood Loan Fund (BLF) had a net increase of \$1.3 million for a total of \$46.2 million. The sale of BLF securities is crucial to the Foundation's ability to help serve the BIC U.S. We have committed to providing conservative investment alternatives to individuals, congregations, and organizations of the BIC U.S. All of our securities earn a very competitive variable rate ranging from 0.75% for our liquid TAP accounts up to 3.50% for our 10-year IRA Notes. Recently, in cooperation with the General Conference Board, we have made BLF securities available to all participants in the BIC U.S. 403(b)(9) pension plan.

In 2019, the Foundation made a significant investment in new financial software. With this enhancement, we are now able to offer an upgraded account experience through our website. In the near future, we will be adding to the on-line experience enabling our investors to manage their accounts in real-time.

### **Loans**

The Foundation loan portfolio continues to grow. Since 2017, the outstanding principal has increased by \$1.9 million. While this is a good indicator of growth within our congregations, the large desire for loans can also create a shortage of available funds if security sales do not keep pace. Typically, the Foundation can lend approximately \$8 for every \$10 of new investment. For continued growth and expansion of facilities for ministry throughout BIC U.S., new investments are necessary as well.

### **BIC U.S. Support**

The Foundation's Board of Directors adopted a new Discretionary Contribution Plan for contributions to the BIC U.S. In the past, the Foundation would only send contributions from the Loan Fund. Staff and the Board have been reluctant to provide a contribution from the Loan Fund in order to protect the assets of our investors. The Loan Fund has over \$8.0 Million in net assets without donor restriction. We feel it is necessary to continue to grow the fund balance at a moderate rate given the current demographics of our securities portfolio.

The Foundation has a desire to support the ministry of the BIC U.S. Therefore, the Board has adopted a plan for funding current and potential future contributions to BIC U.S.

In 2019, the Board of Directors of the Foundation made a one-time discretionary contribution of \$200,000 from Trust Fund operations to the General Conference's Honor the Past: Build the Future Campaign and an undesignated discretionary contribution of \$49,764 from the Brotherhood Loan Fund to the General Conference. Additionally, effective as of December 31, 2019, the Board of Directors of the Foundation adopted policies to (a) designate, on an annual basis, the Trust Fund's net operating excess, if any, for the benefit of the General Conference; provided that, as of the time of such designation, net assets without donor restrictions of the Trust Fund are no less than an amount equal to the five (5) years historical average of the Trust Fund's annual operating expenses, and (b) continue its policy not to make discretionary contributions from the Brotherhood Loan Fund if the ratio of outstanding obligations to our investors to net assets of the Brotherhood Loan Fund is greater than 8 to 1. The Board further clarified that all contributions from the Foundation are purely discretionary and are subject to annual review.

## **COVID-19**

On March 17, 2020, the Foundation staff began remote operations due to COVID-19 restrictions implemented in Pennsylvania. We have been able to be fully operational and meet the needs of all of our constituents.

Recognizing that many of our borrowers may have had their income streams negatively impacted, and in order to relieve some of the burden, the Foundation allowed all of our loan-holders to pay only interest through August 31, 2020. Approximately one-third chose to exercise this option. We also developed a line of credit program for any congregation in need of additional funds. To date, we have not received any requests for this type of funding. Through the availability of Paycheck Protection Program loans, as well as increased use of online giving options, congregations were able to obtain the necessary funds to remain stable.

As you are aware, the financial markets have been quite volatile during the pandemic. We have had several questions regarding the stability of the Foundation's assets. The assets of Brotherhood Loan Fund are invested very conservatively. The majority of funds generated by investors' purchases are re-invested in secured mortgage loans to our congregations, organizations, and pastors. The remaining cash is invested in either Money Market accounts or secured Certificates of Deposit. This eliminates the volatile swings of the equity markets.

We look forward to a bright future for our congregations and the Foundation's role in enabling their ministry to all people.

James Reynolds  
*Executive Director*

JREYNOLDS@BICFOUNDATION.ORG

## 2. Loan Fund Summarized Financial Statements

	Statement of Position			Statement of Activities		
	Investments	2019	2018	Interest Paid	2019	2018
<i>Investments made by faithful stewards</i>	TAP and SIC	\$ 38,763,872	\$ 38,619,031	Interest Paid	\$ 1,098,839	\$ 900,259
	IRA and HSA	7,424,660	7,394,156			
	<b>Total Investments</b>	<b>\$ 46,188,532</b>	<b>\$ 46,013,187</b>	<b>Total Interest Paid</b>	<b>\$ 1,098,839</b>	<b>\$ 900,259</b>
<i>used to further build the Church</i>	<b>Reinvestments</b>			<b>Reinvestments</b>		
	Loans	\$ 39,608,634	\$ 41,160,885	Interest on Loans	\$ 1,878,733	\$ 1,629,521
	Minimum Cash Requirement	6,250,909	6,179,895	Net Investment Income	188,694	164,645
	Unapplied Cash	328,989	(1,327,593)			
	<b>Total Reinvestments</b>	<b>\$ 46,188,532</b>	<b>\$ 46,013,187</b>	<b>Total Reinvestment</b>	<b>\$ 2,067,427</b>	<b>\$ 1,794,166</b>
				<b>Margin from Investments</b>	<b>\$ 968,588</b>	<b>\$ 893,907</b>
<b>Operations</b>				<b>Operating Expenses</b>		
Cash Available for Loans and Ministry	\$ 6,901,199	\$ 6,534,319		Salaries, Ben and G&A	\$ 564,476	\$ 436,676
Building Renovation	500,000	500,000		Other Op-Ex	100,673	122,295
Operating Cash Reserve	750,000	750,000		<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 665,149</b>	<b>\$ 558,971</b>
Fixed Assets (Operational)	822,223	788,859				
Real Estate Held for Sale	-	-		<b>Other Income/(Expenses)</b>		
Other Assets	94,945	223,623		Management Service Fees	\$ (28,388)	\$ (17,341)
Other Liabilities	(50,868)	(65,651)		Farming Income	35,065	35,449
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 9,017,499</b>	<b>\$ 8,731,150</b>		Distributions to Charity	(84,764)	(35,499)
				Donations and Other	60,997	2,040
				<b>Total Other Income/(Expenses)</b>	<b>\$ (17,090)</b>	<b>\$ (15,351)</b>
				<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 286,349</b>	<b>\$ 319,585</b>

### 3. Trust Fund Summarized Financial Statements

	Statement of Position		Statement of Activities	
	Custodial Accounts	2019	2018	Contributions
<i>Investments made by faithful stewards</i>	Common Trust Fund	\$ 17,208,578	\$ 15,125,645	Charitable Donations
	Split Interest and Other	4,042,742	4,086,124	Net Investment Income
	<b>Total Custodial Accounts</b>	<b>\$ 21,251,320</b>	<b>\$ 19,211,769</b>	<b>Total Contributions</b>
<i>used to further build the Church</i>	<b>Reinvestments</b>			
	Investments	\$ 18,874,561	\$ 17,100,724	Distributions to Charity
	Custodial Cash	2,376,759	2,111,046	Distributions to Investors
	<b>Total Reinvestment</b>	<b>\$ 21,251,320</b>	<b>\$ 19,211,770</b>	<b>Total Distributions</b>
				<b>Net Excess/(Deficit)</b>
	<b>Operations</b>			
	Designated Donor Advised	\$ 1,736,885	\$ 1,819,785	Service Fees
	Board Designated	344,724	-	Interest on Loans
	Cash Reserve	613,454	1,199,376	<b>Total Operating Revenue</b>
	Loans (unsecured)	863,947	843,110	<b>Operating Expenses</b>
	Other Assets	108,669	112,663	Salaries, Ben, and G&A
	Other Liabilities	(11,070)	(87,583)	Other Op-Ex
	<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 3,656,609</b>	<b>\$ 3,887,351</b>	<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>
				<b>Change in Net Assets</b>

These statements are an abbreviated summary of the audited financial statements. For a copy of the complete audited financial statements, please go to [bifoundation.org/about/financials](http://bifoundation.org/about/financials) or write us at 431 Grantham Rd., Mechanicsburg, PA 17055. Thank you.

## **N. AWAKEN: BIC Network for Women in Ministry**

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3:28

Awaken, A BIC Network for Women in Ministry, serves as an arm of the Brethren in Christ Church. The church and its leadership fully affirms women in ministry leadership. Quoting from the Women in Ministry Leadership Statement released in 2017, “As a denomination within the historic Christian faith, we are committed to the Bible as the divinely inspired, authoritative Word of God. And it is our reading of the Bible that leads us to support women in ministry leadership, grounded, more specifically, in our understanding of 1) the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all people - both women and men, 2) the witness in both the Old and New Testaments of women called to spiritual leadership, and 3) the example of Jesus partnering with women in ministry.”

Awaken functions as an informal network, designed to connect and support women serving in various ministry positions in congregational and para-church ministry. Awaken represents all seven regions, including women in ministry who serve overseas, and women who continue to serve the Lord in retirement. Our mission seeks to engage, equip, and empower women for the work to which God has called them within the body of Christ. Our overarching responsibility is to raise up advocates for women in ministry and challenge congregations, church boards, pastors, and denominational leaders to give women opportunities to use their God-given gifts to serve in ministry at all levels of church life; locally, regionally, and nationally.

Over the past two years, Awaken Network strategically focused on planned events that identified and connected women in ministry and brought them together with church leaders and pastors. Prior to the 2018 General Assembly, Awaken sponsored a half-day seminar with more than 200 participants, featuring Katelyn Beaty, editor with Christianity Today, as guest speaker and a panel discussion with pastoral leaders from Harrisburg BIC Church and Mechanicsburg BIC Church to address the importance of women in ministry in the local church.

In 2019 our focus turned to regional events. In partnership with the Pacific Conference, a very successful dinner was held in Rancho Cucamonga, California with 40 women in attendance who were interested in hearing about Awaken. A second dinner occurred in May in Salina, Kansas with 50 women in attendance in partnership with the Midwest Conference. In September the Allegheny Conference arranged a scrumptious breakfast in Waynesboro highlighted by an inspirational challenge from pastor's wife, Beth Fisher and Pastor Blaine Loughheed (Hollowell Church), enjoyed by all participants.

In October, Awaken was thrilled to partner with The Sider Institute for their Fall Convocation to sponsor Dr. JoAnn Lyon, Superintendent Emeritus of the Wesleyan Church and Dr. Janette Ok, professor of New Testament Studies at Azusa Pacific University as resource speakers, on the theme, Empowering Women in Ministry. A highlight of the day featured a panel of four women: Heather Brickner, Esther Spurrier, Rachel Sensenig, and Cedra Washington chaired by Heather Beaty, who shared their ministry stories. The Atlantic,

Susquehanna, and Allegheny Conference bishops along with Devon Manzullo-Thomas director of The Sider Institute partnered with Awaken to provide funds so that all assigned ministers and staff could attend the day-long event free of charge. Participants attended afternoon workshops to discuss ways to enhance opportunities for women in ministry. Bishop Lynn Thrush concluded the conference with a challenge to action.

The Awaken Team looks forward to the continuation and expansion of our regional Awaken visits in the coming year. It is with sadness that due to COVID-19 we will not meet together in Kansas in July to hear and learn from Pastor Tara Beth Leach.

Eleven regional partners serve as a local extension of our network. Designated ministry women represent each region, including one partner for international women, with their eyes and ears open to serve as a resource, guide, and encouragement to women who are already serving in congregations or who are showing interest in entering the ministry.

“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.” (Acts 2:16-18)

Bishop Perry Engle wrote a few years ago in an article, *The Day Everything Changed*, “we need to ACT as if the account of Pentecost in the New Testament is true. If the Holy Spirit really was poured out on all believers, women and men equally, regardless of gender - who am I to stand in the way of what God’s Word has announced as being fully accomplished.”

We are grateful for two pastors (Nick Ressler and Ryan Showalter) who serve on our Leadership Team as male advocates for women in ministry. Pastoral leaders are strategic in helping the Church move from passivity to full inclusion for women in the life and leadership of the church.

During the last biennium, sixteen BIC women received their initial ministerial license after completing requirements and with a ministry assignment. Hearty **congratulations** goes to Melissa Beal, Corinne Bergman, Christina Bosserman, Marie Collins, Carmen Dones, Krista Dutt, Christina Embree, Angela Fickes-Mountz, Eileen Flenner, Denise Fogelsanger, Zoila Garcia-Sanchez, Erika Henry, Melita Ramsey, Diana Reinert, Millyellen Strayer, and Brianna Thompson.

As Awaken continues to gather information from each of the regional bishops’ offices, we are excited to learn that currently more than 225 women (paid or volunteer) are serving in official ministry positions within congregations, chaplaincy, or other specific ministry assignments. That number has continued to grow significantly over the past five years. Of this group, thirteen women are now serving as lead or senior pastor and a significant number of women serve as co-pastors along with their husbands, primarily among our Hispanic sisters in Florida.

You can learn more about Awaken and find important ways to support our ministry at [awakennetwork.org](http://awakennetwork.org) or go to our Facebook page and “like” us. If you are a woman in ministry, consider joining our closed Facebook Group. Get to know your regional partner. Direct your comments or questions to a Leadership Team member.

Awaken does not take our mandate lightly. We are humbled and gratified to be an integral part of the ongoing mission of the Brethren in Christ Church. It is our heartfelt desire to continue to grow and find even better ways to engage, equip, and empower women in ministry. We envision the day when every woman who experiences a call to ministry will find her place to serve. When every young woman in college or seminary, and every mid-life career woman who leaves a job to answer God's call to full time ministry will be, not only hopeful, but confident there is a place for her to minister in the Church, the body of Christ.

**Awaken Leadership Team:** Pauline Peifer (Director), Heather Beaty, Jane Beachy, Isabel Morejon, Vicki Podjasek, Nick Ressler, Teddi Rodgers, Ryan Showalter, Jill Thompson, Bonnie Walker

Pauline Peifer  
*Director*

PAULINEPEIFER@GMAIL.COM

**ACTION:** *General Assembly accepted all Brethren in Christ U.S. reports.*



## **Part 3:**

# **Recommendations of General Conference Board (GCB)**

## **1. Confirmation of General Assembly 2018 Minutes**

Whereas General Conference Board is authorized by General Assembly to approve the minutes of General Assembly, it is hereby moved that General Assembly confirms the action of the General Conference Board in approving the minutes of General Assembly 2018.

**ACTION:** *General Conference voted to confirm the action of the General Conference Board in approving the minutes of General Conference 2018.*

## 2. Additions to the Articles of Faith and Doctrine

Whereas the 2016 and 2018 General Assemblies voted to repeal the Constitution of BIC U.S. because all the necessary information from the Constitution had been merged into the Bylaws, and

Whereas we desire to add additional sentences to the Articles of Faith and Doctrine that connect BIC U.S. to the historic Christian creeds and church history, and

Whereas the Bylaws of BIC U.S. require a vote of two successive General Assemblies to amend the Articles of Faith and Doctrine, and

Whereas the 2018 General Assembly approved the following amendment to the Articles of Faith and Doctrine,

The General Conference Board hereby recommends that the 2020 General Assembly also approves the following amendment to the Articles of Faith and Doctrine:

“As Brethren in Christ, we trace our beginnings from a group known as the River Brethren, which originated about 1778 in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Our forbearers stood in the stream of historic Christianity mediated through the Protestant Reformation, especially the Radical Reformation. They bore witness to the beliefs that set them apart by formulating a Confession of Faith. The first confessional statement of about 1780 and others that followed reflect the Pietistic and Anabaptist influences that have shaped our doctrinal understandings. Some 100 years later the Brethren in Christ adopted aspects of Wesleyan thought, which were incorporated into subsequent doctrinal statements.

Through the years we have reaffirmed and redefined our essential beliefs. In the 20th century, new doctrinal statements were adopted by General Conferences in 1937 and again in 1961. In 1986 we decided to give written expression to our current beliefs and life. This was done with sensitivity to and respect for our doctrinal heritage. We regard each previous doctrinal statement of the church as having its own integrity.”

**ACTION:** *This recommendation was adopted.*

### 3. Introduction to the Core Values

Whereas a section of the Doctrine of BIC U.S. in the *Manual of Doctrine and Government* contains the Core Values of BIC U.S., and

Whereas the section on the Core Values does not have an introduction, and

Whereas it was considered desirable to provide an introduction,

The General Conference Board hereby recommends that the 2020 General Assembly approves the following introduction to the Core Values for inclusion in the *Manual of Doctrine and Government*:

The Core Values of the Brethren in Christ Church were developed in May of 1999 by a group of 51 representatives gathered from throughout North America. Their goal was to distill our essential beliefs, stated in the Articles of Faith and Doctrine, and communicate them in a contemporary way using clear and accessible language. Ten concise statements were articulated and later adopted by the 2000 General Conference. In broad strokes, these ten statements convey the core convictions of our faith community—the values that touch our hearts, inspire our minds, and move us to action.

In recognition of their deep resonance among our national and international church family since their inception, these values were added to the Manual of Doctrine and Government by a vote of the 2016 BIC U.S. General Conference.

**ACTION:** *This recommendation was adopted.*

## 4. Amendments to the Introduction to the Statements of Christian Life and Practice

Whereas a section of the Doctrine of BIC U.S. in *Manual of Doctrine and Government* is titled, “Statements of Christian Life and Practice,” and

Whereas this section has an introduction, and

Whereas it is considered desirable to amend that introduction,

The General Conference Board hereby recommends that the 2020 General Assembly approves the following amendments to the introduction of the Statements of Christian Life and Practice:

Statements of Christian Life and Practice included in the BIC U.S. MDG are written positions approved by the General Assembly to provide clarity and guidance regarding specific concerns, topics, or issues, often for a particular time or context. Statements may focus on issues related to faithful discipleship within the Christian community, or issues related to the wider societal context.

~~Statements of Christian Life and Practice are secondary to the Articles of Faith and Doctrine and should address a specific issue for a specific time and context.~~ A Statement may be revised or deleted upon the recommendation of the GCB and upon approval by the General Assembly.

**ACTION:** *This recommendation was adopted.*

## 5. Amendments to the Bylaws of the Brethren in Christ U.S.

Whereas the Brethren in Christ U.S. has a *Manual of Doctrine and Government* (MDG) that contains statements and documents that express the doctrine and government of the Church, and

Whereas the incorporation documents and/or Bylaws of regional conferences and local congregations often refer to the *Manual of Doctrine and Government*, and

Whereas it is necessary from time to time to update the *Manual of Doctrine and Government* so that it continues to be current and relevant as the governing and guiding document of the Brethren in Christ U.S.,

Therefore, the General Conference Board hereby recommends that the 2020 General Assembly approves the following amendments to the Bylaws of BIC U.S.:

A. Bylaw 1.3 (page 34 in the 2018 MDG) be amended as follows:

- 1.3 The doctrine and governance of the BIC U.S., its Regional Conferences, and its congregations are stated in a *Manual of Doctrine and Government* (“MDG” or “the Manual”). The provisions in the MDG shall be construed in accordance with the law of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, without giving effect to conflict of law principles.

B. Bylaw 2.4.3 (page 36 in the 2018 MDG) be amended as follows:

- 2.4.3 Members of General Conference Board, ~~and~~ Leadership Council, and BIC U.S. Commissions.

C. Bylaw 2.4.4 (page 36 in the 2018 MDG) be amended as follows:

- 2.4.4 ~~Retired Assigned Ministers who had served in assigned roles for at least twenty years~~ Persons with a Retired Minister credential.

D. Bylaw 5.2.3.2 (page 45 in the 2018 MDG) be amended as follows:

- 5.2.3.2 ~~Implement and facilitate~~ Administer the ministerial credentialing functions of the BIC U.S. ~~by the issuing, renewal, or removal of ministerial credentials. Recommendations for credentialing shall be made to~~ on behalf of Leadership Council, which has authority to credential.

**ACTION:** *This recommendation was adopted.*

## **6. Boundary Change for the Great Lakes and Southeast Regional Conferences**

Whereas the Brethren in Christ congregations in the state of Tennessee are currently being overseen by the bishop of the Great Lakes Regional Conference, and a series of meetings has occurred with the pastors of these congregations, and

Whereas the congregations in Tennessee are supportive for the state of Tennessee to be included in the borders of the Great Lakes Conference, and

Whereas the board of directors of the Great Lakes Conference and the board of directors of the Southeast Conference have been consulted and have expressed a willingness for this realignment,

Therefore, the General Conference Board recommends that the boundary between the Southeast and Great Lakes Conferences be realigned to incorporate the state of Tennessee into the Great Lakes Conference.

**ACTION:** *This recommendation was adopted.*

## 7. Statement on Open Theism

Whereas there has been discussion in the Church for several years concerning the theological perspective known as “Open Theism” or “Openness Theology” and its compatibility with the Brethren in Christ Articles of Faith and Doctrine, and

Whereas the Leadership Council and the Commission on Ministry and Doctrine have studied the matter and have facilitated conversation about the matter across the Church, and

Whereas reports have been circulated in recent years to each of the Regional Conferences for discussion and feedback, and

Whereas a final report and concluding statement has been written and approved by the Commission on Ministry and Doctrine, the Leadership Council, and the General Conference Board, and

Whereas the final report and concluding statement was circulated in early 2020 to all the Regional Conferences,

The General Conference Board hereby recommends that the 2020 General Assembly adopts the Statement on Open Theism.

### *BIC U.S. Statement on Open Theism*

#### **Introduction**

This is a final report on the work of the Brethren in Christ U.S. (the Church) regarding the theological position termed Open Theism and the compatibility of Open Theism with the Articles of Faith and Doctrine (AFD) of the BIC U.S. This report has been approved by the Commission on Ministry and Doctrine, the Leadership Council, and the General Conference Board.

#### **Background, Process, and Learnings**

In recent years the question of Open Theism and its compatibility with the doctrine of the Brethren in Christ U.S. has been discussed across the Church. The important question was, “Is Open Theism compatible with the Brethren in Christ Articles of Faith and Doctrine?”

In considering this question, the Church has attempted to practice the BIC core value of community conversation and discernment in which we “value the Bible as God’s authoritative Word, study it together, and build our lives on its truth.” Thus, the conversation has included dialogue among individuals, leadership groups of the Church, some pastors and Church Boards, two seminars at the 2018 General Assembly, and a report shared and discussed at the 2019 annual meetings of the seven U.S. regional conferences. In this conversation the following were especially significant:

1. The Church strongly reiterated its continuing commitment to the authority of the Bible and to the Articles of Faith and Doctrine of the Church. At several points in the conversation the leadership of the Church issued statements that underscored this commitment and attempted to clarify anything that might have created uncertainty and/or confusion.



2. In some instances, the position of the Church and its commitment to the Bible and the Articles of Faith and Doctrine of the Church, as well as the views of others within the church, were misrepresented.
3. The conversation was significantly hampered by the lack of a single, consistent, and agreed-upon definition of Open Theism. Furthermore, it was also apparent that across the Church there is not a single, consistent, agreed-upon definition of other important theological words such as sovereignty, omniscience, omnipotence, and providence.
4. Given the multiplicity of definitions and understandings concerning these important theological terms, the Church reiterated its commitment to its historic practice of examining those who seek to become credentialed ministers of the Church in order to clearly understand what they believe as opposed to assuming what they believe based only on the terms and labels used.

### **Statement concerning Open Theism and the Brethren in Christ U.S.**

While we admit there are multiple definitions and explanations of Open Theism, it can be summarized as a theological position that attempts to explain the relationship between the Biblical revelation of the nature of God as sovereign and omniscient and the nature of humans as creatures with libertarian freewill. In attempting to explain what the Bible holds in tension, Open Theism goes beyond what the Bible clearly states.

BIC U.S. affirms the Bible as God's authoritative word. The BIC U.S. Articles of Faith and Doctrine are developed from our understanding of the Bible and state the following concerning the nature of God:

We believe in one sovereign, true, and living God, creator and preserver of all things. God knows all things, is all-powerful, and transcends time and space.

We continue to reaffirm this as the position of the BIC U.S. Any view or understanding, whether labeled Open Theism or not, that states Almighty God is not full and complete in His sovereignty, knowledge, power, and in His transcendence over space and time; but rather is in some way lacking or deficient in his knowledge of all things, is not compatible with our reading of the Bible or our Articles of Faith and Doctrine.

Further, the Brethren in Christ U.S. Articles of Faith and Doctrine state the following concerning the nature of humanity:

The image of God in each person includes the capacity to make moral choices. We can choose good or evil, to obey or disobey God. The freedom to choose makes us responsible for our decisions and liable for their consequences. We understand from Scripture that while God grants humanity this freedom of choice, God also knows the end from the beginning and in His wisdom and grace is working out His eternal purposes within human history.

We continue to reaffirm this as the position of the BIC U.S. Any view or understanding, whether labeled Open Theism or not, that states Almighty God has not freely and sovereignly chosen to create a world in which each person is made in the image of God with the

capacity and freedom to choose good or evil, to obey or disobey God, is not compatible with our reading of the Bible or our Articles of Faith and Doctrine.

The paradoxical nature of statements that simultaneously affirm God's sovereignty and foreknowledge along with human free will, is undeniable. We confess that paradoxes are common in Christian theology. For example, God is one and God is three, Jesus is fully divine and fully human, God knows all things and humans are fully free, and humans are in the image of God yet fallen and sinful. All are paradoxical, but true. We affirm these truths because of our commitment to doing theology in a way that remains grounded in the Bible, where we are convinced both sides of these paradoxes are affirmed without being explained.

Following the Bible's lead in this way, we are theologically comfortable replying, "I don't know," in answer to many of the questions pursued at great length in the history of systematic theology. We practice a theology that seeks a clarity of vision concerning the church in her connection to Jesus Christ and his mission of redemption. The Bible doesn't clearly explain how God's power and knowledge fit together with his gift to us of freedom. Rather, the Bible takes these things for granted as it focuses its readers on the question of what we, who have been given that freedom, will do to honor the all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-loving God who has given it to us. It is that better question which we recommend and which we are committed to pursuing together.

The Leadership Council and the Commission on Ministry and Doctrine shall continue to examine all persons seeking to become BIC U.S. credentialed ministers to ascertain if their views are compatible with our reading of and commitment to the Bible as God's authoritative Word and with the doctrine of BIC U.S. as contained in the Manual of Doctrine and Government.

Further, the Leadership Council and the Commission on Ministry and Doctrine shall also continue to examine all persons seeking to become BIC U.S. credentialed ministers to ascertain if their spirit and posture are compatible with the Church's desire that all ministers exemplify a gentle, humble, loving, gracious, and fervent quest for piety and obedience and that they will faithfully lead others in the same quest.

**ACTION:** *This recommendation was adopted.*

## 8. Name Change Recommendation

Whereas, the 2010 General Conference approved a recommendation from the Canadian Conference to initiate a process to consider a new denominational name and to bring a recommendation to the 2012 General Conference, and

Whereas, the name change study group conducted a study and subsequently unanimously recommended that the process should not be continued as less than one-fourth of the people who responded to the study supported a name-change, and

Whereas, the 2012 General Conference adopted the recommendation that the name-change study should be concluded but also recommended that the matter should be revisited at least two more times, at four-year intervals, and

Whereas, the 2016 General Conference approved a recommendation from General Conference Board and the Leadership Council that no change should be made to the denominational name, and

Whereas, four years have passed since the 2016 decision and Leadership Council and General Conference Board have discussed the matter again and have concluded not to recommend a denominational name-change,

Therefore, the General Conference Board recommends that no change to the name Brethren in Christ should be made at this time, and that the Church should continue to be known by its legal name General Conference of the Brethren in Christ, doing business as Brethren in Christ U.S. and BIC U.S.

**ACTION:** *This recommendation was adopted.*

## 9. Report on Project 250

Whereas there has been discussion across the Church over the last two years about the priorities that should guide the work of BIC U.S. in the years leading up to 2028 (the 250th birthday of the Brethren in Christ), and

Whereas Regional Conferences and BIC U.S. World Missions solicited and received input and suggestions from pastors and leaders across the Church, and

Whereas the Leadership Council received the feedback from across the Church and has worked to identify a common vision, common themes, and common priorities, and

Whereas the Leadership Council has prayerfully considered the counsel of the Church and has written a report and desires that the Brethren in Christ U.S. commit to the strategic priorities in the report to guide the Church in its work in the years leading to 2028,

Therefore, the General Conference Board hereby recommends the adoption of the Project 250 report.

### *Project 250 Report*

#### **Inspired by the Past**

Ever since our beginnings not too far from the bank of the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania around 1778, the Brethren in Christ have sought to be an alternative biblical community with Jesus at its center.

Carlton Wittlinger, in his seminal history of the BIC, *Quest for Piety and Obedience*, notes three emphases of the earliest River Brethren: 1) a focus on JESUS and his teachings, with the emphases to know, love, and follow him; 2) a focus on SCRIPTURE, and going directly to the Word of God for guidance; and 3) a focus on COMMUNITY, emphasizing corporate rather than individual decision-making (*Quest for Piety and Obedience*, p.25).

Our streams of influence began as children of the Radical Reformation in the 17th Century. As Anabaptists, our forefathers and mothers left Europe as a persecuted and marginalized people. Their commitment to a literal interpretation of the Bible, and to living out the ethic of Jesus, to believer's baptism, non-violence and the separation of church and state, led them to seek shelter in the New World in the mid-1700s.

Once established in Pennsylvania, our founders came to embrace the teachings of German Pietists, who emphasized the experience of personal conversion in a heart strangely warmed by God's love.

A century later, the BIC were impacted by the teachings of John Wesley and the Wesleyan Holiness revival. Through this influence, the church embraced the deeper, fuller sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

By the 1950s, the BIC again sought renewal, this time in the American Evangelical movement. The BIC practice of non-conformity sometimes fell into legalism, and the Church struggled to retain its children as well as win new people to Christ. The BIC became

energized by the evangelistic fervor and commitment to prayer of the Evangelical churches around them. The basic tenets of Evangelicalism - the primacy of the Bible, of personal conversion, of the saving work of Jesus on the cross, and of sharing our faith in word and deed – all resonated with a church in need of and desiring a fresh touch of God's Spirit.

Carried along by these streams of influence throughout its history, the BIC have always sought to build on what God has called them to be, and to live forward into what they have yet to become. In the words of church historians Luke Keefer and Owen Alderfer, the BIC have always been revivalists - open to new movements of the Spirit as a community of believers called to follow Jesus.

## **Positioned for the Future**

For almost two-and-a half centuries, we have sought to live simply and with integrity as a committed community of believers, putting the Bible first, while keeping Jesus at the center of all we do and say.

Our highest priority continues to be following Jesus in our commitment to the Great Commandment (loving God and loving neighbor – Matt. 22:34-40) and the Great Commission (making disciples of all nations – Matt. 28:18-20). We have always held the conviction that *doing* faith is just as important as *believing* faith, and that *piety* that does not lead to *obedience* is really no faith at all.

Jesus has called us to more than just the polarized, bifurcated world in which we live today – a world that divides 'conservatives' and 'liberals' like some modern day sheep and goats. More than ever, we believe that as sisters and brothers in Christ, we should join our Heavenly Father in the task of forming a prophetic, peaceable Kingdom that is not of this world - an alternative biblical community centered on Jesus that speaks of nothing but allegiance to the One who died for our sins.

Today, just a few years away from celebrating our 250th anniversary in 2028, we continue to live forward into what Jesus has for us in the present days and the coming years. Having synthesized various streams of influence in the past, here are some guiding priorities we see propelling us into the future.

### **1. Reaffirming our identity as a community of Christ-followers**

*First and foremost, as Brethren in Christ we are called to be a covenant community of Christ-followers who value wholehearted obedience to Christ Jesus through the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit.*

For us as BIC, our identity in Christ precedes every other aspect of who we are and what we are called to do as God's people today. We would ask, in what ways can we strengthen our identity as a covenant community of Christ followers who are living in wholehearted obedience to him?

We are committed to developing and implementing plans and strategies that will engage BIC U.S. congregations in learning, understanding, living, and teaching what it means to live as communities of Christ-followers. This involves keeping Jesus at our center, going directly to the Word of God for guidance, and teaching our core values as guiding principles for life and practice.

## **2. Making lifelong disciples**

*As a community of Christ-followers we are called to make disciples of all people. Therefore, we prioritize reaching others with the good news of Jesus and helping them to become his lifelong disciples.*

We live in a post-Christian, post-churched world, where the number of people who claim no religious affiliation are significantly on the rise. We would ask ourselves, in what ways are BIC U.S. congregations, each in their unique ministry contexts, prioritizing reaching others with the good news of Jesus and helping them to become his lifelong disciples? What are the core practices that will help a person who is far from Jesus engage in a lifetime of devotion to him?

We are committed to assisting congregations in developing and implementing strategies for both reaching others with the good news of Jesus (evangelism) and helping people become lifelong disciples of Christ (discipleship). We will help each congregation to evaluate the extent to which they have or have not prioritized helping people become lifelong followers of Jesus, and aid them in assessing the strategies they are implementing in pursuit of this priority.

## **3. Multiplying missional congregations, movements and leaders**

*As we seek to be a community of Christ-followers who are making lifelong disciples, central to our mission is (a) to help congregations to thrive by being healthy and reproducing; (b) training, equipping, and empowering individuals to be servant leaders; and (c) to cultivate and multiply sites of missional vitality that draw people into a lifelong relationship of knowing, loving, and following Jesus.*

What are the critical factors that enable local congregations to thrive in their local contexts within a global world? How can we best equip and empower vibrant servant leaders who will positively contribute to the pursuit of our missional priorities?

We are committed to developing and implementing initiatives to help existing congregations of all sizes to be healthy, thriving, and reproducing. As well, we will foster initiatives that call and equip a diverse cadre of leaders to be increasingly healthy and fruitful. All of this has as its purpose to encourage the development of new, creative and contextually-relevant models of being the church in today's quickly changing world.

## **4. Increasing global awareness and impact**

*We desire that every BIC U.S. congregation will increase in global and cross-cultural awareness, understanding, and impact, and that BIC U.S. world missions will be the primary ministry through which BIC U.S. congregations and individuals engage in this work.*

We would ask, are each of our local congregations doing their part to engage the command of Jesus to make disciples of all nations, and to commit themselves to cross-cultural church planting? Do we demonstrate a whole-hearted belief that people of different ethnicities and cultures are equal in their ability to bring glory to God?

We invite every BIC U.S. congregation to engage in reciprocal cross-cultural relationships in their local, regional and global communities. As Teresa of Avila once famously said, "Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes

through which he looks compassionately on this world. Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which he blesses all the world.”

## **5. Growing to reflect the demographic realities of our communities**

*We acknowledge that our communities are diverse. We desire that our congregations will increasingly reflect the makeup of the contexts in which they minister, and that our denominational leadership will grow to reflect the wide variety of gifted and qualified persons (men, women, ethnicities) that comprise our congregations.*

We would ask, what are the best ways for congregations to reach underrepresented people and groups in their communities? In the same way, how can BIC U.S. facilitate more diverse representation in all of its leadership structures?

We are committed to developing and utilizing all available tools to assist congregations in better understanding their social and cultural contexts and implement all appropriate ministry strategies. Simultaneously, we will work to assess current levels of diversity in all BIC U.S. leadership structures and strive to employ strategies for significant improvement in the representation on all denominational leadership teams.

## **Conclusion**

When a handful of devout young Brethren decided to baptize one another in the Conoy Creek in Central Pennsylvania in or around 1778, they set in motion a movement that they never could have imagined would be in existence almost two-and-a-half centuries later. Today, we the Brethren in Christ U.S., continue to re-envision what it means for us to be unapologetic followers of Jesus in today’s quickly changing world. Rooted in the rich soil of our past, we are positioned to live forward with hope and anticipation into the glorious future that God has for us in the days and years to come.

**ACTION:** *This recommendation was adopted.*

# 10. Nominating Committee

Whereas the General Conference Board is designated as the nominating committee for General Assembly, and

Whereas the General Conference Board has done its work of nominating individuals for the various positions required to be filled for the upcoming biennium,

Therefore, the General Conference Board recommends the acceptance of the nominating committee report as presented to this General Assembly and that the national director cast a unanimous ballot for all nominees as presented:

## A. Appointment of General Conference Board Members

MEMBER (OF)	PRESENT	NOMINEE	TERM EXPIRATION - NUMBER
Allegheny	Sherri Flohr	<b>Sherri Flohr</b>	2024 — 1st*
Atlantic	Adam Forry		2022 — 2nd
Great Lakes	David Espinosa	<b>Abby Kean</b>	2024 — 1st
Midwest	Jeff Piepho	<b>Ron Kramer</b>	2024 — 1st
Pacific	Tom Law	<b>Tom Law</b>	2024 — 1st*
Southeast	Carlos Alfaro	<b>Rachel Diaz</b>	2022 — 2nd
Susquehanna	Gary Lebo**		2022 — 1st
At large	Rachel Diaz	<b>Jose Rodriguez</b>	2024 — 1st
At large	Emerson Leshner	<b>Emerson Leshner</b>	2022 — 1st*^
At large	Ron Kramer	<b>Brian Mbuu</b>	2024 — 1st
At large	Cathy Musser		2022 — 3rd
At large	Kevin Noll	<b>Kevin Noll</b>	2024 — 1st*
At large	Julie Stout	<b>Julie Stout</b>	2024 — 2nd
At large	New position	<b>Nicole Airth</b>	2022 — 1st^
At large	New position	<b>Dulcimer Brubaker</b>	2022 — 1st^
Ex officio	Alan Robinson		N/A

\*These members' previous terms were 2 years to help stagger term-ending dates among the board. They are now eligible for a first full 4-year term starting in 2020. They will be eligible to serve for three consecutive four-year terms, not to exceed a total of 14 years consecutively.

\*\*Deceased

^Nominated for a 2-year term to help stagger term-ending dates among the board. Will be eligible for first full 4-year term in 2022.





### **Nicole Airth, member-at-large**

Nicole Airth, of the Pacific Conference, is a General Conference Board nominee as a member at large.

Nicole was born into the Brethren in Christ family and has served the church her whole life. She and her husband, Steve, planted GracePoint BIC in 2005 where they continue as the pastoral couple. She has been active in her local church by serving on the worship team and ministering to

all age groups from children through young adults.

Nicole has served on multiple Pacific Conference boards and teams, most recently the Multiplication Team, which evaluates and equips potential church planting couples.

Nicole graduated with her master's degree in College Counseling and Student Development in May of 2019. She currently works at Azusa Pacific University as a Program Manager for the RN to BSN program. She has a heart for students who have been battling an oppressive system their whole lives and searches for ways to break down barriers that keep her students from being successful.

In her free time, she enjoys reading, fishing, and traveling with her family. She has made it her life's mission to enjoy a Starbucks Caramel Macchiato in as many places as possible. She and her husband Steve, live in Ontario, California with their four children, Isaiah, Luke, Andrew, and Abbie.



### **Dulcimer Hope Brubaker, member-at-large**

Dulcimer Hope Brubaker, of the Susquehanna Conference, is a General Conference Board nominee as a member at large.

Dulcimer (Dulci) is a member of Dillsburg BIC, where she has attended since 1995. She began following Jesus in late childhood and was blessed to begin discipleship in the context of the youth group there. A few years into her English

studies at Messiah College, Dulci married Jason, the clever guy she admired from youth group. At Messiah, she was privileged to be one of the last students to have E. Morris Sider, Al Long, and Merle Brubaker as professors, and she traces much of her love for the greater BIC Church and its heritage back to them. After graduation, Dulci worked for several years as a writer and editor in the BIC Communications Office, managing the publication of Seek magazine from 2005-2007.

The Brubakers lived in the city of Pittsburgh for four years, where Jason completed his education and Dulci worked as a writer and became a stay-at-home mom. After moving back to Central PA and rejoining her home congregation, Dulci continued freelance writing and editing for the denomination for several years.

As her busy family life has allowed, Dulci has served on Dillsburg BIC's Ministry Council,

launched a life group of young families, and occasionally taught Sunday school. She frequently leads worship through music.

Dulci and Jason have four children under 12, whom they homeschool in the context of a vibrant classical Christian community. She is an enthusiastic supporter of local food producers and loves to cook from their bounty for friends, family, and neighbors who share their table.



### **Rachel Diaz, Southeast Conference**

Rachel Diaz, of the Southeast Conference, began serving on General Conference Board in 2014 as a member-at-large. Rachel is transitioning from a member-at-large to the member from the Southeast Conference.

Since childhood, Rachel has actively participated in developing the South Florida cluster of BIC churches.

A member of Iglesia Rescate in Hialeah, Fla., Rachel previously volunteered in a number of Brethren in Christ congregations with worship, youth work, small groups, translation, and legal assistance. She also served for four years on the BIC Board for World Missions. She continues to be an active member of her local church where she serves in various capacities.

Rachel's unique perspective as a bilingual, urban attorney is an asset both to the churches in South Florida and to the larger denomination. It is her prayer that the BIC U.S. would become a prominent presence in its surrounding society — strengthened, united, and growing to better reach out into the world for the sake of God's Kingdom.

Rachel and her husband, Hamlet, live in South Florida with their two daughters.



### **Sherri Flohr, Allegheny Conference**

Sherri Flohr, representing the Allegheny Conference, began serving on General Conference Board in 2018.

Sherri has led at national, regional, and local levels of the Brethren in Christ U.S.: At the national level, Sherri serves as facilitator for the BIC Directed Study Program and has been a member of the BIC Equipping for Ministry team.

For the Allegheny Conference, she serves on the board of directors, as well as the discipleship council. She has also served on bishop selection for the conference. Sherri has led young adult, youth, and ministry programs and events for Allegheny Conference and Roxbury Holiness Camp, where she was a director and committee member.

Having grown up in the Chambersburg BIC Church, Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, Sherri was on the board of Christian education, a member of the personnel committee, and director of VBS. Today, Sherri participates in Five Forks Church, Waynesboro, Pennsylvania,

where she was director for youth ministries, as well as on the church board, worship committee, and Sunday school teaching team. She led several international mission trips and continues to serve in various ways at Five Forks Church.

Sherri has a Master of Arts in global leadership from Fuller Seminary's School of Intercultural Studies and a bachelor's degree in Christian education and music at Messiah College. Having benefited from leadership training in the BIC U.S. Church, Sherri has a vision to see the BIC U.S. continue to emphasize developing and equipping leaders to live out their full potential in Christ.

Sherri, and her husband, Mark, reside in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. They have two adult children.



### **Abby Kean, Great Lakes Conference**

Abby Kean is a General Conference Board nominee for the Great Lakes Conference.

A proud native of Milwaukee, WI, Abby has been a part of New Vision BIC just outside Milwaukee since 2010. Having come to know Jesus personally through the ministry of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship early in college, Abby's adult life has always been framed by an understanding that ministry

and missional living is central to the Christian life regardless of vocation. Though active in Bible studies, worship ministry, and global missions work since college, she sees her vocation as a high school history and theater teacher as her primary missionary assignment.

Since joining New Vision and the BIC (which she met through a family at her school), Abby has been a regular part of the musical worship team, a facilitator for large group gatherings, and a committed member of weekly Life Group; as well as a member of the Church Board/Leadership Team since 2013. She has also served as the congregation's Director of Missions, helping to lead three summer teams at the Navajo BIC Mission and participating on a Vision & Prayer Team New Vision sent to visit BICWM's workers in Thailand in 2016.

When not in the classroom, working on the next school play, or "something with church" Abby looks forward to video calls with out of town friends and family, game nights, and long walks outside listening to a good audiobook.



### **Ron Kramer, Midwest Conference**

Ron Kramer, from the Midwest Conference, began serving on General Conference Board in 2018 as a member-at-large. Ron is transitioning from a member-at-large to the member from the Midwest Conference.

Since 2013, Ron has been an associate and counseling pastor at CrossRoads Church, Salina, Kansas. He completed the BIC Directed Study Program in 2015 and was ordained in

2016. Ron has led the Celebrate Recovery and men's ministry, as well as teaching adult Sunday school and serving on the CrossRoads board. He also serves on the Midwest Regional Conference board of directors. Ron holds a B.S in Psychology and a M.S. in Counseling & Human Development from Troy University, Alabama.

Prior to his leadership at CrossRoads Church, for 27 years Ron was a corporate manager and trainer for Blue Beacon International, Inc. Previous to this he served as a nuclear missile officer in the U.S. Army, a trucking company manager, and a community mental health clinician.

Active in his community, Ron serves, or has served on, numerous community and non-profit boards, where the mission is to address poverty, education, healthcare, or the arts. He served for many years with Gideon's International, holding numerous state officer positions. Currently, Ron is president of the Salina Rescue Mission, and a chaplain for the Salina Regional Health Center.

Ron has compassion for those inside and outside the Church who have not embraced the extreme joy and security available to them through following Jesus. He appreciates how our Core Values resonate with many disaffected and disconnected Christians and nonbelievers. Ron and his wife, Jane, live in Salina, Kansas.



### **Tom Law, Pacific Conference**

Tom Law, representing the Pacific Conference, began serving on General Conference Board in 2018.

An optometrist for 40 years, Tom led as vision department chairperson for two large medical groups in Southern California, while maintaining an active clinical practice for 23 years. He took over a private practice 17 years ago where he works full time. Passionate about sharing his faith, Tom is

grateful his vocation often enables him to share the amazing grace found in Christ Jesus.

Tom serves as leadership board chairperson at Solid Ground Church, Alta Loma, California, where he has been a member since 1981. There he also serves as deacon treasurer and life group leader. And over the years at Solid Ground, Tom has assisted on various church boards and has been a worship and Awana leader, as well as a Sunday school superintendent and teacher. In connection with Azusa Pacific University, he has participated on medical missions trips to Mexico.

Tom completed a Bachelor of Science in biological science from the University of California, Irvine. At the Southern California College of Optometry, he earned a second bachelor's degree in visual science and his doctorate in optometry.

Enjoying dialoguing with people of many backgrounds, Tom believes God has gifted us with heart, intellect, and energy in order to share our faith and to engage in God's story. Living in Rancho Cucamonga, California, Tom and his wife, Kimberly Bert, have seven children between them and three grandchildren.



### **Emerson Leshner, member-at-large**

Emerson Leshner, from the Atlantic Conference, began serving on General Conference Board in 2018 as a member-at-large.

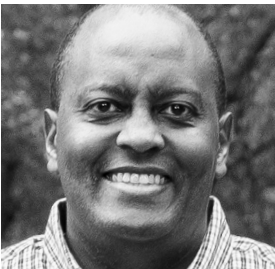
Emerson provides leadership and organizational-development consulting for faith-based organizations through Mennonite Health Services. He was also senior vice president there for five years. Prior to his service at Mennonite Health

Services, for 18 years, Emerson led Messiah Lifeways as president and CEO.

Chair of the board for the Brethren in Christ Historical Society, Emerson has also served on the Messiah College board of trustees for over 15 years. Emerson has a doctorate in psychology from Saybrook University, a master's in marriage and family therapy from Fuller Seminary, and a bachelor's degree from Messiah College.

For 18 years, he participated at Grantham Church, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, where he was chair of the church board. He now attends Harrisburg BIC Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The three BIC U.S. Core Values that most resonate with Emerson are following Jesus, as Christ is at the center of our faith; pursuing peace, as Christ's call to seek peace with others is needed now more than ever; and belonging to the community of faith, because, if we are to flourish as God intended, we are called to social connection.

Emerson and his wife, Ruth, a psychologist and partner in a behavioral health practice, live in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, and have two adult children.



### **Brian Mbuu, member-at-large**

Brian Mbuu, Atlantic Conference, is a General Conference Board nominee as a member at large.

Born and raised in Kenya, Brian came to the United States to attend Messiah College and graduated with a bachelor's degree in Business Administration. For more than 20 years, Brian has worked in various human resources roles. He currently works in State Government supporting the 14

Pennsylvania state-owned universities in the areas of human resources and labor relations. His role includes working with teams to negotiate, implement, and administer statewide labor agreements.

As a member of Harrisburg BIC Church since 2003, he has held various roles including having the privilege to serve as a member of the church board, serving as chair of the personnel committee, as well as volunteering with various ministries.

Living simply is one of the core values that motivates him to live, love, and serve the broader community. This value embodies the life of Jesus Christ and encourages us to strive for dependence on God and service to others.

Brian and his wife, Joela, live in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania with their two daughters.





### **Kevin Noll, member-at-large**

Kevin Noll, from the Atlantic Conference, began serving on General Conference Board in 2018 as a member-at-large.

Since 1998, Kevin has served as director of business services at Paxton Ministries, a nonprofit in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, that provides affordable housing and support services to adults who are challenged with poverty, mental illness, and intellectual disabilities. At Paxton Ministries, Kevin

has responsibility for the fiscal management of the entire organization, including accounts receivable and accounts payable, payroll and benefits, budget, and annual audit, while also managing human resources and information technology infrastructure. In 2009, he played a key role in the startup of Paxton Cleaning Solutions, a subsidiary of Paxton Ministries, and he continues to oversee its management.

A member of New Hope Church, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, for 20 years, Kevin has served on the leadership team and has supervised children and youth ministries. He currently serves in the high school youth ministry.

He is grateful for his upbringing on a Lancaster County farm, where he cultivated a strong work ethic, an ability to seek practical solutions, and a deep desire to serve others with the love of Jesus Christ. Kevin obtained a Bachelor of Science in business administration from Eastern University.

Kevin and his wife, Jennifer, live with their two children, Elijah and Rebecca, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. As the parent of two teenagers, he is particularly grateful for the way our denomination supports and desires to raise up the next generation for Christ.



### **Jose Rodriguez, member-at-large**

Jose Rodriguez, Southeast Conference, is a General Conference Board nominee as a member at large.

Born in Cuba, Jose came to faith in Christ as a child and became heavily involved in the first Cuban BIC mission congregation, the Cuatro Caminos Church under Pastor Juana Garcia. After sensing a call to pastoral ministry and attending seminary, he would later serve as pastor of that

church for two years. In 1989, he and his family moved to Miami, Fl. where he has served in pastoral ministry ever since; most recently providing oversight to the Esmirna congregation, which he started in 1998.

In addition to serving on the Commission on Ministry and Doctrine and the Southeast Conference Board of Directors, Jose founded PEACE CDC, Inc., a nonprofit organization that provides afterschool and summer camp programs throughout Miami-Dade County for approximately 250 children year-round.

Jose and his wife, Lourdes, have two adult children, Madai and Josue.

**B. Confirmation of Brethren in Christ Foundation Board Members**

<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>NOMINEE</b>	<b>TERM EXPIRATION - NUMBER</b>
Karl Brummer	<b>Karl Brummer</b>	2024 — 2nd
Anler Morejon		2022 — 2nd
Rod Musser		2022 — 3rd
Ron Niesley	<b>Ron Niesley</b>	2024 — 3rd
William Strausbaugh		2023 — 1st
Chad Wenger		2022 — 1st
Alan Robinson		N/A
Julie Stout		N/A

**ACTION:** *This recommendation was adopted.*

## **Part 4:**

# **Covenant & Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Reports**



## **A. Lifeline Ministries Women's Shelter Inc., Upland, Calif. (Covenant)**

As a covenant organization with BIC U.S., we are thankful for God's provision to Pacific Lifeline through your financial and prayer support as we transition families from homelessness to self-sufficiency. Families like Wendy's ...

Thirteen years of drug abuse seemed to have destroyed Wendy's dreams. Her four children had been taken away. While she couldn't redo the years drugs had stolen, her resolve to create a better future led her to Pacific Lifeline.

After completing rehabilitation, Wendy got a job and was reunited with her two younger children, yet she lacked the resources to gain stability. They moved into a motel room, knowing she would be homeless once her funds ran dry.

Instead, Wendy and her two children moved into Pacific Lifeline in April 2019, and she began to work on reuniting with her older children and finding a home. Our therapy team provided parenting education and worked with the two older daughters as they prepared to transition into the family. Wendy continued working her twelve-step program and got a sponsor for accountability. She worked full-time, and our case manager helped her create a budget that would allow her to support her family. Wendy found an apartment and moved out of Pacific Lifeline on January 1, 2020.

Through our covenant relationship, you are part of the supportive circle that our residents and former residents like Wendy call 'family.' Many have lost all biological family support; it means the world to them to know they once again have a family.

### **Snapshot of 2019 Services:**

- 7 women received weekly case management, individual therapy, and group therapy sessions.
- 14 children received weekly tutoring and individual therapy, and participated in weekly group activities.
- 7 women participated in life-skills training.
- Of the seven families served, three moved into permanent housing, three continued to live in the shelter in 2020, and one was dismissed.
- Two families (two women, three children) live in permanent homes on our property, with reduced rent and supportive services.
- 64 children received back-to-school supplies and clothing.
- 33 Extended Care families had access to food, clothing, household items, basic necessities, therapy, Thanksgiving food, Christmas gifts, & community resources.

In closing, we thank Ken Hoke for his many years of serving as Pacific Lifeline's board chair. We are grateful for his prayerful leadership.

Carmen Hall  
*Executive Director*

PACIFICLIFELINE@EARTHLINK.NET

## **B. Mennonite Central Committee (U.S.) (MOU)**

In 2020, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) turns 100 years old! The Brethren in Christ (BIC) Church in the U.S. has formally been part of the MCC story for 70 years.

MCC was formed when representatives of various Mennonite and Mennonite Brethren groups met in July 1920 in Elkhart, Indiana, and pledged to aid hungry people, including Mennonites, in southern Russia (present-day Ukraine). The first feeding operations began on March 16, 1922, at Khortitsa. MCC sent a shipment of 25 tractors and plows to southern Russia in June 1922.

### **Early on**

In the late 1930s, BIC leaders were contacting national government officials, seeking an alternative service mechanism for conscientious objectors. BIC leaders learned that a group of Mennonites, Church of the Brethren and Friends was doing the same, and members of the BIC Peace, Relief and Service (PRS) committee connected with MCC in February 1940. Eventually, MCC administered Civilian Public Service (CPS) on behalf of the church, including the BIC Church. In CPS, “work of national importance” was performed by nearly 12,000 Anabaptist and other conscientious objectors between 1941 and 1947, of whom 136 were BIC.

Meanwhile, at BIC’s June 1940 General Conference meeting, PRS reported on its developing connections with MCC. Conference recommended that churches support MCC’s relief work. MCC sought BIC personnel to participate in that work. In 1941, Jesse W. Hoover, from Union Grove Brethren in Christ Church in Nappanee, Indiana, went to France and served for a number of months among war refugees.<sup>1</sup>

Another example of BICs who served with MCC is Elsie Bechtel, a member of Valley Chapel in East Canton, Ohio. Bechtel worked with MCC in 1944 at a state hospital in Howard, Rhode Island. From 1945 to 1947, she was an MCCer in France, much of the time with Secours Mennonite Américain aux Enfants (American Mennonite Aid to Children). Committed to the doctrine of nonresistance, she held that this conviction should lead to positive action. Bechtel found relief work to be an avenue for expressing God’s love. “Curing hate by love may seem like a wintry task,” she said in a speech in 1945 to other relief work candidates at Goshen (Indiana) College, “but we can pour on love as recklessly and with as great abandon as the geranium pours out color and brightness, for our God is the God of love and there is no limit to his supply.”<sup>2</sup>

### **Through the years**

By 1954, C.N. Hostetter, president of Messiah Bible College, was chair of MCC’s executive committee. Harriet Sider Bicksler, Ruth Leshner and Gwen White have served in similar leadership roles with MCC in the U.S. Wilmer Heisey served as MCC U.S. executive secretary from 1982 to 1989.

In 1962, David Climenhaga was bishop of the BIC Church in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and Northern Rhodesia (now part of Zambia). He also was general superintendent of BIC missions there. To those roles, he added the task of coordinator for South

Central Africa of MCC's new Teachers Abroad Program (TAP). Through TAP, hundreds of teachers were placed in church-run secondary and teacher training colleges, first in newly independent African countries and later elsewhere. The first orientation for TAP participants took place at Messiah College in Grantham (now Mechanicsburg), Pennsylvania.

In 1982, after initially denying the request, the U.S. government granted MCC permission to ship school kits to Cambodia (then called Kampuchea). More than 96,000 school kits – prepared by Canada and U.S. BIC and other church groups – were eventually shipped to schools. Indian and Indonesian churches also contributed school kits through MCC.

In 1993, MCC provided a grant to the BIC Church in Zimbabwe to start the AIDS Education and Counselling Project in southern Zimbabwe. The project sought to boost awareness of AIDS, recruit and train volunteers for home-based patient care, and offer spiritual support to AIDS patients and their families. Also, responding to a BIC Church call, MCC provided \$2,650 for seminars for leadership training in Zimbabwe and other African countries.

Monsoon rains in August 2017 killed at least 1,246 people and displaced more than 1.7 million in Nepal, India and Bangladesh. In Nepal, MCC and Brethren in Community Welfare Society (BICWS) partnered to provide food assistance and tarps for shelter to 700 families. MCC and BICWS supported 323 families with home reconstruction, repairs of wells and fisheries, and projects to increase vegetable crops and income from kitchen gardens.

## Today

BICs and MCC continue to partner today. Rachel Diaz is an immigration attorney who attends Iglesia Rescate BIC congregation in Hialeah, Florida. Since 2005, Diaz has worked with MCC East Coast, serving those in need of legal representation with immigration matters in BIC and other Anabaptist churches. In Miami and New York City, MCC East Coast works with such churches to provide services, education and advocacy related to immigration. The efforts include consultations, court representation, application assistance, education and immigration law updates. More information on MCC's immigration work can be found at [mcc.org/learn/what/categories/immigration](https://mcc.org/learn/what/categories/immigration).

In Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe, Cyclone Idai made landfall on March 15, 2019. MCC, the BIC Church in Mozambique, and other partners provided food assistance, toiletries and supplies to more than 11,000 people in Mozambique. MCC and the BIC Church in Malawi provided maize flour, beans, plastic tarps, relief kits and more to 500 households in Malawi. "The food relief will really make a difference in our lives," said Rose Innocent, mother of five, in Malawi. "Please, pass on this message of our gratitude to people who have sent us this food assistance." The joint response in Malawi continued into early 2020.

For more than 10 years, Upland (California) Brethren in Christ Church members have sewn cloth bags for kits, collected basic school supplies and packed school kits to send via MCC to children in need. In 2019 they again broke their congregation's record and donated 903 kits to MCC. Since 2011, the church has donated 3,867 school kits in this

way, and plans to continue doing so. “We feel good about giving to MCC because we know it is an efficient conduit for sending help to so many in need,” said Allen Vanderbilt in 2018, a member at Upland. Visit [mcc.org/get-involved/kits](http://mcc.org/get-involved/kits) for information on how you or your church or other group can make kits and comforters.

Finally, Manor Church in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, is a key site for the national celebration of MCC’s centennial – Celebration 2020: MCC at 100 – on Saturday, October 17. After a day of activities in Ephrata and Akron, Manor Church hosts an evening worship service. Learn more at [mcc.org/centennial](http://mcc.org/centennial).

“Thank you, our Brethren in Christ partners, for being an essential part of who MCC is,” said J Ron Byler, MCC U.S. executive director. “At Manor Church in October, we want to thank God for leading in the past and present and continue to seek God’s direction for the future. To anticipate doing so with the BICs and all of our supporting churches that week-end and beyond is a blessing. May God continue to bless BIC’s other ministries as well.”

Gwen White

*Brethren in Christ Representative to MCC U.S.*

GWENMWHITE@GMAIL.COM

1. Details in this paragraph and the previous paragraph are from Nancy R. Heisey, “Brethren in Christ Participation in MCC: Integral Part or Burden?” in E. Morris Sider, ed., *Brethren in Christ History & Life*, Vol. XVIII, No. 2, Grantham, PA: Brethren in Christ Historical Society, August 1995, pp. 178-180.

2. Quote is from Elsie Bechtel, “Why We Should Support Relief Service,” as printed in *Evangelical Visitor*, July 16, 1945, p. 5, re-printed in M. J. Heisey, *Peace & Resistance: Tracing the Brethren in Christ Peace Witness through Three Generations*, Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 2003, p. 151. Other information in this paragraph comes from M. J. Heisey, pp. 150-152.

## C. Messiah University, Mechanicsburg, Pa. (Covenant)

The spring 2020 semester ended in a most unusual way due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I am deeply grateful for the significant and swift adjustments our faculty and employees made for the benefit of our students and for the health and safety of our community. They demonstrated that it is the people of Messiah that make our institution strong—quickly revising pedagogy and courses to move our entire spring and summer curriculum online—coming to campus to care for our remaining residential students—finding alternative placements for student teaching or clinical assignments at both the undergraduate and graduate levels—and successfully adjusting to working from home. While the spring semester was not what any of us imagined or wanted, we are now working diligently to ensure a safe, meaningful start to the fall 2020 academic year.

On June 1, I announced that Messiah University will be reopening in August for an on-campus, in-person start to its undergraduate fall session. Campus administrators and educators have been working diligently to develop and implement Messiah's reopening strategy. We are collaborating with local healthcare systems and authorities on a reopening plan that places health and safety at the forefront, focuses on optimal student learning—and complies with state, CDC, and other public health standards. Faculty will soon begin their training for building effective face-to-face/remote courses.

Fall 2020 undergraduate enrollment remains strong. Currently we are 9 students ahead of our enrollment goal (at 629 first-years and 74 transfers) and 59 ahead of our revised budget goal. On the first day of course registration, 572 first-years successfully registered! In May, we hosted our first virtual open house with over 330 students registered. The School of Graduate Studies continues to have strong enrollment and continues to add new in-demand graduate programs including a post-baccalaureate PDE teaching certification, a post-master's DNP program (nursing leadership), a new MBA concentration in healthcare management, an M.A. in healthcare leadership, and a nursing administration dual MSN-MBA degree program. Newly-launched adult degree programs in business and nursing are also being marketed to reach new degree-seeking populations and extend our mission to encourage learning for life.

Dr. Todd Allen, Vice President for Diversity Affairs has been a much sought-after communicator, both regionally and nationally, on the topic of racism and reconciliation in recent days as we witness protests and unrest. Together, we authored a joint statement on reconciliation underscoring our commitment to call out injustice and work toward justice as commanded in Scripture.

The University Implementation Team continues to work to prepare for our transition from college to university on July 1, 2020. In addition to revealing the new Messiah University logo and a refreshed visual identity palette, we will launch several social media announcements and videos to mark this important occasion! I remain grateful for the prayers and support of those who hold Messiah dear and help us fulfill our critical work of educating men and women of all ages in sharpening intellect, deepening Christian faith, and inspiring action.

Kim S. Phipps  
*President*

KPHIPPS@MESSIAH.EDU

## **D. Messiah Lifeways, Mechanicsburg, Pa. (Covenant)**

As Messiah Lifeways nears 125 years after our founding as Messiah Rescue & Benevolent Home, we remain grateful for the deep roots and connections to our Anabaptist heritage. All of us at Messiah Lifeways truly appreciate the many brothers and sisters in Christ who support our mission and ministry through their ongoing financial and prayer support.

Our mission to “responsibly enhance the lives of older adults with Christ-like love,” has shaped the work we’ve accomplished over the past year. Here are some highlights:

- Over 3,500 older adults were served across all service lines last fiscal year, and the persons served span at least seven counties in South Central PA.
- In 2018-19, Messiah Lifeways provided more than \$3.2 million in benevolent care to residents who have outlived their resources through no fault of their own, and that amount is projected to grow to \$3.7 million in 2019-20.
- In January 2020, Messiah Lifeways finalized their inaugural Senior Living Community Needs Assessment (SLCNA) focused on identifying the needs of Central Pennsylvania’s senior population. Following a model commonly used to assess health needs by hospitals, the SLCNA compiled data to identify gaps in services. This process allows us to align our future strategies to better address those challenges.
- As of April 30, 2020, we made the difficult decision to close our Carlisle Adult Day program location and consolidate our efforts to our Mechanicsburg Campus. Moving to one location rather than two will allow us to more effectively fulfill our mission and be good stewards of organizational resources.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has presented unique challenges for everyone, particularly in long-term care facilities. Messiah Lifeways has taken a cautious, proactive approach to handling the crisis, implementing some difficult, yet necessary restrictions. At this time, we are pleased to report that zero Messiah Village residents have tested positive for COVID-19, and we are blessed to have a dedicated team, continuing to provide excellent care for the over 300 older adults residing in our Skilled Nursing and Personal Care building.

We continue to make good progress toward Messiah Lifeways’ current long-range Strategic Plan, which includes twelve strategic initiatives; however, we are focusing on the following three key priorities over the next few years: implementing transformational technology, revising our comprehensive master plan, and evaluating potential partnerships.

Thank you again for your interest in Messiah Lifeways, and we look forward to ministering together in the year ahead.

Curtis D. Stutzman  
*President and CEO*

CSTUTZMAN@MESSIAHLIFEWAYS.ORG

Financial statements were submitted to BIC U.S. For a copy of the complete financial statements, please contact Tracy Biesecker at [tbiesecker@messiahlifeways.org](mailto:tbiesecker@messiahlifeways.org)

## **E. Navajo Mission, Bloomfield, N.M. (Covenant)**

The Mission had a good 2019 and for 2020 was heavily scheduled with teams and guests who all cancelled due to the current situation in our nation. It is with pleasure that we submit the following report.

### **January—March, 2019**

There were visitors to the campus for short terms – some for a few days, others for a few weeks. Some of the guests included former summer mission team members who came to work on the campus grounds and to do interior painting. March was the busiest month for the Mission with a team every week for three weeks.

### **April—June, 2019**

Nizhóní Academy, an Accelerated Christian Education curriculum private Christian school here at the Mission started working very hard to meet all criteria to become a Quality Status school. Several contests were held to encourage the students to work a bit harder with great results. June was filled with school staff vacations and three Mission teams staying a week each to reach out to the community with VBS for all ages including adults.

### **July—August, 2019**

We continued with VBS outreaches but several teams canceled at the last minute causing us to be left with open dates and too late to schedule other teams. Nizhóní Academy began classes in August with a firm goal to reach Quality Status by the end of the school year. Students were pleased with the incentives and the school year started on a very positive note.

### **September—December, 2019**

October began with a friend from Canada, Port Colborne BIC, coming for the last quarter of the year. He was a major help to all of the staff, community, and Mission. He took care of the building, grounds, and repairing broken washers and vehicles. We also had other visitors throughout this quarter.

Christmas Love Gifts Outreach was a success. We gave new items in gift bags to kids in the DZ boarding dorm, Headstart programs, Family and children education programs, home-based and center-based, and families in need. The Christmas Community Celebration brought out over 300 people for dinner and a play by a production company in Maryland. Fall Festival was a lot of fun with the community kids coming in costumes and families just gathering for fun throughout the evening.

### **January—March, 2020**

Duane traveled to Jackson Hole, WY to be with the First Baptist Church for the weekend Mission Emphasis. It was a time of renewing friendships, meeting with their Missions board, and bringing the message in two services. Nizhóní students worked hard and had some fun along the way with sports and some completion as they worked to meet the goals for Quality Status. In March we had to begin the “new way” of doing school. The kids took their PACES home and came in once a week for scoring and tests and then home again.



March had another milestone reached as the **Desert Wind Bible Training Center** opened with three students. The course “Doctrine of The Bible 1” began on a high note despite the ongoing national issues.

### **April—June, 2020**

The hard work paid off for Nizhóní Academy—in May they were recognized as a Quality Status school, meeting and exceeding the requirements! We were so thankful for all the hard work and parent support of some of the students. We are excited to begin the 2020-2021 school year! The calendar was packed with teams and guests for the summer. During this time they all cancelled. This has been hard on the community not having VBS and for the Mission. We will have a teacher training via Zoom this month with master teachers conducting the workshop from Maryland. We have six registered.

### **Current**

Desert Wind Bible Training Center (DWBTC) will begin the second term in August with four courses being offered. We are excited to announce that New Testament Greek will be offered! We currently have three students here registered with two students taking it online.

The Mission is *now booking* teams for 2021. Contact Diane Bristow for more information and to set a date.

The Mission is in urgent need of a maintenance person. Housing, phone, and internet are provided, and as we have food/meat donated to the Mission it is equally shared with the families on staff. Since this is a volunteer position, there is no pay. The person should be able to get support and/or be on an income from other sources. Contact the Mission for more information.

Duane Bristow  
*Executive Director*

REZDUANE@ME.COM



## F. Paxton Ministries, Harrisburg, Pa. (Covenant)

As we progress through another year at Paxton Ministries, we give thanks for the Lord's great faithfulness to us over the 39 years of our history, and we look forward to serving him in what remains of 2020 and for many years to come by continuing to fulfill our mission to **provide affordable housing and support services to adults in need with Christ-like love**. The residents we serve are adults who are challenged with poverty, mental illness, and intellectual disabilities. Many have experienced very difficult trials, and we are humbled and amazed to see how lives are truly changed through our ministry. At our licensed personal care facility, Paxton Street Home, and the three smaller homes in our Community Living Programs, we provide just over 100 adults from the Central PA region with the safe, supportive home they need.

### Hope Restored

This past year, we revisited a statement that was made by our Brethren in Christ founders at the rededication of our building back in 1981. The founders summarized what Paxton Street Home would be: *"This facility will provide a home for the disadvantaged, love for the lonely, and meaningful activities for empty lives. [...] Here hope will be restored. Here we will strive to meet the basic needs of fellow human beings in an atmosphere of Christian love."*

Each day we strive to live up to that statement. Our facility provides a secure, comfortable home with regular meals for people who have faced homelessness or unstable housing situations. Our staff and volunteers provide true care and companionship for those who have experienced social isolation or abuse. Our busy calendar of engaging activities and the employment opportunities at Paxton Cleaning Solutions offer our residents purpose and meaning to their day. We continue to look to God in faith to see how He will use us to restore hope in the lives of those He has entrusted to our care.

### Strength for Today and Tomorrow

For all of these important daily tasks in caring for our residents, we rely on the strength that God gives us. The line "strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow" from the grand old hymn "Great is Thy Faithfulness" has become a very meaningful description of the Lord's blessing on our ministry. And we have received this strength from God through a variety of means.

Our volunteers help us in so many areas at Paxton Street Home – from serving meals to mowing the grass, from leading activities to answering the phone. We are so grateful for their service! Our financial supporters generously and faithfully give gifts to provide our residents with the home they need, as well as special gifts at Christmas time. We receive grant funding from local foundations to help us care for our building, and we benefit from food donations from other organizations. Our prayer partners lift up our praises and requests to God and are a great encouragement to us. The support of all of these people means so much to us! We are especially thankful that many of our local Brethren in Christ congregations are among them, encouraging our residents and staff with their service, gifts, and prayers. They are making such a difference in people's lives, and they give bright hope for the future of Paxton Ministries.

## COVID-19 Response

In recent months, as the COVID-19 crisis has hit our community and world, we have known in a very special sense what it is to rely on the Lord for strength and hope. Our circumstances here as a personal care home with a vulnerable population have changed so dramatically as we try to protect our residents and staff from the virus. But in spite of the many new restrictions and procedures, we are thankful for the Lord's blessing of health and for the way in which our residents and staff have adapted to a new "normal". Please join us in praying for protection, wisdom, and patience as we face the days and weeks ahead. We look forward very much to welcoming volunteers, visitors, friends, and family back to our home in the future!

## Paxton Place

In previous years, we have reported our desire to expand our ministry to reach low-income seniors in Harrisburg. We are thrilled that our application to the PA Housing Finance Agency was approved, and we received the funding needed to construct "Paxton Place: Caring Connections for Senior Living" on our adjacent land. There was a lot more traffic, dust, and noise around Paxton Street Home over the last year and a half, but the results are phenomenal! The construction of Paxton Place was an exciting project to watch, and the three-story building was completed in late fall 2019. Within a month, all 37 apartments were leased, and we are welcoming low-income seniors to their brand-new home. These seniors will enjoy a variety of services thanks to our many partners, including fellow BIC entities Messiah Lifeways and Messiah College. Give thanks to God with us for this wonderful new home for senior adults!

We value our part in the wider Brethren in Christ network of churches and ministries and are grateful for your kind, prayerful support. It truly is a privilege to be the hands and feet of Christ among our residents and in our community.

Thanks be to God!

Jodie Smiley  
*Executive Director*

JSMILEY@PAXTONMIN.ORG

**ACTION:** *General Assembly received all covenant & memorandum of understanding (MOU) reports.*

# **Part 5:**

## **Related Reports**

## A. Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives, Mechanicsburg, Pa.

The last two years have brought exciting yet significant changes to the Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives (BICHLA), headquartered on the campus of Messiah University (formerly College). In July 2019, the university merged its three archival units—the BICHLA, the University Archives, and the Ernest L. Boyer Center Archives—into one entity. This reorganization led to a change in leadership. Devin Manzullo-Thomas assumed the role of director of archives, with responsibility for overseeing all three collections. Glen Pierce, who formerly served as director of the church and university collections, continued to serve in a revised role as archives assistant. The merger has created opportunities for operational and administrative efficiencies, without changing the unique identity and collecting policy for each collection.

In the midst of these changes, the Archives has continued to fulfill its mission “to collect, preserve, organize, describe, and make available records of historical, legal, fiscal, and/or administrative value to... the BIC Church.” In addition to our normal work of assisting researchers, acquiring and processing new collections, and supporting both the church and the university, we have engaged in two important initiatives:

1. Migrating our digital collections to MOSAIC, the university’s new digital repository. This new “home” for these digital collections will make materials more accessible and more searchable. Collections to be migrated include the *Evangelical Visitor* (the North American BIC church newspaper from 1887-2004) and the *Handbook of Missions*, among others.
2. Collecting materials that document the history of the Hispanic BIC churches in the United States. Unfortunately, the Archives holds almost no information about these congregations, beyond what is available in official church records (such as the General Conference Minutes). In the last two years we were thrilled to add several oral histories of Hispanic BIC pastors to our collection, as well as several photographs documenting the early history of Hispanic congregations in South Florida. We invite individuals and congregations to donate materials that help to document this important part of our shared story.

In closing, let me remind General Assembly delegates that the Archives can only preserve and make available those materials that have been placed in our care. We encourage pastors and other church leaders to take seriously their responsibilities, mandated by the denomination since 1984, for depositing important documents in the Archives in a timely manner. For more information, please contact [archives@messiah.edu](mailto:archives@messiah.edu).

Devin Manzullo-Thomas  
*Director*

[DCTHOMAS@MESSIAH.EDU](mailto:DCTHOMAS@MESSIAH.EDU)

## B. Brethren in Christ Historical Society

During this biennium we again had a transition in our executive director. We express thanks to Micah Brickner for his faithful service. The development of other assignments in his life left him without space to meaningfully lead in this volunteer role. I was asked to assume the position in 2019. I am honored to follow those who have served before me. We also had the transition of our treasurer, Nevin Engle, following years of faithful service. It was good to work with him and I express my personal thanks for his assistance in so many ways through these years. We are grateful that Karen Ulery has accepted the position of treasurer as we move forward.

The Society publishes two exceptional publications, with many thanks to our editor Harriet Sider Bicksler: *History Matters*, the Society's newsletter, and *Brethren in Christ History and Life*, the Society's journal, both of which are published three times per year.

The Society held two annual meetings and will host another in 2020:

- On September 29, 2018, we hosted an annual meeting highlighting the importance of stories and preserving congregational histories. During this meeting we released E. Morris Sider's book *Stories and Scenes from a Brethren in Christ Heritage*.
- On October 5, 2019, our Annual Meeting focused on the music ministries of Messiah College and Upland College and their impact on the Brethren in Christ. Many personal stories were collected and shared.
- The plan for 2020 is to collect stories of how churches and individuals met the ministry challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. We will see if we may gather in person or virtually.

We held two heritage services at the historic Ringgold Meetinghouse in Smithsburg, Md. and one virtual service in 2020:

- On July 15, 2018, we combined the service with the Ringgold Meetinghouse Hymn Sing, with the theme "This Is My Story, This Is My Song" for one of our best attended services. This good attendance partly related to it taking place during General Assembly.
- On June 2, 2019 we held a service at Ringgold with three preaching brethren, Josh Crain, David Flowers, and Ken Hoke, giving a message in the older style of speaking as led by the Spirit on a common theme.
- On June 7, 2020 we did a live Facebook broadcast of this service with John Yeatts as our speaker with the question of how we relate to the nation states in which we live. This service continues to be available online.

We welcome interested people to support our work and receive our publications by taking membership in the Society.

For more information, please visit [bic-history.org](http://bic-history.org).

Kenneth O. Hoke  
*Executive Director*

KEN.HOKE@GMAIL.COM

**ACTION:** *General Assembly received all related reports.*

## **Part 6:**

# **General Business and Conclusions**

## **A. BIC U.S. Leadership Recognition**

The following leadership council members were recognized as they begin new terms:

Rob Patterson, Bishop of the Allegheny Conference, term 8/1/2020 to 7/31/2026

Bryan Hoke, Bishop of the Atlantic Conference, term 8/1/2020 to 7/31/2026

Ron Howell, Bishop of the Midwest Conference, term 8/1/2020 to 7/31/2026

Perry Engle, Bishop of the Pacific Conference, term 8/1/2020 to 7/31/2026

Aner Morejon, Bishop of the Southeast Conference, term 8/1/2020 to 7/31/2026

Appreciation was shown to the following individuals for their service and dedication to the Brethren in Christ U.S.:

Carlos Alfaro, outgoing GCB member

Perry Engle, outgoing Bishop of the Midwest Conference

David Espinosa, outgoing GCB member

## **B. General Assembly 2022**

Alan Robinson announced that General Assembly 2022 will be held in Salina, Kansas.

## **C. Concluding Expressions**

Alan Robinson concluded the event with a time of reflection that including resharing the video “Patterns for Peace” which was part of Heather Beaty’s sermon.

## **D. Adjournment**

All members were informed that voting on resolutions would be conducted by electronic ballot and must be complete by 8:00 a.m. on Monday, July 20, 2020. The General Assembly gathering was adjourned.

# E. Delegate Listing

## Allegheny Conference

### MARYLAND

New Life Believers (*formerly Van Lear*)  
Paramount  
The Vine  
Walkersville Community Church

Dave Gettel, Rebecca Gettel  
Jacob Harrison, Jamie Harrison  
Lori Sewell, Mark Sewell  
Beth Fisher, Timothy Fisher

### PENNSYLVANIA

Acts Fellowship Network  
Air Hill  
Antrim

Blue Mountain Memorial  
Canoe Creek  
Center Grove  
Chambersburg  
Clear Creek  
Crossroads (State Line)  
Fairview Avenue  
Five Forks  
Green Spring  
Hollowell  
Iron Springs  
Martinsburg  
Montgomery  
Mountain Chapel  
Mowersville  
Mt. Rock  
Mt. Tabor  
New Guilford  
Peace Light  
Shermans Valley  
South Mountain  
Spring of Hope  
Springhope  
The Spring

West Side  
Woodbury

### VIRGINIA

Bethel (Hillsville)  
Community of Faith

Brad Stutzman  
John Melhorn, Nancy Melhorn  
Hiram Bundy, Rob Gowing, Casey Hurst,  
Adam Meredith, Nelson Stayman  
Ray Halteman, Luke Holtry, Brian Reiff  
Lisa Crawford, Stacy Crawford  
Herta Morgan, Stan Morgan  
Peter Byers, Brent Wildeson  
John Geyer  
*No representation*  
Bonnie Walker, John Walker  
Sherri Flohr, Darlyss Kipe, Ray Kipe, Bill Shank  
*No representation*  
Brian Kelley, Blaine Lougheed  
Doug Lichty  
Michael Abell  
Japheth Nell  
Melissa Beal, Ronald Hott  
David Halteman  
Ron Crawford, Tess Crawford  
Kevin Lay  
Amy Bert, Jeff Bert, Lawton Jacobs, Mary Jacobs  
Ada Strite, Jim Strite  
*No representation*  
David Erisman  
*No representation*  
Brandon Horton  
Anita Carbaugh, Sandy Delaney, Steve Delaney,  
Don Shenk  
Diana Reinert, Jim Sollenberger, Sam Yoder  
*No representation*

Mike Blouse  
Jim Hain, Loine Hain



Highland Park Community  
La Roca  
La Roca Eterna  
Ridge View

**WEST VIRGINIA**

Bunker Hill

**SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT**

Roxbury Holiness Camp

Phillip Madison  
*No representation*  
*No representation*  
*No representation*

Gary Collis, Brenda Kifer

*No representation*

**Atlantic Conference**

**NEW JERSEY**

Circle of Hope: 3800 Marlton Pike  
Grace Community of Vineland

Benjamin White  
David Edgar

**PENNSYLVANIA**

Branch & Vine  
Bright Hope Fellowship  
Circle of Hope: 2007 Frankford Avenue  
Circle of Hope: 2214 South Broad  
Circle of Hope: 5720 Ridge Avenue  
Circle of Hope: 2309 North Broad  
City of Refuge  
Conoy  
Cross Roads (Maytown)  
Cross Roads (Mount Joy)

Heather Brickner  
Jeremy Shank  
Jonny Rashid  
Rachel Sensenig, Rod White, Gwen White  
Julie Hoke  
*No representation*  
*No representation*  
Scott Boyer, Toni Boyer, Nick Ressler  
Dawn Groff  
Doug Bender, Eileen Musser, Glenn Musser,  
Charles Starr, Martha Starr  
*No representation*  
David Hakes, Phil Tyson  
Adam Forry, Nancy Huerter, Jim Stauffer, Karen Ulery,  
Pamela Urbanavage, Darlene Wingert  
Dustin Sider, Rachel Sider  
Ray Hock  
Carmen Dones, Sophia Fumey, Lynda Gephart,  
John Hawbaker, Wanda Heise, Hank Johnson,  
Fellistus Munakombwe, Patty Patterson, Lori Thiesen  
*No representation*  
Sue Guldin, Jan Latshaw  
Ericka Henry  
*No representation*  
Andrew Carpenter, Timothy Diehl  
Jane Beachy, Michael Beachy, Steven Crider, Joshua Nolt  
Keith Miller  
Glen Pfeiffer

Crossroads Community  
Daybreak Community  
Elizabethtown

Fairland  
Free Grace  
Harrisburg

Harvest Community  
Hempfield (Hope Born in Christ)  
Holy District  
Hunlock Creek  
Koinos Community  
Lancaster  
LifePath  
LifePoint

Manheim  
Manor  
Marsh Creek of Exton  
Millersville  
Monte de Carmelo  
Montoursville  
Mount Pleasant  
New Beginnings  
New Hope  
New Joy

New Life Church of Hershey  
Palmyra (Encounter Church of Palmyra)  
Pequea  
Refton  
Silverdale  
Souderton  
Speedwell Heights  
Story Philly  
Stowe  
Summit View  
Tremont

### **SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT**

Christian Medical & Dental Association  
Movement.org  
Normandy Farm Estates

Dustin Sauder  
John Pletcher  
Chris Benzing  
Warren Hoffman  
*No representation*  
Eric Hartshaw, Sherri Hartshaw  
Kay Book, Mike Book  
*No representation*  
*No representation*  
Jason Dietrich, Jeff Dunlevy, Karen Dunlevy,  
Dave Miller, Julie Miller  
Amy Starr, Greg Starr  
Ryan Cagno, Terry Friesen, Theodore Simmons  
Jerry Clonch, Jo Hart, John Hart  
Scott MacFeat, Butch Miller, Nettie Miller  
Brenda Sims, Troy Sims  
Laurel Landis-Alleger, Diana Moyer  
John Courchesne, Brian Willison  
Joshua Edgar, Maddie Edgar  
Mike Bowen, Renee Bowen, Bob Harple  
Dave Fulmer, Todd Harmon, Scott Wiker  
Stephen Ginder

Thomas Grosh  
Craig Sider  
Thomas Delk

## **Great Lakes Conference**

### **ILLINOIS**

Dwelling Place  
Morrison

Krista Dutt  
Dan Rinker, Craig Sipes, Cynthia Wiesel

### **INDIANA**

Christian Union  
Mt. Zion  
Nappanee  
Union Grove

Ronald Remke  
*No representation*  
Jeff Williams  
Darin Simms

### **KENTUCKY**

Beulah Chapel  
Bloomington Chapel  
Knifley Chapel  
Millerfield  
Plowshares

Kim Goodin  
*No representation*  
*No representation*  
Troy Grider  
Matthew Dodson, Christian Embree, Luke Embree

## **MICHIGAN**

Bethel (Merrill)  
Bethel Community  
Carland-Zion  
Christ Community Etc  
Lakeside Fellowship of Micro Churches  
Lakeview Community  
Leonard Community  
Mooretown

Carmen Lang, Jimmy Lang  
*No representation*  
*No representation*  
*No representation*  
Paul Pawelski  
Jon Grimshaw  
*No representation*  
Josh Whipple

## **OHIO**

Amherst Community  
Ashland  
Dayton  
Dayton Mission  
Fairview (Englewood)  
  
Gethsemane Fellowship  
Highland  
  
Pleasant Hill  
Valley Chapel  
Western Hills  
Westside Christian Community

Cal Hamblin, Galen Oakes, Melinda Oakes  
Andrew Beach, Keith Tyson  
*No representation*  
Hope Pawelski, John Pawelski, Ruth Pawelski  
Jenny Ballard, Mark Ballard, Chris Hall,  
DeLaine Niesley, Ron Niesley, Zach Spidel  
*No representation*  
Tim Artz, Tracey Artz, Harve Bowman,  
Robyn Bowman  
Cliff Hensel, Margaret Hensel, Jonah Langenderfer  
*No representation*  
Jennie Brown, Tracie Hunter  
Joel Zimmerman

## **WISCONSIN**

Blessed Hope  
Hope Community  
New Vision  
The Seed

Phillip Unti  
*No representation*  
Christina Bosserman, Abby Kean  
Jeff Podjasek, Vicki Podjasek

# **Midwest Conference**

## **KANSAS**

Abilene  
  
Aliento de Vida (Lyons)  
Aliento de Vida (Salina)  
  
CrossRoads (Salina)  
  
Lifehouse  
New Trail Fellowship  
Revolution  
Rock Island  
Zion (Abilene)

Barth Amend, Dale Engle, Margaret Engle, Pam Fay,  
Marge Freeman, Carol Wenger  
Javier Ronquillo  
Alex Zapata, Fili Zapata, Margarita Zapata,  
Shadden Zapata  
Kerry Howell, Ron Howell, Jane Kramer, Ron Kramer,  
Jesse Smith  
*No representation*  
Beth Norman, Stan Norman  
Jeff Piepho, Dave Waggoner  
*No representation*  
Jay Johnson, Collen McGee, Ken Rohrer

**NEW MEXICO**

Broken Walls Fellowship  
Desert Light Christian  
First Nations Gathering  
Freedom of Nations  
Heart of Worship

Denise Conway  
*No representation*  
Diane Bristow, Duane Bristow  
Ben Stoner, Eunice Stoner  
Angel Romaniz, Yaciel Toledo

**OKLAHOMA**

Bethany  
Red Star

James Rainwater  
*No representation*

**TEXAS**

Cristo La Roca

*No representation*

**SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT**

Special designation (Arkansas)

Donna Harvey

**Pacific Conference**

**CALIFORNIA**

Agua Viva  
Crest Community  
Etiwanda  
Gateway-Karis  
Getsemany  
GracePoint  
Madison Street  
Ministerios El Shaddai (Rialto)  
Ministerios El Shaddai (Riverside)  
New Community  
Ontario  
Palabra de Vida  
Solid Ground  
  
Upland  
  
Valley Christian  
Waukena Community

*No representation*  
Kent Byer, Alan Claassen-Thrush, John Dixon  
*No representation*  
Paul Lehman-Schletewitz, Peter Song  
*No representation*  
Nicole Airth, Steve Airth  
Jenna Pontious, Ryan Skove, Debbie Wright, Jeff Wright  
*No representation*  
*No representation*  
Michael Shipman  
*No representation*  
*No representation*  
Marie Collins, Mike Collins, Carol Hoffman,  
Elisha Hankins, Kimberly Law, Ryan Showalter  
Asa Bert, Doyle Book, Jayson Brooks, Steven Smith,  
Marie Williams  
Martin Saine  
*No representation*

**GUAM**

Faith Christian Fellowship

*No representation*

**OREGON**

El Monte Calvario  
Peace City  
Redwood Country

Baldomero Pedrozz, Rebeca Pedroza, Maria Vickie  
Drew Strayer, Millyellen Strayer  
*No representation*

**WASHINGTON**

Pangea Church

Kurt Willems

**SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT**

Pacific Christian Center

Sarah Brooks

Upland Manor

Nick Hankins

**Southeast Conference**

**FLORIDA**

Buenas Nuevas (MELA)

*No representation*

Casa de Oracion

*No representation*

Casa del Dios Viviente

Ruth Villamizar

Centro Adoracion Refugio Eterno

*No representation*

Community Bible Chapel

*No representation*

Cristo es la Respuesta

*No representation*

Cristo Vive

*No representation*

Dios Senando Nuestra Tierra

Manuel Lopez

Ebenezer (Hialeah)

*No representation*

El Aposento de la Gracia

*No representation*

Esmirna

Maria Perdomo, Jose F. Rodriguez, Lourdes Rodriguez

Fuente de Salvacion

*No representation*

Hialeah East

*No representation*

Holy City

Angel Paez

Iglesia Cristiana Bethel

*No representation*

Iglesia Cristiana Oasis

*No representation*

Iglesia Cristiana Refugio de Amor

*No representation*

Iglesia Cristiana Restauracion en Cristo

Lazaro Perez

Iglesia de Avivamiento Emmanuel

Elkin Perez

Iglesia de Dios Marathon

Loida Morejon

Iglesia Evangelica Monte Calvario

*No representation*

Iglesia Rescate (Hialeah)

Daima Herreria Castillo, Jose Lemus, David Monduy,

Vivian Monduy

Iglesia Rescate (Okeechobee)

*No representation*

Jesucristo es la Solucion

Juan Roig, Keila Roig

Jesus Redentor de Vidas

*No representation*

Jubileo

*No representation*

La Puerta

Abraham Rivera, Marilyn Rivera

La Roca Firme

*No representation*

Los Hijos de la Fe

Juan De la Cruz

Ministerio Casa del Alfarero

Jose Rodriguez

Ministerio Cielos Abiero Gloria a Dios

Perla Fiallos

Ministerio Cristiano Monte Sion

*No representation*

Ministerio Cristo Fiel y Verdadero

*No representation*

Ministerio Int. Fuego en la Palabra

*No representation*

Ministerio Int. Jesucristo Rey de Reyes

*No representation*

Ministerio Sanando las Naciones  
Monte Gerizim  
Naples  
Nueva Jerusalem  
Nuevo Comienzo en Cristo  
Palabra de Vida (FL)  
Poder de Dios  
Principe de Paz  
Redimidos por la Sangre  
Refresh Church  
Revelation

Rey de Reyes  
Torre Fuerte  
Un Nuevo Amanecer  
Vida Abundante  
Zion Church (FL)

**GEORGIA**

Grafted

**TENNESSEE**

Center Hill  
DeRossett  
Pomeroy  
Rolling Acres

*No representation*

Miguel Lescaille

*No representation*

*No representation*

Douglas Castillo

*No representation*

*No representation*

*No representation*

*No representation*

*No representation*

Constain Carrillo, Miguel Granda, Luis Rodrigua,  
Alex Rodriguez, Teresa Rodriguez

*No representation*

*No representation*

*No representation*

*No representation*

Anler Morejon, Isabel Morejon

Tammy Nunnally, Frank Rodgers, Teddi Rodgers

*No representation*

Carl Davis, Guerry Davis

Bryan Jones

Jeff McKinnon

**Susquehanna Conference**

**PENNSYLVANIA**

Big Valley  
Cedar Grove  
Cedar Heights  
Colyer  
Dillsburg  
Eshcol  
Fairview (New Cumberland)

Faith  
Ferguson Valley  
Grantham

Granville  
Green Grove  
Hanover  
Iglesia Hispana Vida y Esperanza

*No representation*

*No representation*

Laurie Garman, Scott Garman

*No representation*

Jeff Conrady, Rob Douglass, Donald Knepper

*No representation*

Angela Fickes-Mountz, Judy Keller, Kenneth Keller,  
Katrina Rife, Denise Rupp

*No representation*

*No representation*

Rebekah Basinger, Dan Bisbee, David Flowers,  
Devin Manzullo-Thomas, Amy Yeatts, John Yeatts

*No representation*

*No representation*

Brian Casale

*No representation*

Jemison Valley  
 Luz Alegria y Esperanza  
 Luz y Salvacion  
 Marsh Creek (Howard)  
 Mechanicsburg  
 Mechanicsburg Community  
 Messiah Village  
 Morning Hour Chapel  
 Mountain Ridge (Dillsburg)  
 Mountain Ridge (Gettysburg)  
 New Harvest Community  
 New Life Community (Carlisle)  
 New Life Community (Mt. Holly)  
 Pathway Community (York)  
 Pleasant Valley  
 Pleasant View  
 Redland Valley  
 Saville  
 The Meeting House (Carlisle)  
 The Meeting House (Dillsburg)  
 The Upper Room (Belleville)

Gary Wolfe, Waldo Wood  
 Mike Holland  
 Angel Fernando Bedon  
 Dan Longmore, Marty Longmore  
 Layne Lebo  
 Chad Wenger  
 Ronald Slabaugh, Dwayne Stutzman  
 Bob Anderson, Joe Durika  
*No representation*  
*No representation*  
*No representation*  
 Maureen Brown, Ryan Brown  
 Erica Lloyd  
 Tony Rohrer  
*No representation*  
 Paul Dauenbaugh  
 Kevin Richardson  
 Mike Stoltzfus  
 Leah Fisher, Rich Love, Julie Stout  
 James Yutzy  
*No representation*

### **SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT**

Awaken Network/Retired Minister  
 BIC Historical Society/Retired Minister

Pauline Peifer  
 Ken Hoke

## **Leadership Representatives**

### **LEADERSHIP COUNCIL**

Perry Engle  
 Bryan Hoke  
 Jonathan Lloyd  
 Mitch Martin  
 Aner Morejon  
 Rob Patterson  
 Lynn Thrush

### **GENERAL CONFERENCE BOARD**

Rachel Diaz  
 Ron Kramer\*  
 Emerson Leshner  
 Cathy Musser  
 Kevin Noll  
 Julie Stout  
 David Espinosa  
 Sherri Flohr\*

Adam Forry\*  
Tom Law  
Jeff Piepho\*

**BRETHREN IN CHRIST FOUNDATION**

Jim Reynolds

**COVENANT MINISTRIES**

Lifeline Ministries Women’s Shelter, Inc.	<i>No representation</i>
Paxton Ministries	<i>No representation</i>
Messiah College	<i>No representation</i>
Messiah Lifeways	Curt Stutzman
Navajo Mission	Diane Bristow,* Duane Bristow*

**Missionaries**

**BIC U.S. MISSIONARIES**

Malawi	Barb Miller, Doug Miller, Becky Owen, Jonathan Owen
New Mexico	Denise Conway,* Brian Myers, Rochelle Myers, Jason Oberholser, Ben Stoner,* Eunice Stoner*
Sensitive environments	Chris K., Kara K., P.R., H.R.
Spain	Bruce Bundy, Merly Bundy
Zimbabwe	Jake Shenk

**ASSOCIATE MISSIONARIES**

India	Dan Deyhle
Sensitive environment	A.W.

*\*Represented their home congregation as well*

**F. Attendance Report**

Category	Number
Total registered voting members	380
Total registered non-voting members	39
<b>Total attendance</b>	<b>419</b>

*Auxiliary programming, which would normally occur during a General Assembly, did not take place this year.  
Electronic voting records indicate that 282 members voted on one or more of the resolutions.*



## **Part 7:**

# **Year-end Reports and Financial Statements**

## A. 2018 Year-end Report

Conference	Bishop	Number of congregational sites	Membership 12/31/2018*	Total average weekly worship attendance*	Baptisms*	Total annual general offerings*	Total amount contributed to BIC U.S.**
Allegheny	Robert Patterson	39	3,864	4,609	145	\$7,417,197	\$638,549
Atlantic	Bryan Hoke	49	5,260	7,460	144	\$13,186,325	\$1,089,282
Great Lakes	Lynn Thrush	33	1,157	1,243	34	\$1,961,050	\$152,901
Midwest	Perry Engle	18	764	1,371	58	\$1,396,314	\$128,272
Pacific	Perry Engle	22	809	1,235	28	\$1,776,252	\$155,216
Southeast	Aner Morejon	59	4,450	3,693	242	\$3,572,987	\$83,946
Susquehanna	K. Hoke / B. Beaty	41	3,545	5,204	175	\$8,740,147	\$824,651
<b>Totals</b>		<b>261</b>	<b>19,849</b>	<b>24,815</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>\$38,050,272</b>	<b>\$3,072,817</b>

\*Based on 85% of congregations reporting. \*\*Based on receipts received by BIC U.S. in calendar year.

## B. 2019 Year-end Report

Conference	Bishop	Number of congregations sites	Membership 12/31/2019*	Total average weekly worship attendance*	Baptisms*	Total annual general offerings*	Total amount contributed to BIC U.S.**
Allegheny	Robert Patterson	39	4,036	4,437	139	\$7,445,706	\$675,580
Atlantic	Bryan Hoke	48	5,508	6,864	164	\$13,570,235	\$1,070,372
Great Lakes	Lynn Thrush	36	1,174	1,236	26	\$1,805,489	\$170,719
Midwest	Perry Engle	18	764	1,334	55	\$1,167,109	\$139,277
Pacific	Perry Engle	21	801	968	22	\$1,966,236	\$153,328
Southeast	Aner Morejon	58	3,938	3,818	204	\$4,221,042	\$71,032
Susquehanna	Bob Beaty	39	3,137	4,306	182	\$8,247,257	\$855,621
<b>Totals</b>		<b>259</b>	<b>19,358</b>	<b>22,963</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>\$38,423,074</b>	<b>\$3,135,929</b>

\*Based on 78% of congregations reporting. \*\*Based on receipts received by BIC U.S. in calendar year.

C. 2019 Audited Financial Statements

GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE  
BRETHREN IN CHRIST  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEARS ENDED  
DECEMBER 31, 2019 AND 2018  
AND  
INDEPENDENT AUDITOR’S REPORT

HAMILTON & MUSSER, P.C.  
*Certified Public Accountants*

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

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For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

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## HAMILTON & MUSSER, PC

*Certified Public Accountants • Consultants to Management*

DAVID A. HAMILTON, CPA • BARRY E. MUSSER, CPA, CFP® (1959 - 2020)  
JAMES A. KRIMMEL, MBA, CPA, CFE, CFF • ROBERT D. MAST, CPA • WILLIAM P. ASHMAN, CPA

### INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of the  
General Conference of the Brethren in Christ  
Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania

#### **Report on the Financial Statements**

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of the General Conference of the Brethren in Christ (a non-profit organization), which comprise the statements of financial position as of December 31, 2019 and 2018, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses, and cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements.

#### **Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements**

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

#### **Auditor's Responsibility**

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audits. We conducted our audits in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

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*Members of the American and Pennsylvania Institutes of CPAs*

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**Opinion**

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the General Conference of the Brethren in Christ as of December 31, 2019 and 2018, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

**Emphasis of a Matter**

As further explained in Note 19, the General Conference of the Brethren in Christ is operating in an environment that has been economically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our opinion is not modified with respect to this matter.

June 16, 2020

Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania



*Certified Public Accountants*

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Statements of Financial Position

December 31, 2019 and 2018

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Without Donor Restrictions	\$ 1,349,208	\$ 1,052,433
Board Designated (Note 12)	1,412,133	1,412,133
Investments (Note 4)		
Without Donor Restrictions	880,501	876,356
With Donor Restrictions	13,557,936	11,528,187
Education Loans Receivable (Note 6)	10,239	3,618
ASEL Receivable (Note 7)	88,941	88,941
Other Receivables (Note 8)	49,708	34,417
Notes Receivable (Note 9)	214,486	196,621
Other Assets	252,310	224,483
Fixed Assets, Net (Note 11)	<u>114,353</u>	<u>112,327</u>
 Total Assets	 <u>\$ 17,929,815</u>	 <u>\$ 15,529,516</u>
 <b>Liabilities</b>		
Accounts Payable	\$ 122,001	\$ 119,588
Accrued Wages and Vacation Payable	14,260	14,867
Deposit Agreements	5,000	5,000
Notes Payable (Note 14)	186,486	196,621
Liability for Pension Benefit (Note 16)	<u>3,424,921</u>	<u>3,029,763</u>
 Total Liabilities	 <u>3,752,668</u>	 <u>3,365,839</u>
 <b>Net Assets</b>		
Without Donor Restrictions	619,211	635,490
With Donor Restrictions (Note 13)	<u>13,557,936</u>	<u>11,528,187</u>
 Total Net Assets	 <u>14,177,147</u>	 <u>12,163,677</u>
 Total Liabilities and Net Assets	 <u>\$ 17,929,815</u>	 <u>\$ 15,529,516</u>

The Accompanying Notes are an Integral Part of the Financial Statements

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Statement of Activities  
For the Year Ended December 31, 2019

	<u>Without Donor Restrictions</u>	<u>With Donor Restrictions</u>	<u>Total</u>
Revenue			
Contributions	\$ 2,660,864	\$ 3,160,564	\$ 5,821,428
Investment Income (Note 4)	106,459	1,607,325	1,713,784
Other	56,817	-	56,817
Net Assets Released From Restrictions	<u>2,738,140</u>	<u>(2,738,140)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Revenue	<u>5,562,280</u>	<u>2,029,749</u>	<u>7,592,029</u>
Expenses			
Program Services	4,722,082	-	4,722,082
Supporting Services			
Management and General	718,313	-	718,313
Fundraising	<u>14,948</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>14,948</u>
Total Expenses	<u>5,455,343</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,455,343</u>
Increase in Net Assets	106,937	2,029,749	2,136,686
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	635,490	11,528,187	12,163,677
Pension-Related Changes Other Than			
Net Periodic Pension Cost	<u>(123,216)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(123,216)</u>
Net Assets, End of Year	<u>\$ 619,211</u>	<u>\$ 13,557,936</u>	<u>\$ 14,177,147</u>

The Accompanying Notes are an Integral Part of the Financial Statements



**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Statement of Activities  
For the Year Ended December 31, 2018

	<u>Without Donor Restrictions</u>	<u>With Donor Restrictions</u>	<u>Total</u>
Revenue			
Contributions	\$ 2,572,216	\$ 3,130,208	\$ 5,702,424
Investment Income (Loss) (Note 4)	87,333	(428,119)	(340,786)
Other	129,845	-	129,845
Net Assets Released From Restrictions	<u>2,516,321</u>	<u>(2,516,321)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Revenue	<u>5,305,715</u>	<u>185,768</u>	<u>5,491,483</u>
Expenses			
Program Services	4,608,302	-	4,608,302
Supporting Services			
Management and General	632,878	-	632,878
Fundraising	<u>15,297</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,297</u>
Total Expenses	<u>5,256,477</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>5,256,477</u>
Increase in Net Assets	49,238	185,768	235,006
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	733,128	11,342,419	12,075,547
Pension-Related Changes Other Than Net Periodic Pension Cost	<u>(146,876)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(146,876)</u>
Net Assets, End of Year	<u>\$ 635,490</u>	<u>\$ 11,528,187</u>	<u>\$ 12,163,677</u>

The Accompanying Notes are an Integral Part of the Financial Statements

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Statement of Functional Expenses  
For the Year Ended December 31, 2019

	Program Services	Supporting Services		Total
		Management & General	Fundraising	
Business Meals	\$ 39,990	\$ 185	\$ -	\$ 40,175
Church Planting Grants – Domestic	169,900	-	-	169,900
Church Planting Grants – Global	28,760	-	-	28,760
Conferences & Events	12,379	-	-	12,379
Contracted Services	151,918	21,979	-	173,897
Depreciation Expense	25,984	1,310	-	27,294
Disability Insurance	25,664	628	-	26,292
Global Compassion Aid	120,945	-	-	120,945
Leadership Training Scholarships	51,996	-	-	51,996
Maintenance	28,087	-	-	28,087
Memberships	17,682	1,234	-	18,916
Ministry Project Grants	332,595	-	-	332,595
Office Expenses	85,479	23,716	-	109,195
Other	28,498	-	-	28,498
Periodic Pension Costs	-	271,942	-	271,942
Printing & Promotion	29,568	22	256	29,846
Regional Conference Ministry Grant	126,000	-	-	126,000
Rent Expense	50,051	9,849	-	59,900
Salary & Benefits	2,715,311	384,423	14,692	3,114,426
Seminary Grants	26,300	-	-	26,300
Shaping Leaders for Tomorrow Grant	22,385	-	-	22,385
SPICE Sponsorship Grants	156,804	-	-	156,804
Support of Related Organizations	121,667	-	-	121,667
Training & Development	65,441	1,951	-	67,392
Travel Expenses	<u>288,678</u>	<u>1,074</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>289,752</u>
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 4,722,082</u>	<u>\$ 718,313</u>	<u>\$ 14,948</u>	<u>\$ 5,455,343</u>

The Accompanying Notes are an Integral Part of the Financial Statements

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Statement of Functional Expenses  
For the Year Ended December 31, 2018

	Program Services	Supporting Services		Total
		Management & General	Fundraising	
Business Meals	\$ 32,273	\$ 93	\$ -	\$ 32,366
Church Planting Grants – Domestic	174,000	-	-	174,000
Church Planting Grants – Global	36,155	-	-	36,155
Conferences & Events	94,888	-	-	94,888
Contracted Services	131,439	19,416	-	150,855
Depreciation Expense	25,800	1,945	-	27,745
Disability Insurance	26,489	628	-	27,117
Global Compassion Aid	12,390	-	-	12,390
Leadership Training Scholarships	63,283	-	-	63,283
Maintenance	24,887	-	-	24,887
Memberships	17,379	1,304	-	18,683
Ministry Project Grants	268,692	-	-	268,692
Office Expenses	85,399	23,884	-	109,283
Other	40,968	-	-	40,968
Periodic Pension Costs	-	197,683	-	197,683
Printing & Promotion	48,009	51	759	48,819
Regional Conference Ministry Grant	167,468	-	-	167,468
Rent Expense	53,899	11,210	-	65,109
Salary & Benefits	2,613,305	371,037	14,538	2,998,880
Seminary Grants	27,200	-	-	27,200
Shaping Leaders for Tomorrow Grant	27,756	-	-	27,756
SPICE Sponsorship Grants	154,071	-	-	154,071
Support of Related Organizations	127,539	-	-	127,539
Training & Development	58,712	2,896	-	61,608
Travel Expenses	296,301	2,731	-	299,032
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 4,608,302</u>	<u>\$ 632,878</u>	<u>\$ 15,297</u>	<u>\$ 5,256,477</u>

The Accompanying Notes are an Integral Part of the Financial Statements

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Statements of Cash Flows

For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Cash Flows from Operating Activities:		
Increase in Net Assets	\$ 2,136,686	\$ 235,006
Adjustment to Reconcile Increase in Net Assets to		
Net Cash and Cash Equivalents Provided by Operating Activities:		
Realized Gain on Sale of Investments	(200,538)	(436,536)
Unrealized (Gain) Loss on Investments	(1,232,194)	986,956
Contributions Received Restricted for Perpetual Endowment	(51,664)	(2,000)
Depreciation	27,294	27,745
(Increase) Decrease in:		
Education Loans Receivable	(6,621)	6,126
Other Receivables	(15,291)	(3,647)
Notes Receivable	(17,865)	10,115
Other Assets	(27,827)	(13,797)
Increase (Decrease) in:		
Accounts Payable	2,413	(53,564)
Accrued Wages and Vacation Payable	<u>(607)</u>	<u>1,048</u>
Net Cash and Cash Equivalent Provided by Operating Activities	<u>613,786</u>	<u>757,452</u>
Cash Flows from Investing Activities:		
Purchase of Investments	(909,169)	(2,005,573)
Proceeds from Sale of Investments	308,007	547,414
Purchase of Fixed Assets	<u>(29,320)</u>	<u>(6,773)</u>
Net Cash and Cash Equivalents Used by Investing Activities	<u>(630,482)</u>	<u>(1,464,932)</u>
Cash Flows from Financing Activities:		
Principal Payments on Notes Payable	(10,135)	(10,115)
Contributions Received Restricted for Perpetual Endowment	51,664	2,000
Change in Ministers Pension Fund Components	<u>271,942</u>	<u>135,183</u>
Net Cash and Cash Equivalents Provided by Financing Activities	<u>313,471</u>	<u>127,068</u>
Net Increase (Decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents	296,775	(580,412)
Cash and Cash Equivalents, Beginning of the Year	<u>2,464,566</u>	<u>3,044,978</u>
Cash and Cash Equivalents, End of Year	<u>\$ 2,761,341</u>	<u>\$ 2,464,566</u>
<u>Supplemental Cash Flow Disclosures:</u>		
Cash Paid for Interest	\$ 9,145	\$ 8,664
Cash Paid for Income Taxes	-	-

The Accompanying Notes are an Integral Part of the Financial Statements

## GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST

Notes to Financial Statements

For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

### NOTE 1 NATURE OF ACTIVITIES AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

#### **Nature of Activities:**

The General Conference of the Brethren in Christ (the BIC US) was incorporated on June 18, 1940 in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a charitable, non-profit religious organization. The BIC US is supported by contributions from Brethren in Christ congregations as well as direct contributions from individuals and other entities.

#### **Basis of Accounting:**

The financial statements of the BIC US have been prepared on the accrual basis of accounting and, accordingly, reflect all significant receivables, payables and other liabilities.

#### **Basis of Presentation:**

Financial statement presentation follows the *Not-for-Profit Entities* topic of the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) Accounting Standards Codification (ASC) which requires the BIC US to report information regarding its financial position and activities according to two classes of net assets: net assets without donor restrictions and net assets with donor restrictions.

#### **Contributions:**

Contributions received are recorded as increases in net assets with or without donor restrictions, depending on the existence and/or nature of any donor restrictions.

All donor-restricted contributions are reported as increases in net assets with donor restrictions, depending on the nature of the restriction. When a restriction expires (that is, when a stipulated time restriction ends or purpose restriction is accomplished), net assets with donor restrictions are reclassified to net assets without donor restrictions and reported in the Statements of Activities as net assets released from restrictions.

The BIC US recognizes receipts when given by the supporting congregations. As a result, approximately twenty business days are required after year-end to properly recognize these December receipts. Additionally, the BIC US allows the Common Ministry Program to make the appropriate allocations to other BIC US programs and external organizations before the year-end close.

#### **Ministry Activities:**

The BIC US is strongly committed to functioning as one organization, in support of various ministries, as we seek to accomplish the mission of the church to make and grow disciples. The following list is illustrative of the ministry activities supported by the BIC US in 2019 and 2018:

- Regional Conference Leadership
- Commission on Ministry and Doctrine
  - Equipping for Ministry
- General Assembly Meeting
- Denominational Communications
- World Missions
  - Missionary Support
  - International Leadership Development
  - Global Compassion Fund
- Ministers Pension Fund

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Notes to Financial Statements

For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

**NOTE 1            NATURE OF ACTIVITIES AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)**

**Fixed Assets:**

It is the policy of the BIC US to record purchased fixed assets at cost and donated assets at their fair value at the date of donation. Depreciation is provided on the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives of the assets.

New acquisitions of fixed assets having a low acquisition cost, or which are not expected to last for more than a year, are expended in the year of acquisition. Repairs and maintenance charges are capitalized and depreciated when they materially extend the useful life of the related asset.

**Taxation:**

The BIC US is exempt from federal income tax as provided by Code Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Donors are entitled to deductions for federal income tax purposes for contributions made to the BIC US in accordance with the Internal Revenue Code. Accordingly, no income tax is incurred unless the BIC US earns income considered to be unrelated business income. The BIC US conducted no activities that were subject to income taxes.

Accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America require management to evaluate tax positions taken by the BIC US, including whether the entity is exempt from income taxes. Management evaluated the tax positions taken and concluded that the BIC US had taken no uncertain tax positions that require recognition or disclosure in the financial statements. Therefore, no provision or liability for income taxes has been included in the financial statements. With few exceptions, the BIC US is no longer subject to income tax examinations by the U.S. federal, state or local tax authorities for years before December 31, 2016.

**Receivables:**

Receivables are stated at the amount management expects to collect from balances outstanding at year-end. Based on management's assessment of outstanding balances, it has concluded that losses on balances outstanding at year-end will be immaterial.

**Investments:**

Investments are valued at their fair market values on a recurring basis in the Statements of Financial Position.

Fair Value Reporting requires an establishment of a hierarchy that ranks the quality and reliability of inputs, or assumptions, used in the determination of fair value and requires financial assets and liabilities carried at fair value to be classified and disclosed in one of the following three categories:

- Level 1 – Quoted prices in active markets for identical assets and liabilities
- Level 2 – Directly or indirectly observable inputs other than Level 1 quoted prices
- Level 3 – Unobservable inputs not corroborated by market data

For investments that have quoted market prices in active markets, the BIC US uses the quoted market prices as fair values and includes those investments in Level 1 of the fair value hierarchy. When quoted market prices in active markets are not available, various pricing services are used to determine fair value of investments that are included in Level 2 of the fair value hierarchy. Level 3 represents financial assets whose fair value is determined based upon inputs that are unobservable and include the BIC US's own determinations of the assumptions that a market participant would use in pricing the asset.

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Notes to Financial Statements

For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

**NOTE 1            NATURE OF ACTIVITIES AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)**

**Investments (Continued):**

Investment income, including realized and unrealized gains restricted by donors, is reported as an increase in net assets without donor restrictions if the restrictions are met (either a stipulated time period or a purpose restriction is accomplished) in the reporting period in which the income and gains are recognized.

Investments are exposed to various risks, such as interest rate, market and credit. Due to the level of risk associated with certain investments and the level of uncertainty related to changes in the value of investments, it is at least reasonably possible changes in risks in the near term would materially affect investment assets reported in the Statements of Financial Position and Activities.

**Contributed Services:**

The BIC US receives a substantial amount of donated services in carrying out the various ministries of the BIC US. No amounts have been reflected in the financial statements for those services since they do not meet the criteria for recognition.

**Use of Estimates:**

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported in the financial statements and accompanying notes. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

**Cash and Cash Equivalents:**

For the purpose of the Statements of Cash Flows, cash and cash equivalents include all highly liquid investments with an initial maturity of three months or less.

**Functional Allocation of Expenses:**

The cost of providing the various programs and activities has been summarized on a functional basis in the Statements of Activities. Accordingly, certain costs have been allocated among the programs and supporting services benefited.

**NOTE 2            PENDING NEW ACCOUNTING PRONOUNCEMENT**

In February 2016, FASB issued ASU No. 2016-02, *Leases*. The ASU introduces a lessee's model that brings most leases onto the Statement of Financial Position and aligns many of the underlying principles of the new lessor model with those in the new revenue recognition standard (ASU No. 2014-09). ASU No. 2016-02 is effective for annual periods beginning after December 15, 2020. The BIC US is currently assessing the impact this standard will have on its financial statements.

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Notes to Financial Statements  
For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

**NOTE 3 AVAILABILITY AND LIQUIDITY**

The following represents the BIC US's financial assets at December 31:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Financial Assets:		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 2,761,341	\$ 2,464,566
Investments	14,438,437	12,404,543
Other Receivables	<u>49,708</u>	<u>34,417</u>
Total Financial Assets	<u>17,249,486</u>	<u>14,903,526</u>
Less Amounts Not Available to be Used		
Within One Year		
Net Assets with Donor Restrictions	13,557,936	11,528,187
Board Designated Cash and Cash Equivalents	<u>1,412,133</u>	<u>1,412,133</u>
	<u>14,970,069</u>	<u>12,940,320</u>
Financial Assets Available to Meet Expenses Over the Next Year	<u>\$ 2,279,417</u>	<u>\$ 1,963,206</u>

The BIC US's plan is generally to maintain financial assets to meet 90 days of operating expenses.

**NOTE 4 INVESTMENTS**

Investments are summarized as follows at December 31, 2019 and 2018:

	<u>2019</u>	
	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Market Value</u>
Certificates of Deposit	\$ 268,610	\$ 268,610
Stewardship Investment Certificates (SICs)	4,021,352	4,021,352
Trust Investments and Deposit Accounts (BICF)	<u>9,128,869</u>	<u>10,148,475</u>
Total	<u>\$ 13,418,831</u>	<u>\$ 14,438,437</u>
	<u>2018</u>	
	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Market Value</u>
Stewardship Investment Certificates (SICs)	\$ 3,915,461	\$ 3,915,461
Trust Investments and Deposit Accounts (BICF)	<u>8,702,134</u>	<u>8,489,082</u>
Total	<u>\$ 12,617,595</u>	<u>\$ 12,404,543</u>



**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Notes to Financial Statements  
For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

**NOTE 4 INVESTMENTS (CONTINUED)**

Investment income (loss) is summarized as follows for the years ended December 31, 2019 and 2018:

	2019	2018
Realized Gain on Sale of Investments	\$ 200,538	\$ 436,536
Unrealized Gain (Loss) on Investments	1,232,194	(986,956)
Interest and Dividends	326,742	254,859
Custodial Fees	<u>(45,690)</u>	<u>(45,225)</u>
Total	<u>\$ 1,713,784</u>	<u>\$ (340,786)</u>

**NOTE 5 FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS**

Fair values of investments and money markets are summarized as follows at December 31, 2019 and 2018:

	December 31, 2019			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
Cash & Cash Equivalents				
Money Market	\$ -	\$ 1,250,306	\$ -	\$ 1,250,306
Total Cash & Cash Equivalents	<u>-</u>	<u>1,250,306</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,250,306</u>
Investments				
Certificates of Deposit	-	268,610	-	268,610
Stewardship Investment Certificates (SICs)	-	4,021,352	-	4,021,352
Trust Investments and Deposit Accounts (BICF)	<u>-</u>	<u>10,148,475</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,148,475</u>
Total Investments	<u>-</u>	<u>14,438,437</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>14,438,437</u>
Total	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 15,688,743</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 15,688,743</u>
	December 31, 2018			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Total
Cash & Cash Equivalents				
Money Market	\$ -	\$ 1,242,686	\$ -	\$ 1,242,686
Total Cash & Cash Equivalents	<u>-</u>	<u>1,242,686</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,242,686</u>
Investments				
Stewardship Investment Certificates (SICs)	-	3,915,461	-	3,915,461
Trust Investments and Deposit Accounts (BICF)	<u>-</u>	<u>8,489,082</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,489,082</u>
Total Investments	<u>-</u>	<u>12,404,543</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>12,404,543</u>
Total	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 13,647,229</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 13,647,229</u>

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Notes to Financial Statements

For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

**NOTE 5 FAIR VALUE MEASUREMENTS (CONTINUED)**

Level 2:

*Money Market Funds* – valued at the net asset value (NAV) of shares held by the BIC US at year-end. NAV is used as a practical expedient to fair value and shares may be redeemed on a daily basis. Money Market Funds are held with the Brethren in Christ Foundation, Inc. (BIC Foundation) and are considered to be Level 2.

*BIC Foundation Stewardship Investment Certificates* – investment in Stewardship Investment Certificates (SICs) are held with the BIC Foundation and considered to be a Level 2 Investment. These SICs are similar to a certificate of deposit and valued at cost.

*Certificates of Deposit* – investment in certificates of deposit (CDs) are held with the BIC Foundation and considered to be a Level 2 Investment. The CDs are valued at cost.

The BIC US's trust investments and deposit accounts held with the BIC Foundation are considered Level 2. A description of the various investments is as follows:

*BIC Foundation Growth with Income Fund* – a non-quoted investment fund which only invests in financial assets quoted in active markets. The Growth with Income Fund's investment objective is asset growth and protection against inflation by investing primarily in stocks, combined with secondary components in bonds and short-term/money market investments. Any amount can be withdrawn from an account up to the total account balance.

*BIC Foundation Fixed Income Fund* – a non-quoted investment fund which only invests in financial assets quoted in active markets. The Fixed Income Fund's investment objective is to seek a higher and more sustainable level of interest income and not long-term growth in capital by investing in fixed income holdings of U.S. government or U.S. government agencies with a 60% target allocation to U.S. agency mortgage-backed securities and 40% to U.S. short-term treasury securities. Any amount can be withdrawn from an account up to the total account balance.

*Mutual Funds* – valued at the net asset value (NAV) of share held by the Plan at year-end. NAV is used as a practical expedient to fair value and shares may be redeemed on a daily basis.

**NOTE 6 EDUCATION LOANS RECEIVABLE**

Individuals who are accepted for service with Brethren in Christ U.S. World Missions (BICUSWM), who have educational debts, may apply in writing for educational debt assistance. Educational debts approved for reimbursement will be paid based on ten percent (10%) of the original amount of the loan (at the time of appointment) per year for ten (10) years. Payments made will range from a minimum of \$1,000 to a maximum of \$2,500. Maximum lifetime education debt assistance is limited to \$25,000. For individuals accepted for service with BICUSWM but needing further education, BICUSWM will pay for such education as a loan. A "credit" is given to the missionaries for each year of service, based on an approved credit schedule. If the credits for years of service are less than the loan payments made by BICUSWM when a missionary completes his or her service, the difference will be paid back to BICUSWM by the missionary. The receivable due back to BICUSWM was \$10,239 and \$3,618 at December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively.

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Notes to Financial Statements

For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

**NOTE 7      ASEL RECEIVABLE**

From time to time, the BIC US makes Appreciation Sharing Equity Loans (ASEL) to BIC US executives for the purpose of purchasing their residence. These interest-free loans will be repaid upon the sale of the residence. Three loans were outstanding, totaling \$88,941, at December 31, 2019 and 2018. These notes are secured by a mortgage deed of trust or security deed.

**NOTE 8      OTHER RECEIVABLES**

Other receivables consisted of the following at December 31, 2019 and 2018:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Shared Services Receivables	\$ 43,708	\$ 28,417
Administrative and Other Advances	<u>6,000</u>	<u>6,000</u>
Total	<u>\$ 49,708</u>	<u>\$ 34,417</u>

**NOTE 9      NOTES RECEIVABLE**

Notes receivable are summarized as follows at December 31, 2019 and 2018:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Missionary Loan	\$ 28,000	\$ -
Forest Gate Loan	3,030	8,746
Hoyo-Spain Church Receivable	<u>183,456</u>	<u>187,875</u>
Total Notes Receivable	<u>\$ 214,486</u>	<u>\$ 196,621</u>

During 2019, the BIC US entered into a note receivable agreement with a missionary for \$28,000. Starting in 2020, the missionary will begin paying interest at a rate of 1.68% per annum. The unpaid principal shall be payable in full on any future date on which the BIC US demands repayment. The BIC US will provide a 90-day notice to the missionary. The balance was \$28,000 and \$0 at December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively.

During 1999, the BIC US entered into a note receivable agreement with a reverend for \$110,000. The reverend is to make monthly payments in the amount of \$408 at 5.5% and 5.0% interest during the years ended December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively. The balance was \$3,030 and \$8,746 at December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively.

During 2014, the BIC US entered into a note receivable agreement with a church for \$216,480. The church is to make monthly payments in the amount of \$1,102 and \$1,065 at 4.75% and 4.25% interest during the years ended December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively. The balance was \$183,456 and \$187,875 at December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively.

**NOTE 10      MASP EMPLOYEE HEALTHCARE ASSISTANCE BENEFIT PROGRAM**

The BIC US participates in a self-funded employee healthcare assistance benefit program, Mutual Aid Sharing Program (MASP). The MASP is a not-for-profit employee benefit plan whereby mission and service agencies of the Anabaptist Community share with each other the cost of providing healthcare assistance and death benefits to their employees.

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Notes to Financial Statements

For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

**NOTE 10      MASP EMPLOYEE HEALTHCARE ASSISTANCE BENEFIT PROGRAM (CONTINUED)**

Under the MASP, the BIC US is responsible for claims up to the retention of \$20,000 per person (retained claims). Claims in excess of the retention up to \$250,000 will be pooled with the other agencies. Claims in excess of the retention and the \$250,000 are reinsured by a stop loss policy that covers all MASP agencies. The stop loss reinsurance defines a claim as the total medical claims per individual per MASP fiscal year (October 1 through September 30). The BIC US has expensed its retained claims and its monthly payments to the MASP for its expected share of pooled claims and administrative costs including stop loss premiums. The payments include the actuarially projected amount to cover claims that exceed the agency retention up to \$250,000. The actual amount may differ from this estimate based on the organization's and pooled agencies' actual experience.

The MASP maintains a reserve fund, which can be drawn upon in the event of a large single claim or a series of large claims or if the MASP chooses to allocate a portion of the reserve fund to lower the aggregate shared claims limit. Claims are expensed as incurred. The BIC US has determined its estimated share of the reserve fund to be \$145,381 and \$151,278 at December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively. These funds are included in Other Assets.

**NOTE 11      FIXED ASSETS**

Fixed assets are summarized as follows at December 31, 2019 and 2018:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Real Estate	\$ 145,966	\$ 145,966
Furniture and Equipment	<u>127,648</u>	<u>111,072</u>
	273,614	257,038
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(159,261)</u>	<u>(144,711)</u>
Fixed Assets, Net	<u>\$ 114,353</u>	<u>\$ 112,327</u>

The estimated useful lives for purposes of computing depreciation are as follows:

Real Estate	40 years
Furniture and Equipment	3-10 years

Depreciation expense was \$27,294 and \$27,745 for the years ended December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively.

**NOTE 12      BOARD DESIGNATED CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS**

Board designated cash and cash equivalents at December 31, 2019 and 2018 are available for the following purposes:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Other – Global	\$ 687,358	\$ 687,358
Honor the Past – Build the Future	<u>724,775</u>	<u>724,775</u>
Total	<u>\$ 1,412,133</u>	<u>\$ 1,412,133</u>

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Notes to Financial Statements

For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

**NOTE 13      NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS**

***Perpetually Restricted Net Assets – Endowment Funds***

**Interpretation of Relevant Law**

In August 2008, The Financial Accounting Standards Board issued FASB ASC 958-204-45-28 through 45-31, “Endowments of Not-for-Profit Organizations: Net Asset Classification of Funds Subject to an Enacted Version of the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act and Enhanced Disclosures for all Endowment Funds.”

The staff position provides guidance on the net asset classification of donor-restricted endowment funds and requires additional disclosures about an organization’s endowment funds, both donor-restricted and board-designated.

The BIC US has interpreted the law that underlies the net asset classification of donor-restricted endowment funds as requiring the preservation of the fair value of the original gift as of the gift date of the donor-restricted endowment funds absent explicit instructions. As a result of this interpretation, the BIC US classifies as perpetually restricted net assets (1) the original value of gifts to the perpetual endowment, (2) the original value of subsequent gifts to the perpetual endowment, and (3) accumulations to the perpetual endowment made in accordance with the direction of the applicable donor gift instrument. Absent explicit instructions from the donor, investment income from perpetually restricted funds is classified as purpose restricted and expensed as permitted by established endowment fund spending policies.

The BIC US considers the following factors when receiving donor-restricted endowment funds:

1. The duration and preservation of the fund
2. The purposes of the organization and the donor-restricted endowment fund
3. General economic conditions
4. The possible effect of inflation and deflation
5. The expected total return from income and the appreciation of investments
6. Other resources of the organization
7. The investment policies of the organization

**Investment Management Policy**

Perpetually donor-restricted gifts are generally given with the donors’ expectations that the funds will stay intact and grow from or at a minimum provide earnings that can be used to fund the purposes specified in the corresponding trust instrument. Therefore, the funds should be invested in accordance with these general policies:

1. *Preservation of Capital* – Both with respect to the overall Fund and to the assets assigned to each investment manager, the Finance Committee and the investment managers should make conscious efforts to preserve capital, understanding that losses may occur in individual securities.
2. *Risk Aversion* – Understanding that risk is present in all types of securities and investment styles, the Finance Committee recognizes that some risk is necessary to produce long-term investment results sufficient to meet the Fund’s objectives. However, investment managers are to make reasonable efforts to control risk, and they will be evaluated regularly to ensure that the risk assumed is commensurate with the given investment style and objectives.
3. *Adherence to Investment Discipline* – Investment managers are expected to adhere to the investment management styles for which they were hired. Managers will be evaluated regularly for adherence to investment discipline.

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Notes to Financial Statements

For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

**NOTE 13      NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS (CONTINUED)**

**Investment Objectives**

Specifically, the primary objective in the investment management of fund assets shall be:

- To preserve purchasing power after spending
- To achieve returns that are more than the rate of inflation plus spending over the investment horizon in order to preserve purchasing power of fund assets
- To control risk in the investment of fund assets

**Handling of Income from Endowment Fund Investments**

All income earned, whether interest income, dividend income, or gains realized and unrealized will be classified as purpose restricted until appropriated for expenditure by the BIC US. There are no restrictions on the use of the income other than time and purpose restrictions established by the trust instrument or board-designated.

Changes in endowment net assets for the year ended December 31, 2019 are as follows:

	<u>Perpetual</u>
Contributions to Perpetual Endowment	\$ 51,664
Amounts Appropriated for Expenditure	<u>-</u>
Total Change in Endowment Funds	<u>\$ 51,664</u>

Changes in endowment net assets for the year ended December 31, 2018 are as follows:

	<u>Perpetual</u>
Contributions to Perpetual Endowment	\$ 2,000
Amounts Appropriated for Expenditure	<u>-</u>
Total Change in Endowment Funds	<u>\$ 2,000</u>

Perpetually restricted net assets at December 31, 2019 and 2018 are as follows:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Leadership Training Endowment	\$ 641,375	\$ 641,375
New Frontiers Endowment	445,038	445,038
Shaping Leaders for Tomorrow (Formerly Seminary Students)	1,535,549	1,485,885
Spouses Training	13,745	13,745
Smith Pastoral Training	65,458	63,458
Renewal/Refocus Endowment	11,801	11,801
World Missions – S. Africa Women's Ed. Fund	<u>71,561</u>	<u>71,561</u>
Total	<u>\$ 2,784,527</u>	<u>\$ 2,732,863</u>

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Notes to Financial Statements

For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

**NOTE 13      NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS (CONTINUED)**

***Time and Purpose Restricted Net Assets***

Purpose restricted net assets at December 31, 2019 and 2018 are available for the following purposes:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Other – National	\$ 18,926	\$ 18,599
Shaping Leaders for Tomorrow	437,259	253,570
Honoring Leaders of Yesterday	70,489	69,982
CMD – Special Projects	9,039	9,089
Kipe Seminary Special Training	16,120	12,938
Smith Pastoral Training	8,303	1,723
Renewal/Refocus	18,029	14,851
Honor the Past – Build the Future	3,246,329	2,274,312
Other – Global	1,229,710	1,337,370
Thrive – Global	2,403	2,403
Global Special Projects	520,502	364,371
Spice Gift – Global	39,953	48,754
Leadership Training – Global	1,405,625	1,139,681
Personnel Training – Global	982,927	861,713
New Frontiers – Global	354,957	243,017
So. African Women's Ed. Fund – Global	48,898	31,482
ECP – Global	371,485	328,149
Emergency Risk Mgt. – Global	543,841	535,343
Global Compassion – Global	115,694	92,483
Crisis Management – Global	59,553	44,258
Missionaries – Global	<u>1,273,367</u>	<u>1,111,236</u>
Total	<u>\$ 10,773,409</u>	<u>\$ 8,795,324</u>
Total Net Assets with Donor Restrictions	<u>\$ 13,557,936</u>	<u>\$ 11,528,187</u>

**NOTE 14      NOTES PAYABLE**

**Note 1**

During 1999, the BIC US entered into a thirty-year note payable with the Brethren in Christ Foundation for \$110,000. Interest of 5.5% and 5.0% is charged on the remaining balance with a monthly principal and interest payment of \$408 at December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively. Interest expense was \$340 and \$585 for the years ended December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively. Minimum principal maturities for the subsequent year are as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>
2020	<u>\$ 3,030</u>
Total	<u>\$ 3,030</u>

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Notes to Financial Statements

For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

**NOTE 14      NOTES PAYABLE (CONTINUED)**

**Note 2**

During 2013, the BIC US entered into a thirty-year note payable with the Brethren in Christ Foundation for \$216,480. The interest rate is variable at the sole discretion of the lender and was 4.75% and 4.25% at December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively. Monthly installments of principal and interest are \$1,102 and \$1,065 during the years ended December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively. Interest expense was \$8,805 and \$8,079 for the years ended December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively.

Minimum principal maturities for each of the subsequent five years are as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>
2020	\$ 4,633
2021	4,858
2022	5,094
2023	5,341
2024	5,601
Thereafter	<u>157,929</u>
Total	<u>\$ 183,456</u>

Total notes payable at December 31, 2019 and 2018 are as follows:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Note 1	\$ 3,030	\$ 8,746
Note 2	<u>183,456</u>	<u>187,875</u>
Total	<u>\$ 186,486</u>	<u>\$ 196,621</u>

**NOTE 15      RELATED ENTITY**

The BIC Foundation owns the building in Pennsylvania which serves as facilities for its principal office. The building is utilized by the BIC Foundation and the BIC US. No rental or lease payments are made to the BIC Foundation, but operating and maintenance costs of the building are shared by the BIC Foundation and the BIC US on a pro rata basis. Operating and maintenance costs paid to the BIC Foundation were \$34,209 and \$39,249 during the years ended December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively.

The BIC US provided services to the BIC Foundation for personnel services including, but not limited to, accounting, communications, human resources, benefit placement, and operational management. Costs for these services paid to the BIC US totaled \$23,843 and \$28,043 during the years ended December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively.

The BIC US owed the BIC Foundation \$12,959 and \$14,439 at December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively.



# **GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Notes to Financial Statements

For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

## **NOTE 16      RETIREMENT PLANS**

The BIC US has a 403(b)(9) Retirement Income Account plan. This plan covers all employees of the BIC US beginning at date of hire. Employees can contribute a percentage of their compensation each year up to specified limits. The BIC US made contributions to this plan on behalf of employees at a rate of 5.0% along with matching up to an additional 5.0% for 2019. The BIC US made contributions to this plan on behalf of employees at a rate of 5.5% along with matching up to an additional 4.5% for 2018. The BIC US contributed \$218,356 and \$208,707 to the plan during December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively.

The BIC US maintains the Brethren in Christ Minister's Pension Fund (the Plan) which is a single-employer defined-benefit pension plan. The Plan covers all ordained or licensed senior pastors and pastors of single-pastor congregations; ordained or licensed full-time associate pastors, Christian education, or youth ministers; and ordained or licensed ministers of other denominational boards and agencies. Normal monthly retirement benefits are equal to \$9.00 multiplied by the years of benefit service up to a maximum of 40 years of benefit service. In addition, the Plan provides for death benefits for eligible participants. As of December 31, 2009, the Plan was "frozen," allowing no new participants to be added after that point.

The BIC US pays the full cost of the Plan, and employee contributions are not required. During 2019 and 2018, the BIC US requested that the congregation for each eligible participant contribute \$1,200 into the Plan to provide the necessary funding of the Plan's obligations. A \$0 and \$62,500 contribution, in addition to the annual contribution for the ordained or licensed ministers of the BIC US, was provided by the BIC US during the years ended December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively.

The annual measurement date is December 31 for the pension benefits. The following tables provide further information about the BIC US's pension plan.

The following sets forth the Plan's actuarially determined funded status at December 31, 2019:

### Obligations and Funded Status for 2019:

Benefit Obligation at December 31, 2019	<u>\$    8,639,224</u>
Fair Value of Plan Assets at December 31, 2018	5,460,012
Employer Contributions	8,190
Actual Return on Assets	392,715
Benefit Payments	(646,614)
Fair Value of Plan Assets at December 31, 2019	<u>5,214,303</u>
Net Unfunded Status of the Plan at December 31, 2019	<u>\$   3,424,921</u>

### Net Periodic Pension Cost for 2019:

Service Cost	\$            -
Interest Cost	306,200
Expected Return on Plan Assets	(237,849)
Amortization of Net Transition (Asset) or Obligation	-
Amortization of Prior Service Cost	-
Amortization of Net (Gain) or Loss	<u>203,591</u>
Net Periodic Pension Cost for Period 1/1/2019 to 12/31/2019	<u>\$    271,942</u>

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Notes to Financial Statements  
For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

**NOTE 16 RETIREMENT PLANS (CONTINUED)**

Items Not Yet Recognized as a Component of Net Periodic Pension Cost for 2019:

Items Not Yet Recognized as a Component of	
Net Period Pension Cost at 12/31/2018	\$ 4,367,599
Amortization of Net Transition Asset or (Obligation)	-
Amortization of Prior Service Cost	-
Amortization of Net Gain or (Loss)	(203,591)
Change Due to Change in Experience and Assumptions at 12/31/2019	327,621
Change Due to Plan Amendment	-
Experience (Gain) or Loss at 1/1/2019	162,242
Asset (Gain) or Loss	<u>(154,866)</u>

Items Not Yet Recognized as a Component of	
Net Period Pension Cost at 12/31/2019	\$ <u>4,499,005</u>

Assumptions:

Weighted-Average Assumptions Used to Determine Benefit	
Obligations at December 31, 2019:	
Discount Rate	3.00 %
Rate of Compensation Increase	0.00 %

Weighted-Average Assumptions Used to Determine Net Periodic	
Benefit Cost for Year Ended December 31, 2019:	
Discount Rate	3.00 %
Expected Return on Plan Assets	5.50 %
Rate of Compensation Increase	0.00 %

The BIC US's expected rate of return on plan assets is determined by the plan assets' historical long-term investment performance, current asset allocation, and estimates of future long-term returns by asset class.

Plan Assets:

The BIC US's pension plan weighted-average asset allocations at December 31, 2019, by asset category are as follows:

<u>Asset Category</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Real Estate	5.37 %
Cash/Money Market Funds/SICs	68.63 %
International Equities	4.50 %
Large Cap Equities	8.02 %
Fixed Income – US	10.90 %
Fixed Income – International	<u>2.58 %</u>
Total	<u>100.00 %</u>

All assets are considered Level 1 or 2.

*Mutual Funds* – Valued at the net asset value (NAV) of share held by the Plan at year-end. NAV is used as a practical expedient to fair value and shares may be redeemed on a daily basis.

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Notes to Financial Statements  
For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

**NOTE 16      RETIREMENT PLANS (CONTINUED)**

*BIC Foundation Stewardship Investment Certificates* – The Plan's investment in Stewardship Investment Certificates (SICs) are held with the Foundation and considered to be a Level 2 Investment. These SICs are similar to a certificate of deposit and valued at cost.

Cash Flows:

Contributions – The BIC US expects contributions of \$0 to its pension plan in 2020.

Estimated Future Benefit Payments – The following benefit payments, which reflect expected future service, as appropriate, are expected to be paid:

2020	\$ 721,235
2021	722,651
2022	671,405
2023	656,143
2024	623,473
Years 2025-2029	<u>2,742,445</u>
Total	<u>\$ 6,137,352</u>

The following sets forth the Plan's actuarially determined funded status at December 31, 2018:

Obligations and Funded Status for 2018:

Benefit Obligation at December 31, 2018	<u>\$ 8,489,775</u>
Fair Value of Plan Assets at December 31, 2017	6,099,176
Employer Contributions	76,663
Actual Return on Assets	(5,028)
Benefit Payments	(710,799)
Fair Value of Plan Assets at December 31, 2018	<u>5,460,012</u>
Net Unfunded Status of the Plan at December 31, 2018	<u>\$ 3,029,763</u>

Net Periodic Pension Cost for 2018:

Service Cost	\$ -
Interest Cost	316,091
Expected Return on Plan Assets	(295,990)
Amortization of Net Transition (Asset) or Obligation	-
Amortization of Prior Service Cost	-
Amortization of Net (Gain) or Loss	<u>177,582</u>
Net Periodic Pension Cost for Period 1/1/2018 to 12/31/2018	<u>\$ 197,683</u>

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Notes to Financial Statements  
For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

**NOTE 16 RETIREMENT PLANS (CONTINUED)**

Items Not Yet Recognized as a Component of Net Periodic Pension Cost for 2018:

Items Not Yet Recognized as a Component of	
Net Period Pension Cost at 12/31/2017	\$ 4,206,560
Amortization of Net Transition Asset or (Obligation)	-
Amortization of Prior Service Cost	-
Amortization of Net Gain or (Loss)	(177,582)
Change Due to Change in Experience and Assumptions at 12/31/2018	(20,385)
Change Due to Plan Amendment	-
Experience (Gain) or Loss at 1/1/2018	57,988
Asset (Gain) or Loss	<u>301,018</u>

Items Not Yet Recognized as a Component of	
Net Period Pension Cost at 12/31/2018	<u>\$ 4,367,599</u>

Assumptions:

Weighted-Average Assumptions Used to Determine Benefit

Obligations at December 31, 2018:

Discount Rate	3.75 %
Rate of Compensation Increase	0.00 %

Weighted-Average Assumptions Used to Determine Net Periodic

Benefit Cost for Year Ended December 31, 2018:

Discount Rate	3.75 %
Expected Return on Plan Assets	5.50 %
Rate of Compensation Increase	0.00 %

The BIC US's expected rate of return on plan assets is determined by the plan assets' historical long-term investment performance, current asset allocation, and estimates of future long-term returns by asset class.

Plan Assets:

The BIC US's pension plan weighted-average asset allocations at December 31, 2018, by asset category are as follows:

<u>Asset Category</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Real Estate	4.57 %
Cash/Money Market Funds/SICs	62.62 %
International Equities	6.76 %
Large Cap Equities	11.46 %
Fixed Income – US	10.47 %
Fixed Income – International	<u>4.12 %</u>
Total	<u>100.00 %</u>

All assets are considered Level 1 or 2.

*Mutual Funds* – Valued at the net asset value (NAV) of share held by the Plan at year-end. NAV is used as a practical expedient to fair value and shares may be redeemed on a daily basis.

# **GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Notes to Financial Statements

For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

## **NOTE 16 RETIREMENT PLANS (CONTINUED)**

*BIC Foundation Stewardship Investment Certificates* – The Plan's investment in Stewardship Investment Certificates (SICs) are held with the Foundation and considered to be a Level 2 Investment. These SICs are similar to a certificate of deposit and valued at cost.

### Cash Flows:

Contributions – The BIC US expects contributions of \$10,104 to its pension plan in 2019.

Estimated Future Benefit Payments – The following benefit payments, which reflect expected future service, as appropriate, are expected to be paid:

2019	\$ 717,843
2020	706,641
2021	716,115
2022	662,132
2023	649,135
Years 2024-2028	<u>2,874,961</u>
Total	<u>\$ 6,326,827</u>

## **NOTE 17 CONCENTRATED CREDIT RISK**

The BIC Foundation is a denominationally owned and sponsored corporation consisting of two divisions which holds investments for the BIC US. The Trust Division handles investments on behalf of church agencies. The Brotherhood Loan Fund Division serves the church in a manner similar to that of a credit union. This division accepts deposits from individuals and church agencies and loans funds to congregations and pastors for real estate transactions. The investments of the BIC US are held by the BIC Foundation, which are neither insured by any private or governmental agency, nor are the balances fully collateralized. Therefore, an off-balance-sheet and a concentrated credit risk exist.

Financial instruments that potentially subject the BIC US to concentrations of credit risk consist principally of cash and cash equivalents held with financial institutions. Accounts at financial institutions are insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) up to \$250,000 per institution. The BIC US's accounts at a financial institution exceeded the insurance obtained through the FDIC. Amounts in excess of the FDIC limit totaled \$789,276 and \$562,265 at December 31, 2019 and 2018, respectively.

## **NOTE 18 RECLASSIFICATIONS**

Certain accounts in the prior-year financial statements have been reclassified for comparative purposes to conform with the presentation in the current-year financial statements.

## **NOTE 19 SUBSEQUENT EVENTS**

Subsequent events have been evaluated through June 16, 2020, which is the date the financial statements were available to be issued.

Subsequent to December 31, 2019, the BIC US has been operating in an environment that has been economically impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The full impact of the pandemic on the BIC US is not known as of the release of these financial statements. However, management is monitoring the current conditions and their potential impact.

**GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST**

Notes to Financial Statements

For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018

**NOTE 19      SUBSEQUENT EVENTS (CONTINUED)**

Subsequent to December 31, 2019, as part of the CARES Act, the BIC US received a Paycheck Protection Program loan from the Small Business Administration for \$480,814. The BIC US intends to apply for the loan forgiveness feature of this program. However, as of the release of these financial statements, these funds are considered a loan.

