

Beachy Amish Mennonite Ministers' Business Meeting Minutes
April 7-8, 2010
Fair Haven Amish Mennonite, Goshen, IN

Wednesday, April 7, 2010

2:39pm: Introduction of the Newly Ordained/Moderator—Dean Miller

Twenty-two newly ordained brethren introduced themselves. As each made an introduction, his co-ministers stood.

Name	Office	Church	Location	Date
Bobby Miller	Bishop	Salem A.M. Church	Newcomerstown, OH	Nov. 9, 2008
Alvin Stoltzfus	Bishop	Mine Road A.M.	Oxford, PA	April 26, 2009
Dave Beiler	Bishop	Shekinah Christian F.	Middleburg, PA	May 10, 2009
Melvin Lapp	Bishop	Crystal Valley M.	Dundee, NY	Aug. 23, 2009
Duane Troyer	Bishop	Faith & Light C.F.	Leesburg, OH	Aug. 30, 2009
Robert Beachy	Bishop	Canaan Fellowship	Plain City, OH	Nov. 8, 2009
Bill Yoder	Bishop	Sunnyside Fellowship	Sarasota, FL	March 7, 2010
Wilbur Gingerich	Bishop	Trinity Christian F.	Arthur, IL	Mar. 14, 2010
John Beiler	Bishop	Light of Hope C.F.	Wytheville, VA	March 21, 2010
Lester Glick	Deacon	Crystal Valley M.	Dundee, NY	Aug. 5, 2007
Al Garber	Deacon*	Gospel Light F.	Lincoln, MO	April 26, 2008
Dale Miller	Deacon	Bethesda Fellowship	Plain City, OH	Sept. 27, 2009
Steven Adams	Minister	Fairhaven A.M.	Millbank, ON	Oct. 26, 2008
Steven Gerber	Minister	Fairhaven A.M.	Poole, ON	Oct. 26, 2008
Phaylon Schrock	Minister	Fair Haven A.M.	Goshen, IN	March 8, 2009
Jon Yoder	Minister	Pilgrim Fellowship	Centreville, MI	April 12, 2009
Jared Schlabach	Minister	Living Waters F.	Sugarcreek, OH	May 17, 2009
Delbert Hostetler	Minister	Bethany Fellowship	Kokomo, IN	June 28, 2009
Leland Wagler	Minister	Mt. Nebo Mennonite	Newberry, IN	July 26, 2009
Simon Schrock	Minister	Pilgrim Christian F.	Stuarts Draft, VA	Aug. 23, 2009
Tim Yoder	Minister	Shady Grove C.F.	Lewisburg, PA	Nov. 1, 2009
Lamar Hochstetler	Minister	Oak Grove Mennonite	Aroda, VA	Dec. 22, 2009

**With the charge of 'bishop' under Bishop Truman Yoder*

Dean Miller called on Ivan Beachy to lead prayer. *Prayer:* Those who desired to leave for the business meeting were dismissed. *Song:* "Sweet Are the Promises"

2:45pm: Bishop Committee Presentation—Tim Miller

Election: The current bishop committee is Tim Miller (VA), Roman B. Mullet (OH), Raymond King (PA), Philip Miller (OH), and David Yoder (KS). Tim Miller's term is expiring. In a ballot mailed prior to the meeting, nominations were taken for a replacement. The assembled ministers voted by ballot among the top nominees, all of whom consented to be on the ballot:

- Ben Stoltzfus, Pequea Amish Mennonite, PA
- ✓ Ivan Beachy, Faith Mission Fellowship, VA
- Donnie Swartzentruber, Montezuma Amish Mennonite, GA

Ballot procedure: There was a pattern developing whereby new bishop committee nominees tended to be those who happened to be assigned topics at the ministers' meetings in a given year. After consultation with Paul A. Miller, the committee decided to take nominations prior to the meetings. In the future, submissions should include the brother's name and the church & state he's from, as similar names are becoming increasingly common within the constituency.

Mode of Baptism: The Beachys have historically practiced pouring. The committee feels that it is problematic when the mode becomes a more significant issue than what Scripture and the early church made of it. The committee is open to looking further into this issue if there is a need.

Method of Bishop Ordination: The committee has found that some advocate doing away with the bishop ordination as a second ordination. The committee raised concern that this may lead to instability from a lack of long-term leadership. Seriousness should be given before discarding the second ordination. There have been situations of abuse by a bishop, but changing the title doesn't change the man.

Questionnaire Responses: The following is a summary of the report. Tim Miller read the statement with occasional comments. The complete statement was available to ministers at the front desk.

The committee received about half the questionnaires back that were sent in February. Responses are still welcome. A substantial majority continue to affirm support for the non-use of the radio decided at the 1999 annual meeting hosted by Mountain View Mennonite, Salisbury, PA. Radio is to be avoided by any means, including via Internet and cell phone, though we have allowed both. Influence from video in most forms and TV in all forms destroys and takes away. Is our vision broad enough to see the effects of our choices to the third and fourth generations? We are not serving our churches if we expect one thing but in reality don't expect it at all. In the questionnaire responses, our strength (the broad spectrum of fellowship and congregational autonomy) is our weakness (lack of accountability and [ideological] distance). There's concern those tensions and differences may be too great now. No church considers itself 'typical Beachy' so typical Beachy becomes whatever we make of it. Is that helpful? One thing that unites a group is distinctiveness, such as of the difference between a fire company and emergency squad, or the identity of an adolescent skateboard crowd. There are agreed-on parameters. The real depth of any relationship is based on the level of submission between the parties involved; the broader the disregard, the more distant the relationship. This group was intimate decades ago, but now it is so large, we use name tags. Is the only solution to separate, then reunite through separation, or are we willing to sacrifice in the spirit of Romans 14 for the sake of deeper fellowship? Our commitment must be centered of the Word of God. Too many of our people are starving and dying spiritually because the seeds of the gospel are being choked out their lives by the cares of this world. Can we gain the vision for gathering together away from the edges, around the Word of God and around the presence of Christ within us?

3:13pm **Moderator—Dean Miller**

Song: "This Is My Commandment That You Love One Another"

3:14pm **Missions Interest Committee—Mel Glick**

Hillcrest Home: Ken Nisly shared thoughts on the concept of service, describing perspectives of youth when they come and when they leave again, and also the ability of unit life friction to bring growth. Hillcrest is operating at near capacity for residents, at around 88-90. There are no needs for male staff, but a laundry couple and ladies are needed: CNAs, a secretary, and kitchen workers. Ken felt that some staff come unprepared to practice unit standards and believes churches may not practice that which they have asked members to practice; conservative Mennonites appear to be doing better in this area than the Beachys. In Harrison, many residents from the two other nursing homes want to transfer to Hillcrest, and the quality of care is because of volunteers: “we’re doing what we’re doing because we want to do it.”

Northwest Ontario: Darrel Nisly reported on Nate Hostetler’s surgery to remove a tumor, asking for further prayer for his recovery. Galen and Edith Miller are now helping with the bookstore ministry; this is a result of someone recommending them after last year’s presentation. Darrel shared about staff involvement with the natives: helping a couple with their marriage, singing at a funeral, and assisting a young girl overcome bitterness. “Our desire is to be available, not only to give the salvation message, but to help with healing because of what Jesus does.”

Sioux Lookout: David Herschberger shared that in the late 1970s he had gone around to different reserves and found little edifying reading material in stores, this after the missionaries had invested much in teaching the natives how to read and write through schools. From this, he opened a bookstore and expanded the witness by flying literature to nine reserves up to 250 miles north and 250 miles east. Galen and Edith are now taking over this ministry. The present bookstore building has been outgrown and a larger storage facility needs to be rented or purchased at Sioux Lookout. \$300,000 - \$500,000 is needed to purchase a building, and donations and interest-free loans are sought, from \$1,000 to \$100,000. Contact David, Darrel Nisly, or any of the MIC board members if you can help with this need.

Faith Mission Home: Galen Stutzman reported that FMH currently has 59 residents, 44 single staff, and 11 families. There is no waiting list to come serve; while FMH is “comfortably” staffed, they are not “fully” staffed. He encouraged parents to contribute to the constituency through maintaining a good home life.

Choice Books of Northern Virginia: Simon Schrock reported that 8,500 books are sold a day, making CBNV no longer dependant on MIC financial support. Mel Glick assists on the board of directors, finds staff, and services book racks sometimes. Two sales representatives are needed in Texas and a floater based in Virginia who may travel to other states. Choice Books is employing Ernest Witmer in Los Angeles. Ernest wants to establish a conservative church there, but Choice Books wages do not permit this, so he is looking for “a few drips a month” to fill a bucket of financial support.

Voting: Mel Glick expressed his sympathies for the recent passing of Willis Bontrager, who had been on the MIC board for nine years. MIC sought support of the ministerial body to appoint a replacement rather than elect a replacement, and a raise of hands provided support for the proposal. The results of the most recent election are as follows: Rodger Byers, Free Union, VA, was elected to replace Ivan Hershberger, who completed three terms.

Dunmore East church, Ireland: Mel Glick reported that Irish citizenship has been given to the Dan Yoder family. In August, the Ken Miller family, Stuarts Draft, VA, will replace the Ed Yoder family. The mission has had contact with seekers from Great Britain and mainland Europe; some have moved to the Dunmore East mission. MIC has partnered with Bald Eagle Boys' Camp to establish a camp in Ireland. The traditional camp model may need adjustment in Ireland because of climate, culture, government regulations, etc. MIC has just purchased 16 acres of land to access a forest. All forest is government land, and the forest land is rented.

4:04pm **Amish Mennonite Aid—Earl Peachy**

Voting: Three nominees were voted on by ballot to replace Daniel Bontrager, who requests not to be re-elected:

- Lavern Miller, Rosewood Fellowship, Shipshewana, IN
- ✓ Paul Beachy, Grace Mennonite Fellowship, Bastrop, TX
- Virgil Kanagy, Calvary Fellowship Mennonite, Blackville, SC

Prayer. The board requested that Daniel be used as an honorary board member, and unanimous support was offered by a hand raise.

*Financial Report—*Ivan Beachy shared that AMA is now offering the two AMA books for free. Because of generous giving in 2009, AMA will be distributing over \$104,000 in love offerings to workers, \$58.70 per share for 1,782 shares. Total income in 2009 was \$2.36 million, this after a difficult year in 2008. AMA is changing accounting programs and accountants. 2009 financial reports are not available at this time, but the balance was \$540,000 (\$436,000, minus the love offering reserve).

*Personnel Needs—*Ray Stutzman thanked the assembled for referring potential workers. A number of workers are leaving for the mission field this summer. Despite most needs being met, referrals are still requested. Merle Beachy, who has served as bishop in Kisumu, Kenya, is terminating, and someone with pastoral and administrative experience is sought to fill part of Merle's role.

*General Missions Report—*Daniel Bontrager described the Central American Ministers' Meeting; around 100 ordained and commissioned leaders attend. Recent milestones include the ordination of Orlando Matute as bishop of Cayo Christian Fellowship, Belize, and Seferino Alcaraz as deacon of La Belleza Colony, Paraguay. A recent fire destroyed Seferino's storage building and truck; contributions are welcome. Nearby government-run clinics in Paraguay are challenging the official permission of the mission clinic to operate; if the mission clinic is unable to meet the demands (perceived as manipulative), it may have to close, with approval of the colony church. The children's home started by El Salvador churches grew to the point where they receive assistance from CAM and the Holmes County New Order Amish, and now it is a deaf ministry. The Kenya ministry continues to grow, with both church plantings and the Agape material aid ministry. Fellowship Haven, the former AMA-MIC-sponsored mission in Washington, DC, wishes to rejoin the constituency and is pursuing assistance.

*Proposed Ransom Policy/Visitors—*Earl Peachy asked for a raised-hand vote in consideration of AMA's ransom policy handed out at the beginning of the meetings; the policy was accepted

unanimously. The policy states AMA will not pay ransom in hostage situations, but is available in aiding monetary transfers from private sources if requested. Noted that historically, Mennonite churches met missions with suspicion because of a perceived liberalizing effect, but AMA is finding visitors from domestic churches have a liberalizing effect on the mission field. Visitors should be willing to comply with local practices.

4:39pm: Calvary Bible School—Paul A. Miller

The current board is Marvin Kauffman (IA), Tim Stoltzfus (AR), Norman Kauffman (PA), Ken Miller (VA), and Paul A. Miller (OH). Ken Miller is moving to Ireland and is not up for re-election. One layman is allowed on the board. The candidates are:

- ✓ Stan Nisly, minister, Cornerstone Mennonite, KS
- Mel Stoltzfus, layman, Mine Road A.M., PA

Principal's Report—Floyd Stoltzfus described the suitability of the site in Arkansas, surrounded by natural beauty. This year, the enrollment was 103 for first term, 104 second term, and 74 third term, 220 students in all. Chester Weaver's sermon at CBS on "The Beauty of Christian Womanhood" and appropriate covering size, as well as thoughts on drift in the church, brought a revival.

Treasurer's Report—Tim Stoltzfus reported that this year's end-of-term balance of \$12,485 is better than last year's balance of \$1,547. A burglary during off-season cost several thousand worth of supplies. "I wish they had taken the teachers' chairs," said one experienced instructor.

Paul A. Miller said an email will be sent of sought-after replacement items. Contact Marvin Kauffman or other board members with recommendations for potential teachers or feedback.

4:53pm: Moderator—Dean Miller

After announcements and closing prayer, the assembled were dismissed for supper.

Thursday, April 8, 2010

2:29pm: Moderator—Dale Hochstetler

After opening thoughts, Dale dismissed those who desired to leave for the business meeting.
Song: "Lord, Speak to Me" (#908 Christian Hymnary)

2:35pm: Bishop Committee—Tim Miller

David Yoder (KS) is the new chairman. As the committee continues to discuss items from the questionnaire, they welcome input. Tim read the "Purpose, Statement, and Function" of the committee, emphasizing that the committee is available to assist a church in finding help for difficult situations, but will not take direct responsibility.

2:41pm: Calvary Publications—Elmer Glick

The present board is Elmer Glick (WV) (chairman), Nathan Yoder (VA) (vice chairman), Enos Stutzman (OH) (secretary), Ralph Miller (VA), David L. Miller (KS), and Glen Yoder (IN). Paul L. Miller (KS) is editor and Mark Beachy (OH) is treasurer and circulation manager. Ralph

Miller's term expires; three nominees were voted on by ballot for the board position:

- Manfred McGrath, Dayspring Christian Fellowship, Taylorsville, NC
- ✓ Ralph Miller, Faith Mission Fellowship, Free Union, VA
- Mark Webb, Oak Grove Mennonite, Aroda, VA

Early on, MIC subsidized Calvary Messenger, but because of donations and subscriptions, Calvary Messenger now operates independently of that support. Subscriptions are around 5,000, and the board encourages that the CM be placed in a visible location in the home so it is read. The current balance is \$18,509.79, but subscription payments come at the beginning of the year, so this is how much Calvary Messenger has to operate off for the remainder of the year. Three publications and two tracts are available for purchase at the Calvary Publications booth. The board reaffirms David L. Miller's position as a board member emeritus, which is done on a year-to-year basis.

2:51pm: Conservative Anabaptist School Board Institute Report—Elmer Glick

The institute operates through the oversight of the Calvary Publications board. The role of Calvary Publications is minimal. The present board is Allen Beiler (Stuarts Draft, VA), Lee Lehman (PA), Edwin Eby (PA), and Jonas Sauder (PA). The fourth annual meeting at Oak Grove Mennonite, Aroda, VA had good attendance. The next annual meeting will be March 4-5, 2011, at a location to be determined. Contact Elmer Glick if your community would consider hosting CASBI's 2011 meeting.

2:54pm: Institute for Global Outreach—Merle Burkholder

The purpose of IGo is to train conservative Anabaptist missionaries for the mission field in areas of life such as cultural adaption, theological challenges, and language acquisition. Merle described the activities of the institute, based in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and invited potential students. IGo is a para-church organization.

3:06pm: Moderator—Dale Hochstetler

Dale read a statement from Christian Believer's Fellowship, Lewisburg, PA. The church is looking for someone to oversee Lighthouse Haven, a home for unstable women. Contact James Yoder with suggestions. *Song: "I Love You, Lord"*

3:08pm: Peace & Service Committee—Elmer Miller

Two nominees were voted on by ballot to be placed on the board:

- Dave Beiler from Shekinah Christian Fellowship, Lewisburg, PA
- ✓ Merv Lapp from Weavertown A.M., Lancaster County, PA

Other board members are Elmer Miller (IN), David L. Miller (KS), and Tim Miller (VA).

Draft Report—David L. Miller shared about the development of CASP (Conservative Anabaptist Service Programs). Fourteen constituencies are affiliated with CASP, and the Beachys are the largest, with approximately 800 young people eligible to be drafted. The new director of selective service seems more sympathetic to CASP than the previous. A goal of CASP is to make sure conviction is not lost for nonresistance; those Anabaptist churches that have acculturated have also lost their conviction for nonresistance.

Elmer Miller reported that at the August 2008 CASP board meeting in Plain City, OH, CASP and CAM requested that the Beachys pursue separate CO projects outside the umbrella of CASP, as CAM cannot accommodate all the youth that would need service positions. The partnership with Interfaith Housing Services in Hutchinson, KS, became the first project independent of CASP. The project lasted for three months. Seven young men volunteered for the first term and six each for the second and third terms. Dan Miller (IN) was the project coordinator the first six weeks and Marcus Overholt (SC) the last six weeks. The project went well, and the work was finished in under half the time it was projected to take. Elmer read a statement of appreciation from Interfaith Housing Services.

Contributions to pay back interest free loans totaling between \$8,000 and \$9,000 are sought. A non-minister board is under consideration. A more comprehensive report of activities will be sent out by the middle of the year, including information about the possibility of another project. Nonresistance statements are still available.

3:35pm: **Penn Valley Christian Retreat—Homer Zook**

While PVCR is a Beachy-supported organization, it ministers to many outside the constituency. The present ministerial board includes Elmer Schrock (VA), David S. King (PA), and Homer Zook (OH). The board requested to renew David's five-year term. Support was given by a raise of hands. This year, PVCR is offering 25 seminars. Smaller seminars have been phased out or put on a non-annual schedule, but it is still difficult to get people to PVCR. The youth seminar became uncontrollably large like the youth fellowship meetings had been, so PVCR instated some changes that have been working well. All permits have been approved for upcoming renovations, and plans are to start by September 27, and help is desired. Among other staff needs, administrator Ervin Hostetler is terminating by Aug./Sept., and a replacement is sought.

3:45pm: **Faith Builders Educational Programs—Ernest Hochstetler**

Ernest mentioned two books and CDs available from FBEP. He thanked supporters for financial contributions during the recession. The Beachy constituency is well represented at Faith Builders with board members Sam Bontrager (IN), Gary Miller (KS), John Nisley (PA), and Dave Nisly (VA), pastoral council members Ernest Hochstetler (SC), Wayne Schrock (VA), and Glen Yoder (IN), as well as numerous advisory council members. The main reasons people go to FBEP is to prepare for teaching, prepare for college, or prepare for service. FBEP is considering an academic-style periodical close to 100 pages published annually or semiannually. Ernest asked Verlynn Yoder to comment about FBEP's winter term. Verlynn described his five weeks of winter term at FBEP as refreshing and recommendable. FBEP is a para-church organization.

4:01pm: **CAM Billboards—Ernest Hochstetler**

Ernest is seeking tele-counselors, volunteers to take phone calls from people who have seen a CAM billboard; contact Ernest or Dwayne Stoltzfus at CAM. Ernest described the different kinds of calls the volunteers get at all hours of the day. Currently, 83 billboards in 44 states are in service; an estimated two million people view these boards each day. The average cost of a billboard is \$600/month. CAM is a para-church organization.

4:10pm: **Moderator—Dale Hochstetler**

Song: "Jesus Loves Me"

4:11pm: Masters International Ministries—Nathan J. Yoder

Nathan presented an electronic slideshow of MIM work in Ukraine. There are four churches, including a new one beginning in Gordeske. Programs requiring contributions or short-term volunteers include the tilling program, summer Bible camp, translation work and printing (including the newly completed *Doctrines of the Bible*), and church land acquisition in Chernivtsi. The mission base is relocating to Gordeske, a village without a church that has invited MIM in to proselytize.

4:22pm: Anabaptist Financial—Richie Lauer

The purpose of Anabaptist Financial is to assist the brotherhood in channeling material resources within the Kingdom of Christ and to provide stewards with Biblically-based financial counsel consistent with conservative Anabaptists beliefs. The 40-person advisory group includes, among others, Bill Mullet, Ben Stoltzfus, Aaron Lapp Jr., and Raymond King. Through Anabaptist Foundation, donors can give anonymously and still receive a tax deduction. Other programs available include micro-financing in third-world countries, personal investments and loans, and business seminars. Visit afweb.org for more information. AF is a para-church organization.

4:37pm: Shepherds' Institute—Chester Weaver

The Shepherds' Institute is an effort to provide help for ministers in preaching, ministering, and sorting through theology. The next seminar is at Pleasant Grove Mennonite in Northern Indiana, April 19-23, 2010. It features presentations and a round-table discussion. One of the present concerns is the 'emergent church' movement. Booklets entitled "Amber Alert: Exodus En Mass" are available from Chester. The Shepherd's Institute is a para-church organization.

4:44pm: Youth Fellowship Meetings—Donald Miller

The current committee includes Donald Miller (KS), Simon Bender (PA), Luke Stutzman (OH), Verlynn Yoder (MN), and Wayne Nisly (SC). A new member from the southwest district is needed to replace Donald. Ballots were cast for the following nominees:

- ✓ Dan Byler, Lighthouse of Faith Fellowship, Huntsville, AR
- Julian Nisly, Center Amish Mennonite, Hutchinson, KS

The meetings went well last summer, with the exception of a fatality from a motorcycle crash in Lott, TX. Youth sponsors and parents are encouraged to attend with their youth.

4:48 Native Missions Endeavors—Titus Wagler

The organization sponsors 32 pastors at \$50 a month in India. The executive committee includes Alvin Beachy, Leon Overholt, David Kauffman, and Jay Hostetler (secretary/treasurer). The current board is Melvin Glick, Titus Wagler, and John Hostetler. Melvin Glick's six-year term is expiring. Ballots were cast for the following nominees:

- John Beiler, Crystal Valley Mennonite, Dundee, NY
- ✓ Daniel Brenneman, Kempsville Amish Mennonite, Virginia Beach, VA
- Sanford Wayne Yoder, Light of Hope Christian Fellowship, Wytheville, VA

4:51pm: Archive/Annual Meeting—Paul A. Miller

Paul Miller and Cory Anderson are suggesting the assembled consider the value of a central

archive. Documents may include committee reports, papers of service units, recordings of the ministers' meetings, minutes of annual meetings, programs over the years, etc. Materials and records on a constituency, congregational, and personal level may be considered. No formal proposal was made, but Paul welcomed thoughts and contributions to the "who, what, and where" of the idea. Paul extended thanks to all involved in work for the ministers' meetings. The next annual meeting is scheduled for April 5-7, 2011, in Lancaster County, PA.

4:56pm: **Moderator—Dale Hochstetler**

Dale asked Julian Nisly (KS) to lead a song. *Song: "Marvelous Grace of Our Loving Lord" (#817 Christian Hymnary, verses 1,4)*. Dale concluded with announcements and prayer, then dismissed the assembled for supper.