

**Minutes of the
National Brethren Ministerial Association**

Tuesday, August 7, 2001

The meeting was called to order by President Ray Aspinall. Ron Waters and Emery Hurd made announcements to the group about participating in research for their doctoral programs.

President Aspinall then led the association in prayer. Following prayer guests were introduced to the association.

Secretary-Treasurer Gerald Barr presented the minutes and financial re-port for 2000. No corrections were noted. He also advised the group that the Executive Committee had decided to give the committee \$500 to help with the costs of the conference.

Jerry proposed to revise the 2001 budget by adding \$100 to the office expense item and to adopt that as the 2002 budget. He moved to accept the 2000 report and adopt the 2002 budget as amended. The motion was seconded and carried.

President Aspinall called for reports from the commissions. No commission had a report to present.

President Aspinall announced that the **Nominating Committee** was still working on a ballot, and would present its ballot on Thursday for a vote.

The **Ministerial Student Aid Committee** report was presented by Chairman Bob Keplinger. He directed us to the written report in the Conference Program book, and suggested that we read it. He did advise that more funds were needed to continue providing meaningful support to students.

There were questions about just how the fund was administered and who received aid. Bob Keplinger and Fred Finks explained how the scholarship program for the seminary worked, and the problems created by the declining economy. We were advised that the Midwest District had voted to send \$500 to the Student Aid program. Bob Keplinger recommended that churches send contributions to the fund.

Following the discussion it was moved and seconded to accept the committee report. The motion carried.

Fred Finks presented the report from **Ashland Theological Seminary**. He invited everyone to the open house at the Sandburg Center on the afternoon of August 8th. He stressed the need to provide leadership to impact our society, and the part ATS was going to be playing through the Sandburg Center.

The seminary is currently working on programs related to grants for developing ethical statements for law enforcement, challenging high school youth to choose ministry careers, and developing character formation in leadership. He also advised of the upcoming quest for new faculty and administration.

He presented Anthony Kime as the nominee for the 2002 NABCE scholarship. It was moved and seconded to receive the Seminary report and accept the nomination of Anthony Kime. The motion was seconded and carried.

Emery Hurd presented the report of the **2001 Pastors' Conference Committee**. He said that the conference was excellent, and that everyone who attended had a wonderful time. He also expressed the appreciation of the committee for the financial assistance. It was moved and seconded to receive the report and the motion carried.

President Aspinall called for the report of the **2002 Pastors' Conference Committee** from the Northern California District. Because of the small size of the district and confusion about the schedule we were advised that the N. California district would not be able to host the conference in 2002.

Charles Lowmaster moved to refer the problem to the Executive Committee for resolution, and the motion was seconded. There was considerable discussion about the Pastors' Conference schedule and rotation of assignments. Fred Finks said that Ashland Theological Seminary would invite the Brethren pastors to its Spring Conference in 2002 and make arrangements in the schedule for meeting time for Brethren elders. The Ohio elders agreed to work with the seminary in implementing this idea.

The motion was passed, and the Executive Committee announced that the Ohio district would be assigned the 2002 conference, and that the 2003 conference would be planned by the N. California district with assistance from others.

The **National Ordination Council** report was presented by David Cooksey. Four were approved for ordination this year. It was moved and seconded to receive the report, and the motion carried.

Dave Cooksey then presented the report of the **Director of Pastoral Ministry**. He reported that many young people were moving through the educational process toward full-time ministry, and were concerned that there would be room for them in their specialties. Many young people are moving through the BYIC organization who are deeply committed to the Lord and the church, and

would be assuming leadership positions in the next ten years. He reminded us that the church is God's chosen means of reaching the world. It was moved and seconded to receive the report, and the motion carried.

- ✚ President Aspinall called for memorials, and the following were presented:
- ✚ Marlin McCann -- by Kurt Stout
- ✚ Don Rowser -- by Lynn Mercer, Dale Stoffer, Charles Lowmaster, and Bob Keplinger
- ✚ Bob Hoffman -- by Lynn Mercer and Charles Lowmaster
- ✚ Duane Dickson - Larry Baker

A petition from the Midwest District Association of Brethren Church Elders concerning Brethren Church policy on the ordination of women was presented to the association by President Aspinall. A similar petition was presented from the Indiana District Ministry of Pastoral and Congregational Care. *[Copies of these petitions are attached to these minutes.]*

Emery Hurd moved to receive these reports and to refer them to the Study and Research Commission, which would prepare a report for the 2002 NABCE business meeting. The motion was seconded by Milt Robinson. Following considerable discussion regarding the propriety of the petitions and the proper way of dealing with them Charles Lowmaster moved to table the motion until Thursday's meeting. Bob French seconded the motion, and it carried.

The meeting was adjourned by President Aspinall.

Thursday, August 9, 2001

Announcements were made as the association gathered for the meeting.

President Aspinall opened the meeting with devotions based on Matthew 14. He reminded us that while we sometimes think that ministry comes from us and we choose the time and place of our ministry, in reality we serve under the authority of Jesus. He **made** the disciples get into the boat and leave. We are not free to do ministry our own ways—Jesus is Lord! President Aspinall then led the association in prayer.

Guests were then introduced to the association.

The following new members were presented with proper applications: T. J. McLaughlin (R), Gerald Wilkinson (R), and Paul Reeder (L), Jon Bouldin (L), Wesley Glass (R), and Brad Whitehead (R). It was moved and seconded to receive them into membership, the motion was seconded and carried.

The tabled motion regarding the petitions concerning ordination of women was placed back on the floor. There was considerable discussion about issues

related to the question. The exact nature of ordination, and questions related to gender and hermeneutics were all discussed. We were reminded that in the 1890's the church affirmed that women were equal to men and that ordination of women was proper according to the Brethren understanding of Scripture. It was questioned whether personal preference was confusing the historical position of the church.

Following discussion the motion to receive the petitions and refer them to the Commission of Study and Research was defeated.

John Swope moved that the Chairman of the National Ordination Council publish in the Leadership Letter a statement of current policy of the NOC on the ordination of women. Bill Skeldon seconded the motion and it passed.

The Nomination Committee presented the following nominees for association offices:

- ✚ President - Richard Morris, Ray Aspinall
- ✚ Secretary Treasurer—Gerald Barr
- ✚ Asst. Secretary-Treasurer—Dick Craver
- ✚ Study and Research Commission—Ron Burns, Dale Stoffer
- ✚ Benevolence Commission—Jim Naff
- ✚ Nurture and Support Commission—Jim Koontz, Rom Miller

Ray Aspinall declined the nomination of President, and David Stone was nominated. Ron Miller withdrew his name for Nurture and Support Commission. It was moved and seconded to close nominations. The motion carried, and ballots were cast.

The following memorials were then presented to the association:

- ✚ Claude Stogsdill - by Roger Stogsdill
- ✚ Don Rowser - by Emery Hurd
- ✚ Robert Hoffman - by Owen Preston.

It was also announced that Ann Black, a former Brethren elder and widow of E. J. Black, had also passed away this past year. Mrs. Black was not a member of the association, but we note her passing with appreciation for her service to the church.

The report of the elections was announced. It was moved, seconded, and carried that the second highest in the election for President would be Vice President. The results of the election:

- ✚ President -- Dave Stone
- ✚ Vice President - Richard Morris

✚ Study and Research Commission - Dale Stoffer.

It was moved to declare the unopposed candidates elected. The motion seconded and carried.

The newly elected officers were installed by outgoing president Ray Aspinall, and President David Stone adjourned the meeting.

[Rev Gerald Barr](#)

Secretary-Treasurer