One Hundred Fortieth Annual Meeting of the Bible Fellowship Church Conference 2023

edited on May 1, 2024

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Announcing:
141st BFC Conference

Convenes: April 22-24, 2024

Place: Pinebrook Bible Conference

Officers:
Daniel L. Williams - Moderator
Timothy J. Schmoyer - Vice Moderator
Ronald L. Kohl - Secretary

Reports Due: February 15, 2024

Convened at Pinebrook Bible Conference

East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania

April 24-26, 2023

Published by Order of BFC Conference

Ronald L. Kohl, Editor

Officers of the 140th BFC Conference:

Moderator, Randall A. Grossman

Vice Moderator, Daniel L. Williams

Secretary, Ronald L. Kohl

~ ~ ~

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Jared M. Burkholder

Noah Hottel

Publisher, Rachel E. Schmoyer

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Regions for 2023

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Lehigh Valley Region:
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Pocono PA Region:
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Cape May Courthouse, NJ; Wallingford, PA; Wissinoming, PA; Woodbury Heights, NJ

South/West Region:
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City Concerns:
Ralph E. Ritter, Leader
Citylight Bible Church, Allentown, PA; La Roca de Reading, Reading, PA; Newark, NJ; Grace Fellowship, Harrisburg, PA; Wissinoming, PA

Regional Photos

Berks PA Region
Front Row: Jim MacArthur, Sandy Holbert, Paul Harvey, Scott Allison, Carlos Rodriguez, Wayne Rissmiller

Back Row: Bill Burton, John Studenroth, Jerry Brush, Randy Grossman, Dan Williams, Dan Hoffstetter, Larry Davies

Bucks-Mont PA Region
Front Row: Dan King, Ezekiel Mack, Jeff Kauffman, Joel Klase, Mike Walker, A.J. Miller

Back Row: Barry Parsons, Scott Wright, Mike Meadows, Andy Crossgrove, Ron Kohl, Tim Radcliff

Capitol PA Region
Wes Bunting, Andy Barnes, Dennis Spinney, Jayonn Folks, Howard Wells, Mark Barninger, Josh Miller, John Hanner, Steve DelDuco

DELMARVA Region
Front Row: Dick Bickings, Ray Bertolet, Dan Wagner
Back Row: Andrew Hebel, Trace Haines, Josh Dupiche, Steve Morton, James Reff

Lancaster PA Region

Front Row: Eric Herb, Jr, Keith Long, Jesse Benack, Kevin Kirkpatrick, Ralph Soper, Calvin Reed

Back Row: Jarrod Cruise, Phil Morrison, Mark Morrison, Tom Morrison

Lehigh Valley Region

Front Row: Adam Crain, Tim Schmoyer, Keith Strunk, Chris Von Holt, Aaron Smith, David Smith

Back Row: Jared Burkholder, Rick Paashaus, John LoRusso, Tom Shorb, Jason Hoy, Jules Hall, Bill Walters (elder), Tim Hogan

Metro NJ Region
Marc Sweet, Marco Valle, Ronnie Burgess, John Sullivan

Northumberland County PA Region
Ferdie Madara, Josh Gibson, Roger Siegrist

Pocono PA Region
Beau Coffman, Bob Johnson, James Farver

South Jersey/Philly Region
Front Row: Ralph Ritter, Dick Taylor, Mark Bickel
Back Row: Tim Nessler, Aaron Susek, Brad Boyer, Tim Cowen

South and West Region
Jason Filbert and David Poland

Church Extension Ministries

Front Row: Carlos Rodriguez, Mark Morrison, Ray Bertolet, A.J. Miller, David Gundrum, Tracy Haines, James Reff, Richard Taylor, Jason Filbert

Back Row: Josh Dupiche, John Hanner, Dan Hoffstetter, Larry Davies, Los Morales, Tim Radcliff, Brad Boyer

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Directory of Boards and Committees

Directory of Boards & Committees
(Elected by BFC Conference)

BFC Executive Board

(2024) Gary E. Karch, Robert A. Sloan, Ricky D. Whitmire
(2025) Steven J. DelDuco, L. James Roberts, Jr., Byron D. Roth, Daniel L. Williams
(2026) Randall A. Grossman, Ronald L. Kohl, John W. Sullivan, William J. Walters
President - William G. Schlonecker
Vice President of Corporation - Robert A. Sloan
Secretary of Corporation - Ronald L. Kohl
Treasurer - John W. Sullivan
Executive Director - David T. Allen

Ministerial Credentials Committee

(2024) Jason L. Hoy, Scott Wright, Ralph M. Soper
(2025) Keith M. Long, Keith A. Strunk
(2026) Jesse A. Benack, S. Wayne Rissmiller
Chairman - S. Wayne Rissmiller
Vice-Chairman - Jason L. Hoy
Secretary - Ralph M. Soper

Ministerial Candidate Committee

(2024) Mark E. Barninger, Andrew T. Crossgrove
(2025) Andrew W. Barnes, David A. Smith
(2026) David E. Gundrum, Joshua P. Miller, Richard E. Taylor
Chairman - Andrew T. Crossgrove
Secretary - Richard E. Taylor
Applications Secretary - Joshua P. Miller

Ministerial Relations Committee

(2024) William G. Schlonecker, J. Robert Vaughn
(2025) Randall A. Grossman, Ronald W. Reed
(2026) Glendon R. LeSuer, Jr., Daniel Z. Krall, Timothy J. Schmoyer
Chairman - Randall A. Grossman
Secretary - Timothy J. Schmoyer

Committee on Nominations

(2024) Jill Davidson, Michael W. Walker
(2025) John J. Hanner, Beckie Merrick
(2026) Jules J. Hull III, Daniel W. King
Chairperson - Jill Davidson

Conference Judicatory

(2024) Ronald W. Reed, L. James Roberts, Jr., Kevin W. Kirkpatrick
(2025) Donald D. McKinney
(2026) Clyde D. Bomgardner, Jr., James R. Knapp, Bryan C. McNally, Rodney P. Plows
Secretary - Clyde D. Bomgardner, Jr

Special Appellate Judicatory

(2024) Timothy Faust, Joshua P. Miller
(2025) Randall A. Grossman, Ken Lord, J. Richard Vroman, Scott Wright
(2026) Robert A. Moreau, Robert A. Sloan
Secretary - Randall A. Grossman

Officers of 141st BFC Conference

Moderator - Daniel L. Williams
Vice Moderator - Timothy J. Schmoyer
Secretary - Ronald L. Kohl

BFC Elected & Ratified Positions

BFC President - William G. Schlonecker (2024)
BFC Executive Director - David T. Allen (2025)
Conference Pastor - Ralph M. Soper (2025)

Directory of Other Committees

(Self Elected/Appointed & Ratified by Executive Board)

BFC Life Committee

David T. Allen, Lisa Kellerman, Richard T. Paashaus, S. Wayne Rissmiller, William G. Schlonecker, Dana E. Weller

Chairman - William G. Schlonecker
Secretary/Treasurer - David T. Allen

Communications Committee

Jared Burkholder, Ronald L. Kohl, Matthew Printz, Kaylena Radcliff, Ralph E. Ritter, Rachel Schmoyer, Jeff Tintle

Chairman - Ronald L. Kohl
Secretary - Matthew Printz
Fellowship News Editor - Carolyn Ritter
OneVoice Editor - Ralph E. Ritter

Historical Committee

Jill A. Davidson, Andrew Geissinger, Ronald W. Hoyle, C. Robert Roth, Timothy J. Schmoyer, Richard E.Taylor (Archivist)

Chairperson - Jill A. Davidson
Secretary - Richard E. Taylor

Pinebrook Educational Foundation

(2024) Rachel Schmoyer, John W. Sullivan
(2025) Helen Gemmill
(2026) Stephen C. Cassel, John J. Hanner

Chairman - Stephen C. Cassel
Vice-Chairman - John W. Sullivan
Secretary/Treasurer - Helen Gemmill
Director - Andrew T. Crossgrove

Youth and Young Adults Committee

Melissa Adams, Cory Arnold, Jared Burkholder, Jarrod Cruise, Jeremy Harkins, Timothy S. Hogan, Sandy Holbert, Bekah Manwiller, Chris Von Holt

Chairman - Timothy S. Hogan
Vice-Chairman - Cory E. Arnold
Secretary - Bekah Manwiller
Treasurer - Jared Burkholder

Directory of Study Committees

(Appointed Committees)

Committee to Review Biblical Principles for Living:
Timothy M. Zuck (Convener); Timothy S. Radcliff, R. Daniel Wagner

Study Committee on Examination of the BPL on the Family:
Clyde D. Bomgardner, Jr. (Convener); Lisa Bomgardner, Brad L. Boyer, Jared M. Burkholder, Timothy S. Cowen, Nancy Maurer, James D. Reff II, Andrew Schmersahl

Study Committee on Examination of the BPL on Sexual Identity:
Aaron J. Susek (Convener); Clyde D. Bomgardner, Jr., Joseph Kim, James D. MacArthur, Donald Maurer, Timothy S. Radcliff, Ronald W. Reed, Alan Russell

Study Committee on the Importance of Preaching:
Keith A. Strunk (Convener); Andrew W. Barnes, Jason L. Hoy, Keith M. Long

Study Committee on Child Sexual Abuse:
Joshua P. Gibson (Convener); Mark A. Bickel, Philip E. Morrison, Lisa J. Radcliff, Timothy J. Schmoyer, Benjamin J. Triestman

Study Committee on the Role of Women in the Church:
Aaron D. Smith (Convener); Daniel Z. Krall, John R. LoRusso, Joshua P. Miller, Ralph E. Ritter, Rachel Schmoyer, Jocelyn Scott, Dennis W. Spinney, Keith A. Strunk

Study Committee on Mode of Believers' Baptism for People with Disabilities and Infirmities:
Scott Wright (Convener); David E. Gundrum, Joshua P. Gibson, Joseph Kim

Study Committee on Mode of Believers' Baptism with Regard to Membership:
William G. Schlonecker (Convener); James Arcieri, Ronald L. Kohl, Mark R. Orton, S. Wayne Rissmiller

Study Committee on Abortion (per Stroudsburg request):
Beau E. Coffman (Convener); W. Scott Kappes, Juan Carlos Morales, Sal Piccolo, Ronald W. Reed, John C. Studenroth, Mary Tannous

Study Committee on Eternal Conscious Torment (per Whitehall petition):
Calvin T. Reed (Convener); Stephen A. Diaz, Daniel J. Hoffstetter, Ronald L. Kohl

Directory of Departments
(Self-appointed & ratified by Executive Board)

Board of Church Health

Wayne W. Batten, Clyde D. Bomgardner, Jr., Beau E. Coffman, Steven J. DelDuco, Jason L. Hoy, Bryan C. McNally, Aaron D. Smith, Daniel L. Williams, Timothy M. Zuck

Interim Director of Church Health - Robert A. Sloan, Jr.
Chairman - Jason L. Hoy
Vice Chairman - Steven J. DelDuco
Secretary - Daniel L. Williams

Church Extension Ministries

Mark E. Barninger, Eric Herb, Sr., Mark L. Morrison, Michael Norquist, James MacArthur, Carlos Rodriguez, William G. Schlonecker, Richard E. Taylor, Robert Witten

Director - David E. Gundrum
Chairman - Richard E. Taylor
Vice Chairman - Mark L. Morrison
Secretary - William G. Schlonecker
Treasurer - Michael Norquist

Department of Missions

Susanne Figard, Kevin W. Kirkpatrick, Sean McNamara, Lenore Macikonyez, David J. Peters, Kim Stengele, Craig Tress

Director - James Arcieri
Chairman - Sean McNamara

Victory Valley Camp

Colin Bartholomew, James Crosley, Carolyn Cruise, Jason J. Englehart, Cindy Ireland, John Masters, Kelly Moono, Mark R. Orton, Craig Peoples, Timothy J. Schmoyer

Director - Curtis Cutler
Chairman - Timothy J. Schmoyer
Vice Chairman - Colin Bartholomew
Treasurer - Kelly Moono
Secretary - Carolyn Cruise

Directory of BFC Conference Committees
(Appointed Committees)

Committee on Agenda and Arrangements:
Ronald L. Kohl, Chairman; R. Daniel Wagner, Secretary; David T. Allen, Joel B. Klase, Bryan C. McNally, Timothy J. Schmoyer, Daniel L. Williams

Committee on Examination of Minutes of Particular Churches:
Kevin W. Kirkpatrick, Chairman; Mark R. Orton, Barry T. Parsons, Roger L. Siegrist, Robert A. Sloan, Jr.

Committee to Examine the Minutes of 140th BFC Conference
Philip G. Norris, Richard E. Taylor, R. Daniel Wagner

Registrars for the 141th BFC Conference
Joel B. Klase, Registrar
Jules J. Hull III, Assistant Registrar

Prayer Committee:
Daniel L. Williams (Chairman); Daniel W. King (Secretary); Kevin Kirkpatrick, James D. Reff II, Michelle Sallee, Michael W. Walker

Adjunct Committees

Beneficiary Society
(Elected by Beneficiary Society)
Chairman - Philip G. Norris (2026)
Secretary - Bryan C. McNally (2024)
Treasurer - David T. Allen (2025)

Ministerial Convention Committee
(Elected by Ministerial Convention)
Beau E. Coffman, Jeffrey A. Kauffman, Timothy R. Nessler, Barry T. Parsons, Scott Wright
Chairman - Scott Wright
Secretary - Timothy R. Nessler
Advisor - Ralph M. Soper

Table of Ordained Ministers

Ordained Active Ministers	Year of BFC License	Year of Ordination	Year of Present Status
Allen, David T.	2000	2003	2010
Allison, Scott A.	2019	2021	2019
Arcieri, James R.	2009	1988	2021
Barnes, Andrew W.	2013	2015	2014
Barninger, Mark E.	2006	2007	2008
Benack, Jesse A.	2018	2020	2018
Bertolet, Raymond R.	2005	2007	2005
Bickel, Mark A.	2009	2012	2009
Boyer, Brad L.	2015	2018	2015
Brush, R. Jerome	1988	1992	1991
Bunting, Wesley H.	2019	2021	2019
Burgess, Ronald	2017	2018	2016
Burkholder, Jared	2013	2021	2019
Burton III, William A.	2020	2023	2020
Chi, Freddy A.	2018	2023	2018
Coffman, Beau E.	2013	2016	2017
Cowen, Timothy S.	1997	2000	1997
Crain, Adam K.	2021	2023	2021
Crossgrove, Andrew T.	1999	2002	2002
Cruise, Jarrod J.	2017	2020	2017
Davies, Larry W.	2017	2020	2017
DelDuco, Steven J.	2007	2009	2011
Diaz, Stephen A.	2015	2017	2015
Dupiche, Joshua A.	2013	2016	2016
Erb, Ronald C.	1981	1983	2017
Filbert, Jason A.	2015	2019	2015
Fischer, Carl J., Jr.	1990	1985	2007
Gibson, Joshua P.	2013	2015	2013
Grossman, Randall A.	1981	1983	1990

Gundrum, David E.	1986	1988	2000
Hanner, John J.	2017	2020	2017
Harvey, Paul S.	2019	2020	2019
Hoffstetter, Daniel J.	2020	2023	2020
Hogan, Timothy S.	2015	2017	2017
Hoy, Jason L.	2011	2014	2021
Hull, Jules J., III	2017	2020	2022
Johnson, Robert A., II	2002	1990	2002
Kauffman, Jeffery A.	2018	2020	2018
King, Daniel W.	2016	2020	2023
Kirkpatrick, Kevin W.	2001	2004	2001
Klase, Joel B.	2013	2016	2019
Kohl, Ronald L.	2004	2007	2004
Krall, Daniel Z.	2017	2020	2022
Long, Keith M.	2010	2013	2020
LoRusso, John R.	2012	2015	2017
Mack, Ezekiel R.	2015	2018	2022
Madara, Ferdie R.	2006	1995	2006
McNally, Bryan C.	2012	2015	2022
Miller, Joshua P.	2007	2010	2012
Morales, Juan Carlos	2019	2021	2019
Morrison, Mark L.	1996	1999	2006
Morton, Steven J.	2015	2017	2023
Nessler, Timothy R.	2015	2017	2017
Orton, Mark R.	2009	2006	2009
Parsons, Barry	2019	2021	2019
Poland, David M.	2018	2020	2018
Radcliff, Timothy S.	2015	2017	2021
Ramirez, Marcos G.	2008	2011	2007
Ravis, Richard B.	1990	1985	2001
Reed, Calvin T.	1982	1984	1983
Reff, James D. II	2016	2019	2016
Ritter, Ralph E.	1991	1994	2017

Rissmiller, S. Wayne	2015	2018	2016
Rodriguez, Carlos G.	2008	2010	2004
Schmoyer, Timothy J.	2004	2007	2009
Siegrist, Roger L.	2018	2020	2018
Smith, Aaron D.	2012	2016	2016
Smith, David A.	2011	2014	2018
Smith, Ronald B.	2011	2014	2011
Soper, Ralph M.	1985	1987	2016
Strunk, Keith A.	2011	2014	2011
Susek, Aaron J.	2008	2011	2009
Sweet, L. Marc	2015	2017	2015
Triestman, Benjamin J.	2015	2018	2015
Verdon II, William C.	2020	2021	2020
Von Holt, Christopher M.	2019	2021	2019
Wagner, R. Daniel	2014	2016	2016
Walker, Michael W.	2012	2015	2015
Widger, Byron	1985	1988	1995
Williams, Daniel L.	2006	2009	2014
Wright, Scott	2009	2012	2023
Yerrington, Philip E.	1978	1981	2019
Zuck, Timothy M.	2008	2011	2014

Ordained Ministers Working under the Direction of the Board of Missions	**Year of BFC License**	**Year of Ordination**	**Year of Present Status**
Evans, Scott B.	2005	2007	2008
Head, Jim D.	1994	1996	1998
Istrate, Daniel	2014	2017	2014
Johnston, Walter M.	1987	1987	1991
Moyer, Jerry L.	1992	1994	1997
Riddell, David W.	1985	1987	1987
Studenroth, John C.	1991	1976	2000

Ordained Ministers Working in the Chaplaincy under the Sponsorship of the BFC	Year of BFC License	Year of Ordination	Year of Present Status
Mack, Ezekiel R. (Military)	2015	2018	2015
Susek, Jacob J. (Fellow. Comm.)	1994	1983	2011

Ordained Ministers Working in Other Christian Ministries	Year of BFC License	Year of Ordination	Year of Present Status
Bertolet, Timothy J.	2004	2007	2020
Bomgardner, Clyde D., Jr.	1997	2000	2012
Brandt, David E.	2006	2009	2023
Clineff, Kevin W.	2001	2004	2020
Dunn, William J.	1999	2002	2020
Eyster, Jordan K.	2011	2014	2016
Tannous, Michael J.	2001	2004	2011

Ordained Ministers Working in Non-BFC Churches	Year of BFC License	Year of Ordination	Year of Present Status
Commerford, Robert S.	1984	1986	2015
Curcio, Louis S.	2002	2004	2015
Hunter, Justin L.	2010	2013	2015
Lawrence, Dennis J.	1993	1996	2015
LeTowt, Nathaniel C.	2018	2021	2023

Ordained Ministers Between Calls	Year of BFC License	Year of Ordination	Year of Present Status
Carder, Greg W.	2015	2018	2021
Fox, Sean A.	2018	2020	2018
Martin, Carl T.	1983	1986	2020

Ordained Ministers on Leave of Absence	**Year of BFC License**	**Year of Ordination**	**Year of Present Status**
King, Jonathan H.	2012	2014	2023
Lauterback, Stanley P.	2010	2013	2020

Ordained Ministers in Retirement	**Year of BFC License**	**Year of Ordination**	**Year of Present Status**
Aukamp, William C.	1985	1988	2016
Baker, Delbert R., II	1976	1979	2013
Barber, Kenneth F.	1985	1971	2006
Bickings, Richard F.	2010	2013	2021
Bigley, T. James, Jr.	1962	1966	2002
Boone, Clifford B.	1989	1992	2020
Buck, Leonard E.	1958	1970	1997
Cahill, Dennis M.	1986	1984	2021
Clapier, G. Wayne	1980	1981	2012
Cole, Charles E.	1996	1970	2016
Coulbourn, Hugh C., Jr.	1977	1970	2001
Dodson, Richard C.	2013	2015	2020
Ellingson, Bruce A.	1963	1966	2005
Felty, Glenn R.	2006	1966	2018
Gehman, Richard J.	1964	1971	2002
Harris, Richard D.	1976	1978	2023
Heller, LeRoy S.	1955	1958	2017
Herb, John H.	1962	1966	2005
Hoyle, Ronald W.	1978	1954	1998
Jones, David H.	1978	1983	2015
Kappes, W. Scott	2012	2015	2020
Kuntzman, Donald E.	2003	2006	2022
Lenahan, Frank E.	2005	2009	2020
Mahurin, Ronald C.	1960	1959	2001
Manney, David L.	1961	1976	2011
Morrison, Philip E.	1980	1982	2023

Moyer, Duane E.	1998	2001	2014
Moyer, Richard A.	1995	2000	2020
Norris, Philip G.	2004	2007	2015
Paashaus, Richard T.	1988	1990	2020
Plows, Keith E.	1966	1968	2000
Prontnicki, Louis	1983	1985	2022
Reitz, Roger L.	1972	1974	2011
Ruhl, Jeffery L.	1997	2000	2021
Schlonecker, David K.	2012	2014	2020
Schlonecker, William G.	1985	1988	2021
Schoen, David N.	1982	1987	2023
Shelly, Austin G.	1956	1961	1995
Shorb, Thomas P.	1977	1979	2015
Sloan, Robert A., Jr.	1988	1986	2016
Smith, Gene W.	1991	1978	2008
Spinney, Dennis W.	1984	1993	2022
Taylor, Richard E.	1973	1975	2016
Thomann, David A.	1978	1977	2020
Uhrich, Gregory A.	1989	1983	2017
Vandegriff, John C., Jr.	1974	1972	2013
Way, David R.	1989	1993	2010
Weaber, Harold C.	1963	1967	1998
Weller, Dana E.	1972	1974	2014
Wells, Howard N.	1990	1992	2020
Zimmerman, Paul G.	1966	1971	2006

Ordained Inactive Ministers	**Year of BFC License**	**Year of Ordination**	**Year of Present Status**
Dommel, Albert J.	1982	1984	2019
Edwards, Joshua D.	2008	2011	2020
Gysi, Andrew T.	2012	2014	2018

In Memoriam:
Daniel P. Allen
July 8, 1955 - February 4, 2023

Daniel P. Allen was a big man with a big voice and a big heart who left a big impact on the Bible Fellowship Church, as evidenced by a standing-room-only memorial service held at Ephrata Bible Fellowship Church on June 8, 2023.

Ephrata BFC was an appropriate setting for the service, given that Allen had served as its longest-tenured pastor: 23 of his 67 years were spent as Ephrata's pastor, establishing a deserved reputation as a caring shepherd and a faithful proclaimer of God's Word. "He was an incredibly faithful Bible teacher and expositor," noted Sanjay Dalavai, a BFC missionary who sat under Allen's pulpit ministry for several years as a church member and later as an elder. "Sunday after Sunday he opened the Scripture and taught us, and taught us well."

Longtime friend Dr. Peter Teague, President Emeritus of Lancaster Bible College, said that the words of Henry Ward Beecher seemed especially appropriate when honoring Allen's memory: "Being dead, he speaks. Dan Allen was such a man," Teague noted. "His firmly-rooted faith in God is evident to every person who is gathered here today."

Allen, the son of the late Rev. Russell T. Allen, recognized a calling to pastoral ministry early in life. He earned a bachelor's degree in theological ministry from Lynchburg Baptist College (now Liberty University) and later added a master's degree from Biblical Theological Seminary. He also received an honorary doctorate from Lancaster Bible College.

After a short time pastoring a congregation in Cape May, NJ starting in 1979, Allen arrived in Ephrata, where his ministry truly blossomed. In addition to his ministry at Ephrata BFC, he had a thriving radio and TV ministry and was a familiar face in the Ephrata community. Upon leaving Ephrata in 2004, Allen served as director of Pinebrook Bible Conference while continuing to preach almost every Sunday. He served as Pinebrook's director for seven years.

From there, Allen's evangelistic heart led him to start Joy in Jesus Ministries as well as The Nathanael Project, allowing him to combine several things he loved: missions, ministry, mentoring, and media. His love of sharing the gospel and training pastors took him on several occasions to India and other places in Southeast Asia. Indeed, knowing he had inoperable cancer but determined to experience one last teaching trip that would allow him to say goodbye to many of the pastors he had trained, Allen went to India in January, 2023. He expended his last energy there, returning home just a few weeks before the Lord called him to glory. While his family expressed serious reservations about his making the trip given his health, son Jason Allen noted, "He was going to go whether we told him not to go or not."

Allen is survived by his wife of 46 years, Vonnette (Day) Allen, sons Jason Michael (wife Annalise) and Matthew James (wife Marissa), daughter Melinda Joy Ogbin (husband Ronald), daughter-in-law, Shelley Mahoney (husband Phil), and nine grandchildren. He was preceded in death by a son, Joshua Marc Allen.

"He served his Lord," noted his brother, David T. Allen. "He served his family—right up to the very end of his life."

In Memoriam:
Raymond R. Dotts
June 18, 1934 – May 7, 2023

As a pastor, Raymond Richard Dotts understood himself to be an educator and took that role seriously. One of his primary responsibilities as a pastor was to educate his people, and he further understood that educating young people was a high calling. And so Dotts engaged in both. A faithful pastor who spent 45 years in a number of roles at the Camden Bible Fellowship Church in Camden, DE—as founding pastor, interim pastor, and member of the church's Board of Elders—Dotts also served in education, first at Berean Bible School and later at Pinebrook Junior College. He was also a founder of the Pinebrook Educational Foundation, serving as a founding member upon its establishment in 1994 until February, 2023—just three months prior to his death at age 88. Dotts served as Chairman of the PEF board for 24 years.

Born and raised in Quakertown, PA, Dotts left Quakertown to graduate from Berean Bible School in 1955 and Muhlenberg College with a Bachelor of Arts in 1960. He also attended Bob Jones University and Houghton College. He later returned to school, earning a Master of Business Administration from Southern Illinois-Edwardsville in 1977.

In younger days Dotts had worked as Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds at Covenant College in Lookout Mountain, GA. After moving to Delaware in 1972, Dotts served as financial officer at Delaware Technical and Community College in Dover for 23 years and served as a mentor at the North Dover Elementary School for 24 years.

Dotts' partner in ministry and in life was his wife Mary; they celebrated their 66th anniversary on Sept. 1, 2022 and were parents to four daughters: Gwendolyn Hughes (husband Joseph Meyers), Jennifer Jackson (husband Keith Hoffer), Margaret Thomas (husband James) and Rebecca McCudden (husband Michael). In the last year of his life, Ray and Mary Dotts lived in Madison, CT and were well cared for by members of his family.

Experiences early in his life allowed Dotts to develop a wide range of skills and interests ranging from woodworking, gardening, and cutting firewood to browsing flea markets, telling jokes, and engaging friends and family in theological discussions.

Dotts was an eager discipler and evangelist who deeply influenced many lives, among them longtime BFC pastor Thomas P. Shorb, who was a student at Berean when Dott was serving as Dean. At Dotts' funeral service, Shorb used the word piety to describe his mentor. Piety, Shorb said, is "a life of sincere and pure devotion to Christ."

"It was a word I saw modeled in his living," Shorb noted.

A grandson, Chris Jackson, offered this observation about his grandfather: "He was a man of great faith and loved his family dearly."

In addition to his wife, daughters, and sons-in-law, Dotts is survived by several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

In Memoriam:
Roy A. Hertzog
January 13, 1930 – October 9, 2022

Roy A. Hertzog led a full, varied life that was anchored in missions and ministry, with 37 years of active service in the Bible Fellowship Church as both a pastor and missionary.

The son of longtime pastor and key denominational figure F.B. Hertzog, Roy Hertzog entered ministry early in life. A U.S. Navy veteran, he went directly from military service in the Mediterranean and studies at Columbia Bible College (now Columbia International University) to missions work with Trans-World Radio in Monaco. In all, Hertzog spent 14 years with Trans-World before turning his attention to pastoral ministry.

A native of Allentown, PA, Hertzog had the privilege of shepherding a flock in his hometown. From 1974-79, he served as pastor at Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church, having received a unanimous call from that congregation. And in 1979, when Cedar Crest voted to merge with Bethel BFC in downtown Allentown, Hertzog was willing to humbly step aside to serve as Ronald C. Mahurin's associate pastor. Hertzog and Mahurin bonded their partnership with a multi-day retreat that allowed them to figure out how the pastorate at Cedar Crest would work.

It worked out just fine, and Hertzog served in the capacity of associate pastor until 1986, when he was called to become the first full-time Director of the BFC's Board of Missions. He took on that role with warmth and energy before retiring in 1996.

Diane Hertzog was Roy's partner in ministry as well as his wife. Theirs was a whirlwind courtship; he married her after just five dates.

A kind, friendly, and compassionate figure, Hertzog was also a man of strong convictions that he wasn't afraid to share. He was known for always having a smile on his face, but while smiling he could argue with you theologically, and stridently so. Articles 10 (Human Ability and Responsibility) and 19 (The Evangelistic Mission of the Church) came about as "a direct result of Roy's prodding," BFC Executive Director David T. Allen noted. Hertzog also played a key role in the development of the BFC BPLs (Biblical Principles for Living).

In addition to his many responsibilities in the BFC, Hertzog also served on the Board of Directors at Bible Basics International for 30 years. After retiring, and during times of failing health, Hertzog was still a faithful prayer warrior.

At the time of his death Hertzog was still an active member at Cedar Crest, having served on several committees of the church prior to and after retirement. In addition to his wife, Hertzog leaves behind son Daniel, daughter DeAnne, six grandchildren, and 13 great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by a brother, Ernest.

A memorial service for Hertzog was held on Oct. 13, 2022 at Cedar Crest. His remains were interred at Zionsville BFC.

In Memoriam:
Dean A. Stortz
June 19, 1943 – March 26, 2023

Dean A. Stortz was promoted to glory suddenly on March 26, 2023 at the age of 79, but in a very real sense, Stortz's home-going could not have been more appropriate, for he was stricken while on his way to a Sunday School class at Bethel Bible Fellowship Church in Emmaus, PA. So in a very real way, he went right from a church he loved into the presence of the Savior he loved even more.

One of Stortz's four sons, Eric Stortz, appreciated the symmetry. Speaking at his father's memorial service, his son said, "He grew up in these pews and he died going to church after serving the church and God's kingdom for 40 years in ministry."

Stortz's life was directed toward gospel ministry at an early age. He received diplomas from Berean Bible Institute, Covenant College, and Alliance Theological Seminary prior to serving for three years—alongside his faithful wife Donna—as a missionary in Germany. He went to Germany not knowing how to speak German, but his commitment to prayer allowed him to minister faithfully among the German people. From there, the Stortzes returned home to the U.S., allowing Dean to begin his career calling as a pastor. Over the course of a long career that spanned three decades, he pastored churches in New Fairfield, CT and Toms River, NJ. At Toms River, Stortz planted The Church of the Cross and was its primary spiritual leader for more than two decades.

Stortz retired in concept but not in actuality. After officially retiring, he served as an interim pastor, chaplain, and elder for a number of BFC congregations. He also served on the Board of Directors at Fellowship Community in Whitehall, PA for 30 years.

A lifelong sports fan of Penn State athletics as well as Philadelphia's pro sports teams—the Phillies, Flyers, Sixers, and Eagles, Stortz spent time as an athletics coach as well as a history teacher and as a banker prior to entering ministry. He was also a voracious reader with an extensive library

Among Stortz's many church minstry opportunities, he served as an elder at Kutztown BFC for a decade. Kutztown elder Nick Timpe remembers, "After a career of tireless and self-sacrificing ministry, Dean and Donna were eager to pour themselves into the life, and be a vital part of the life, of our church. If there was an opportunity to serve, Dean was there."

Stortz's "life verse" was Psalm 27:4. It reads, "One thing I have asked of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to inquire in His temple."

In addition to his wife of 52 years, Donna, Stortz is survived by sons Stephen (wife Jenny), Andrew, and Eric (wife Lindsay), as well as eight grandchildren. He was preceded in death by a brother, Rodney, and a sister, Janice Morgan.

"The first characteristic that I think of when I think of Dad is that he was humble," noted Stephen Stortz. "He walked in humility and he really lived out the spirit of the verse that says, 'Consider each other better than yourself.'"

MINUTES

First meeting..... 2

Second meeting..... 13

Third meeting..... 16

Fourth meeting..... 23

Fifth meeting..... 27

Sixth meeting..... 32

Seventh meeting 35

BFC Conference Proceedings - 2023
First meeting

Monday, April 24, 2023, 2 P.M.

The 140th Conference of the Bible Fellowship Church was called to order by Conference Moderator Randall A. Grossman at 2 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall at Pinebrook Bible Conference. In prayer Grossman asked God's rich blessings upon the work to be conducted over the next three days.

Musical worship was led by Mark E. Barninger as part of an ensemble that also included James Arcieri, Richard B. Ravis, and Aaron J. Susek. Conference joined in the singing of "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" and "He Will Hold Me Fast." Daniel W. King then led Conference in a time of corporate prayer, especially focusing on Colossians 3:12-17, using the apostle Paul's instructions to commend pastors and delegates to pray with thankfulness in their hearts to God.

Pinebrook Bible Conference's new director, Richard B. Brewer, welcomed the pastors and delegates to Conference. Mark Swartley, Executive Director of Spruce Lake Retreat and Pinebrook Bible Conference, noted that its staff, as it met for its regular Monday morning prayer time, focused especially on BFC Conference. "We prayed that God would shower wisdom on you and that He would give you vision for your denomination and on your churches…that He would give you strength to hold onto biblical truth," Swartley explained.

Report of the Registrar:

Resolved, that the roll of eligible members of the 140th BFC Conference constitute the Conference Bar for the 140th BFC Conference.

The roll of the 140th BFC Conference was established as follows:

Allentown, PA (Cedar Crest)	Jason L. Hoy, Adam K. Crain (Probationer), Jules J. Hull III, John R. LoRusso, Chris M. Von Holt, Steven M. Klase, William J. Walters, Daniel D. Waterman
Allentown, PA (Citylight)*	Stephen A. Diaz, Rick Dobrowolski (Probationer**)
Bethlehem, PA	Jeremy Harkins (Probationer), Michael J. Notary, (Probationer), Marcus J. Brunstetter, Byron D. Roth, Swannie W. Griffin, III
Blandon, PA	Daniel L. Williams, R. Jerry Brush, Brad D. Kunkle
Boyertown, PA	Barry T. Parsons, Andrew Vasel
Breinigsville (Orchard Hills)	Benjamin J. Triestman, John E. Schleicher, Timothy Sweeney
Brick, NJ	L. Marc Sweet, Marco Valle

Camden, DE	R. Daniel Wagner, Albert F. Biddle, Jr.
Cape May Court House, NJ*	Brad L. Boyer, Michael J. Polach
Carmel, NY	(Vacant)
Clinton Corners, NY	(Vacant), Wayne M. Chadwell
Coopersburg, PA	Timothy S. Hogan, Robert A. Moreau, Stephen C. Cassel
Dauphin, PA	Mark E. Barninger, Dennis Souder
Denville, NJ	(Vacant), Steven Kay
Emmaus, PA	David A. Smith, Jared Burkholder, Scott A. Hoffman, David N. Schoen
Ephrata, PA	Daniel Z. Krall, Benjamin Ross (Probationer), William F. Early
Exeter, PA	William A. Burton III (Probationer), Shawn McAnulty
Finesville, NJ	Byron Widger
Forks, PA*	Timothy M. Zuck, Frank J. Farley
Graterford, PA	Mark R. Orton, Rodger E. Spangler
Harleysville, PA	Andrew T. Crossgrove, Michael W. Walker, Andrew J. Miller (Probationer), Richard C. Lutz
Harrisburg, PA (Grace BFC)	Joshua P. Miller, Andrew W. Barnes, Steven J. DelDuco, Bryan Bowers, Don Maurer
Harrisburg, PA (Grace Fellowship)	(Vacant), Jayonn C. Folks
Hatfield, PA	Joel B. Klase, Larry J. Allen
Hellertown, PA	Keith A. Strunk, Kevin Sine
Kutztown, PA	Sandy Holbert (Probationer), Doug Steffy, Nickolas T. Timpe
LaGrangeville, NY	(Vacant), Thomas L. Ward
Lancaster, PA	Keith M. Long, William C. Verdon II, Neil J. Franklin, Jr. (Probationer), John J. Brown, Joseph A. Kim
Las Cruces, NM	David M. Poland

Lebanon, PA	Calvin T. Reed, Jarrod J. Cruise, Eric E. Herb (Probationer), Jack S. Herb, Jr.
Lehighton, PA	Robert A. Johnson II, Steven Ramos
Long Neck, DE	(Vacant), Richard Petrecca
Merida, MEXICO	Marcos G. Ramirez
Mt. Carmel, PA	Roger L. Siegrist, James P. Ketner
Mt. Pocono, PA	James L. Farver (Probationer), Ronald E. Miller
Nazareth, PA	Carl J. Fischer, Jr., James W. Preslar
Newark, DE	Andrew R. Hebel (Probationer), Stephen J. Morton, Kenneth J. Klein, David Bradford
Newark, NJ	Ron Burgess, Melvin Hinton
Oley, PA	Scott A. Allison, James D. MacArthur, Todd Heath
Paradise, PA	Jesse A. Benack, Daniel Eckman
Philadelphia, PA	Ralph E. Ritter, Joseph P. Specht, Jr.
Piscataway, NJ	Richard B. Ravis, John P. Sullivan (Probationer), Jay R. Vroman
Quakertown, PA	Ronald L. Kohl, Ezekiel R. Mack, Robert E. Smith, L. James Roberts
Reading, PA	Randall A. Grossman, Bryan C. McNally, Ronald W. Reed
Reading, PA (La Roca)	Carlos G. Rodriguez, Luis Beltran, Vladimir Caba
Red Hill, PA	Michael Meadows (Probationer), J. Rob Vaughn
Royersford, PA	Daniel W. King, Ronald C. Erb, Michael Gangwer
Shamokin, PA	Ferdie R. Madara, William Kerstetter
Sinking Spring, PA	S. Wayne Rissmiller, Paul Harvey, Tim Hart, Donald D. McKinney, Timothy P. Stump, John R.Weller
Spring City, PA	Jeffrey A. Kauffman, Sean P. McNamara

Stroudsburg, PA	Beau E. Coffman, Brian Seay, Mike Murphy
Sunbury, PA	Joshua P. Gibson, Douglas A. Gaugler
Terre Hill, PA	Kevin W. Kirkpatrick, Andrew S. Littlejohn
Townsend, DE	Ronald B. Smith, Dave Graham
W. Norriton, PA (Redeemer)	R. Scott Wright, Rodger Eastman
Wallingford, PA	Aaron J. Susek, Mark A. Bickel, Timothy S.Cowen, Michael Plourde
Walnutport, PA (Northern Lehigh)	Aaron D. Smith, Jason P. Musselman
Whitehall, PA	Timothy J. Schmoyer, Mark Hargrove
Whitehall, PA (Rock of Ages)	Philip E. Yerrington, Jerald A. Lagler
Woodbury Heights, NJ	Timothy R. Nessler, Harry Nessler
York, PA	Wesley H. Bunting, Ricardo Vargas (Probationer), Kenneth L. Good
Zionsville, PA	(Vacant) Jim Pruitt

*Contingent upon their graduation as a particular church at this Conference

**Contingent upon the graduation of Citylight (Allentown) as a particular church at this Conference

Ordained Ministers Serving in Bible Fellowship Ministries:

BFC Executive Director — David T. Allen

Conference Pastor — Ralph M. Soper

Church Extension — David E. Gundrum (Director), Raymond R. Bertolet, Freddy A. Chi (Probationer), Larry Davies, Joshua P. Dupiche, Jason A. Filbert, Tracy Haines (Probationer), John J. Hanner, Daniel J. Hoffstetter (Probationer), Juan Carlos Morales, Mark L. Morrison, Timothy S. Radcliff, James D. Reff

Board of Missions — James R. Arcieri (Director)

Ordained Missionaries:

Scott B. Evans, James D. Head, D.B.H. (Probationer), Daniel Istrate, Walter M. Johnston, Jerry L. Moyer, David W. Riddell, John C. Studenroth

Ordained Ministers Working in the Chaplaincy Under the Sponsorship of the BFC:

Jacob J. Susek, Jr.

Ordained Ministers Working in Other Christian Ministries:

Timothy J. Bertolet, Clyde D. Bomgardner, Jr., David E. Brandt, Kevin Clineff, William J. Dunn, Jordan K. Eyster, Michael J. Tannous

Ordained Ministers in Retirement or on Permanent Disability:

William C. Aukamp, Delbert R. Baker II, Kenneth F. Barber, Richard F. Bickings, T. James Bigley, Jr., Clifford B. Boone, Leonard E. Buck, Dennis M. Cahill, G. Wayne Clapier, Charles E. Cole, Hugh C. Coulbourn, Jr., Richard C. Dodson, Raymond R. Dotts, Bruce Ellingson, Glenn Felty, Richard J. Gehman, Richard D. Harris, LeRoy S. Heller, John H. Herb, Ronald W. Hoyle, W. Scott Kappes, Donald E. Kuntzman, Francis E. Lenahan, Ronald C. Mahurin, David L. Manney, Philip E. Morrison, Duane E. Moyer, Richard A. Moyer, Philip G. Norris, Richard T. Paashaus (Delegate for Finesville, NJ), Keith E. Plows, Louis Prontnicki, Roger L. Reitz, Jeffrey L. Ruhl, David K. Schlonecker, William G. Schlonecker, Austin G. Shelly, Thomas P. Shorb, Robert A. Sloan, Jr., Gene W. Smith, Dennis W. Spinney, Richard E. Taylor, David A. Thomann, Gregory A. Uhrich, John C. Vandegriff, Jr., David R. Way, Harold C. Weaber, Dana E. Weller, Howard N. Wells, Paul G. Zimmerman

Ordained Ministers Between Calls:

Sean Fox, Carl T. Martin, Thomas H. Morrison

Additional Lay Members of the BFC Executive Board:

John W. Sullivan II, Rick D. Whitmire

Report of the Committee on Agenda and Arrangements: (see page 48)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

Resolved, that the proposed agenda for the 140th BFC Conference be accepted as the guide for our deliberations.

Resolved, that the Registrar be authorized to seat alternate delegates as required during the Conference and report them to Conference in his report at the conclusion of Conference.

Resolved, that the 141st BFC Conference be held at Pinebrook, April 22-24, 2024.

Resolved, that committee reports for the 141st BFC Conference be sent in digital format to the BFC Conference Secretary by Feb. 15, 2024 at sportspastor33@gmail.com.

The Conference Moderator announced the following roles:

Timekeeper: Mark L. Morrison

Parliamentarian: Timothy J. Schmoyer

Committee on Resolutions: Scott A. Allison, Chairman; Sandy H. Holbert, Daniel Z. Krall

Committee on Minutes of the 140th BFC Conference: Philip G. Norris, Richard E. Taylor, R. Daniel Wagner.

Resolved, that the appointments be ratified.

Resolved, that Steven J. DelDuco serve as acting Vice-Moderator on Wednesday afternoon if Daniel L. Williams is unable to be present.

Conference Secretary Ronald L. Kohl appointed Bryan C. McNally as Assistant Secretary and Jared Burkholder and Noah Hottel as assistants to the secretary.

Resolved, that the appointments be ratified.

The following first-time delegates to BFC Conference were introduced and then welcomed by Conference:

John Brown, Lancaster, PA; Frank Farley, Forks Twp., PA; Swannie Griffin, Bethlehem, PA; Michael Meadows, Red Hill, PA; A.J. Miller, Horsham, PA; Michael J. Polach, Cape May Court House, NJ; Timothy P. Stump, Sinking Spring, PA.

The Conference Secretary made the following recommendation:

Resolved, that all minutes of the 139th BFC Conference be approved.

Report of the Committee on Examination of BFC Conference Minutes (139th): (see page 122)

Resolved, that the report be adopted as amended.

Report of the Nominating Committee:

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

The following were elected to boards or committees:

Committee on Church Health:
- Beau E. Coffman (three years)
- Jason L. Hoy (three years)
- Aaron D. Smith (three years)

Conference Judicatory (elders):
- James R. Knapp (three years)
- Rodney P. Plows (three years)

Officers of the 141st BFC Conference

Secretary
Ronald L. Kohl (1 year)

Report of the Ministerial Credentials Committee: (see page 109)

Resolved, that the report be accepted as amended.

Whereas, the Ministerial Candidate Committee has recommended ordination for William A. Burton III and Freddy A. Chi, and
Whereas, the Ministerial Candidate Committee has recommended Adam K. Crain and Daniel J. Hoffstetter for recognition of previous ordination, and
Whereas, these brethren have served acceptably as ministers of the Bible Fellowship Church for the required period of time or the equivalent thereof, and
Whereas, after examination, the Ministerial Credentials Committee believes these men to be called of God to the gospel ministry and to be in accord with the Faith & Order of the Bible Fellowship Church, therefore be it
Resolved, that William A. Burton III and Freddy A. Chi be ordained to the gospel ministry of the Bible Fellowship Church, and that Adam K. Crain and Daniel J. Hoffstetter be recommended for recognition of previous ordinations.

Resolved, that an Ordination Service be held at the 140th BFC Conference; and be it further

Resolved, that Exeter Bible Fellowship Church, Exeter, PA. and Iglesia Biblica La Roca church, Merida, YUCATAN, Mexico be encouraged to hold services in recognition of the ordinations of William J. Burton III and Freddy A. Chi, respectively; and that Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church, Allentown, PA and Redeemer Bible Fellowship Church, Topton, PA be encouraged to hold services in recognition of previous ordinations for Adam K. Crain and Daniel J. Hoffstetter, and that these churches be encouraged to invite the Ministerial Credentials Committee to send representation to be present at each service.

Report of the Ministerial Candidate Committee: (see page 106)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

Resolved, that the list of men under the care of the Ministerial Candidate Committee be approved.

The following men who are under the care of the Ministerial Candidate Committee were introduced to Conference:

Marcus J. Brunstetter, Bethlehem, PA; Richard Dobrowolski, Allentown, PA; James L. Farver, Jr., Mt. Pocono, PA; Neil Franklin, Jr., Millersville, PA; Andrew Hebel, Newark, DE; Eric E. Herb, Jr., Lebanon, PA; Sandy Holbert, Kutztown, PA; Will Lockhart, Sinking Spring, PA; Michael Meadows, Red Hill, PA; A.J. Miller, Horsham, PA; Jason Musselman, Walnutport, PA; Michael Notary, Bethlehem, PA; Benjamin Ross, Ephrata, PA; Nathan G. Trommler, Reading, PA; Marco A. Valle, Brick, NJ, Joshua Von Holt, Bethlehem, PA.

Report of the Ministerial Relations Committee: (see page 114)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

Resolved, that each church provide a minimum of 3% of the pastor's salary for retirement, plus an additional 1% match if the pastor is voluntarily contributing 1%.

Report of the Conference Pastor: (see page 97)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.
Kevin W. Kirkpatrick prayed for the ministry of Ralph M. Soper as Conference Pastor and for his wife Sharon as his partner in the work of supporting pastors and their wives.

Report of the Church Health Committee: (see page 119)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.
Daniel L. Williams, committee secretary, took time to cite the "success story" of the work of revitalizing the ministry of our Maple Glen, PA church, with considerable thanks to Faith BFC, Harleysville for its support and active engagement.

David E. Gundrum, Director of Church Extension Ministries, entertained motions to receive three new churches into the ranks of Particular Churches of the BFC.

Whereas, the Board of Church Extension has assessed the elder candidates and has reviewed the financial reports of the Cape May (Cape Community) Mission Church, NJ, and
Whereas, Church Extension affirms that the Cape May Mission Church, NJ has sufficient men qualified to be elders, and a sufficient committed participant group who will sign as charter members, and
Whereas, the financial reports of Cape May Mission Church, NJ, have been reviewed, therefore be it
Resolved, that Cape May Mission Church, NJ, be received into the BFC Conference, and be recognized as a Particular Church.

Whereas, the Board of Church Extension has assessed the elder candidates and has reviewed the financial reports of the Allentown (Citylight) Mission Church, PA, and
Whereas, Church Extension affirms that the Allentown Mission Church, PA has sufficient men qualified to be elders, and a sufficient committed participant group who will sign as charter members, and
Whereas, the financial reports of the Allentown Mission Church, PA have been reviewed, therefore be it
Resolved, that the Allentown Mission Church, PA be received into the BFC Conference, and be recognized as a Particular Church.

Whereas, the Board of Church Extension has assessed the elder candidates and has reviewed the financial reports of the Forks Township (Forks Community) Mission

Church, PA, and

Whereas, Church Extension affirms that the Forks Township Mission Church, PA has sufficient men qualified to be elders, and a sufficient committed participant group who will sign as charter members, and

Whereas, the financial reports of Forks Township Mission Church, PA, have been reviewed, therefore be it

Resolved, that Forks Township Mission Church, PA, be received into the BFC Conference, and be recognized as a Particular Church.

All three churches were unanimously and enthusiastically received by Conference as new Particular Churches of the BFC. The delegates of all three churches were thus approved to be seated at the Conference bar.

Conference Secretary Ronald L. Kohl provided an update on two prospective changes to the Faith & Order that had been adopted at First Reading and were now in the hands of Boards of Elders from the Particular Churches. Kohl noted that procedurally churches have 24 months to submit elder votes to the Conference Secretary.

Kohl provided updates on two pieces of legislation. First, he related that the Study Committee on the Importance of Preaching had been adopted at First Reading at the 138th BFC Conference in October, 2021 (see pp. 24-26, 2021 Yearbook) and as such was nearing its two-year deadline. He reported that the current vote in favor of the proposed addition of Article 18-5 to Article 18, The Church, currently falls short of the necessary two-thirds majority of the total number of Particular Churches required to be considered for final adoption at Second Reading in 2024. He noted that churches that fail to register their elder boards' votes before October, 2023 will be counted as "no" votes. The current vote stands at 26 yes, 14 no.

In addition, Kohl also updated Conference on the proposed changes to Article 8-1 (see 2022 Yearbook, p. 12), which have one more year before, if elder boards vote in favor by a two-thirds percentage, they are presented for adoption at Second Reading at the 141st BFC Conference. The current vote stands at 27 yes, 0 no.

Report of the Study Committee to Review the Biblical Principles for Living: (see page 131)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

The committee presented resolutions to form three new study committees as part of its mandate, as given by the 136th BFC Conference, to review our current Biblical Principles for Living (BPLs) and offer any appropriate adjustments.

Resolved, that the BFC Conference appoint a committee to examine the matter of addictive behaviors, and, if it deems necessary and appropriate, to prepare statements. Examples of addictive behaviors include, but are not limited to, pornography, other sexual addictions, computer gaming, gluttony, eating disorders, and gambling. *Possibly adding to "Alcohol" and "Tobacco" (current BPLs).*

Conference voted not to establish the study committee requested by the resolution.

Resolved, that the BFC Conference appoint a committee to examine and prepare a statement on the issues of digital technology (digital, gaming, or computerized devices) and social media by considering the following questions:

1. Where does technology belong in the biblical story of redemption? What are the benefits and detriments?

2. What guidance does the Bible offer on the use of digital technology and social media?

Conference voted not to establish the study committee requested by the resolution.

Resolved, that the BFC Conference appoint a committee to examine the growing marginalization of Christian culture and churches.

1. What should be the response of churches to the growth of secularism and materialism?

2. What should be the response of churches if anti-biblical or anti-church initiatives are proposed by local, state, or national government?

Conference voted not to establish the study committee requested by the resolution.

Report on the Examination of the BPL on the Family

This committee gave no report this year but had two pieces of legislation that needed to be passed at Second Reading – regarding questions 1 and 3 of the matters it was asked to consider for the 139th BFC Conference. See 2022 Yearbook, pp. 27-28.

Question 1: Does the current statement adequately define biblical marriage and provide adequate response and/or direction regarding culture's use of domestic partnership, civil union, common-law marriage, and same sex marriage?

Answers to question 1:

Resolved, that the statement below will be our answer to the first part of the first question asked by the Study Committee to review BPLs—"Does the current statement adequately define biblical marriage?"

103-4.2 The marriage covenant is defined as a man and a woman committing themselves to a unique, exclusive, and lifelong relationship with each other and becoming "one flesh"[9] under God's authority as found in the Bible.

[9] Genesis 2:24 (add this to the list of verses below)

Because of temporary technical difficulties connected to phone balloting, Conference agreed to vote by hand. The legislation passed almost unanimously and was adopted at Second Reading.

Question 3: Does the current statement adequately address the structure of single-parent homes and provide guidance for the church in caring for these families?

Resolved, that this be our answer to question 3, proposing this addition to BPL 103-4.6 for adoption at First Reading at the 139th BFC Conference:

103-4.6 Within the church there exist family units **such as single-parent and blended families as well as never-married adult singles who are a part of family units** that require special attention and mercy from the church. With prayer, loving support, wise counsel, and God's abundant grace these families **and individuals** can be nurtured. The church should gladly and unwaveringly supply comfort, encouragement, and deep fellowship for all family units **and individuals of family units for the ministry of the Word (Ephesians 4:16)**.*

NOTE: Ephesians 4:16 now becomes footnote 25 and all subsequent footnotes need to be renumbered accordingly.

By hand vote, Conference voted to adopt this legislation at Second Reading.

Whereas, the Study Committee on the Family has completed its assignment and the legislation it has recommended has been approved, therefore be it

Resolved, that we thank the members of the committee for their service and declare the committee to be dissolved.

Joshua P. Gibson prayed for the upcoming elections, which were then conducted.

Conference adjourned for dinner at 5:03 p.m. as Louis Prontnicki prayed.

Conference Moderator - Randall A. Grossman

BFC Conference Proceedings - 2023
Second meeting

Monday, April 24, 2023, 6:45 P.M.

The evening session was called to order by the Moderator at 6:45 p.m. Musical worship included the following songs: "Blessing and Honor and Glory and Power" and "Build Your Kingdom Here."

David E. Gundrum, Director of Church Extension Ministries, provided the keynote address on the *Reaching Out* theme—which was perfectly appropriate given the groundbreaking addition of three new Particular Churches to the BFC. "What an appropriate time and what an appropriate theme for the 140th Conference of the Bible Fellowship Church," he noted.

"It's a time to reach out," Gundrum said. "It's a time to mobilize ourselves individually and also to mobilize our churches." He said he sees many encouraging signs throughout the Bible Fellowship Church. "What I'm seeing now is…churches wanting to widen their position, churches wanting to reach out to their communities, and churches wanting to reach out beyond their communities to plant new churches…I'm excited about that. Are you?"

Gundrum directed Conference's attention to Matthew 9, which he said includes several components of reaching out.

Are we called just to live where we do or to claim the place where we live and the people who live in and around it? Matthew 9 says Jesus came to His own city. Matthew is telling us Jesus "owned" Capernaum. The Greek word *idios*, he says, means "my own possession." "He made Capernaum and the environs His own possession…this was His own focus for ministry," Gundrum explained.

One great challenge: Can we say we own our cities, our villages, our towns, our neighborhoods?

Gundrum said he sees five components of missional outreach in Matthew 9—two foundational requirements and three foundational actions that flow from the requirements as Jesus ministered in Galilee. Matthew 9:35 reminds us that our Lord eagerly went out to reach people. "And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction."

First component: Going is not geographical but is focused on unbelief wherever it exists. "It wasn't the geography that was important to Him," Gundrum said of Jesus. "What was important to Him was going to unbelief wherever it existed."

Second component: Adopt a more accurate compassionate view for the lost and their deadly spiritual condition. As Matthew 9:36 says, "When He saw the crowds, He had compassion for them…" "It's that feeling that goes down to the bowels, making you move and do something," Gundrum said for the Greek word for "compassion."

The compassion Christ exhibited wasn't focused on physical needs but was related to their distress. These people, Matthew 9:36, were "harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. "The compassion we see here is the compassion for a soul that is lost," Gundrum said.

Gundrum describes words used by one of his former teachers, John Gerstner, who described the unsaved as "a walking corpse; a stench in the nostrils of God." People without Christ are facing eternal damnation; that ought to move us to compassion and to desire that they be reached with the gospel. Compassion ought to move us to understand the eternal destiny of unbelievers and how graphic that is.

Gundrum noted three foundational actions based on these two components—all flowing out of Matthew 9:35—teaching, gospel proclamation, and mercy ministry.

First, we should be intentional about teaching the gospel in various settings. Jesus was a teacher. He engaged in discourse with people. He dialogued. "He taught people—the idea of coming to a person where they're living and dialoguing with them," Gundrum said, noting that our Lord will provide such opportunities for us.

Second, we should prioritize the preaching of Christ's supremacy. Jesus proclaimed "the kingdom of God." What gospel was He proclaiming? "In a sense, I think He's proclaiming Jesus as King of the kingdom—that there is no other," Gundrum said.

Gundrum quoted R.C. Sproul as saying, "We announce the blessed reign of Christ, and we must repeat His commandment: all people, wherever they are, [are to] repent and bow to His rule." There is only one way to the King of kings. People think otherwise—that there are many ways to get to God—but Jesus is the only way. "When we preach the kingdom of God, we're preaching the Lord, high and exalted: the Lord, who is the King of kings, supreme over all things…there is no other way to satisfy a holy God but by the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses us from all impurity."

Finally, the third foundational action we see exemplified in Matthew 9 is having a fervent concern for mercy. Teaching, proclamation, and mercy are all aspects of the same ministry and should not be seen as separate actions. "Jesus never missed a need; if He did, it was according to His own sovereign plan and purpose," Gundrum said.

What did the Father send Jesus to do? He sent Him to sinners in order to teach the truth, proclaim the gospel, and serve humanity. In Matthew 9, Jesus showed mercy in a number of healings: of the lame, the blind, and the mute, and in restoring a dead girl to life.

May the Bible Fellowship Church continue to reach out, remaining focused on unbelief wherever it exists while exercising compassion for the lost.

After concluding his keynote address, Gundrum introduced the work in Cape May Court House, NJ. "There was a time when Cape May was on our list to close…but we didn't close it," Gundrum said. He noted the crucial sustaining work of Mark L. Morrison in holding the work together as an interim pastor before Brad L. Boyer arrived as a church planter and has been there ever since, moving Cape Community Mission Church along to graduation.

Boyer introduced several members of his congregation who were watching the celebration via livestream from the church building. "I just can't be more thrilled than I am right now at this moment," he said, sharing the moment with his wife and with his delegate Michael J. Polach, who was joined by his wife Elaine. "We are grateful to the BFC for your support—way before Elaine and I came [to Cape Community Church]," Mike Polach said. "But most of all we thank God, because He's building His church throughout the world and especially at Cape May."

Boyer tried to make a list of everyone who made a contribution to the growth of Cape Community Church but eventually gave up because there were too many to list. Still, he

couldn't stop before praising God for his wife Vicki. "She actually sacrificed way more than I did to go down to Cape May," he said. "Anyone who knows her and knows me knows that she's the brains of the outfit."

Boyer pointed to Isaiah 6 and Isaiah's response of "Here am I. Send me!" Mark L. Morrison offered a prayer of gratitude for God's work in Cape May Court House, NJ.

The Moderator prayed to close the evening session at 8:02 p.m. A reception followed in honor of Cape Community Church's welcome as a Particular Church.

140th Conference Officers
Ronald L. Kohl, Randall A. Grossman, Daniel L. Williams

BFC Conference Proceedings - 2023
Thirdmeeting

Tuesday, April 25, 2023, 8:45 A.M.

The morning session was called to order at 8:45 a.m. as Donald D. McKinney, a delegate at Calvary BFC, Sinking Spring, PA for about 40 years, prayed for the morning's proceedings. A musical ensemble led by Mark E. Barninger again led in musical worship as Conference sang "Come, Thou Almighty King" and "Hear the Call of the Kingdom."

Brad L. Boyer, pastor of Cape Community Church in Cape May Court House, NJ offered the morning devotional. Article 19-1 of our Articles of Faith, *The Evangelistic Mission of the Church*, reads, "The Church has been commissioned by Jesus Christ to preach the gospel to all nations. Each Particular Church and every believer bear responsibility for this commission."

Boyer said the mission Christ gave in The Great Commission in Matthew 28 "was commissioned to us because Jesus did His job." After reading Acts 1:1-8, he noted that Jesus' "to do list" was what He *began to do*, according to Acts 1:1. Jesus of course continues to be at work today.

The disciples asked a particular question in Acts 1:6. "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" They assumed that Jesus would answer in the affirmative, but Jesus instead answered in verse 8, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." The Holy Spirit came with power and the church was born as the apostles and their fellow servants carried on Christ's work.

Boyer noted that the first believers were already in Jerusalem, reaching out, and when Pentecost came, 3,000 souls believed and were baptized—something Boyer called "a logistical dream." They started in Jerusalem and when Acts 8 noted the beginnings of persecution, they spread throughout Judea and Samaria, taking the gospel with them. By Acts 9, the conversion of Saul of Tarsus continued the spread of the gospel "to the ends of the earth."

"The time is now. It's urgent," Boyer said of the call to witness to the gospel in a world where even professing evangelicals seem to be losing their trust in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Boyer quoted J.I. Packer, who was referencing Jonathan Edwards in describing revival. "Revival is an extraordinary work of God the Holy Ghost, reinvigorating and propagating Christian piety in a community," Packer said. Revival is directly connected to the outreach of God's people with the good news of the gospel. We have an ongoing mission—"Each Particular Church and every believer bear responsibility for this commission," our Articles of Faith declare.

How can we be the kind of church that fulfills its commission? Boyer cited Acts 2:42-47. The people learned, grew, fellowshipped, and served together, and we as individuals and as churches are called to do so "until the nets are filled," as the late Daniel P. Allen was fond of saying. James D. Reff II of the Prayer Committee followed by leading Conference in a time of prayer based on Acts 1:8.

Following the morning break, the results of elections were communicated to Conference. The following were elected to boards or committees:

BFC Executive Board (ministers):

Randall A. Grossman (3 years)

Ronald L. Kohl (3 years)

BFC Executive Board (elders):

John W. Sullivan (3 years)

William J. Walters (3 years)

Ministerial Credentials Committee:

Jesse A. Benack (3 years)

S. Wayne Rissmiller (3 years)

Ministerial Candidates Committee:

David E. Gundrum (3 years)

Joshua P. Miller (3 years)

Richard E. Taylor (3 years)

Ministerial Relations Committee (ministers):

Daniel Z. Krall (3 years)

Timothy J. Schmoyer (3 years)

Ministerial Relations Committee (elders):

Glendon R. LeSuer, Jr. (3 years)

Committee on Nominations:

Jules J. Hull III (3 years)

Daniel W. King (3 years)

Conference Judicatory:

Clyde D. Bomgardner, Jr. (3 years)

Bryan C. McNally (3 years)

Special Appellate Judicatory (ministers):

Robert A. Sloan (3 years)

Special Appellate Judicatory (elders):

Robert A. Moreau (3 years)

Officers of the 141st BFC Conference

Moderator

Daniel L. Williams (1 year)

Vice-Moderator

Timothy J. Schmoyer (1 year)

Report on the Examination of the BPL on Sexual Identity

This committee presented several resolutions that passed at First Reading at the 139th BFC Conference and are now presented as Second Reading legislation. See 2022 Yearbook, pp. 10-13.

Resolved, that the following additions be made to BFC BPL article 103-3.2 (additions in bold and underlined):

103-3.2 The purpose of sexual expression **and the gendered roles we play in it** has been given to mankind by his Creator. The sexual union between a man and a woman was created, in part, to image the unity of the Godhead and God's covenantal relationship with His people. In addition, sexual union was given for the procreation of children and for the mutual enjoyment of husband and wife.

God created the human race into two complementary sexes/genders ("male and female") **and determines each person's sex/gender at conception.** This distinction **of male and female** is the first fact mentioned in connection with mankind being made in the image of God. The first marriage, and thus the first sexual act, was a recognition, expression, and celebration of this complementary distinction. God designed sexual union such that two complementary sexual halves, one man and one woman, come together and become a sexual whole.

The Bible refers to this sexual union as becoming "one flesh." This "one flesh" sexual union between the first man and his wife establishes the pattern and standard of sexual expression for all of humanity. The participation in, or promotion of, any sexual act other than this "one flesh" union, within the marriage covenant, or the willful neglect of this sexual union is a sinful disregard of its intended purpose and fails to glorify God in our bodies.

Sexual expression is authorized within the bond of marriage between male and female. God's name is glorified when the sexual union between male and female within the bond of marriage is honored and protected. God is dishonored when His design for sexual union is disregarded and perverted, and He will not allow this perversion to go unpunished. In addition, sexual expression outside the biblical standard corrupts the ideal in human relationships and prevents human flourishing.

As sexual expression and sexual union are God's design and created according to His purpose, it is sinful for a man or woman to give in to the temptation to pursue or engage in changing the sex or gender given by God.

[SECOND READING]

Yes - 157; No - 1.

Resolved, that the following change be made to BFC Article 154, Sexual Immorality (addition in bold and underlined).

154-2 The Bible teaches that activities such as adultery, bestiality, fornication, homosexuality (i.e. indulging in a lust for or engaging in a sexual act with a member of the same sex), incest, polygamy, **transgenderism,** and sexual lust are perversions of God's created order.

[SECOND READING]

Yes - 151; No - 1.

Whereas, the Study Committee on Examination of the BPL on Sexual Identity has completed their assignment and the legislation they proposed has been approved, therefore be it

Resolved, that we thank the members of the committee for their service and declare the committee to be dissolved.

Report of the Study Committee on Mode of Baptism for Believers with Disabilities and Infirmities (see page 189)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

This committee will present a full report at the 141st BFC Conference in 2024.

Report of the Study Committee on Eternal Conscious Torment: (see page 188)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

This committee also plans to submit a full report at the 141st BFC Conference.

The Executive Director presented the following legislation for adoption at First Reading**:**

506-6 Excuses for BFC Conference

(1) Any lay delegate desiring to be excused from a meeting which will result in his church lacking lay representation shall submit a request in writing to the Registrar. The Registrar shall present such requests to BFC Conference, which shall grant or deny the request.

(2) ADD THE FOLLOWING TO THE END OF THE PARAGRAPH:

Ordained Ministers in retirement or permanent disability who do not attend BFC Conference are excused without a written request.

[FIRST READING]

Yes - 135; No - 1.

This will be implemented by rule of exception but will still be presented at the 141st BFC Conference for adoption at Second Reading in 2024.

The following change to Article 511-6, Ministerial Relations Committee, was presented for adoption at First Reading:

511-6, Ministerial Relations Committee

511-6.2(1) Composition and Election (proposed changes are in italics)

The Board shall be composed of four ordained ministers who *have served or* are serving as pastors, and three elders.

[FIRST READING]

Yes - 146; No - 2.

This will also be implemented by rule of exception but will also be presented at the 141st BFC Conference for adoption at Second Reading in 2024.

The following Second Reading material was proposed in conjunction with the Board of Church Health (see 2022 Yearbook, pp. 17-19)

512-4 Board of Church Health

512-4.1 Purpose

The Board of Church Health serves the Bible Fellowship Church by promoting strong

Church Health. It does this by helping Particular Churches evaluate the health of their own church, by helping new Particular Churches develop healthy ministries, and by assisting struggling Particular Churches and Mission Churches as requested by Church Extension Ministries to regain a healthy condition.

512-4.2 Composition and Election

(1) The Board of Church Health will be composed of the Director of the Board of Church Health, and selected ministers and members of the Bible Fellowship Church.

(2) The Director shall be appointed by the BFC Executive Board.

(3) The Board of Church Health will select members to serve on the board who have a heart for healthy churches and can provide valuable assistance to the Board. The number of members will be determined by the Director after consultation with the BFC Executive Board. Members will be presented to the BFC Executive Board for ratification to a three year term of office before beginning service on the board. All board members must presently be serving or have served as a credentialed pastor or an elder within the Bible Fellowship Church.

512-4.3 Duties

(1) It shall oversee the compilation of an annual BFC statistical report of the churches which will assist them in this work.

(2) The Board of Church Health shall monitor the health of Particular Churches.

(3) It shall provide counsel and resources for the self-assessment of the health of Particular Churches.

(4) It shall provide a list of recommended consultants to Particular Churches needing assistance in moving toward stronger church health.

(5) It shall offer training and seminars to promote church health.

(6) It may recommend to the BFC Executive Board that a Particular Church be placed under the supervisory care of the Board of Church Health. When a Particular Church is under the supervisory care of the Board of Church Health, the Director has the right to appoint interim elders to the church. By simple majority, the Executive Board in this case may place the Particular Church under the supervisory care of the Board of Church Health. If a Particular Church resists being placed under the supervisory care of the Board of Church Health, the Executive Board will recommend its placement to the BFC Conference for its consideration. This action by BFC Conference shall be by a simple majority.

(7) A Particular Church is removed from the supervisory care of the Board of Church Health by a simple majority vote of the BFC Conference.

(8) It shall inform the Ministerial Relations Committee if a matter threatening the pastoral relationship becomes evident at a Particular Church receiving Board of Church Health assistance and shall assist a Particular Church at the request of the Ministerial Relations Committee.

(9) It shall, in cooperation with the BFC Executive Board, assist Particular Churches to close when necessary.

(10) It shall provide a report on the closing of a Particular Church to BFC Conference.

(11) In the event of a church closing it shall consult with the Director of Church Extension Ministries regarding the feasibility of planting a new church in the same area.

(12) It shall develop sources of financial assistance for Particular Churches who cannot afford church health resources.

(13) It shall receive and disburse monies designated for the Board of Church Health.

(14) It shall work in cooperation with the Training and Education Committee to provide Pastoral Internships at Churches under the care of the Board of Church Health or when requested by a Particular Church or Church Extension Ministries, and shall oversee the financial arrangements for the Pastoral Internship.

(15) It shall make a written report of its activities to the BFC Executive Board.

512-4.4 Church Health Director

The Church Health Director shall be an ordained minister of the Bible Fellowship Church. He shall, by virtue of his office, be a member of the Board of Church Health and shall be appointed by and accountable to the BFC Executive Board. He may serve in either a full-time or part-time capacity.

Duties

(1) He shall, in the performance of his duties, work under the direction of the BFC Executive Director in accordance with the policies and directives of the Board of Church Health.

(2) He shall represent the Board of Church Health in its dealings with pastors, elders, and churches.

(3) He shall oversee the Pastoral Internships under the care of the Board of Church Health.

(4) He shall be available as a resource to local churches regarding Church Health.

(5) He shall be available to meet with pastors, boards of elders, and congregations for consultation, evaluation, exhortation, and advice.

(6) He shall give a full report to the Board of Church Health at each of its meetings, and report to the BFC Executive Board as requested.

[SECOND READING]

Yes - 143; No - 11.

Report of the Study Committee on Mode of Believers' Baptism with Regard to Membership (see page 133)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

Discussion about the legislation proposed by the committee ensued and continued until the Moderator called for the lunch break. Conference adjourned for lunch at 12:30 p.m. as Larry W. Davies prayed.

BFC Conference Proceedings - 2023
Fourthmeeting

Tuesday, April 25, 2023, 1:30 P.M.

The afternoon session was called to order by the Moderator at 1:30 p.m. Conference praised God with the singing of "To God be the Glory" and "All I Have is Christ."

Richard Dobrowolski, who shares the pastorate at Citylight Bible Church of Allentown, PA with Stephen A. Diaz, brought the afternoon devotional based on Article 19-2, *The Evangelistic Mission of the Church.* It reads, "God has clearly revealed in the gospel the only way of salvation sufficientforandapplicabletothewholelostraceofmankind. Based on His infiniteandperfectloveandHisexpresseddesirethatallmenbesaved, He bids that the Church, with urgency, compassion, and persuasion, proclaim the gospel to all people and invite them to believe."

Dobrowolski turned in Scripture to Mark 5 and the story of the woman who was suff ering from a discharge of blood—and her going to Jesus for healing and relief. As one deemed "unclean" by the surrounding culture, she was dealing with loneliness and despair in addition to her physical trials. No one else was able to help her. "She knows that Jesus, unlike anybody else, has the physical resources that she needs to bring about help. So she goes…and it works," he explained.

But her healing wasn't limited to physical matters. Jesus had higher goals. He sought to draw her out. Upon asking, "Who touched Me?" she came to Him "in fear and trembling," but He commended her faith and then healed her. "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease," He said to her.

"Jesus shows compassion by bringing hope to His fallen creation," Dobrowolski said in applying the text. "This is what compassion looks like, lived out."

"Shouldn't compassion be mentioned as our world describes us—the BFC as a whole?" he asked. "Is the BFC known as a compassionate denomination?" He said our compassion should mimic the compassion Jesus showed in Mark 5. Are we compassionate to neighbors with differingpoliticalviews?Howaboutthepersoninour congregation who comes to us for the 100th time. How about always-moody family members who dis-agree with us about who Jesus is and what He has done? We ought to ask God to change our hearts to be more Christ-like. We ought to be willing to enter people's lives even before we share the gospel of hope.

David E. Gundrum introduced a service of celebration for Citylight Bible Church. "When I think of Citylight Church, the word 'providence' comes into place," he said. Aaron D. Smith firstbroughtDobrowolskitoGundrum'sattention,butnofurther contact was made for 10 years—until discussions about urban ministry brought Dobrowolski and Allentown Bible Church back into the BFC orbit just two years ago.

Citylight Bible Church is a merger between Allentown Bible Church and Lighthouse (*El Faro*) Mission Church, pastored by Stephen A. Diaz. The combined church has acquired a new building in a strong location in Allentown. "We're just blessed in seeing the providence of God at work these last few years."

Following a video highlighting the ministries and people of Citylight Bible Church, Pastors Diaz and Dobrowolski both addressed Conference. "I can't believe we're here, but Jesus builds His church. Amen?" Diaz said. He explained that following times of disappointment and soul-searching, eventually in 2021 Diaz reconnected with

Dobrowolski and over nine months, the prospects of a potential merger emerged. The two congregations voted to merge in June, 2022.

Diaz introduced Joe Fox, who aided in the start of Allentown Bible Church and is now filling a key role in Citylight Bible Church. "It's been exciting and we've been glad to be a part of it," he said of the relationships that have been built with the BFC. "We desire to reach the city of Allentown with the gospel of Christ…We are called to minister with them."

John Elias, a long-time servant of the Bible Fellowship Church who returned to the BFC by becoming part of the ministry in Allentown, prayed that God would make Citylight Bible Church a shining light for the gospel in Allentown.

Conference returned to the discussion concerning the Report of the Study Committee on Mode of Believers' Baptism with Regard to Membership. The following revised legislation—as approved by Conference—was presented as First Reading legislation:

Whereas, the BFC's current position requiring immersion for everyone, including those who have already been baptized as believers by another mode, creates conflict at worst and tension at best between some parts of the Faith & Order, thereby excluding from membership someone who is a part of the universal body of Christ, and

Whereas, some who have been baptized as believers by another mode and truly desire to be a member of the BFC are precluded from membership because personal conscience and conviction forbid them to be rebaptized as believers, and

Whereas, it is more consistent with the spirit and truth of Christ to receive such individuals as members who, acting in obedience to their God-ordained leadership at the time, were baptized as believers by another mode, therefore be it

Resolved, that we present the following changes to Article 202-3 for adoption at First Reading:

> Anyone desiring to be a member of the BFC shall give testimony and evidence of faith in Christ and the new birth. He shall be in sympathy with the Faith & Order, be baptized by immersion or have had water applied subsequent to salvation, and manifest holiness toward God and separation from the world (Acts 2:41-47)

[FIRST READING]

Yes - 136; No - 14.

Report of the Study Committee on Strengthening Our Position on Abortion (see page 152)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

Josh Kappes, the son of BFC pastor W. Scott Kappes, offered a guest presentation on Love Life Ministry, which advertises its mission as "uniting and mobilizing the church to create a culture of love and life that will result in an end to abortion and the orphan crisis."

While many believe that talking publically about abortion will heap shame upon themselves, Kappes said, "Actually, the opposite is true. When we apply the gospel specifically to the sin of abortion, people's lives are set free from guilt and shame." The church needs to be a place of redemption—it needs to be made a safe place where people can run." Love Life offers training and mentoring. "The heart of the culture needs to change. And how does it change? Through the gospel," he said.

Steven M. Klase prayed for God's comfort upon the Kappes family, which is mourning the sudden death of Jared Kappes, Scott's son and Josh's younger brother.

The committee proposed several additions to the existing BPL Article 152 – Abortion, with additions to 152-1 and 152-2 and the insertion of a new 152-3.

Resolved, that the following BPL on Abortion be adopted at First Reading, with additions and changes in bold face:

Article 152 - Abortion

152-1 God is the creator, sustainer, and giver of life. Only He has the right to say under what conditions it may be taken away.[1] His Word declares that man is made in His image **and is endowed with the dignity of personhood from the moment of fertilization**,[2] and it is for this reason that the death penalty was commanded for murder in the Old Testament.[3] It is an evil before God to **intentionally murder** unborn children, since they too bear His image, even if they are disabled or the result of rape or incest. **If the life of the mother is in jeopardy, it is the moral and ethical obligation of the mother's medical care team to work to preserve the life of both baby and mother to the greatest extent their abilities and resources allow. Therefore, since abortion is murder**, as members of Christ's body, the Church, we may not have, give direct assistance to, or perform an **elective** abortion.[4] **Any BFC church member(s) who, after rejecting repeated, godly, and compassionate counsel, continue(s) to have unrepentant sinful involvement in abortion will be subject to church discipline as prescribed by our Lord in Matthew 18.** [5]

[1] Gen. 9:5-6

[2] Psa. 139:13-16; Gen. 1:27

[3] Exo. 21:14

[4] Prov. 24:11-12

[5] Matt. 18:15-20

152-2 Within the marriage bond a pregnancy and resulting child must be accepted as from God, and the parents are commanded to love the child.[6] Pregnancies resulting from promiscuous or licentious behavior are not to be terminated by abortion, which only adds sin forbidden by the sixth commandment to sin forbidden by the seventh commandment.[7] Therefore, anyone contemplating an abortion, even though outside the Church, should be encouraged to preserve life by completing the pregnancy.[8] The child can either be raised by its biological parents or be adopted by others. **The Church must strive to create a culture where women and men feel safe in coming forward to share their struggles without fear of being condemned.**

[6] Psa. 127:3-5

[7] Exo. 20:13-14; 1 Cor. 6:18

[8] Heb. 10:24

[FIRST READING]

Yes - 105; No - 45.

Resolved, that a new Article 152-3 be added to our Biblical Principle of Living on Abortion.

152-3 As Christians, we call upon our government leaders, with complete dependence on God, to establish equal justice and equal protection for the preborn according to the authority of God's Word, at the local, state and federal levels, without exception or compromise.[9] We call upon pastors and leaders to use their God-given gifts of preaching, teaching, and leading with one unified, principled, prophetic voice to uphold and promote God's justice for all, including our preborn neighbors, at any and all stages of development.[10]

[9] Deut. 16:18-20; Proverbs 20:10; Romans 13:3-4; 1 Pet. 2:13-14

[10] Prov. 24:11-12; Psalm 82:4; Micah 6:8; Matt. 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29

[FIRST READING]

Yes - 119; No - 33.

Report of the Study Committee on the Role of Women in the Church (see page 154 and 173)

William G. Schlonecker prayed for the upcoming discussion about this significant matter.

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

Prior to the legislation being introduced, the Minority Report subcommittee was permitted to present its position with a brief presentation prior to legislation being presented for adoption at First Reading. After considerable discussion on the floor of Conference, the meeting was adjourned for dinner at 5:26 p.m. as Timothy S. Hogan prayed.

BFC Conference Proceedings - 2023
Fifth meeting

Tuesday, April 25, 2023, 7:00 P.M.

The Tuesday evening session was called to order by the Moderator at 7 p.m. No business was conducted; the entire session was set aside for a service of ordination conducted by the Ministerial Credentials Committee.

Mark E. Barninger and Aaron J. Susek led Conference in the singing of "Great is Thy Faithfulness." Keith M. Long read Matthew 10:16-33 and then prayed.

Jesse A. Benack presented William A. Burton III and Freddy A. Chi (in absentia; a separate ordination service and accompanying recognition service for Chi will be held at a future date in Merida, Mexico, with appropriate BFC representation) for ordination and Adam K. Crain and Daniel J. Hoffsttetter for recognition of previous ordination.

Keith A. Strunk provided a charge from 2 Timothy 1. Paul's final words to Timothy were intensely personal. He spoke of the reality of tears in ministry, encouraging the ordinands to take their eyes off self and place them firmly on Christ during difficult times of trial.

Paul then reminds Timothy of the sincerity of his faith. He exhorted Timothy to "remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel," (2 Timothy 2:8). This passion for Christ and the ministry of the gospel is to be fanned into flame as we use the gifts He has given us. "We must stoke the fire…put more fuel on the fire," Strunk said.

It is God who gives pastors the power to serve Him. Second Timothy 1:7 says, "For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control." "He gave us power to endure. He gave us power to persevere," Strunk said. God has also given us love and self-control. The latter enables us to be level-headed, with a way of thinking that "defaults to God and faith in God." We are always to remember who God has called us to be as men called by Him to gospel ministry.

S. Wayne Rissmiller administered the vows of ordination. Each man was then prayed over by the laying on of hands of members of the Ministerial Credentials Committee.

Jason L. Hoy gave the pronouncement of ordination. The service concluded at 7:55 p.m. with Pastors Barninger and Susek leading in the singing of "Yet Not I But through Christ in Me." Following the benediction, the newly-ordained pastors were greeted by their ministering brethren.

Ordination Photos
April 25, 2023
Pinebrook Bible Conference

Keith Strunk gives a charge to the ordination candidates while the rest of the members of the Ministerial Credentials Committee look on.

S. Wayne Rissmiller gives the ordination vows for Daniel J. Hoffstetter, Adam K. Crain, and William A. Burton III.

William A. Burton III is prayed over by R. Scott Wright.

Daniel J. Hoffstetter is prayed over by S. Wayne Rissmiller.

Members of the Ministerial Credentials Committee gather around ordinand Adam K. Crain in prayer during the traditional Tuesday evening service of ordination.

William and Sarah Burton
Ryley, Benaiah, Nathanael

Daniel and Heidi Hoffstetter
Calvin and Madelyn

Adam and Lauren Crain

Adam K. Crain gives a joyful hug to Jason L. Hoy after Jason prays over him.

BFC Conference Proceedings - 2023
Sixth meeting

Wednesday, April 26, 2023, 8:45 A.M.

Conference Moderator Randall A. Grossman called the meeting to order at 8:45 a.m. Carlos G. Rodriguez led in prayer in both English and Spanish. Mark E. Barninger, James Arcieri, and Aaron J. Susek led Conference in the singing of "Jesus, Lover of My Soul" and "Jesus, All for Jesus."

Kevin W. Kirkpatrick of the Committee on Prayer led a time of corporate prayer based on Colossians 1:15-20 and focusing on the supremacy of Jesus Christ.

The Darlene J. Mahurin Memorial Fund offering was received. Richard E. Taylor prayed that it would be a blessing to our servant-ministers in need.

Report of the Study Committee on the Role of Women in the Church (continued from session four)

Discussion continued as the Committee (representing the Majority Report) offered some introductory remarks and clarifications and then proposed the following amended resolution, representing an addition to our Principles of Order, Article 404, for adoption at First Reading:

Article 404 Choosing Leaders Other Than Elders

404-6 The elders of each Particular Church shall have freedom to determine which teaching opportunities are available to qualified and gifted laymen and laywomen. However, preaching (i.e., the sermon given in the context of the local church) is to be reserved for elders or qualified men under the authority of the Board of Elders.

[FIRST READING]

Yes - 67; No - 79.

The amended motion having failed, the original motion returned to active consideration. After defeating a motion to refer the work back to the committee, the following original motion was voted upon by Conference:

Whereas, Paul wrote to Timothy, "I do not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man" in 1 Timothy 2:12, referring to an authoritative teaching in the church reserved for elders, and

Whereas, Paul allowed, expected, and commended women's participation in the early church, including public prayers (1 Cor. 11:5), public prophesying and teaching (1 Cor. 14:26), public learning (1 Tim. 2:11), and teaching and exhorting (Col. 3:16, 1 Cor. 14:26), and

Whereas, the BFC Principles of Order allows each particular church's board of elders to decide for themselves how and where laymen and laywomen can lead, serve, and teach in their church, be it

Resolved, that we codify our existing position in keeping with 1 Timothy 2:12 by adding the following to Principles of Order Article 404, *Choosing Leaders Other Than Elders and Deacons*:

404-6 The elder board of each Particular Church will decide for itself what teaching opportunities are authoritative (which should be reserved for elders) and what teaching opportunities are not authoritative and are therefore available to laymen and laywomen.

[FIRST READING]

Yes - 50; No - 91.

The original motion having been lost, Conference decided to consider the work of the minority committee.

Resolved, that the minority report be accepted.

The minority subcommittee then presented the following resolution for adoption at First Reading. Prior to the First Reading vote, Conference resolved the following:

Resolved, that this legislation be added to the Principles of Order, Article 404-6 [Choosing Leaders Other Than Elders], rather than to the Articles of Faith, Article 18 – The Church.

With the above correction, the following legislation was considered for adoption at First Reading:

Whereas, Jesus Christ is the Lord of His church and has left us His Word to direct and instruct His church, and

Whereas, 1 Timothy 3:15 states that this letter was written "that one may know how to behave in the household of God," and

Whereas, 1 Timothy 2:8 and 3:15 speak to the gathering of the people of God as the body of Christ, vested with the authority given to it by Christ, and

Whereas, 1 Timothy 2:12 gives specific instruction on how women are to conduct themselves with respect to men in the gathered church, and

Whereas, the meaning of teaching in 1 Tim. 2:12 is to give biblical instruction with the intention of influencing the hearers, and

Whereas, 1 Timothy 2:12 prohibits women from teaching or exercising authority over men in the gathered church, and

Whereas, a refusal to submit to this instruction is in opposition to Jesus Christ's authority over His church, and

Whereas, clarity and unity on gender roles in the church has become a distinctive belief for churches and denominations, therefore be it

Resolved, that we codify our position on women teaching or exercising authority over men by adding the following statement to the Principles of Order 404-6:

> **Any teaching given to a gathering of the church where men are present is to be done by qualified men under the oversight of the elders.**

And be it further **Resolved**, that we codify our position on women teaching or exercising authority over men by adding the following statement to Principles of Order 404-6:

> **Any function of authority over a gathering of the church where men are present is to be done by qualified men under the oversight of the elders.**

[FIRST READING]

Yes - 32; No - 117.

Conference adjourned at 12:30 p.m. as Richard T. Paashaus prayed. A short meeting of the Beneficiary Society preceded lunch.

BFC Conference Proceedings - 2023
Seventh meeting

Wednesday, April 26, 2023, 1:30 P.M.

The final session of the 140th BFC Conference was called to order by the Moderator at 1:40 p.m. as Clyde D. Bomgardner, Jr. prayed. Conference engaged in the *a capella* singing of "Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise."

Timothy M. Zuck, church-planting pastor at Forks Community Church in Forks Twp., led Conference in a devotional related to Article 19-3 as part of the *Reaching Out* theme – "It is the duty and privilege of everyone who hears the gospel to repent and receive its merciful provisions. Those who do are saved, and those who continue in impenitence and unbelief incur aggravated guilt and perish by their own fault."

Struck by the phrase "receive its merciful provisions," Zuck said he quickly thought of the salvation story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10. "I love this story in Luke because the salvation of Zacchaeus is a wonderful account of the movement of God's mercy in the life of a sinner," Zuck said.

God's mercy moves the sinner to reach out to Jesus, Zuck said. The text shows God the Father drawing Zacchaeus to Himself. What prompted Zacchaeus to seek out Jesus? We read, "He was seeking to see who Jesus was." Zacchaeus' curiosity was somehow piqued, and he wouldn't allow his lack of height prevent him from making contact. God's mercy often causes people we would never expect to be drawn to the gospel. But we have a role, too; we are called to have open eyes and perceptive hearts to know where people's hearts are being opened by God's Spirit. "Mercy moves out to reach the lost," Zuck noted.

Jesus invited Himself, not only into Zacchaeus' home but also into his life. Mercy moved Jesus to dine with tax collectors and sinners, and so the invitation to dine at Zacchaeus' home fit the Lord's profile of reaching out to the lost and calling them to repentance.

Reaching out, this story tells us, sometimes comes at a cost. Critics said of Jesus, "He has gone to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." But we must stay on mission, not allowing complainers to deter us from accomplishing what Jesus has put on our hearts. The result was that Zacchaeus repented and offered proof that his repentance was genuine by declaring his desire to make restitution for anyone he had defrauded.

"If we believe our doctrines about sin, salvation, and the necessity of evangelism, why aren't we moving more?" he asked. "Where is our reach?" We should be asking, "Where's our reach as a church?"

"Every church should be a mission church called by God to reach out and seek the lost," Zuck stressed.

David E. Gundrum introduced the ensuing celebration service for Forks Community Church. Zuck, he noted, is the first BFC church planter to successfully plant two

Particular Churches: in Hellertown, PA (Saucon Community BFC) as well as in Forks Twp. Gundrum credited Zuck with doing "a lot of innovative things" to establish Forks Community Church.

Conference viewed a video that included testimonies from members of the Forks Community Church family. "From the beginning, we wanted to be a church that is for the community and is in the community," Zuck said as part of the video.

Frank J. Farley, an elder and delegate at Forks Community, praised God for His work in blessing the church before James Arcieri prayed for God's ongoing blessing on the ministry of Forks Community Church.

Report of the BFC Executive Board: (See page 50)

Executive Director David T. Allen provided a few particulars from the Executive Board report and then reviewed the BFC's financial statements before presenting both a revised budget for 2023 and a proposed budget for 2024.

Resolved, that the BFC Executive Board report, which includes the financial statements of the BFC, be accepted as audited.

Resolved, that the 2023 revised BFC Executive Board budget be adopted by the 140th BFC Conference.

Resolved, that an assessment rate of two (2.0) percent be adopted by the 140th BFC Conference for 2024 (based on assessable receipts from 2022).

Resolved, that the 2024 proposed Executive Board budget be adopted by the 140th BFC Conference.

The Executive Board recommended the following resolutions:

Whereas, the MRF annuity rate for 2023 was $221 per year of service, and

Whereas, cost-of-living adjustments no longer apply to MRF payments, be it

Resolved, that the MRF annuity rate for calendar year 2024 be $221 per year of service.

Resolution Relating to Rental/Housing Allowances for Retired or Disabled Ministers of this Conference for Calendar Year 2024:

Whereas, the religious denomination known as The Bible Fellowship Church has, and functions through, Ministers of the Gospel who are duly ordained or licensed, and

Whereas, the practice of The Bible Fellowship Church is to provide a parsonage or

a rental allowance as part of the gross compensation for each of its active ordained or licensed ministers, and

Whereas, pensions paid to retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers of The Bible Fellowship Church are considered as deferred compensation and are paid to said retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers in consideration of previous, active service, and

Whereas, the Internal Revenue Service has recognized that The Bible Fellowship Church is the appropriate organization to designate a housing/rental allowance for retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers who are members of this Conference, therefore be it

Resolved,

1. An amount equal to 100% of the pension payments received during the year of 2024 be and is hereby designated as a rental/housing allowance for each retired and disabled ordained or licensed minister of The Bible Fellowship Church who is or was a member of the Bible Fellowship Church Minister's Retirement Fund.

2. This rental/housing allowance shall apply to each retired and disabled ordained or licensed minister who has been granted the retired relationship or placed on disability leave by the BFC Conference and whose name and relationship to the conference is recorded in the Yearbook of BFC Conference and in other appropriate records maintained by the conference.

3. The pension payment to which this rental/housing allowance applies shall be the pension payment resulting from all service of such retired or disabled ordained or licensed minister from all employment by any local church, BFC Conference or institution of The Bible Fellowship Church or of any former denomination that is now a part of The Bible Fellowship Church, or from any other employer who employed the minister to perform services related to the ministry and who elected to make contributions to the pension funds of The Bible Fellowship Church for such retired minister's pension.

Note: The rental/housing allowance which may be excluded from a minister's gross income is limited to the lesser of (1) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the minister's employer or other appropriate body, (2) the amount actually expended by the minister to provide his housing, or (3) the legally-determined fair rental value of the parsonage or other housing provided. As specified in Rev. Rul. 71-290 C.B. 92, "the only amount that will qualify for exclusion under section 107(2) of the Code as a 'rental allowance' is an amount equal to the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances such as a garage, plus the cost of utilities."

The Bible Fellowship Church Executive Board has recognized that credentialed BFC pastors who were not members of the MRF at the time when the MRF was closed, but still receive pension benefits that were paid by their church into a 403(b) Retirement Plan, should be able to receive the same recognition as those who receive pension benefits under the MRF.

Whereas, the religious denomination known as The Bible Fellowship Church has, and functions through, Ministers of the Gospel who are duly ordained or licensed, and

Whereas, the practice of The Bible Fellowship Church is to provide a parsonage or a rental allowance as part of the gross compensation for each of its active ordained or licensed ministers, and

Whereas, contributions paid to an authorized 403(b) plan for the benefit of retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers of The Bible Fellowship Church are considered as deferred compensation and are paid to said retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers in consideration of previous, active service, and

Whereas, the Internal Revenue Service has recognized that The Bible Fellowship Church is the appropriate organization to designate a housing/rental allowance for retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers who are members of this Conference, therefore be it

Resolved,

1. An amount equal to 100% of the proceeds drawn from a 403(b) plan during the year of 2024 be and is hereby designated as a rental/housing allowance for each retired and disabled ordained or licensed minister of The Bible Fellowship Church who is or was a member of the Bible Fellowship Church.

2. This rental/housing allowance shall apply to each retired and disabled ordained or licensed minister who has been granted the retired relationship or placed on disability leave by the BFC Conference and whose name and relationship to the conference is recorded in the Yearbook of BFC Conference and in other appropriate records maintained by the conference.

3. The pension payment to which this rental/housing allowance applies shall be considered the pension payment resulting from all service of such retired or disabled ordained or licensed minister from all employment by any local church, BFC Conference or institution of The Bible Fellowship Church or of any former denomination that is now a part of The Bible Fellowship Church, or from any other employer who employed the minister to perform services related to the ministry and who elected to make contributions to the pension funds of The Bible Fellowship Church for such retired minister's pension.

Note: The rental/housing allowance which may be excluded from a minister's gross income is limited to the lesser of (1) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the minister's employer or other appropriate body, (2) the amount actually expended by the minister to provide his housing, or (3) the legally-determined fair rental value of the parsonage or other housing provided. As specified in Rev. Rul. 71-290 C.B. 92, "the only amount that will qualify for exclusion under section 107(2) of the Code as a 'rental allowance' is an amount equal to the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances such as a garage, plus the cost of utilities."

Report of the Pinebrook Educational Foundation: (see page 100)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

Report of the BFC Life Committee: (see page 117)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

Report of the Communications Committee: (see page 96)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

Report of the Historical Committee: (see page 99)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

Report of the Prayer Committee: (see page 130)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

Report of the Youth & Young Adults Committee: (see page 104)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

Following the afternoon break, David Marks, a member of the Board of Directors of Harvest USA, explained the ministry, which is committed to upholding biblical sexuality and providing healing for those who are experiencing sexual brokenness. The Moderator prayed for Harvest USA and for the BFC's commitment to biblical holiness.

BFC Department reports

Report of the Department of Missions: (see page 72)

James Arcieri, Director of the Board of Missions, provided an overview of the work of missions in the Bible Fellowship Church. A video highlighted the work of the BOM while introducing Conference to several of the BOM board members.

Kevin W. Kirkpatrick prayed for the work of missions in the Bible Fellowship Church.

Report of Church Extension Ministries: (see page 84)

Director David E. Gundrum reviewed the work of Church Extension Ministries and introduced the men who are currently serving as church planters. Mark L. Morrison

provided a few anecdotes about his own experiences in church planting and highlighted the many men who are either involved in Church Extension or whose churches have come through the church planting process.

William G. Schlonecker prayed for Church Extension Ministries and for its ongoing planting efforts.

Report of Victory Valley Camp: (see page 92)

Curtis Cutler, Victory Valley's Director, talked about the camp's ongoing ministry, noting how God has graciously provided many needs. He noted that at least 35 campers trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation in the past year.

"God is growing this ministry," Cutler said. "He's growing the staff. He's growing our reach, and we are excited."

Cutler noted that the recent Winter Blast attracted the most campers in Victory Valley history. Almost 800 campers have already been registered for summer camp this year, with more than 1200 expected in all, and the majority who will attend are unchurched. "We are full to overflowing," he said. "And God is bringing the masses to us."

He added that almost 80 percent of this year's summer staff are returning from 2022. "We get to train them to be the church planters of tomorrow, the missionaries of tomorrow, the pastors of tomorrow…God is doing something amazing. This is something to be excited about."

Timothy J. Schmoyer prayed for the expanding vision of the ministry at Victory Valley Camp.

Report of the Conference Judicatory: (see page 125)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

Report of the Committee on Examination of Minutes of Particular Churches: (see page 124)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

Report of the Ministerial Convention Committee: (see page 129)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

This year's Ministerial Convention is scheduled for October 2-3, 2023 with "Regenerate Church Membership and Church Discipline" as the theme.

Report of the Beneficiary Society: (see page 126)

Resolved, that the report be accepted.

Report of the Registrar

The following delegates requested to be excused from part or all of the 140th BFC Conference:

Luis Beltran (La Roca de Reading, PA), Vladimir Caba (La Roca de Reading, PA), Stephen C. Cassel (Coopersburg, PA), Wayne M. Chadwell (Clinton Corners, NY), Rodger Eastman (W. Norriton, PA), Dave Graham (Townsend, DE), Mark Hargrove (Whitehall, PA), Tim Hart (Sinking Spring, PA), William Kerstetter (Shamokin, PA), James P. Ketner (Mt. Carmel, PA), Steven M. Klase (Cedar Crest-Allentown, PA), Brad D. Kunkle (Blandon, PA), Jerald A. Lagler (Rock of Ages-Whitehall, PA), Donald Maurer (Harrisburg, PA), Shawn McAnulty (Exeter, PA), Sean P. McNamara (Spring City, PA), Robert A. Moreau (Coopersburg, PA), Michael Murphy (Stroudsburg, PA), Harry Nessler (Woodbury Heights, NJ), James W. Preslar (Nazareth, PA), John E. Schleicher (Breinigsville, PA), Brian Seay, (Stroudsburg, PA), Dennis Souder (Dauphin, PA), Doug Steffy (Kutztown, PA), Timothy P. Stump (Sinking Spring, PA), Timothy Sweeney (Breinigsville, PA), Nickolas T. Timpe (Kutztown, PA), Andrew Vassal (Boyertown, PA), J. Robert Vaughn (Red Hill, PA).

Resolved, that these requests for excuses be granted.

The following licensed and ordained pastors/missionaries requested to be excused from part or all of the 140th BFC Conference. These requests were approved by the Ministerial Credentials Committee.

Delbert R. Baker II, Timothy J. Bertolet, T. James Bigley, David E. Brandt, R. Jerry Brush, Leonard E. Buck, Dennis M. Cahill, Freddy A. Chi, Kevin Clineff, Charles E. Cole, Raymond R. Dotts, William J. Dunn, Scott B. Evans, Jordan K. Eyster, Carl J. Fischer, Jr., Sean Fox, Jeremy Harkins, James D. Head, LeRoy S. Heller, D. B. H., Daniel Istrate, Walter M. Johnston, W. Scott Kappes, Francis E. Lenahan, Ronald C. Mahurin, David L. Manney, Andrew J. Miller, Duane E. Moyer, Jerry L. Moyer, Keith E. Plows, Roger L. Reitz, David W. Riddell, David K. Schlonecker, Austin G. Shelly, Robert A. Sloan, Ronald B. Smith, Marcos G. Ramirez, Richard B. Ravis, Jeffrey L. Ruhl, David A. Thomann, Gregory A. Uhrich, Ricardo Vargas, David R. Way, Dana E. Weller, Byron Widger, Daniel L. Williams, Philip E. Yerrington, Paul G. Zimmerman.

The following licensed and ordained pastor(s) were noted as absent for part or all of the 140th BFC Conference without excuse.

None

The following Ordained Ministers in Retirement or on Permanent Disability were noted as being absent and excused without a written request from the 140th BFC Conference:

Kenneth F. Barber, G. Wayne Clapier, Hugh C. Coulbourn, Jr., Richard C. Dodson, Bruce Ellingson, Glenn R. Felty, Richard J. Gehman, John H. Herb, Donald E. Kuntzman, Gene W. Smith, Harold C. Weaber.

Conference addressed the not-yet-resolved work of the Study Committee on the Role of Women in the Church.

Whereas, the Study Committee on the Role of Women in the Church labored to reach consensus on the meaning and application of 1 Timothy 2:12, and

Whereas, BFC Conference had concerns and rejected both the majority and the minority reports' resolutions, and

Whereas, pursuing further unity on this matter both honors our Lord's Word and promotes brotherly love, therefore be it

Resolved, that we send the issue of women in ministry, based on the meaning of 1 Timothy 2:12, back to the committee, asking it to bring new legislation that is faithful to the meaning of the text and addresses the concerns of Conference, including the following:

- What is the gathered church?
- Is there authoritative teaching and non-authoritative teaching in the gathered church?
- In what areas and situations can women teach?

Appointments for the 141st BFC Conference

The Moderator made the following appointments for the 141st BFC Conference:

Registrar: Joel B. Klase

Assistant Registrar: Jules J. Hull IIII

Committee on Agenda & Arrangements: Ronald L. Kohl, Chairman; David T. Allen, Joel B. Klase, Bryan C. McNally, Timothy J. Schmoyer, R. Daniel Wagner, Daniel L. Williams.

Committee on Examination of Minutes of Particular Churches: Kevin W. Kirkpatrick, Chairman; Bryan C. McNally, Mark R. Orton, Barry T. Parsons, Roger L. Siegrist, Robert A. Sloan, Jr.

Resolved, that the appointments be ratified.

Secretary of the Conference Judicatory: Clyde D. Bomgardner, Jr.

Secretary of the Special Appellate Judicatory: Scott Wright.

Report of the Committee on Resolutions

Whereas, David E. Gundrum, Brad L. Boyer, Richard Dobrowolski, and Timothy M. Zuck challenged us to REACH OUT, and Keith A. Strunk challenged us to "fan into flame God's gift" at Tuesday evening's ordination service, and

Whereas, Daniel W. King; James D. Reff, II; and Kevin W. Kirkpatrick led us in prayer, and

Whereas, Josh Kappes from the ministry Love Life challenged us to fight for the unborn and vulnerable mothers and fathers, therefore be it

Resolved, that we thank the Lord for His faithful servants and His holy Word.

Whereas, CityLight Bible Church, Cape Community Church, and Forks Community Church have been recognized at the 140th Annual Conference as particular churches, be it

Resolved, that we give praise to God for His work in these three churches.

Whereas, we celebrated the ordinations of William A. Burton, III and Freddy A. Chi; and

Whereas, the BFC recognized the previous ordinations of Adam K. Crain and Daniel J. Hoffstetter, therefore be it

Resolved, that we give thanks to God for calling these men to serve Him as shepherds of His church. We also ask God's blessing on them and their churches.

Whereas, Mark E. Barninger and his band led our hearts and minds back to the living God again and again through worship in song, be it

Resolved, that we thank them for their faithful ministry to us.

Whereas, Conference Secretary Ronald L. Kohl, Assistant Secretary Bryan C. McNally, and Assistants to the Secretary Jared Burkholder and Noah Hottel have served so well behind the scenes, and

Whereas, David T. Allen has served us diligently as Executive Director, and

Whereas, Randall A. Grossman, has once again served exceptionally as the Moderator of the 140th Conference of the Bible Fellowship Church, therefore be it

Resolved, that we thank them for serving this conference so well.

Whereas, the staff and volunteers of Pinebrook Bible Conference have graciously served the members of the 140th BFC Conference, be it

Resolved, that we extend our sincere thanks to them.

Whereas, Daniel L. Williams, Ryan Diffenderfer, and their team of quick-stepping pages did a wonderful job of serving the needs of the conference attendees, be it

Resolved, that we thank them for all the planning and work they did to make this conference a success!

Whereas, Brothers Daniel P. Allen, Roy A. Hertzog, Carl K. Spackman, Dean A. Stortz, and Daniel G. Ziegler have passed into glory and God's rest in the past year, be it

Resolved, that we thank the Lord for the faithful ministry of these men, and that we pray for the comfort of their family members.

Whereas, we have much to thank God for and think about as a result of this year's sermons, reports, testimonies, and times of prayer, be it

Resolved, that, as we go from this place, we ask the Lord for His grace to boldly and actively search for opportunities to personally and corporately REACH OUT with the good news of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world.

The 140th BFC Conference was adjourned at 4:45 p.m. as James D. MacArthur prayed, thanking God for the work that was accomplished by His grace.

Ezekiel R. Mack and Curtis Cutler enjoy lunch together in the Dining Hall at Pinebrook Bible Conference during a meal break.

Mark E. Barninger, Aaron J. Susek, and James Arcieri lead musical worship during the 140th Conference.

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Report of the Committee on Agenda and Arrangements

The committee met three times in fulfilling its mandate to prepare the agenda and worship and to oversee the logistics and hospitality of the 140th BFC Conference. In addition to the appointed committee members, Ryan Diffenderfer, Bryan C. McNally, and Philip G. Norris served as ex-officio members. The Committee invited Richard Brewer, the new Site Director at Pinebrook, for his assistance in coordinating the logistics and hospitality of the 140th BFC Conference.

140th BFC Conference. This year's BFC Conference will convene at 2 p.m. on Monday, April 24, 2023 at Pinebrook Bible Conference, East Stroudsburg PA and will conclude on Wednesday, April 26, 2023. The theme of this year's Conference is "Reaching Out."

Speakers. David E. Gundrum will provide the Keynote Address while devotional speakers include Brad L. Boyer, Richard Dobrowolski, and Timothy M. Zuck.

Orientation. Orientation materials have been placed in the front of the Report Book that is distributed to each pastor and delegate. We ask that you take time to review the information prior to Conference, especially if you are a voting member for the first time.

Live Streaming. Everyone may view the livestream sessions of BFC Conference over the internet. This is an asset allowing interested BFC folks from around the globe to view the worship and deliberations of the Conference. Please inform your congregations of this opportunity, which can be accessed through the website at www.bfc.org. BFC Conference may "mute" delicate or extremely personal issues on the floor of Conference at the discretion of the Moderator of BFC Conference. Please give us grace if this becomes necessary.

Roles. Joel B. Klase will serve as Registrar and Jules Hull as Assistant Registrar. Daniel L. Williams will serve as Overseer of the Pages. Ryan Diffenderfer will serve as Head Page.

Appointments. The Committee has made the following appointments for the 140th BFC Conference:

Timekeeper: Mark L. Morrison

Parliamentarian: Timothy J. Schmoyer.

Committee on Resolutions: Scott A. Allison, Chairman; Sandy H. Holbert, Daniel Z. Krall.

Committee on Minutes of the 140th BFC Conference: Philip G. Norris, Richard E. Taylor, R. Daniel Wagner.

Recommendations:

1. **Resolved**, that the proposed agenda for the 140th BFC Conference be accepted as the guide for our deliberations.

2. **Resolved,** that the Registrar be authorized to seat alternate delegates as required during the Conference and report them to Conference in his report at the conclusion of Conference.

3. **Resolved,** that the 141st BFC Conference be held at Pinebrook, April 22-24, 2024.

4. **Resolved,** that committee reports for the 140th BFC Conference be sent in digital format to the BFC Conference Secretary by 15 Feb 2024 at sportspastor33@gmail.com.

Committee on Agenda and Arrangements: Ronald L. Kohl, Chairman; R. Daniel Wagner, Secretary; David T. Allen (BFC Executive Director), Randall A. Grossman (140th BFC Conference Moderator), Joel B. Klase (Registrar), Daniel L. Williams (Overseer of the Pages). *Ex-officio* member(s) and guests: Richard B. Brewer (Pinebrook Site Director), Ryan Diffenderfer (Head Page), Bryan C. McNally (Assistant Secretary); Philip G. Norris (Examination of BFC Conference Minutes).

Mark E. Barninger led worship on guitar along with Aaron J. Susek on keyboard and James Arcieri on bass.

Report of the Executive Board

Any organization that continues to function for more than a century and a half must, by necessity, see changes in personnel, policies, and procedures. This past year was a significant year in that regards. The Associate Director of the Board of Missions, Donald E. Kuntzman, who also served the BFC as Financial Manager, retired after a quarter of a century in that position. Don was capable in many areas and filled many unseen roles for the operational aspects of the Bible Fellowship Church. His departure last June left a lot of holes that needed to be filled. Although he agreed to assist us on a part-time basis throughout the rest of the year, we needed to find competent replacements for those many responsibilities that he carried.

The Lord was gracious to provide Rachel Schmoyer to take over in the area of denominational communications; she now serves as our Communications Coordinator. Jodi Shorb has picked up many of the day-to-day accounting processes in addition to her work with the Board of Missions. And starting in 2023, Julie Sebastian is now the Office and Accounting Manager while Greg Alderfer of Keystone Technical Services coordinates our in-house computer systems.

Transitions are seldom smooth and this was no exception, as the BFC Executive Director does not like angst and prefers that there exists peace, persistence, and processes that run like a well-oiled machine. But God was merciful, and by the end of the year, almost all of the personnel were provided, existing policies were updated and implemented, and workable procedures were in place. We are therefore grateful to our Lord for enabling us to put into place the organizational structure that should last for many years to come, should the Lord so tarry.

The BFC Executive Board takes seriously its responsibilities to stay aware of the conditions of our Departments and churches, rejoicing whenever appropriate and taking steps to remedy situations that require our attention. Along with the regular regiment of the BFC Denomination responsibilities, some of the significant tasks during the year included the following:

- We continued to work with our Elverson church plant in establishing its own identity with a local bank in Elverson.
- We assisted a Particular Church with reconciling its various accounting methods/systems.
- We encouraged our Harleysville BFC elders to consider a merger with Maple Glen BFC; Robert A Sloan, Jr. and Daniel L. Williams provided guidance and support.
- We met with several banks concerning a possible loan for Victory Valley Camp's pool project and assisted in securing donations and loans to enable the project to begin.
- We met with leaders of Allentown Bible Church concerning their merger with our Lighthouse BFC church plant in South Allentown.
- We assisted Growing Faith Church (Brick, NJ BFC) in the selling of its Howell, NJ property.

- We met with Woodbury Heights, NJ BFC concerning the dissolution of its merger with Calvary Bible Church of Deptford, NJ.
- We assisted the BFC Church Health Pastor, Robert A Sloan, Jr, in visiting and meeting with our Carmel, NY BFC church, to discuss its current and future ministry.
- We worked with several banks in transferring money to Romania in order to assist refuges from Ukraine.
- We provided transportation and support for Nelson Randolph in delivering emergency supplies to Poland and Ukraine.
- We met with the Wallingford BFC elders to discuss engaging their support to work with our Woodbury, NJ church, along with Church Health Pastor, Robert A. Sloan, Jr.
- We assisted Wissinoming BFC to sell the corner property at Harbison Avenue and Van Kirk Street in Philadelphia.
- We assisted Salem BFC (South Allentown) to sell the parsonage to the pastor, Stephen A. Diaz.
- Along with Church Extension Director David E. Grundrum, we met with leaders of Sovereign Grace Baptist in Harmony, NJ to discuss merging with the BFC.
- We assisted Salem BFC (South Allentown) in selling the church property on Genesee Street to another church.
- We provided transportation and support for Daniel P. Allen to go to India on his last ministry trip.

As is our practice to be above reproach, we held ourselves accountable to the standards of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA) by successfully completing an audit for 2021.

The Executive Board maintains a position of being above reproach in all of its dealings and has created a Conflict of Interest Policy, which each member has signed. The written policy may be found at our www.bfc.org website and would be worth considering for adoption by each local church's board of elders.

The officers of the Executive Board are as follows: William G. Schlonecker, President; Robert A. Sloan, Jr., Vice President; John W. Sullivan, Treasurer; and Ronald L. Kohl, Secretary.

L. James Roberts, Rick Whitmire, and Gary Karch serve as the Personnel Committee. Byron D. Roth, Charles A. Lavigna, and John W. Sullivan comprise the Finance Committee.

During 2022, the Executive Board retained the following:

- Indicon, Inc., as our Health Insurance Administrators
- JetPay as our payroll processing firm
- Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company as the preferred church liability insurers

- American Bank of the Lehigh Valley as the major depository of our funds
- Molinari, Oswald, LLC as our CPA firm

Resolved, that the 2023 revised BFC Executive Board budget be adopted by the 140th BFC Conference.

Resolved, that an assessment rate of two (2.0) percent be adopted by the 140th BFC Conference for 2024 (based on assessable receipts from 2022).

Resolved, that the 2024 proposed Executive Board budget be adopted by the 140th BFC Conference.

2022 Review and Status: The total of Ministers' Retirement Fund (MRF) annuity payments to the 30 beneficiaries in 2022 was $96,005, as compared to $121,626 in 2021, $131,839 in 2020, $135,581 in 2019, $141,175 in 2018, $147,765 in 2017, $153,735 in 2016, $155,926 in 2015, $168,000 in 2014, and $170,830 in 2013. Three beneficiaries—Daniel G. Ziegler, Carl K. Spackman, and Roy A. Hertzog—went home to be with the Lord in 2022. Based on the current mortality assumptions, the final year of MRF payments to beneficiaries is still projected to be 2038. Between now and then, it is estimated that the MRF will distribute future benefits totaling nearly $1,400,000.

Annual Funding: 2022 was the twelfth year that the Executive Board funded the Board of Pensions on a monthly "pay as you go" basis in an amount roughly equal to each month's payments to beneficiaries. Funding for the Pension Fund is still the largest expenditure of the BFC Executive Board budget and is supported by a portion of the BFC Conference-wide assessments.

Planned Giving: The benefits of planned giving blessed us when we received a bequest of $225,000 several years ago. The Executive Board urges other members of the Bible Fellowship Church to consider including the MRF in their estate planning arrangements. The simplest and most tax efficient method would be to name the MRF as a contingent or primary beneficiary (for married or singles, respectively) of a portion of an IRA or 403(b) account. This arrangement can be adjusted or revoked at any time and does not involve changing one's Will. For more information, please contact the BFC Treasurer, John W. Sullivan, or the Executive Director.

The Executive Board recommends the following resolutions to 140th BFC Conference:

Whereas, the MRF annuity rate for 2023 was $221 per year of service, and

Whereas, cost-of-living adjustments no longer apply to MRF payments, be it

Resolved, that the MRF annuity rate for calendar year 2024 be $221 per year of service.

Resolution Relating to Rental/Housing Allowances for Retired or Disabled Ministers of this Conference for Calendar Year 2024:

Whereas, the religious denomination known as The Bible Fellowship Church has, and functions through, Ministers of the Gospel who are duly ordained or licensed, and

Whereas, the practice of The Bible Fellowship Church is to provide a parsonage or a rental allowance as part of the gross compensation for each of its active ordained or licensed ministers, and

Whereas, pensions paid to retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers of The Bible Fellowship Church are considered as deferred compensation and are paid to said retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers in consideration of previous, active service, and

Whereas, the Internal Revenue Service has recognized that The Bible Fellowship Church is the appropriate organization to designate a housing/rental allowance for retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers who are members of this Conference, therefore be it

Resolved,

1. An amount equal to 100% of the pension payments received during the year of 2024 be and is hereby designated as a rental/housing allowance for each retired and disabled ordained or licensed minister of The Bible Fellowship Church who is or was a member of the Bible Fellowship Church Minister's Retirement Fund.

2. This rental/housing allowance shall apply to each retired and disabled ordained or licensed minister who has been granted the retired relationship or placed on disability leave by the BFC Conference and whose name and relationship to the conference is recorded in the Yearbook of BFC Conference and in other appropriate records maintained by the conference.

3. The pension payment to which this rental/housing allowance applies shall be the pension payment resulting from all service of such retired or disabled ordained or licensed minister from all employment by any local church, BFC Conference or institution of The Bible Fellowship Church or of any former denomination that is now a part of The Bible Fellowship Church, or from any other employer who employed the minister to perform services related to the ministry and who elected to make contributions to the pension funds of The Bible Fellowship Church for such retired minister's pension.

Note: The rental/housing allowance which may be excluded from a minister's gross income is limited to the lesser of (1) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the minister's employer or other appropriate body, (2) the amount actually expended by the minister to provide his housing, or (3) the legally-determined fair rental value of the parsonage or other housing provided. As specified in Rev. Rul. 71-290 C.B. 92, "the only amount that will qualify for exclusion under section 107(2) of the Code as a 'rental allowance' is an amount equal to the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances such as a garage, plus the cost of utilities."

The Bible Fellowship Church Executive Board has recognized that credentialed BFC pastors who were not members of the MRF at the time when the MRF was closed, but still receive pension benefits that were paid by their church into a 403(b) Retirement Plan, should be able to receive the same recognition as those who receive pension benefits under the MRF.

Whereas, the religious denomination known as The Bible Fellowship Church has, and functions through, Ministers of the Gospel who are duly ordained or licensed, and

Whereas, the practice of The Bible Fellowship Church is to provide a parsonage or a rental allowance as part of the gross compensation for each of its active ordained or licensed ministers, and

Whereas, contributions paid to an authorized 403(b) plan for the benefit of retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers of The Bible Fellowship Church are considered as deferred compensation and are paid to said retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers in consideration of previous, active service, and

Whereas, the Internal Revenue Service has recognized that The Bible Fellowship Church is the appropriate organization to designate a housing/rental allowance for retired and disabled ordained or licensed ministers who are members of this Conference, therefore be it

Resolved,

1. An amount equal to 100% of the proceeds drawn from a 403(b) plan during the year of 2021 be and is hereby designated as a rental/housing allowance for each retired and disabled ordained or licensed minister of The Bible Fellowship Church who is or was a member of the Bible Fellowship Church.

2. This rental/housing allowance shall apply to each retired and disabled ordained or licensed minister who has been granted the retired relationship or placed on disability leave by the BFC Conference and whose name and relationship to the conference is recorded in the Yearbook of BFC Conference and in other appropriate records maintained by the conference.

3. The pension payment to which this rental/housing allowance applies shall be considered the pension payment resulting from all service of such retired or disabled ordained or licensed minister from all employment by any local church, BFC Conference or institution of The Bible Fellowship Church or of any former denomination that is now a part of The Bible Fellowship Church, or from any other employer who employed the minister to perform services related to the ministry and who elected to make contributions to the pension funds of The Bible Fellowship Church for such retired minister's pension.

Note: The rental/housing allowance which may be excluded from a minister's gross income is limited to the lesser of (1) the amount of the rental/housing allowance designated by the minister's employer or other appropriate body, (2) the amount actually expended by the minister to provide his housing, or (3) the legally-determined fair rental value of the parsonage or other housing provided. As specified in Rev. Rul. 71-290 C.B. 92, "the only amount that will qualify for exclusion under section 107(2) of the Code as a 'rental allowance' is an amount equal to the fair rental value of the home, including furnishings and appurtenances such as a garage, plus the cost of utilities."

Bible Fellowship Church 403(b) Plan: Refer to the 2009 Yearbook for details or see the BFC Website under the tab "Resources." There are no known changes in IRS requirements for 2023.

At the request of the Pinebrook Educational Foundation, the Executive Board resolved that Steven C. Cassel and John J. Hanner be ratified to serve as members of the Pinebrook Educational Foundation for the class of 2023.

The BFC Executive Board proposes the following changes to the Principles of Order of the BFC at Second Reading:

1. Department of Church Health

512-4 Board of Church Health

512-4.1 Purpose

The Board of Church Health serves the Bible Fellowship Church by promoting strong Church Health. It does this by helping Particular Churches evaluate the health of their own church, by helping new Particular Churches develop healthy ministries, and by assisting struggling churches (both Particular Churches and Church Plants as requested) to regain a healthy condition.

512-4.2 Composition and Election

(1) The Board of Church Health will be composed of the Director of the Board of Church Health, and selected ministers and members of the Bible Fellowship Church.

(2) The Director shall be appointed by the BFC Executive Board.

(3) The Board of Church Health will select members to serve on the board who have a heart for healthy churches and can provide valuable assistance to the Board. The number of members will be determined by the Director after consultation with the BFC Executive Board. Members will be presented to the BFC Executive Board for ratification to a three year term of office before beginning service on the board. All board members must presently be serving or have served as a credentialed pastor or an elder within the Bible Fellowship Church.

512-4.3 Duties

(1) It shall oversee the compilation of an annual BFC statistical report of the churches which will assist them in this work.

(2) The Board of Church Health shall monitor the health of Particular Churches.

(3) It shall provide counsel and resources for the self-assessment of the health of Particular Churches.

(4) It shall provide a list of recommended consultants to Particular Churches needing assistance in moving toward stronger church health.

(5) It shall offer training and seminars to promote church health.

(6) It may recommend to the BFC Executive Board that a Particular Church be placed under the supervisory care of the Board of Church Health. When a Particular Church is under the supervisory care of the Board of Church Health, the Director has the right to appoint interim elders to the church. By simple majority, the Executive Board in this case may place the Particular Church under the supervisory care of the Board of Church Health. If a Particular Church resists being placed under the supervisory care of the Board of Church Health, the Executive Board will recommend its placement to the BFC Conference for its consideration. This action by BFC Conference shall be by a simple majority.

(7) A Particular Church is removed from the supervisory care of the Board of Church Health by a simple majority vote of the BFC Conference.

(8) It shall inform the Ministerial Relations Committee if a matter threatening the pastoral relationship becomes evident at a Particular Church receiving Board of Church Health assistance and shall assist a Particular Church at the request of the Ministerial Relations Committee.

(9) It shall, in cooperation with the BFC Executive Board, assist Particular Churches to close when necessary.

(10) It shall provide a report on the closing of a Particular Church to BFC Conference.

(11) In the event of a church closing it shall consult with the Director of Church Extension Ministries regarding the feasibility of planting a new church in the same area.

(12) It shall develop sources of financial assistance for Particular Churches who cannot afford church health resources.

(13) It shall receive and disburse monies designated for the Board of Church Health.

(14) It shall work in cooperation with the Training and Education Committee to provide Pastoral Internships at Churches under the care of the Board of Church Health or when requested by a Particular Church or Church Extension Ministries, and shall oversee the financial arrangements for the Pastoral Internship.

(15) It shall make a written report of its activities to the BFC Executive Board.

512-4.4 Church Health Director

The Church Health Director shall be an ordained minister of the Bible Fellowship Church. He shall, by virtue of his office, be a member of the Board of Church Health and shall be appointed by and accountable to the BFC Executive Board. He may serve in either a full-time or part-time capacity.

Duties

(1) He shall, in the performance of his duties, work under the direction of the BFC Executive Director in accordance with the policies and directives of the Board of Church Health.

(2) He shall represent the Board of Church Health in its dealings with pastors, elders, and churches.

(3) He shall oversee the Pastoral Internships under the care of the Board of Church Health.

(4) He shall be available as a resource to local churches regarding Church Health.

(5) He shall be available to meet with pastors, boards of elders, and congregations for consultation, evaluation, exhortation, and advice.

(6) He shall give a full report to the Board of Church Health at each of its meetings, and report to the BFC Executive Board as requested.

2. Changes recommended from the Law Firm of Smith Bukowski as a response to the Oley petition of 2020. Recommended changes are in italics.

Article 8, 8-1 of the Articles of Faith:

God, by a special, instantaneous act, created man in His image—holy, righteous, and possessing true knowledge—by forming him out of the dust of the earth and breathing into his nostrils the breath of life. Thus man became a living soul. *In creating man in His image, God created them male and female, each with unique and complementary physical attributes designed to support their God-assigned gender and God's plan for their life*.

Section 100-1.2 of the Preamble to the BPL (Article 100-1), to read something similar to:

The BFC acknowledges the Scriptures as the supreme and final authority of faith and conduct and the Holy Spirit as the source of power and guidance for the believer. These principles are summaries of the biblical truth that reveals the Lord's directives in various aspects of life. *These principles are intended to be interpreted in a way that is consistent with Scripture and the Articles of Faith.*

Preamble to the Articles of Faith & Biblical Principles of Order.

After the third paragraph, add a new paragraph (in italics):

The BFC has adopted this Faith and Order (F&O) not in substitution for, but in subordination to the Word of God. These standards have been received as being based on the Scriptures; even the elements not drawn directly from the Word have been acknowledged as based on the general rules and tenor of the Word. These standards seek to provide an effective means for the application of the teaching of the Scriptures to the faith, worship, government, and discipline of the church. Although these standards have been acknowledged to be of lesser importance than the inspired words of the Scriptures, they cannot be neglected without resulting in serious impairment of the life of the church.

The BFC Conference is the final interpretive authority on Scripture's meaning and the application of the doctrines set forth in the Articles of Faith and Biblical Principles for Living.

The BFC acknowledges as brethren all those who share its confession of faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ. It confesses gladly the benefits of the historical and geographic breadth of this fellowship. It acknowledges specifically the benefits derived from similar statements of faith and order devised at many times in the history of the church....

The BFC Executive Board proposes the following changes to the Principles of Order of the BFC at First Reading. Recommended changes are in italics.

Article 506, BFC Conference Registration

Article 506-6 (1), Requests to be Excused

(1) Any lay delegate desiring to be excused from a meeting which will result in his church lacking lay representation shall submit a request in writing to the Registrar. The Registrar shall present such requests to BFC Conference, which shall grant or deny the request. Note: This replaces previous 506-6 (1)

Ordained Ministers in retirement

(2) Any pastor desiring to be excused from any meeting must present in writing the reason for such absence to the Secretary of the Committee on Credentials no later than two weeks prior to the commencement of BFC Conference (emergency excuses being the lone exception to the two week advance notice) and the Committee on Credentials will report to BFC Conference stating the validity of such excuses. *Ordained Ministers in retirement or permanent disability who do not attend BFC Conference are excused without a written request.*

Article 511-6, Ministerial Relations Committee

511-6.2(1) Composition and Election (Recommended changes are in italics)

The Board shall be composed of four ordained ministers who *have served or* are serving as pastors, and three elders.

In addition to our own report, several committees and funds report directly to the Executive Board. These reports, written and financial, have been accepted by the Executive Board. They include the following: BFC Life Committee, Communications Committee, Historical Committee, Pinebrook Educational Foundation, and the Youth & Young Adults Committee.

Bible Fellowship Church Executive Board: William G. Schlonecker, President; Robert A. Sloan, Jr., Vice-President; John W. Sullivan, Treasurer; Ronald L. Kohl, Secretary; David T. Allen, Executive Director; Byron D. Roth, Steven J. DelDuco, Gary E. Karch, Charles A. Lavigna, L. James Roberts, Jr., Ricky D. Whitmire, Daniel L. Williams.

David T. Allen presents the Executive Board Report while Moderator Randall A. Grossman presides over BFC Conference.

Report of the Executive Board - Balance Sheet

	Dec 31, 22	Dec 31, 21	$ Change
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Checking/Savings			
100 · Executive Board			
1000 · American Bank - Checking	215,142.93	197,793.16	17,349.77
1005 · American Bank - Payroll Account	14,014.34	13,058.50	955.84
1013 · American Bank - Medical	22,809.46	22,963.54	-154.08
1074 · American Bank - Pensions	10,799.09	11,748.06	-948.97
1075 · Ambk - 12 mth CD - 8/11/22	148,127.82	0.00	148,127.82
1076 · Ambk - MoneyMarket - 12/2/22	309,919.14	0.00	309,919.14
Total 100 · Executive Board	720,812.78	245,563.26	475,249.52
102 · BFC/ChExtn Co-signed Accounts			
1014 · PNC Bank (Naples, FL)	50.00	50.00	0.00
1015 · PNC Bank (Cape May)	50.00	50.00	0.00
Total 102 · BFC/ChExtn Co-signed Accounts	100.00	100.00	0.00
103 · BFC ExBrd Committees			
1030 · QNB - Youth & Young Adults	41,110.44	21,514.70	19,595.74
1049 · Citizen's Bank - BFC Life Comm	23,953.31	18,079.79	5,873.52
Total 103 · BFC ExBrd Committees	65,063.75	39,594.49	25,469.26
105 · Pinebrook Education Foundation			
1050 · Lafayette Bank - Checking	13,954.00	14,322.28	-368.28
1055 · Brokerage Accounts			
1056 · Verizon Common Stock	2,285.20	6,028.00	-3,742.80
1058 · Vanguard Bond Funds	200,295.51	226,034.97	-25,739.46
1059 · Vanguard Stock Funds			
1059-1 · Vanguard Stock Funds (Restr)	337,430.00	264,195.00	73,235.00
1059 · Vanguard Stock Funds - Other	-36,003.58	103,768.46	-139,772.04
Total 1059 · Vanguard Stock Funds	301,426.42	367,963.46	-66,537.04
Total 1055 · Brokerage Accounts	504,007.13	600,026.43	-96,019.30
Total 105 · Pinebrook Education Foundation	517,961.13	614,348.71	-96,387.58
1077 · Darlene Mahurin Mem. Fund	4,480.98	4,640.98	-160.00
Total Checking/Savings	1,308,418.64	904,247.44	404,171.20
Accounts Receivable			
1100 · A/R Church Assessments	1,926.84	11,479.91	-9,553.07
1110 · A/R Communications Publications	2,342.71	2,475.46	-132.75
1120 · A/R Medical Insurance	-162.79	-0.13	-162.66
1130 · A/R Payroll	4,037.83	-2,540.87	6,578.70
1140 · A/R Workers Comp. Ins.	5,391.00	5,391.00	0.00
1150 · Other Receivables	1,743.42	1,767.91	-24.49
Total Accounts Receivable	15,279.01	18,573.28	-3,294.27
Other Current Assets			
12000 · Undeposited Funds	19,240.55	12,880.00	6,360.55
Total Other Current Assets	19,240.55	12,880.00	6,360.55
Total Current Assets	1,342,938.20	935,700.72	407,237.48
Fixed Assets			
1450 · Real Estate - Victory Valley			
1451 · VV Builldings & Equipment	1,797,704.75	1,797,704.75	0.00
1455 · VV Accumulated Depreciation	-456,239.31	-412,898.04	-43,341.27
1450 · Real Estate - Victory Valley - Other	149,197.01	149,197.01	0.00
Total 1450 · Real Estate - Victory Valley	1,490,662.45	1,534,003.72	-43,341.27

	Dec 31, 22	Dec 31, 21	$ Change
1460 · Real Estate - Lancaster City			
1461 · Lancaster Buildings	189,674.20	0.00	189,674.20
1462 · Lancaster Land	47,418.55	0.00	47,418.55
1465 · Lanc Accumulated Depreciation	-7,705.52	0.00	-7,705.52
Total 1460 · Real Estate - Lancaster City	229,387.23	0.00	229,387.23
1500 · Real Estate - Elverson, PA			
1501 · Elverson Buildings	60,665.09	0.00	60,665.09
1502 · Elverson Land	15,166.27	0.00	15,166.27
1505 · Elvrsn Accumulated Depreciation	-1,516.63	0.00	-1,516.63
Total 1500 · Real Estate - Elverson, PA	74,314.73	0.00	74,314.73
1510 · Real Estate - Cape May, NJ			
1511 · CpMay Buildings	43,040.00	43,040.00	0.00
1515 · CpMay Accumulated Depreciation	-42,142.04	-42,101.16	-40.88
1510 · Real Estate - Cape May, NJ - Other	1,879.99	1,879.99	0.00
Total 1510 · Real Estate - Cape May, NJ	2,777.95	2,818.83	-40.88
1520 · Real Estate - Adams County, PA			
1521 · Adms Ctny Buildings	163,800.00	163,800.00	0.00
1525 · Adms Accumulated Depreciation	-57,330.00	-53,235.00	-4,095.00
1520 · Real Estate - Adams County, PA - Other	70,200.00	70,200.00	0.00
Total 1520 · Real Estate - Adams County, PA	176,670.00	180,765.00	-4,095.00
1560 · Real Estate - Chestertown, MD			
1561 · Chestertown Buildings	778,000.00	778,000.00	0.00
1565 · Chstwn Accumulated Depreciation	-106,975.00	-87,525.00	-19,450.00
Total 1560 · Real Estate - Chestertown, MD	671,025.00	690,475.00	-19,450.00
1570 · Office Equipment Purchases			
1571 · Office Equipment	3,996.00	3,996.00	0.00
1575 · Office Equip Accum Depreciation	-999.00	-199.80	-799.20
Total 1570 · Office Equipment Purchases	2,997.00	3,796.20	-799.20
Total Fixed Assets	2,647,834.36	2,411,858.75	235,975.61
Other Assets			
1610 · Office Lease Security Deposit	2,990.00	2,990.00	0.00
1630 · C/P - Notes Receivable	13,883.90	13,556.71	327.19
1635 · Mortgage Rec - ChExtn	158,458.65	166,488.78	-8,030.13
1670 · Note Rec. - Long Neck, DE	175,000.00	175,000.00	0.00
1680 · Note Rec. - Beraca, Phila	29,860.15	33,272.71	-3,412.56
1685 · Note Rec. - Phila-Wissinoming	38,107.83	38,107.83	0.00
1697 · SLR/Pinebrook Ministry Reserve	162,612.80	187,225.70	-24,612.90
1698 · Less C/P - Notes Receivables	-13,883.90	-13,556.71	-327.19
1699 · Bad Debt Reserve	-50,000.00	-50,000.00	0.00
3500 · Real Estate Loans due to BFC			
3610 · Principal Due - Cape May, NJ	10,145.90	10,145.90	0.00
3620 · Principal Due - Adams Co., PA	150,000.00	150,000.00	0.00
Total 3500 · Real Estate Loans due to BFC	160,145.90	160,145.90	0.00
Total Other Assets	677,175.33	713,230.92	-36,055.59
TOTAL ASSETS	**4,667,947.89**	**4,060,790.39**	**607,157.50**
LIABILITIES & EQUITY			
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Accounts Payable			
2000 · Accounts Payable	281.25	2,567.66	-2,286.41
Total Accounts Payable	281.25	2,567.66	-2,286.41

	Dec 31, 22	Dec 31, 21	$ Change
Other Current Liabilities			
2116 · Ukraine Relief Transfer	-10,100.00	0.00	-10,100.00
2260 · BOM Due To (From) Pensions	4,785.47	5,534.41	-748.94
2310 · Payroll Due To (From) ChExtn	13.96	0.00	13.96
2340 · Payroll Due To (From) VV	-756.59	-8,628.91	7,872.32
2362 · Insurance Due From VV	-4,284.64	0.00	-4,284.64
2363 · Insurance Due From BOM	150.34	0.00	150.34
Total Other Current Liabilities	-10,191.46	-3,094.50	-7,096.96
Total Current Liabilities	-9,910.21	-526.84	-9,383.37
Long Term Liabilities			
2500 · C/P-LTD	25,269.05	24,242.04	1,027.01
2553 · QNB Mortgage Owed by VV	504,887.20	527,020.17	-22,132.97
2600 · Less C/P-LTD	-25,269.05	-24,242.04	-1,027.01
Total Long Term Liabilities	504,887.20	527,020.17	-22,132.97
Total Liabilities	494,976.99	526,493.33	-31,516.34
Equity			
3000 · General Equity	792,082.00	737,850.80	54,231.20
3100 · Unrestricted-ExecBrd Designated			
3110 · Church Assistance Fund	4,990.92	4,990.92	0.00
3150 · Special Projects Fund	5,037.76	5,037.76	0.00
Total 3100 · Unrestricted-ExecBrd Designated	10,028.68	10,028.68	0.00
3200 · Unrestricted Net Assets	-249,077.00	-249,091.04	14.04
3201 · Unrestricted - Other Designated			
3210 · Pinebrook Education Foundation	159,267.00	167,885.00	-8,618.00
Total 3201 · Unrestricted - Other Designated	159,267.00	167,885.00	-8,618.00
3300 · Tempoarily Restricted Funds			
3310 · Pinebrook Education Foundation	89,698.00	101,668.00	-11,970.00
3330 · Education & Training Committee	24,016.00	21,788.12	2,227.88
3340 · Ministerial Convention Funds	-97.02	-97.02	0.00
Total 3300 · Tempoarily Restricted Funds	113,616.98	123,359.10	-9,742.12
3350 · Darlene Mahurin Memorial Fund	5,537.52	5,697.52	-160.00
3400 · Permanently Restricted Funds			
3410 · Pinebrook Education Foundation	347,238.00	390,407.60	-43,169.60
Total 3400 · Permanently Restricted Funds	347,238.00	390,407.60	-43,169.60
3600 · Real Estate Equity			
3701 · Equity - Lancaster City	237,092.75	0.00	237,092.75
3702 · Equity - Elverson	75,831.36	0.00	75,831.36
3720 · Equity - Adams Co, PA	84,000.00	84,000.00	0.00
3600 · Real Estate Equity - Other	2,251,112.00	2,198,302.14	52,809.86
Total 3600 · Real Estate Equity	2,648,036.11	2,282,302.14	365,733.97
Net Income	346,241.61	65,857.26	280,384.35
Total Equity	4,172,970.90	3,534,297.06	638,673.84
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	**4,667,947.89**	**4,060,790.39**	**607,157.50**

Executive Board 2022 Profit and Loss

	Jan - Dec 22	Jan - Dec 21	$ Change
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
4000 · Church Assessments	411,385.00	406,498.00	4,887.00
4100 · Department Asessments	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00
4150 · Brotherhood Dividends/Credits	2,066.88	0.00	2,066.88
4175 · Contributions &/or Discounts	284.00	20.00	264.00
4200 · General Interest Income	1,249.84	515.67	734.17
4201 · Revenues from Sub-Committees			
4210 · Communications Com. Revenues	6,646.58	3,904.32	2,742.26
4230 · Education & Training Committee	125.00	125.00	0.00
4240 · Youth & Young Adult Revenues	97,272.76	70,171.53	27,101.23
4290 · BFC Life Committee Revenues	13,606.00	17,770.75	-4,164.75
4450 · PEF Investment Income	10,811.15	83,011.00	-72,199.85
4460 · PEF Contributions Received	13,800.00	15,645.00	-1,845.00
Total 4201 · Revenues from Sub-Committees	142,261.49	190,627.60	-48,366.11
4545 · Current Note - Toms Rvr Chrch	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00
4560 · Current Mortgage Interest Rec'd	6,513.39	6,827.74	-314.35
4950 · Miscellaneous Inc	13,653.46	368.84	13,284.62
Total Income	587,414.06	614,857.85	-27,443.79
Gross Profit	587,414.06	614,857.85	-27,443.79
Expense			
5010 · Executive Director Salary	77,503.17	85,612.29	-8,109.12
5015 · Executive Director Benefits	13,429.52	12,758.14	671.38
5020 · Conference Pastor Salary	25,999.92	25,999.92	0.00
5025 · Conference Pastor Other	24,000.00	24,000.00	0.00
5050 · Executive Board Expenses			
5051 · Payroll Taxes & Processing	9,506.31	9,300.86	205.45
5052 · Administrative Assistance	20,000.04	15,000.00	5,000.04
5060 · Executive Board Rent/Utilities	18,842.28	17,449.32	1,392.96
5070 · Executive Board Office Supplies	726.51	-1,312.21	2,038.72
5050 · Executive Board Expenses - Other	10,531.52	7,046.92	3,484.60
Total 5050 · Executive Board Expenses	59,606.66	47,484.89	12,121.77
5080 · Insurance & Accounting			
5080-4 · Insurance & Accounting	-478.27	0.00	-478.27
5080 · Insurance & Accounting - Other	23,174.03	24,907.81	-1,733.78
Total 5080 · Insurance & Accounting	22,695.76	24,907.81	-2,212.05
5085 · Legal Fees	391.51	5,325.00	-4,933.49
5090 · Dues & Subscriptions	1,805.75	1,750.54	55.21
5100 · BFC Conference Costs	80.77	93.28	-12.51
5110 · BFC Conference Arrangements	2,269.50	3,401.35	-1,131.85
5200 · BFC Committee Expenses			
5115 · BFC Conference Agenda Comm	86.58	0.00	86.58
5120 · BFC Conference Study Committees	311.32	0.00	311.32
5220 · Ministerial Credentials Comm	0.00	1,566.11	-1,566.11
5225 · Ministerial Candidate Comm	440.86	2,030.70	-1,589.84
5230 · Ministerial Relations Comm	459.29	0.00	459.29
5240 · Church Health Committee	1,757.99	2,008.59	-250.60
5241 · Prayer Committee	2,080.96	1,470.00	610.96
5243 · Nominating Committee	121.13	0.00	121.13
Total 5200 · BFC Committee Expenses	5,258.13	7,075.40	-1,817.27

	Jan - Dec 22	Jan - Dec 21	$ Change
5201 · Expenses of Sub-Committees			
5204 · Youth & Young Adults	77,677.02	58,778.12	18,898.90
5210 · Communications	32,159.12	24,732.46	7,426.66
5290 · BFC Life Committtee Expenses	7,997.46	16,472.63	-8,475.17
5460 · PEF Scholarships Awarded	22,000.00	12,000.00	10,000.00
5465 · PEF Expenses	1,331.25	219.00	1,112.25
Total 5201 · Expenses of Sub-Committees	141,164.85	112,202.21	28,962.64
5245 · Beneficiary Society	500.00	500.00	0.00
5246 · Ministerial Convention Expense	0.00	0.00	0.00
5400 · Chaplaincy Expenses	0.00	705.00	-705.00
5425 · Special Gifts - Churches/Others	55,000.00	0.00	55,000.00
5500 · Ministerial Pensions	96,005.48	121,626.07	-25,620.59
5950 · Miscellaneous Expenses	0.00	130.00	-130.00
Total Expense	525,711.02	473,571.90	52,139.12
Net Ordinary Income	61,703.04	141,285.95	-79,582.91
Other Income/Expense			
Other Income			
4300 · Medical Insurance Fees	92,845.57	156,769.56	-63,923.99
4600 · Real Estate Transactions	457,626.21	0.00	457,626.21
4650 · Real Estate Transferred to BFC	47,690.64	52,809.56	-5,118.92
4975 · PEF Unrealized Gains (Losses)	-92,807.89	0.00	-92,807.89
Total Other Income	505,354.53	209,579.12	295,775.41
Other Expense			
5300 · Medical Insurance Prem	93,135.75	157,632.02	-64,496.27
5301 · Medical Insurance Expenses	26.56	57.38	-30.82
5600 · Real Estate Expense	3,498.24	936.00	2,562.24
5650 · Bank Mortgage Interest	25,557.67	24,614.04	943.63
5999 · Non-Operating Expenses			
6000 · Depreciation Expense			
6145 · Victory Valley Depreciation	43,341.27	43,170.64	170.63
6146 · Lancaster Depreciation	4,741.86	0.00	4,741.86
6147 · Elverson Depreciation	1,516.63	0.00	1,516.63
6151 · Cape May Depreciation	40.88	40.88	0.00
6152 · Adams County Depreciation	4,095.00	4,095.00	0.00
6156 · Chestertown Depreciation	19,450.00	19,450.00	0.00
6160 · Office Equipment Depreciation	799.20	199.80	599.40
Total 6000 · Depreciation Expense	73,984.84	66,956.32	7,028.52
Total 5999 · Non-Operating Expenses	73,984.84	66,956.32	7,028.52
7100 · BFC Conference SLR Reduction	24,612.90	34,812.05	-10,199.15
Total Other Expense	220,815.96	285,007.81	-64,191.85
Net Other Income	284,538.57	-75,428.69	359,967.26
Net Income	**346,241.61**	**65,857.26**	**280,384.35**

2022 Combined Balance Sheet

	ExecBrd	BOM	ChExtn	VV	Totals
ASSETS					
Current Assets					
Cash & Cash Equivalents	823,651	45,573	316,999	479,446	1,665,669
Investments	184,577	1,032,372	659,415	4,024	1,880,388
Restricted Investments	337,430		26,638		364,068
Prepaid Expenses				5,523	5,523
Current Maturities of Notes Rec'd	18,088		16,172		34,260
Other Receivables	14,914	7,228		4,664	26,806
Total Current Assets	**1,378,660**	**1,085,173**	**1,019,224**	**493,657**	**3,976,714**
Property And Equipment					
Land	283,862				283,862
Buildings	3,037,323				3,037,323
Other Fixed Assets	3,597		34,373	104,458	142,428
Less Accumulated Depreciation	-679,443		-16,416	-21,538	-717,397
Property And Equipment, Net	**2,645,339**	**0**	**17,957**	**82,920**	**2,746,216**
Other Assets					
Notes Receivable	224,880		276,712		501,592
Mortgages Receivable	151,814				151,814
SLR/Pinebrook Ministry Reserve	162,613				162,613
Bad Debt Reserve	-50,000				-50,000
Total Notes Receivable, Net	**489,307**	**0**	**276,712**	**0**	**766,019**
TOTAL ASSETS	**4,513,306**	**1,085,173**	**1,313,893**	**576,577**	**7,488,949**
LIABILITIES					
Current Liabilities					
Accounts Payable	281	9,076	1,551	14,344	25,252
Advances and Deposits	10,100			18,459	28,559
Other Current Liabilities	190	360,218	26,525	104,285	491,218
Total Current Liabilities	10,571	369,294	28,076	137,088	545,029
Long-Term Debt, less Current Maturities	498,242	0	0	0	498,242
TOTAL LIABILITIES	**508,813**	**369,294**	**28,076**	**137,088**	**1,043,271**
EQUITY					
Unrestricted Net Assets	3,032,592	494,913	645,233	170,932	4,343,670
Unrestricted, but Designated Funds	164,804	335,510	677,415	2,981	1,180,710
Temporarily Restricted Funds	113,617	90,937	46,203		250,757
Restricted Funds	347,238		26,038		373,276
Net Income	346,242	-205,481	-109,072	265,576	297,265
TOTAL EQUITY	**4,004,493**	**715,879**	**1,285,817**	**439,489**	**6,445,678**
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	**4,513,306**	**1,085,173**	**1,313,893**	**576,577**	**7,488,949**

2022 Combined Statement of Revenue and Expenses

	ExecBrd	BOM	ChExtn	VV	Totals
REVENUES					
Contributions					
Churches	411,385	94,498	798,051	45,930	1,349,864
Individuals	13,800	392,980	391,168	104,268	902,216
Other Gifts and Bequests	13,451	10,200	29,772	243,131	296,554
Total Contributions	438,636	497,678	1,218,991	393,329	2,548,634
Other Revenues					
Retreats and Conferences	110,879			265,481	376,360
Program Fees	97,846	6,995		5,153	109,994
Rental Income				154,983	154,983
Program Sales	6,772	2,598			9,370
Interest and Dividends	23,574	30,373	53,852	373	108,172
Net Realized and Unrealized Gains on Investments	(92,808)	(149,419)	(194,680)		(436,907)
Gain on Sale of Property	457,626				457,626
Other Income	12,654	21,801			34,455
Total Other Revenues	616,543	(87,652)	(140,828)	425,990	814,053
Net Assets Released from Restrictions and Other Transfers	47,691	0	0	0	47,691
Total Revenues	**1,102,870**	**410,026**	**1,078,163**	**819,319**	**3,410,378**
EXPENSES					
Salaries/Benefits/Payroll Taxes	170,440	168,588	167,675	186,879	693,582
Program Expenses	144,891	354,828	900,088	120,150	1,519,957
Program Food Expenses				57,881	57,881
Conference and Meetings	95,589		4,155	496	100,240
Marketing/Communications	32,159	10,447	23,265	9,013	74,884
Office Expenses	11,259	9,503	9,982	16,820	47,564
Rents/Real Estate Taxes	22,340	19,992	9,000	7,596	58,928
Buildings and Grounds Maintenance				73,636	73,636
Insurance/Pensions	93,163	47,532	17,017	23,833	181,545
Designated	65,100	500	8,000	3,333	76,933
Legal/Accounting/Fees	23,088		6,584		29,672
Other Expenses	24,613	4,117	35,671	50,065	114,466
Total Expenses	**682,642**	**615,507**	**1,181,437**	**549,702**	**3,029,288**
Ordinary Gain (Loss)	**420,228**	**(205,481)**	**(103,274)**	**269,617**	**381,090**
Depreciation	73,986	0	5,798	4,041	83,825
Net Gain (Loss)	**346,242**	**(205,481)**	**(109,072)**	**265,576**	**297,265**

2023 Executive Board Budget - Revised

	2022 Budget	2023 Budget	Revised 2023 Budget	Plus Minus
Anticipated Receipts				
Assessment from Churches (2%)	400,000	405,000	405,000	0.00
Department Contribution	7,500	7,500	7,500	0.00
Investments\Dividends	12,000	12,000	12,000	0.00
Mortgage Interest	6,500	6,500	6,500	0.00
Communications Reimbursements	5,000	5,000	5,000	0.00
Miscellaneous/General Contributions	7,505	7,505	7,505	0.00
Other	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.00
Total Anticipated Receipts	439,505	444,505	444,505	0
Anticipated Expenses				
Minister's Retirement Fund	121,650	121,650	94,000	(27,650.00)
Board of Communications	25,000	25,000	25,000	0.00
Beneficiary Fund	500	500	500	0.00
Ministerial Convention	2,000	2,000	2,000	0.00
BFC Conference Expense	7,500	7,500	7,500	0.00
Committee Expenses	25,000	25,000	25,000	0.00
Chaplaincy Expenses	2,000	2,000	1,000	(1,000.00)
Committee Mtg Expenses	4,000	4,000	4,000	0.00
Conference Pastor Salary	26,000	26,000	26,000	0.00
Conference Pastor Expenses/Benefits	24,000	24,000	24,000	0.00
Executive Director Salary	87,550	87,550	91,030	3,480.00
HealthCare & Benefits	14,000	14,000	14,000	0.00
Taxes & Administrative Costs	30,000	33,000	50,000	17,000.00
Rent & Office Expense	17,500	19,500	20,000	500.00
Dues & Subscriptions	1,500	1,500	1,500	0.00
Legal & Accounting	24,000	24,000	24,000	0.00
Reserved	5,305	5,305	12,975	7,670.00
Miscellaneous Board Expense	12,000	12,000	12,000	0.00
Executive Board Expense	10,000	10,000	10,000	0.00
	439,505	444,505	444,505	0

2024 Executive Board Budget - Proposed

	2023 Budget	Revised 2023 Budget	Proposed 2024 Budget	Plus Minus
Anticipated Receipts				
Assessment from Churches (2%)	405,000	405,000	410,000	5,000.00
Department Contribution	7,500	7,500	7,500	0.00
Investments\Dividends	12,000	12,000	12,000	0.00
Mortgage Interest	6,500	6,500	6,500	0.00
Communications Reimbursements	5,000	5,000	5,000	0.00
Miscellaneous/General Contributions	7,505	7,505	7,505	0.00
Other	1,000	1,000	1,000	0.00
Total Anticipated Receipts	444,505	444,505	449,505	5,000
Anticipated Expenses				
Minister's Retirement Fund	121,650	94,000	94,000	0.00
Board of Communications	25,000	25,000	30,000	5,000.00
Beneficiary Fund	500	500	500	0.00
Ministerial Convention	2,000	2,000	1,000	(1,000.00)
BFC Conference Expense	7,500	7,500	7,500	0.00
Chaplaincy Expenses	2,000	1,000	1,000	0.00
Committee Mtg Expenses	4,000	4,000	4,000	0.00
Church Health Director	25,000	25,000	30,000	5,000.00
Conference Pastor Salary	26,000	26,000	26,000	0.00
Conference Pastor Expenses/Benefits	24,000	24,000	24,000	0.00
Executive Director Salary	87,550	91,030	91,030	0.00
HealthCare & Benefits	14,000	14,000	14,000	0.00
Taxes & Administrative Costs	33,000	50,000	50,000	0.00
Rent & Office Expense	19,500	20,000	21,000	1,000.00
Dues & Subscriptions	1,500	1,500	1,500	0.00
Legal & Accounting	24,000	24,000	22,000	(2,000.00)
Reserved	5,305	12,975	9,975	(3,000.00)
Miscellaneous Board Expense	12,000	12,000	12,000	0.00
Executive Board Expense	10,000	10,000	10,000	0.00
	444,505	444,505	449,505	5,000

BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION
December 31, 2022 and 2021

ASSETS	2022	2021
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	$ 1,670,268	$ 877,777
Investments	2,244,456	2,674,791
Prepaid expenses	5,523	5,655
Other assets	15,562	18,972
Current maturities of notes receivable	34,260	25,533
Total current assets	3,970,069	3,602,728
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT		
Land	283,862	221,277
Buildings	3,100,375	3,019,638
Other property and equipment	75,336	71,085
	3,459,573	3,312,000
Less accumulated depreciation	713,357	629,534
Property and equipment, net	2,746,216	2,682,466
OTHER ASSETS		
Notes receivable, net of allowance for doubtful accounts and current maturities	610,051	569,593
Pinebrook reserve	162,613	187,226
Total other assets	772,664	756,819
Total assets	$ 7,488,949	$ 7,042,013

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	2022	2021
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Current maturities of long-term debt	$ 25,269	$ 24,242
Accounts payable	33,788	33,026
Advances and deposits	280,797	292,801
Other current liabilities	122,144	4,828
Total current liabilities	461,998	354,897
LONG-TERM DEBT, less current maturities		
Notes payable	479,618	502,778
Total liabilities	941,616	857,675
NET ASSETS		
Without donor restrictions	5,906,888	5,650,843
With donor restrictions	640,445	533,495
Total net assets	6,547,333	6,184,338
Total liabilities and net assets	$ 7,488,949	$ 7,042,013

BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
Year Ended December 31, 2022

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
REVENUES			
Contributions			
Churches	$ 1,840,420	$ 4,500	$ 1,844,920
Individuals	877,723	9,725	887,448
Other gifts and bequests	57,274	242,856	300,130
	2,775,417	257,081	3,032,498
Other revenues			
Retreats and conferences	344,178	-	344,178
Program fees	106,103	-	106,103
Rental income	81,197	-	81,197
Program sales	7,751	-	7,751
Interest and dividends	88,812	-	88,812
Net realized and unrealized loss on investments	(331,298)	(74,164)	(405,462)
Other income	75,461	-	75,461
	3,147,621	182,917	3,330,538
Net assets released from restrictions and other transfers	75,967	(75,967)	-
Total revenues	3,223,588	106,950	3,330,538
EXPENSES			
Program services	2,367,783	-	2,367,783
Management and general	507,944	-	507,944
Fund raising	91,816	-	91,816
Total expenses	2,967,543	-	2,967,543
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	256,045	106,950	362,995
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING	5,650,843	533,495	6,184,338
NET ASSETS, ENDING	$ 5,906,888	$ 640,445	$ 6,547,333

BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS Years Ended December 31, 2022 and 2021

Agency Funds

One of the primary functions conducted under the Missions' ministry is the collection and disbursement of funds for support of missionaries and for special missionary projects. The Organization functions as a conduit for such funds. Accordingly, the funds received and disbursed are not revenues and expenses of the Organization, and the excess of receipts over disbursements is reflected in the Statements of Financial Position as a liability included in advances and deposits.

A summary of agency funds' receipts and disbursements in the years ended December 31, 2022 and 2021, and the balance of agency funds at December 31, 2022 and 2021, are as follows:

Agency funds, at January 1, 2021 Receipts	$ 354,340
Disbursements	1,212,539
	(1,303,436)
Agency funds, at December 31, 2021 Receipts	
Disbursements	263,443
	1,145,980
Agency funds, at December 31, 2022	(1,152,148)
	$ 257,275

Retirement Arrangements

The Organization sponsors a defined benefit plan (the "Plan") for its retired pastors who had attained minimum age 55 as of January 1, 1993 and had served as a Bible Fellowship Church pastor for 15 or more years as of that date. Payment of benefits begins at age 65. Benefits are paid monthly in the form of a life annuity, using a schedule based on retirement age and years of service. Annual benefits have been frozen at $221 for each year of service. The Organization funds benefits on a pay-as-you-go basis and paid benefits of $96,005 and $121,626 to beneficiaries in the years ended December 31, 2022 and 2021, respectively.

At December 31, 2022 and 2021, the Organization held cash of $10,799 and $11,748, respectively, which is designated for payment of future benefits under the Plan. The Plan had 23 and 24 active beneficiaries at December 31, 2022 and 2021, respectively. At December 31, 2022 and 2021, the Plan's projected benefit obligation was approximately $594,000 and $686,000, respectively.

Benefits expected to be paid under the Plan in each of the next five years and in the aggregate for the five years thereafter are as follows (in thousands):

Years ending December 31,	
2023	$ 98
2024	98
2025	69
2026	57
2027	48
Years 2028-2032	182
	$ 552

The Organization has not recorded the Plan's projected obligation for benefits as required under generally accepted accounting principles in the United States of America. If the required projected obligation for benefits were recorded in the accompanying financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles in the United States of America, liabilities would have been increased by approximately $594,000 and $686,000 and net assets without donor restrictions would have been decreased by approximately $594,000 and $686,000 at December 31, 2022 and 2021, respectively, and the change in net assets would have been increased by approximately $92,000 and $147,000 for the years ended December 31, 2022 and 2021, respectively.
In the years ended December 31, 2022 and 2021, the Organization also contributed $16,866 and $17,898, respectively, to certain retired missionaries under an informal arrangement.

Report of the Department of Missions

When you think of missions, do you think of begging? Some do, in regard to the need for finances to send missionaries. But Jesus Himself told us we should be begging – *for more laborers.*

I've discovered that only the KJV and NASB translate an important word from the Greek text in Matthew 9:35-38. It is the word *deomai.* To obtain a sense of the intensity of Jesus' request, let's observe other uses of the word **(in bold italicized print)**:

1. Luke 5:12 – "While he [Jesus] was in one of the cities, there came a man full of leprosy. And when he saw Jesus, he fell on his face and ***begged*** him, 'Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.'" We all know that to be a leper in the first century was a horrible and terminal condition. If I were in such a state, nothing else would be as deeply concerning as my possible healing from the itinerant Rabbi.

2. 1 Thessalonians 3:10 – "As we pray ***most earnestly*** night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith?" I know you can identify with Paul's serious pastoral concern for the well-being of the flock in Thessalonica, as seen in the manner in which he prayed for them.

3. 2 Corinthians 5:20 – "We ***implore*** you … be reconciled to God." What else is more important than a person's need for salvation?

There are 20 other references using *deomai* that indicate the same serious-minded attitude about crucial and significant areas of life; all these illustrate the highest level of concern Jesus has for obtaining and sending more harvest laborers.

It is the intensity of Jesus' request that sets our goals at the Board of Missions. We hope our efforts in your church enable the BFC to have a significant part in realizing "full-employment" in expanding the Kingdom of God locally and around the world. Keeping Jesus' imploring us to pray for more laborers in mind, we seek to assist your church to be as fully as possible engaged in mission and missions.

The BOM has two main goals:

1. Every believer a disciple on mission
2. All disciples supporting missions and at least one BFC missionary

Let's break these down a bit:

Every believer a disciple on mission—We aim to create the understanding that no believer is to be a spectator. Anyone who honestly evaluates our current evangelical sub-culture might think that the Great Commission was as follows: "Go into all the world, and make sermon makers, who preach to passive pew-sitters."

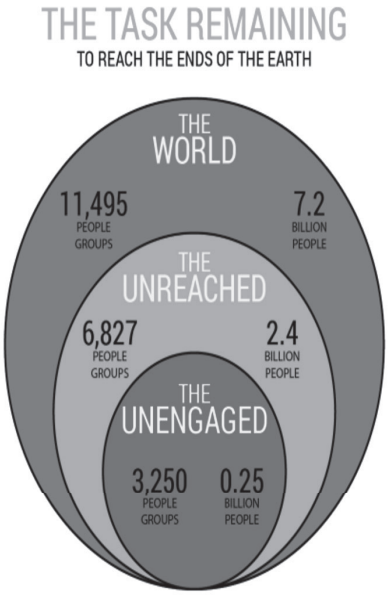
We know that the first century church didn't have settled pulpits and buildings. It didn't have Bible colleges and seminaries; it didn't have commentaries, radio/TV/Internet teachers; it didn't have preaching conferences. However, it was apparently fairly effective in seeing churches formed in homes that reached into their neighborhoods. We have to ask: Why is that? Were they earnestly begging the Lord for more laborers? Were most

of them living as laborers? Were they more discipleship oriented than pulpit or program oriented?

However we choose to answer those questions, the supply-chain problem still exists for many people groups. See the diagram:

Some of these unreached people groups live behind hostile government barriers, yet in God's providence, some are living among us, and a few of our Bible Fellowship Churches are engaged in reaching them.

We think more of our churches could be similarly engaged, and would welcome the opportunity to promote such efforts.



Speaking of promotion, I had the privilege of traveling to 23 BFC churches in 2022, preaching, leading Sunday School, prayer meeting, or consulting with missions committees. Sometimes I have lent a hand in music as well. I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know and serve you in this capacity. Thanks to those who opened their pulpits and classrooms (and homes for a meal!)

I have many Sunday dates still open, and would ask for the invitation to serve your congregation as well. That is one of the reasons for a Department of Missions: to have the board serve as your "missions committee" and the Director as your "missions pastor," as it were.

Included in this report is a chart that shows the various ways and means *every* believer can be *on mission*. Thankfully, we have people both within and from our churches doing ministry identified on this chart. God's purpose for His church is to establish and equip all believers to be His sent ones. As church leaders, we are to strengthen and enable God's people to fulfill the purpose for which they were created—whether they do that here in North America or in difficult places where we ourselves could not go. As they live and work with a *global marketplace vision*, they display God's glory in all the earth, so that He may receive worship from all peoples.

All disciples supporting missions and at least one BFC missionary—Along with serving you in the above capacity, we as a board keep up to date in what the Lord is doing among the nations. Most pastors don't have time for such survey work, but your board delights in it. Recently we have looked at two mega-trends: *Orality* and *Business as Mission*.

Orality is the program to meet people where they are and utilize their methods of learning and sharing. Orality utilizes the use of oral forms like stories, songs, dramas, or direct Bible translation to share information with oral learners. This approach provides

the best opportunity for oral learners to understand and engage with God's Word, creating behavior change and lasting transformation.

Oral Bible Translation (OBT) is a cutting-edge development in missions, combining innovative orality methodology and traditional Bible translation principles. OBT seeks to capture the information contained in every Scripture passage and deliver it naturally to oral learning communities through the expression they understand best.

You may ask: *Why spoken, rather than written words?* Because two-thirds of the world's population of 5.4 billion people learns through spoken, not written, words. Oral communities rely primarily on spoken means of communication, preferring to pass along knowledge and traditions from one generation to the next through verbal communication such as stories, songs, poems, and dramas, for this is their preferred learning style. Yet most Christian discipleship resources have been produced for literate learners, informed by a Western cultural worldview.

If you and nine of your friends made up the world's population, about seven of you would be oral learners. Additionally, three of the seven would:

· **Live in extreme poverty.** On average, you and your family would make less than $1.25 a day.

· **Live under some form of oppression**--caught in human trafficking, religious persecution or corrupt government.

· **Lack basic medical aid.** If you get sick, doctors and medical facilities are too expensive or too far away.

· **Have no access to the gospel.** You haven't heard of the Bible or God's redemption through Jesus.

These are the people to which we are called to minister. They are an underserved population within the unreached people groups of the world and are in desperate need of truth, not only in their heart language but also in a style that is engaging and understandable.

Why share all of the above with you? This is the exciting part: the BFC is participating in this through one of our missionary couples, Bruce and Heather Beal, who are serving with Wycliffe Bible Translators since 2000 and are supported by our Maple Glen (now called Welsh Road) church.

In the spring and summer of 2022, Heather taught her class in Oral Bible Translation for Dallas International University (DIU–the primary training school for Wycliffe Bible Translators and SIL here in the States). The class prepares people to achieve two goals in the field. First, to enable them to translate the Bible into a language they understand, and second, to translate the Bible into a medium they are most likely to use within their community. Providing training in Oral Bible Translation helps provide greater access to the Bible and the truth of the Gospel.

She is involved in the English Oral Bible Translation project as well as its sister project of creating Oral Exegetical Tools to help oral translators gain a better understanding of the Scriptures they are translating. This project opened the door for her to participate in

the Global OBT Gathering in Entebbe, Uganda in January, where she led a panel discussion on the exegetical tools that are being developed by several different organizations.

Business as Mission

A profound shift is happening in missions due to the increasing hostility of countries to traditional missionary efforts. This is happening even in Europe: Belgium is no longer issuing missionary visas. Yet in Brussels alone, there are over 600,000 immigrants from closed countries who could be reached by another means, which is *Business as Mission*.

Many countries will allow someone to enter in order to start a business; this provides jobs, family and community flourishing. A 2023 book by Larry W. Sharp, *Missions Disrupted: From Professional Missionaries to Missional Professionals*, relates nearly 70 different efforts. I couldn't recommend it more highly.

We have three BFC missionary families engaged in such missions in security sensitive countries, and they are seeing fruit in their work. I would encourage you to think about who in your congregation could be sent out to do this kind of kingdom expansion.

Teams

Chris Merrick, a BOM missionary, is available to lead short term projects for your church. He has nearly 40 years' experience in construction work that he regularly uses to serve our missionary families. Once again, you don't have to make missions happen on your own–please contact us! Chris was part of teams that went to Bolivia and other places last year.

Nelson Randolph is also available to take teams on short term trips. He currently is investing much time in assisting churches in Operation Christmas Child efforts through Samaritan's Purse. He brings the supplies; you bring the assembly line. Many of our Bible Fellowship Churches participate in this effective ministry.

The BOM can serve to recruit and promote such individuals in a team effort with other BFC churches. It has been said that people often obtain a vision for where their feet have been. Now that COVID restrictions are lifting, perhaps it is time again for you to consider partnership with other BFC churches in short term efforts?

Yes, a short term team effort can be risky. However, one risk we take if we aren't a sending church is the risk of stunted growth in knowing and experiencing Him. He is the One who came to seek and to save the lost. If we don't engage in this mission with Him by taking risks to share the gospel with our friends, neighbors, relatives, and coworkers, then we risk not knowing the beauty and depth of the compassion and mercy that motivated Him to leave the glory of the Father's presence to die for sinners. Without risk, we greatly limit ourselves in knowing His love and giving it to others.

Churches also take a risk by not taking risks with Jesus in His mission. Studies have shown that churches that spend years making decisions for the benefit of those in the church will one day wake up to discover that if their church doesn't start reaching people outside the church, their church may shrivel up and even die. When a church chooses safety and comfort over taking risks with Jesus in His mission, they risk the future of their church.

The first missions efforts were conducted by teams; perhaps you could see their names in the following chart?

TIME OR PLACE	TEAM	REFERENCE
Jerusalem, Antioch, Cypress	Paul, Barnabas, John Mark	Acts 12:25-13:5
Philippi	Paul, Silas, Timothy, Luke	Acts 16:10-40
Corinth	Paul, Aquila & Priscilla, Silas, Timothy, Titius Justus	Acts 18:5-17
Ephesus	Paul, Timothy, Erastus, Gaius, Aristarchus	Acts 19:1-22; 29
Macedonia, Troas	Paul, Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus, Trophimus, Luke	Acts 20:4-38
Trip to Rome	Paul, Luke, Aristarchus	Acts 27:2 ff

Note: all of these teams were *short term* efforts. Some involved follow up. Likewise, we believe we have gifted believers in our congregations whose talents and experiences could greatly benefit those who are laboring full-time vocationally. If your church has participated in a short term trip, we'd love to know about it!

Finally, let me emphasize that to realize our two main goals . . .

· Every believer a disciple on mission, and

· All disciples supporting missions and at least one BFC missionary. . . we must be open to new and different ways of living. Mission and innovation are often synonymous; however, we can become ineffective by only looking to past forms and patterns.

Here are five questions to help every believer in your congregation to be on mission:

1. What is good that you can promote, celebrate, and protect?
2. What is missing that you can contribute?
3. What is evil that you can resist or stop?
4. What is broken that you can restore?
5. Who can you bless and invest in?

Your Board of Missions is eager to assist you and your church in answering these questions, so that all those in attendance will find the joy and blessing of being on mission. Let us be partners with you, so that the vision in Revelation 7:9-10 will be fulfilled (perhaps even in our lifetimes!):

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, **10** and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"

BOM overall benefits

- Applicant vetting
- Envoy and project promotion
- Coordinated prayer
- Streamline financial transactions
- Dedicated pastoral care
- Church missions enrichment
- Diagnostic tools for discovering and enhancing current missions opportunities

We are certainly sent out to tell others about Jesus as we have opportunity. But even more, in our own walk with God and in our opportunities to disciple others, we must think intentionally about the culture we create and influence. What does it look like for me—with the community to which I belong or the people I am discipling—to reflect God's love and justice through my everyday work so that people can taste God's *shalom* and flourish?

Changes in our missionary family

• Daniel P. Allen has now retired to his heavenly home. Dan promoted missions in India and Nepal.

• Larry W. Davies is now on staff with TEAM and is assisting at the Topton church plant.

• Lois Early has now retired to her heavenly home. Bill Early still serves with Trans World Radio.

• Mary Elmore has married; she and her husband are in Paris, serving the diaspora with AIM.

• Kim Knaub has transferred to Pioneers as her sending agency and will be an administrator in their Kenyan office.

• Craig and Karena Miller have returned to the Canary Islands.

• Philip E. and Jan Morrison have officially retired.

• Haleigh Ott has married; she and her husband are in Bolivia, serving with the Murrins and ITM.

• Nathan and Cindy Sefiane have transferred to MissionGo as their sending agency.

• The Widmans have retired to Florida.

New appointees

• Mark and Jasmine Campbell are DiscipleMakers ministering on the Wilkes University and East Stroudsburg University campuses. Their home church is Stroudsburg.

• G.P. is now in central Asia, having been commissioned in December. Her home church is Lancaster.

• Josh and Rebecca Rauch will soon be moving to North Carolina to serve with JAARS. Their home church is Paradise.

Final Thoughts

The BOM is seeking more members, particularly from the regions of our denomination that are not currently represented. Since our meetings are via Zoom (unless interviewing a candidate), you would not need to travel to attend. Below is a "job description."

Outline for Department of Missions: What it means to be a Board Member

What are the expectations for a Department of Missions Board Member?

- Reviews missionary application packets and participates in missionary interviews to approve BFC missionaries as Department of Missions envoys
- Participates in sub-committees such as Finance, Board Development, etc.
- Assists the Director, Department of Mission, with activities such as:
    - Promoting missions in BFC churches
    - Supporting BFC missionaries with prayer and practical needs
    - Serves as a sounding board/counsel for the Director

What are the time commitments for a Board Member?

- Attend regular board meetings six times per year, typically on the fourth Tuesday of the month
- Attend sub-committee meetings as required
- Represent Department of Missions at their local church through one-on-one, as guest speaker on Sunday, or via missions committee meetings, etc.

What are the requirements for a person to be considered to be a board member?

- A candidate for Board membership is:
    - A member of an active Bible Fellowship Church, and in good standing with that church
    - In agreement with the BFC Faith and Order
    - Recognized/referred by his or her church leadership as a good candidate
    - Demonstrating a strong Christian walk, as evidenced by service in his or her local church.

What is the desired demographic of the Board?

- The Board consists of a mix of experience including pastors, former pastors, former missionaries, and lay-persons.
- This mix of experience and background provides a host of perspectives to the process to vet missionaries to be BFC envoys, as well as bringing practical church and business leadership principles to activities and decisions.

How is a board member selected?

- The Board Development Committee identifies the slot that needs to be filled (pastor, missionary, lay person) as well as some target churches that would round out the board, and starts with the other Board members to consider their networks.

- The Director talks with pastors and missions committee directors at BFC churches to identify possible candidates.

- Once candidates are identified, they complete an application for Board Development Committee review.

- Candidates that are recommended by the Board Development Committee for interviews are then interviewed by the remaining board members.

- Board advises Director whether or not to extend an invitation.

- Director obtains final approval from BFC Executive Board, then extends formal invitation.

What is the term for a board member?

- Board members serve for a three-year term.

How does a board member renew his or her term?

- Upon completion of a three-year term, if board members elect to be considered for another three-year term, they are voted in by the rest of the Board during the January meeting of the renewal year.

How does a board member resign/not renew his or her next term?

- If a Board member intends to terminate his or her service at any time (either during the term or at the end of a three-year term) that board member puts in writing his or her intentions to not renew and sends that to the Director. The member and Director decide timing to announce the decision to the remaining board.

I also want to express my deep appreciation for Donald E. Kuntzman and Jodi Shorb, whose dedication and exceptional talents handle the necessary logistics for a well-run Department. They have eagerly accepted me and provide good insight into the needs of the BOM. Until July 1, 2022, Don served in the statistical and financial aspects while Jodi oversaw correspondence. Don became part time until January 31, 2023, when he retired from serving with the BOM. He is still available for consultation as needed. Some of Don's responsibilities are now being met by Jodi. In addition, Julie Sebastian has taken over other responsibilities, particularly in the financial bookkeeping aspect of the BOM.

Finally, remember: be begging the Lord to send out more laborers, and to realize our BOM goals:

- Every believer a disciple on mission
- All disciples supporting missions and at least one BFC missionary

"The problem today is that the spiritual situation is desperate but many of God's people are not." (Vance Havner, March 1, 2023)

Respectfully submitted

James Arcieri, Director, BFC Board of Missions

Department of Missions: James Arcieri, Director; Sean McNamara, Chairman; David J. Peters, Vice Chairman; Susanne Figard, Kevin W. Kirkpatrick, Lenore Macikonycz, Kim Stengele, Craig Tress.

James Arcieri, Director of Board of Missions, presents the Board of Missions report to Conference.

TOTAL CONGREGATIONAL PARTNERSHIP WITH JESUS' "MAKE DISCIPLES" (MD) IMPERATIVE:

Matthew 28:18 – 20: ***Four "All's:" Authority*** *= Why |* ***Nations*** *= Where |* ***Commandments*** *= Message |* ***Days*** *= Support*

-------- ASPECTS OF "*A CHURCH FOR HIS MISSION*" CONTINUUM --------			
Acts 1:8 MD – 1 (Jerusalem)	**MD – 2 (Judea)**	**MD – 3 (Samaria)**	**MD – 4 (Ends of the Earth)**
Affinity activity (music, sports)	Lunch with Co-worker	Addiction / Recovery ministry to various groups	Humanitarian special needs clinic for tribal groups
Child Evangelism club	Neighborhood block party	Local church to multi-ethnic apartment complex (ESL)	Brahmin Indian Christian reaching Muslims in Pakistan
Alpha course home study	CEO reaching the wealthy Upper Class on Philadelphia's Mainline	Serving material and spiritual needs of ethnic communities in local town or city	"Business as mission" in closed areas to traditional mission
Informal church event at campground	Affinity Evangelistic event (CBMC)	Navajo Christians working with Mongolians in Washington State	BFC mission to unreached tribal group in Chad, Africa
Hospitality meals for church visitors	Prison ministry by local church members	Americans reaching Kurdish refugees in Toronto	Home for orphans in Morocco
Prayer-walking neighborhood	Hosting international students for a party, week, semester, year		Global Trauma Counseling Efforts
Prayer for waitress			Internet bypass of hostile areas
Intelligent Design Clubs			

MUCH <---------- ***GOSPEL PRESENTATION OPPORTUNITY*** ----------> Little / None

Possible <---------- ***ACCESSIBILITY TO HEAR GOSPEL WITHOUT US*** ----------> *Impossible*

Low <---------- ***DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY / NEED FOR TRAINING*** ----------> HIGH

Smaller <---------- ***CULTURAL BARRIERS*** ----------> GREATER

External barriers: **Geographic =** proximity of witness to recipient. **Linguistic** = meaning in primary language. **Demographic** = socio/economic station, legal, political. **Ideological** = moral, behavioral, attitudinal

Active Missionaries:

Name	Agency	Location & Ministry
Sam & Melissa Adams	CMTS	Pennsylvania - Providing needed supplies and vehicles to missionaries.
Dan & Vonnie Allen	800 Follow Me / Joy in Jesus Ministries	Pennsylvania - Equipping churches to evangelize in the United States and South Asia through *The Nathanael Project.*
Byron & Lisa Barnshaw	Christar	Pennsylvania – Mobilizing students and future missionaries on college campuses, in Perspective courses, missions conferences, and local churches in the Northeast and Midwestern US
Bruce & Heather Beal	Wycliffe Bible Translators	Texas - Training linguists, caring for missionary children, and linguistic consulting for translators working in Mexico.
Glenn & Leah Ruth Blauser	Wycliffe Bible Translators / JAARS	North Carolina - Warehouse manager handling shipping and hand deliveries of needed supplies to missionaries around the world.
Steven & Bethany Chmil	ABWE	Togo - Medical evangelism at Hospital of Hope, Mango, Togo.
Sanjay & Keren Dalavai	Life Change Ministries International	Pennsylvania – Reaching children through Christian camping ministries in India, Nepal and South Asia.
Larry & Michelle Davies	The Evangelical Alliance Mission	Pennsylvania - Mentoring, shepherding, preparing new missionaries prior to initial field deployment.
Fernando de Souza	Africa Inland Mission	Chad - Ministering to the Kanembu people of Chad through English teaching, sports and community health
Francisco & Eliane deSouza	Fellowship International Mission	Pennsylvania - Director for Missionary Personnel, responsible for the care of FIM missionaries.
Bill Early	Trans World Radio	Pennsylvania - On-air announcing and technical services for Trans World Radio's site in Bonnaire, Netherlands Antilles.
Jaroslav & Natalija Elijas	Yugoslavian Evangelistic Society	Serbia - evangelism, discipleship, church planting, relief work and radio ministry
Travis & Mary (Elmore) Diede	Africa Inland Mission	France - Working with an international church-planting team focusing on African immigrants in a multi-cultural quarter of Strassbourg.
Scott & Robin Evans	Coalition for Christian Outreach	Pennsylvania - Campus ministry to student athletes and coaches at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, PA.
Theresa Faust	Overseas Missionary Fellowship	Malaysia - Ministering to physically and mentally impaired persons and their families
Ondrej & Milina Franka	Yugoslavian Evangelistic Society	Serbia - Evangelism, discipleship, church planting, relief work and radio ministry
Andy & Trisha Gudeman	Kingdom Air Corp	Alaska - Repair, maintenance and modification of aircraft serving missionary aviation needs around the world.
Alex Hartranft	Africa Inland Mission	Chad - Ministering to the Kanembu people of Chad through English teaching, sports and community health
James & Lynne Head	World Team	North Carolina – Training and counseling missionaries serving with World Team, Wycliffe and JAARS.
D & A	Global Serve	Central Asia - Language and study and cultural adaptation with a view of reaching an ethnic minority people group.
John & Kathy Hoover	InFaith	New Hampshire - Ministry in nursing homes, evangelism
Daniel & Ana Istrate	Yugoslavian Evangelistic Society	Romania - Church planting and outreach to gypsy community
Walter & Susan Johnston	Coalition for Christian Outreach	Pennsylvania - Outreach to international students at Penn State University.
David & Kristy Kelly	Word of Life	Canada - Coordinating summer and winter camps, and discipleship with students at Word of Life Bible Institute in Quebec.
Cheryl Kline	Bethany Fellowship Missions	Thailand - Teacher at Bethany Fellowship International School
Kimberly Knaub	Africa Inland Mission	Tanzania - Bible translation
K & R	Team Expansion	Italy - Working to establish a disciple-making movement in Ancona, Italy.
Brian & Carol Ann L.	Christar	Canada - Church planting among Kurds
Kyle & Jenny Merkey	Wycliffe Bible Translators	North Carolina - Aircraft maintenance
Chris & Beckie Merrick	BFC Board of Missions	Pennsylvania - Coordinator small group missions trips and projects.
Stephen & Ali Merrick	Ethnos 360 (fomerly New Tribes Mission)	Mexico - Appointees in language and cultural training in preparation for joining a church team in Mexico.
Matt & Kristy Messick	World Venture	Ecuador - Engaging the unreached and discipling believers at a point of felt need through Bible-centered marriage counseling and seminars.
Craig & Karena Miller	Crossworld	Canary Islands - Working with CultureBound. Mentoring, shepherding, preparing new missionaries prior to initial field deployment and equipping churches for cross-cultural ministry
Joseph & Thana Moussa	World Team	Pennsylvania - Arabic language evangelism in Eastern and Central Pennsylvania
Jerry & Carolyn Moyer	World Team	France - Leadership development, temporarily assigned to recruit church planters from
Tony & Joanna Murrin	International Tribal Ministries	Bolivia - Missionary aviation, evangelism and discipleship
John & Judy Nicely	The Evangelical Alliance Mission	Illinois - Director of International Personnel for TEAM.
Tim & Michelle Obarow	Missionary Maintenance Services Aviation	Ohio - Missionary aviation production manager.
Nelson & Robyn Randolph	BFC Board of Missions	Pennsylvania - Assisting BFC churches with short-term mission projects, creating opportunities to serve through Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes.
Art & Vicki Reyes	The Evangelical Alliance Mission	Mexico - Church planting through disciple-making in La Playa.
David & Becky Riddell	World Team	France - International Director of World Team. Mentoring, coaching, leading workers throughout World Team in multiplying disciples and communities of believers.
Laura Robison	Wycliffe Bible Translators / SIL	South Sudan - Working with Bible translation teams, developing materials, training people and developing ways that every member of a community can engage meaningfully with the Scripture.
R & A	Christar	Central Asia- Discipleship-based church planting and marketplace outreach to migrant workers.
Amy Sandt	SEND International	Philippines - Community outreach, teaching
David & Denise Schlonecker Jr.	TEAM	Germany - Black Forest Academy House Parents
Dan & Jackie Scott	Pioneers	Central Asia - Business as mission consultant, leadership development and discipleship.

Mark & Jocelyn Scott	Campus Crusade (CRU)	New Jersey - Coaching college students to lead Acts 2 type movements on individual campuses across the state of New Jersey.
Nathan & Cindy Sefiane	MissionGO	Morocco - Maintenance, teaching and house parents at Children's Haven
David & Sherry Shelly	Missionary Maintenance Services Aviation	Ohio - Preparing people and planes for worldwide mission service. Dave in building maintenance, OSHA safety and IT, and Sherry in the Accounting Department
Gary & Karen Shogren	World Venture	PA - Professors of New Testament and Women's Ministries at Seminario ESEPA, and ministry to victims of sexual abuse.
Efthemes & Irene Sioukiouroglou	Fellowship International Mission	Greece - Outreach to Muslim refugees and church planting
Lillian Solt	United World Mission	Costa Rica - Medical ministry, community service, and evangelism in support of church planting.
Jeremiah & Briane Stokes	Ethnos 360 (formerly New Tribes Mission)	Indonesia - Pioneer church planting
John & Laura Studenroth	BFC Board of Missions	Pennsylvania - Reaching faculty, staff, and graduate and undergraduate students at Kutztown University.
Haleigh (Ott) Vargas	International Tribal Ministries	Bolivia - part of a church planting initiative in a tribal village (working with the Murrins).
Scott & Joanna Widman	BCM International	Northern Ireland - Camp ministries and European Director for BCM.
Barry & Candy Wingo	Ethnos 360 (formerly New Tribes Mission)	South Carolina - Providing pastoral care and encuragement to missionaries serving among unreached people groups around the world.
Ondra & Melissa Zikanovi	The Evangelical Alliance Mission	Czech Republic - Disciple makers & church developers amongst a predominantly atheistic people.

Appointees:

Name	**Agency**	**Location & Ministry**
Mark & Jasmin Campbell	Disciplemakers	PA - Campus ministry at East Stroudsburg University and
Joshua & Rebekah Rauch	Wycliffe / JAARS	PA - Plans to work in North Carolina with JAARS

Report of Church Extension Ministries

"Do business with this (occupy) until I come back." Luke 19:13

"I know few words more searching and impressive than these four: Occupy until I come." J.C. Ryle, author and Anglican bishop, interpreted this phrase to mean you are "a doer" in your Christianity and not merely a hearer and confessor. How better to be a "doer" than to be obedient when the Lord says make disciples. Making disciples means evangelism and church planting.

"Do we really need more churches?" Occasionally we hear this comment as we are sharing the work of Church Extension. According to the National Congregational Study Survey, there are an estimated 380,000 churches in the United States. Even so, most of these churches are not making disciples and therefore the answer is YES, we do need more churches. Here are some reasons why the Bible Fellowship Church needs to plant churches:

#1- Planting new churches is critical to denominational growth and stability. Denominations that have church planting in the forefront of their vision tend to grow. The Gospel Coalition records the following denominations that have grown because they have a vision to plant new churches:

Denomination	Past Membership	2013 Membership	Percent Increase
Presbyterian Church in America	41,232 in 1973	367,033	790% increase
Evangelical Free Church of America	43,851 in 1965	372,321	749% increase
Assemblies of God	572,123 in 1965	3,030,944	430% increase
Bible Fellowship Church	4,554 in 1965	7,579	66.4% increase

New BFC Churches Graduated/Connected 2000-2021		
1	Las Cruces, NM	2000
2	Hellertown (Saucon), PA	2004
3	Long Neck, DE	2004
4	Fellowship Community, PA	2006
5	Woodbury Heights, NJ	2008
6	Merida, Mexico	2008
7	Steelton, PA	2013
8	Dauphin, PA	2014
9	Townsend, DE	2016
10	Exeter, PA	2017
11	La Roca (Reading) PA	2018
12	Northern Lehigh, PA	2018
13	Boyertown, PA	2019
14	Lower Providence, PA	2020
15	Upper Macungie, PA	2020
.75 new churches per year		

Although the BFC is not as large as the denominations listed here, church planting has given growth and stability to the denomination at large. Church planting will continue to give growth and stability as we look forward to BFC church plants graduating in the near future. Note the following BFC statistics:

#2- New churches add to the health of other BFC departments and events in the BFC. With every new BFC church received into the BFC Conference there will be

support for and an interest in global missions as well as increased attendance at Victory Valley Camp and Board of Youth and Young Adult events and other Conference ministries. There will be stronger BFC regions, more expansion of the BFC worldwide, and more gifted people in the BFC who are available to serve the Lord.

Projected New BFC Churches Graduated/Connected		
1	Cape May, NJ	2023
2	Forks Township, PA	2023
3	CityLight in Allentown, PA	2023
4	Topton, PA	2024
5	City of Lancaster, PA	2025
6	Chestertown, MD	2025
.84 new churches per year		

#3- New churches make disciples. New churches evangelize more aggressively and focus more diligently on discipleship. It's easy to get so caught up in "doing church" that we forget people need to know God's love and experience salvation in Jesus Christ. What a good reminder that all our churches should be prioritizing evangelism.

So, does the BFC need new churches? YES! Therefore "occupy"—be doing! Let us encourage our pastors and elders, no matter the size of your church, to catch the exciting vision of church planting.

If you are considering God's call to church planting, please contact Director David Gundrum. He is also available to share the vision of church planting with your church or elder board.

Mission Church Directory

Stephen A. Diaz and Rick Dobrowolski – Allentown, PA Mission Church
Citylight Bible Church
Meets at: 1140 E. Clair St., Allentown, PA 18109
Contact: revstevediaz@hotmail.com or 484-387-0936
Website: CitylightBibleChurch.com

John J. Hanner – Adams County, PA Mission Church
Living Bible Fellowship Church
Meets at: 895 Coleman Rd., Gettysburg, PA 17325
Contact: jhanner37@gmail.com or 717-337-1900
Website: LivingBFC.org

Joshua A. Dupiche – Milford, DE Mission Church
Hope Bible Fellowship Church
Meets at: 103 S. Maple Ave., Milford, DE 19963
Contact: scholarlyspirit@gmail.com or 267-273-4171
Website: HopeBFC.church

Timothy M. Zuck – Forks Township, PA Mission Church
Forks Community Church
Meets at: Park Plaza, 1800 Sullivan Trail, Forks Township, PA 18040
Contact: tim@forkscommunitychurch.org or 484-548-0251
Website: www.forkscommunitychurch.org

Freddy A. Chi – Villa Magna, Mexico Mission Church
Contact: freddychi62@gmail.com or office@churchplantingbfc.org

Jason A. Filbert – Naples, FL Mission Church
Covenant Bible Fellowship
Meets at: 11250 Tamiami Trail E., Naples, FL 84113
Contact: jason@cbfnaples.com or 239-910-0766
Website: CBFNaples.org

Brad L. Boyer – Cape May Court House, NJ Mission Church
Cape Community Church
Meets at: 1159 Route 9 South, Cape May Court House, NJ 08210
Contact: bvboyer@comcast.net or 609-465-2338
Website: CapeCommunityChurch.org

James D. Reff II – Chestertown, MD Mission Church
Grace Community Church
Meets at: 400 Morgnec Rd., Chestertown, MD 21620
Contact: jamesreff81@gmail.com or 410-778-0390
Website: GCChestertown.org

Juan Carlos Morales – Lancaster, PA Mission Church
Christ Alone Fellowship
Meets at: 41 Caroline St., Lancaster, PA 17603
Contact: losmoral@me.com or 717-208-5686
Website: ChristAloneFellowship.com

Timothy S. Radcliff and Mark L. Morrison – Elverson, PA Mission Church
CROSSroads: a Bible Fellowship Church
Meets at: 2672 Ridge Rd., Elverson, PA 19520
Contact: tsradcliff@gmail.com or 267-498-8266;
Website: CrossroadsElverson.org

Daniel J. Hoffstetter – Topton, PA Mission Church
Redeemer Bible Fellowship Church
Meets at: Pioneer Grange, 46 E. Keller St., Topton, PA 19562
Contact: info@redeemertopton.org or 610-641-1090
Website: RedeemerTopton.org

Tapachula, Mexico
Iglesia de la Comunion Biblica
Contact: office@churchplantingbfc.org

A.J. Miller – Maple Glen, PA Mission Church
Welsh Road Church
Meets at: 700 Welsh Rd., Maple Glen, PA 19002
Contact: amiller@faithbfc.org or 215-256-6026
Website coming soon!

REVIEW OF 2022 IN CHURCH EXTENSION
The BFC Mission Churches recorded 47 baptisms and 9 people making professions of faith! All glory to God!

Finances and Administration

- Total financial giving from BFC churches increased slightly. Our donor list and donor giving increased.
- Don Skekel served fruitfully as Development Manager and handed the baton to Mark L. Morrison. The Development Committee met several times to monitor our invested funds and discussed funding strategies. Bob Witten is the interim chair of the committee.
- Our two annual fundraisers, Summer Twenty and Christmas Gift Month, were blessed and went beyond their goals, enabling us to use undesignated giving to cover $80,000 in support deficits for some planters.
- Church Extension's invested funds had a big decrease due to the drop in markets.
- The staff met monthly and worked on a number of projects.
- We approved new Board members: James D. MacArthur, Oley BFC and Carlos G. Rodriguez, La Roca BFC.
- Administrative Assistant Laurie Kuhns continues her duties in the office. Rachel Schmoyer assists in the office and works on communications, prayer letters, and our branding. Ruth Richards remains an asset as she assists our plants' bookkeeping needs. Numerous mailings, communications, and prayer letter updates were sent out along with the weekly Antiochan, quarterly It Happened Like This newsletter, and bi-monthly prayer calendar.
- A number of new men from the BFC were added to our Transitional Leadership Teams.

Miscellaneous Happenings in 2022

- We offered counseling assistance to several planters. Some of the planters experienced bouts with COVID-19.
- The Lighthouse Mission Church merged with Allentown Bible Church and is now Citylight BFC. They are pursuing the purchase of a building.
- We met with prospective church planters Ben Ross, Louis E. Beltran, Trace Haines, Andrew Lintner, Immer Molina, Ronny Smith, Richard Greene, and Steven J. Morton.
- The Naples, FL Mission Church moved into a new larger 24/7 location to accommodate its growth.

• Timothy S. Radcliff and Mark L. Morrison are planting the Elverson Mission Church. Mark will be disengaging in April 2023.
• We held conversations with non-BFC churches regarding connection: churches in Milford and Camden, DE; Crossroads Church, Montgomeryville, PA; Allentown Bible Church, Allentown, PA; and Sovereign Grace Church, Harmony, NJ.
• Daniel J. Hoffstetter led his team to experience significant growth at the Topton, PA Mission Church, which is in need of a 24/7 facility to accommodate its growth.
• Daughter Church contacts through the Mission to Multiply plan were made with the Berks Region, Harrisburg BFC & Capital Region, Lehigh Valley Region, Bucks-Mont Region, and DELMARVA Region.
• The Vision & Strategy Committee reviewed the Church Extension By-Laws and discussed "Post-COVID."
• We held our two-day Annual Personnel Committee meetings in November with all our men. Mark E. Barninger was Chair of the Personnel Committee and led the meetings.
• Richard E. Taylor continued his mentoring assignments with Brad L. Boyer and John J. Hanner.
• Brad L. Boyer continues leading prayer teams into the streets of Cape May City, Rio Grande, and Cape May Courthouse. A number of people were saved on the streets.
• We completed a Viability Assessment for Adams County and resolved that the Mission Church will need to meet the graduation criteria by October 2023 in order to continue.
• Raymond A. Bertolet mentored James D. Reff II and Joshua A. Dupiche, reviewed the properties under Church Extension Ministries, met with non-BFC churches to connect with us, helped in several assessments, and conducted numerous demographic studies.
• Trace Haines was called to assist James D. Reff II at the Chestertown, MD Mission Church.
• Joshua A. Dupiche suffered the loss of his sister; he and Juli took in his nephew and niece to live with them. The Milford DE Mission Church is doing well and needs a larger building.
• The Lancaster City Mission Church (Christ Alone Fellowship) experienced significant growth and now needs to accommodate this growth. The break-dancing ministry (Cypher Spot) continues to function at Christ Alone BFC.
• We featured our Church Planters' wives in June and thank them for their support.

Church Planting Across Cultures

• The Villa Magna Mission Church in Mexico under the leadership of church planter Freddy A. Chi is looking into a better meeting place.
• The Tapachula, Mexico Mission Church was opened. Oversight is provided by Pastor Marcos G. Ramirez, Director of Church Planting in Mexico

• Pastor Marcos G. Ramírez, our church planting Director in Mexico, continues to coach and mentor Freddy A. Chi and Immer Molina.

Ordination and Graduation

• Church Planter Freddy A. Chi will be ordained if entrance arrangements can be made from Mexico.
• No new churches were received at the 2022 BFC Conference. Graduation Assessments took place at the Forks, Cape May, and Citylight Mission Churches to prepare them for graduation in 2023.

PROJECTIONS FOR 2023 IN CHURCH EXTENSION

- **The DELMARVA Project**. We are encouraging the DELMARVA Region to plant a Regional daughter church. We are also investigating a new church plant in Elkton, MD and are seeking to make connections in Milford, DE and Camden, DE.

- **Hispanic/Multi-Cultural Church Planting**
  - Merida, Mexico – Pastor Marcos G. Ramirez, Director of Church Planting in Mexico, is looking into another planting site around Merida. He has already begun some bible studies in the area.
  - Hispanic Task Force –The HTF will need to be revived and be more strategic in order to assist our Hispanic men and their ministries and further our BFC Hispanic outreach.
  - La Roca in Reading, PA, under the leadership of Carlos G. Rodriguez and his elders, is planning for the future.
  - We will look for a Hispanic Ministries Director/Liaison to recruit more Hispanic men to plant Hispanic churches.

- **Daughter Church Planting**. We will continue to encourage Daughter Church Planting through the Mission to Multiply plan with the Berks Region, Harrisburg BFC & Capital Region, Lehigh Valley Region, Bucks-Mont Region, the DELMARVA Region, and possibly the Lancaster Region.

- **Connectional Projects**
  - Staten Island, NY – In process.
  - DELMARVA – Efforts are being made to identify non-BFC churches wanting to connect.
  - Harmony, NJ – Discussion and plans to connect with Sovereign Grace Church continue.

- **Recruitment**. We are producing a webinar that will focus on recruiting qualified men to plant churches, as well as dialoguing with current men in the BFC about church planting. We will look to facilitate this by means of launching the new virtual recruitment webinar.

- **Church Planting Training**. We will be utilizing Exponential's online church planting training.

- **Graduation Preparations.** We will be prepping the Topton Mission Church and possibly Chestertown Mission Church for graduation in 2024.

The same maxim that we have been presenting for many years remains true: When we successfully plant new BFC churches our fellowship is enriched and grows, and God is glorified!

This coming year our theme is Glory of Christ – 2 Cor. 4:6. May all our Mission Churches and our Particular Churches see a harvest of souls for the Kingdom in 2023. We especially thank the BFC churches for their prayers and financial support for this vital mission. Please continue to pray for the Church Extension team, including our church planters, their wives and children, and our board and staff. Reaching people with the gospel and planting new churches will need to be prioritized and supported in order for the Bible Fellowship Church to survive.

Respectfully submitted,

David E. Gundrum

Director of Church Extension Ministries

Board of Church Extension Ministries: David E. Gundrum, Director; Richard E. Taylor, Chairman; Mark L. Morrison, Vice Chairman; William G. Schlonecker, Secretary; Michael Norquist, Treasurer; Mark E. Barninger, Eric Herb Sr., James D. MacArthur, Carlos G. Rodriguez, Robert Witten.

CHURCH EXTENSION ACTIVITY CHART 2023

New Projects

Pioneer Plants

TBD

Daughter Plants

Las Cruces, NM
Harrisburg, PA
Elkton, MD

Hispanic/ Multicultural

Juan Pablo Secunda, Mexico

Existing Plants

Villa Magna, Mexico
Adams County, PA
Naples, FL
Chestertown, MD
Topton, PA
Milford, DE
City of Lancaster,PA
Elverson, PA
Maple Glen, PA
Tapachula, Mexico

Graduation Projections

2023-Cape May, NJ
2023- Forks Township, PA
2023- Allentown, PA
2024-Topton, PA
2024-Chestertown,MD
2024-Adams County, PA
2025-Lancaster, PA
2025-Elverson, PA
2025-Naples, FL
2027-Milford, DE
2027-Maple Glen, PA
2027-Villa Magna, Mexico
2032-Tapachula, Mexico

Regional Church Plants

Lehigh Valley
Berks County
DELMARVA
Capital

Connectional Projects

Staten Island, NY
Harmony, NJ
Camden, DE
Milford, DE

Revitalization/Restarts

Maple Glen, PA (Welsh Road Church)

Report of Victory Valley Camp

Over 1,000 campers. Over 1,100 weekend retreat guests. At least 35 new members of the body of Christ. Fifty-four (54) Summer Missionaries, over 20 volunteers, and countless partners in prayer. Yes, 2022 was an *exceptional* year here at the Valley.

***Victory Valley Camp** is strategically equipped with the allure of excitement and lifelong memories to reach today's youth and, through those campers, to reach families who would never venture into a church. In a day where greater than 90% of the local population of youth don't know Jesus, the ministry the Lord has planted here is more important than ever before.*

I (Curt Cutler, Camp Director) want to offer a sincere *Thank You* to Travis Shane (Facilities Manager), Lois Amos (Camp Administrative Assistant), Laura Bishop (Finance), and to our camp families who joined together in going above and beyond to cover so many things this year, especially in early 2022 when we were very short-staffed.

With the resignation of Bekah Manwiller from the role of Program Director in late 2021, and the resignation of Amy Brown from the role of full-time cook just before the New Year, our team opened 2022 with great expectations, determined to trust in the Lord to provide, and with a dedication to do whatever it took to accomplish the mission the Lord has given us. While we searched for the people that God was calling to join us at the Valley, we were blessed to have God provide many individuals pitch in to help us accomplish His mission.

Winter

Winter Blast 2022, covering the last two weeks in January and the first two weekends in February, ended on a snow covered Sunday here in the Valley. We were blessed with fantastic winter weather for three of the four weekends, with thick ice allowing skating and hockey on the pond for weekends 1 and 2, and significant snow on our sledding hill for weekends 2 and 4.

We were also blessed with 30 returning Victory Valley staff members (summer missionaries) and three prospective junior staff members who volunteered their time to counsel, work in the kitchen, run our games, and help out with various maintenance projects around camp. Travis Shane was instrumental in helping us determine the safety of the pond ice, making walkways through the snow, and ensuring that our buildings stayed warm and our driveway remained clear, all while keeping up with the ongoing challenges of maintaining 40-to-60 year old cabins.

In addition, we had the support of five volunteers to help us in the kitchen across four weeks. Jay and Maria Reinhard, from Cedar Crest BFC (and nearby Milford Park Bible Camp), were our cooks for weekends 1 and 3; they did an excellent job of running the kitchen, including intentional time talking with the VVC staff and campers. Karen and Olivia Shane and Mandi Cutler provided exceptional help during weekend 2, where we were short-staffed and had Grayson Ausley here touring camp while interviewing for the Program Director role. In addition, we were blessed to have Rachel Poole, from New Life BFC in Oley, who was our nurse for all four weekends. I am especially grateful that we did not suffer any significant injuries. Praise the Lord for His provision of staff and volunteers that allowed us to minister to so many campers!

With 227 campers, this was the highest attended Winter Blast in recorded history. Our theme was "Following the Good Shepherd," which focused on John 10 and what Jesus

means when He says He is the Good Shepherd. Bekah Manwiller graciously agreed to run the program for all four weekends while we continued our Program Director search, and she did an outstanding job.

Staff did an excellent job in leading intentional discussions with their campers, including sharing their testimonies, and God was at work in growing the family of Christ. By His grace, at least seven campers made decisions for Christ over these four weeks! All of the staff were excited and humbled to be used so powerfully by our great God.

Shortly after the conclusion of Winter Blast, God was at work in bringing a New Program Director, Grayson Ausley, to join the team in March, 2022. Grayson was born in Johnson City, TN, grew up in northern Alabama, and went to college at Auburn University, where he earned a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering. Grayson has a lifelong background in camp ministry. His grandparents were directors at Appalachian Christian Camp (ACC) in Tennessee, where he was a camper in high school and summer staff member in college. ACC is where the Lord called him to camp ministry.

In Grayson's own words:

> As a product of Christian camping myself, I have seen how the Lord can use camp to change the lives of kids of all ages, which is why I am so excited to become part of the vision and mission of Victory Valley. I would say my three greatest passions are camp, missions, and discipleship, and after visiting Victory Valley during a session of Winter Blast, I knew that this would be a place where I could serve the Lord, using the gifts He has given me in a place where all those passions were clearly at work…. I am excited to come alongside this camp, board, and staff to bring more kids to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and teach them to use their lives for His glory.

Spring

Grayson spent the spring learning everything about Victory Valley, including watching and memorizing all the camp songs on our YouTube channel, developing our curriculum for summer camp, developing and running his first Prospective Junior Staff retreat and working with the camp director to recruit staff for the summer camp season.

During this time, we were blessed to be able to host a few local churches and ministries here at camp. Between January and the end of May, we hosted seven weekend retreats, enabling ministry opportunities for over 450 guests.

Summer

When Grayson and I were considering what God would have us teach this summer, we noticed a continuous theme of campers and staff dealing with loneliness, anxiety, fear, and depression. There is no book in the Bible that expresses the heights and depths of these emotions better than the Psalms, which led to our theme for the summer of 2022, "My Refuge: A Summer in Psalms."

Every Sunday we began with *Psalm 1, an Introduction*. Psalm 1 offers two paths: one that is rooted in the Word, and another of the wicked, who are blown away like chaff. Mondays focused on *Lament*—bringing our hurts, our fears, and even our anger to God, even if it is directed at Him. This was a highlight for many campers and even staff: to realize that we are allowed and even encouraged to express our sadness and hurt to a God who loves us without measure. The truth that the God who made the universe also cares

enough to hear and attend to the cry of His children resonated deeply and helped many to know Jesus better.

Tuesdays focused on *Trust*: seeing God's faithfulness in Scripture, history, and our lives. No matter our circumstances or what we face, we can trust God to be faithful again and again. Wednesday focused on *Salvation:* knowing God is our only true refuge, we must turn to Him and no other to be saved. Thursday focused on *Praise*; we can use the gifts and passions God has given us to praise Him and tell of His greatness to others. Finally, Fridays were for *Benediction (Psalm 150)*, in which we praise the Lord for all of the above, and for what He did in our lives that week.

Many of the staff experienced tremendous growth this summer, and we personally saw many of them mature week by week. There was a lot of positive feedback from staff, and visiting former staff noted that there was a noticeable emphasis on care for staff, unity, and morale throughout the summer. Our Discipleship Program, led by Matt and Kristy Messick, was also influenced by the Psalms and received much positive feedback from staff.

This summer God blessed us with 54 Summer Missionaries: 31 Junior Staff, 15 Senior Staff, and eight Leadership Team Members. We were blessed to welcome back most of the Leadership Team from 2021—Maddy Pillsbury, Braden Groff, Tom Bell, and Evan Carey—while also adding a few new members: Ava (Bee) Chaboya, Zach (E) Herb, and Chris Hard, as well as one Leadership Team member from years past in Rachel Sanders. We also had 13 Non-Staff that volunteered for a week or for a day. The Lord was faithful to provide people, even just for a day, whenever we had holes to be filled—sometimes to the point of having too many people to know where they would go!

This summer we had 920 camper registrations: 434 for Cabin Camp, 66 for Outpost, and 422 for Day Camp, with over 100 campers on our wait-list.

Most importantly, the Lord brought many from death to life this summer, with at least 28 campers who made professions of faith! There were also at least seven campers who rededicated their lives to Christ. Every Friday night, we heard the testimonies of campers, and almost every week we saw campers lined up to the door of the Chapel, eager to tell what God had taught them that week!

"The Lord truly did amazing things this year at Victory Valley: in the campers, the staff, and in finishing my first year here, I can say God did great things in my life as well through seeing His work each week and each day," Grayson Ausley said after completing his first summer as Program Director. "I know He will continue to work in the lives of these campers and their families into the fall and beyond!"

Fall

As we entered our fall season, we had the tremendous opportunity to enable and support two weekend retreats for ministries specifically focused on at-risk youth: one with a local church who has been ministering to youth on the streets of Allentown, and one with a ministry that has been working with youth on the streets of Philadelphia. Both ministries showed a dedicated commitment to sharing the gospel of a God who loves these students enough to rescue them for all eternity. What a beautiful contrast with the message that these students often hear: that they are unlovable and alone. *Please join me in praying for more ministry opportunities like these, that the Word of God would walk the lonely streets of our local neighborhoods and cities and shine the Light of Christ into the hearts of these students!*

Between August and the end of October, we hosted an additional nine weekend retreats with local churches and ministries, enabling more ministry opportunities for over 500 guests.

We also began the Pool Project in earnest. Over the course of four months, through the support of our BFC churches, denomination, and many individuals, God provided just enough to begin the project (~$236,000 was raised by the end of December, 2022). In late December, the old pool was demolished, and in February 2023, the new pool shell was finished. As of the time of this report, we were still in need of ~$200,000 and are trusting in the Lord to provide.

Our prayer is that the Lord of the harvest would continue to bless the ministry here at the Valley by allowing us to complete this project debt free, by providing a full-time cook, by providing the staff we need for summer of 2023, and by bringing a great multitude to faith in Jesus Christ through the work of the Summer Missionaries He is calling into the harvest fields.

Grateful for the Lord's provision and rejoicing in His saving work,

Curt Cutler, Director

Victory Valley Camp

Victory Valley Camp Board: Timothy J. Schmoyer, Chairman; Colin Bartholomew, Vice Chairman; Kelly Moono, Treasurer; Carolyn Cruise, Secretary; James Crosley, Jason J. Englehart, Cindy Ireland, John Masters, Mark R. Orton, Craig Peoples.

Department Directors James Arcieri, David E. Gundrum, David T. Allen, Curtis A. Cutler

Report of the Communications Committee

The masthead of the *BFC OneVoice* magazine indicates that the purpose of the publication is "to connect, inform, and promote" the Bible Fellowship Church to its readers. This is an accurate portrayal of the overall role of the Communications Committee, which is responsible for the production and management of the BFC's print and internet media.

The committee met several times over the past 12 months, usually coordinating its meetings in preparation for the next edition of *OneVoice*. Ralph E. Ritter continues to serve as editor of that publication. As always, the committee encourages members and attenders to submit articles to review for publication. Submission guidelines are available on the *BFC OneVoice* website at www.bfconevoice.com/submission-guidelines.

Carolyn Ritter continues to serve as editor of the *Fellowship News* bulletin insert. *Fellowship News* is sent to the church secretary or another designated individual in each church for copying and distribution. Churches also receive an email version which can be used as an alternative. To receive *Fellowship News* please contact bfc.fellowship.news@gmail.com and specify the appropriate church contact person. The committee is grateful for all the church submissions regarding new members, baptisms, and other church happenings. Church news should be reported by the Monday preceding the first Sunday of the month in order for an event to be published in *Fellowship News*.

Donald E. Kuntzman has stepped away from the committee. We thank him for his faithful service, both as committee chair and as coordinator for the annual BFC *Yearbook*. Conference Secretary Ronald L. Kohl serves as *Yearbook* editor and we're thankful for Rachel Schmoyer's willingness to step into Kuntzman's role of coordinating the publication of the *Yearbook*. Kohl is now serving as chairman of the committee.

Over the past year the committee introduced a new informational brochure entitled, The Ordinances: Baptism & Communion. This joined the following brochures in the BFC library: *Is the Bible Fellowship Church Reformed?, The Bible Fellowship Church*, *Eschatology*, *Salvation: The Doctrine of Soteriology,* and *Church Membership*.

Rachel Schmoyer has assumed the responsibilities for keeping our social media accounts up-to-date as part of her BFC Communications Coordinator role. She has faithfully posted new content to the BFC's Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts. As of the writing of this report, our Facebook account had 879 followers. Instagram had 448 followers and 322 posts. Our Twitter feed had 175 followers. In addition, Schmoyer has been working on an update to the BFC Principles of Order.

Jeff Tintle filmed an interview with longtime BFC pastor Ronald C. Mahurin as Rachel Schmoyer and Ronald L. Kohl provided interview questions. Jared Burkholder serves an important role on the committee in communicating youth and young adult items of interest via the podcast he has created with Christopher M. Von Holt.

Communications Committee: Ronald L. Kohl, Chairman; Matthew Printz, Secretary; Ralph E. Ritter, Editor, *BFC OneVoice*; Rachel Schmoyer, Social Media; Greg Alderfer, David T. Allen, Jared Burkholder, Kaylena Radcliff, Jeff Tintle.

Report of the Conference Pastor

"Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will, they existed and were created."
Revelation 4:11

I am sure there are different things we could draw from this verse, but one idea I see is God created everything and all things exist simply because He willed it so. God's will and sovereignty are way above our understanding, but He does share what He wants us to know, gives us the ability to understand His will, and then He gives us the strength to carry out His will. Great is His faithfulness!!! Our day-to-day existence depends on our Savior and we can thank Him for each day, knowing He wants to use us for His glory.

Another year has gone by and I am so thankful for the men the Lord has given us to declare and model the truth of the Scriptures. Thank you, pastors, for clinging to God's written Word. As Sharon and I have the privilege of getting around to our churches, we are grateful that we consistently hear messages that exalt Christ.

We pray for you men and your families to be encouraged. We know the trials and tribulations that we will face from living in this world as we minister to the church family He has given us. May each of you continually find Him faithful and more than adequate to see you through each day.

Sharon and I continue to be blessed in serving alongside you. Thank you for working with us, accepting invitations to visit and to fellowship, and for praying for us. You are an encouragement!

Many regional prayer meetings continue to meet, and it is a privilege to be able to join you when I can for prayer and fellowship. I am blessed as brothers get together to pray for each other. It is also a blessing to see some groups who have developed a close relationship with one another; meeting regularly has helped to encourage and strengthen that bond. These regional prayer groups can be so helpful in ministry and personal growth, and they can be an encouragement in our service to the Lord. I want to strongly suggest that each of you include these regional meetings on your schedule and attend them.

It is a joy to have four men who will be ordained or have their previous ordinations recognized this year at BFC Conference. Three will be at the ordination service at Conference, and we are working on the possibility of sending a delegation to Mexico to hold a service for Freddy Chi, who cannot attend Conference because of the U.S. restrictions requiring a COVID-19 vaccine in order to enter our country.

At the time of this writing, we have 11 churches who are either without a pastor or are in the process of seeking a pastor: Clinton Corners (Cornerstone), NY; Carmel, NY; Bethlehem (Ebenezer), PA; Lagrangeville, NY; Denville, NJ; Finesville, NJ; Nazareth, PA; Lebanon, PA; Calvary BFC, Coopersburg; and Zionsville, PA. We also have some churches who are looking to add to their pastoral staffs. Please remember the body of Christ at each of these churches and give thanks for the Lord's faithfulness as they continue to serve their communities. Pray for wisdom to know the man He leads to each of these churches. Please also be praying for those men seeking where the Lord would have them serve.

After many years of serving the Lord, Daniel P. Allen, Roy A. Hertzog, Carl K. Spackman, and Dean A. Stortz are now worshiping the one true God in glory. It is bit-

tersweet as we miss their presence, but they are present with the Lord. I am thankful for these dear saints: for their years of service and their love for Jesus. Please pray for their families and friends: that they may know God's grace and comfort. We also know fellow pastors and wives who have loved ones who have passed away this last year. Please pray for them as well in the loss of these dear ones. May they know that His grace is sufficient during this time of loss, and may they remember the sweet memories they had with their loved ones.

I would like to remind you again of the Darlene J. Mahurin Memorial Fund and the assistance it provides for our ministers. This is a tax-deductible fund under the umbrella of the BFC. Any donations can be made by check, payable to **"Bible Fellowship Church,"** with a notation that it is for the Memorial Fund. If you have a financial need or know of another BFC pastor who has a need, please talk to me.

I am thankful that, since our last Conference, the memorial fund was able to financially assist some pastors and their families totaling $1,710.00. Thank you for contributing to this fund to provide help to fellow pastors.

Sharon and I are grateful that we can serve our Lord and you men and your wives. We look forward to seeing how God will use us for His glory and how we may be of help to you.

Blessings,

Ralph M. Soper

Conference Pastor

Brad L. Boyer, church planter of Cape Community Church in Cape May Court House, NJ, gives a devotional in conjunction with Cape Community's graduation celebration.

Report of the Historical Committee

Meetings of the Historical Committee are interesting and not like some of our conference committee meetings. They start, as do others, with identifying committee members, reviewing the minutes, and looking at needed decisions. But the similarities end there. Stories soon begin flowing. Questions flow about why certain things were done. Memories of past events follow, and then the inevitable recollections of those who have gone before get repeated. These gatherings are never boring.

Meetings are held at the Whitehall Bible Fellowship Church, which serves now as the storage point for our archives. Over the years, the archival collection has grown and, due to the kindness and generosity of the Whitehall Church, has found a home. The archives include all sorts of records of our churches, conference deliberations, and conference committees. They preserve a record of past decisions that led to what we are today. Also included are various books, periodicals, and individual items that help paint the picture of who we were. Those who desire to do research into the history of their church will find these records invaluable. Records are also available on our website, BFCHistory.org.

Over the past year, members of the committee have been at work, sorting and organizing the acquisitions given for preservation. Materials are often given in bulk, requiring time and attention to even know what is included. It is an ongoing task requiring sorting and organizing. These records are available, but an appointment must be made in order to view or use them.

The committee urges churches and committees to put their records in the safekeeping of the archives where they will be available to future generations should the Lord tarry.

The Historical Society is made up of those who have an interest in our history. Periodic publications offer information relating to our past. An annual meeting is held. This year's gathering will be held at the Graterford Bible Fellowship Church on October 28, 2023. Featured will be a presentation on how pastors were supported and another on urban ministries. All are invited.

Ronald L. Kohl has asked to step down from serving on this committee. We have appreciated his encouragement and input and will miss his participation.

Historical Committee: Jill Davidson, Chairperson; Richard E. Taylor, Secretary and Archivist; Andrew Geissinger, Ronald W. Hoyle, Ronald L. Kohl, Jason Musselman, C. Robert Roth, Timothy J. Schmoyer.

Report of the Pinebrook Educational Foundation

The Board of Directors of the Pinebrook Educational Foundation met two times in 2022.

The Foundation received gifts from individuals and BFC Churches totaling $13,800 in 2022. The Board approved funding for scholarship grants totaling $22,000 as listed on Attachment (A).

The Board continues to rejoice in the privilege of being able to encourage Christian students to use their gifts and interests for the glory of Christ in their particular vocation. Since the Foundation was established, by God's grace, over 259 scholarship have been awarded, totaling over $229,550 of scholarships. We are thankful to those churches that have contributed to the Pinebrook Educational Foundation.

At our board meeting on February 7, 2023, Board members Stephen C. Cassel and John J. Hanner were reappointed to serve additional three-year terms (terms now ending in 2026).

Pinebrook Educational Foundation Board: Stephen C. Cassel, Chairman; Andrew T. Crossgrove, Director; John W. Sullivan, Vice Chairman; Helen L. Gemmill, Secretary/ Treasurer; Raymond R. Dotts, John J. Hanner, Rachel Schmoyer.

Church Planter Timothy M. Zuck gives a devotional in conjunction with the graduation of Forks Community Church.

Attachment A

Applicant	Church	College/ University	Expected Degree/Major	Award Amount	PEF Fund
Alexa Crossgrove	Faith BFC, Harleysville, PA	Wilkes University	Bachelor's Degree/Nursing	$1000	The Luke 10:33, Nursing/Healthcare Endowment Fund
Paige Dalavai	Ephrata BFC, Ephrata, PA	Word of Life Bible Institute	Bachelor's Degree/Bible and Accounting	$1000	The Ungerer Memorial Scholarship
Kimberly Dean	Cedar Crest BFC, Allentown, PA	Word of Life Bible Institute	Bachelor's Degree/Bible	$1000	The Ungerer Memorial Scholarship
Sydney Herb	Lebanon BFC, Lebanon, PA	Moody Bible Institute	Bachelor's Degree/Applied Linguistics	$1000	The Charles D. Weaver Scholarship Fund
Zachariah Herb	Lebanon BFC, Lebanon, PA	Moody Bible Institute	Bachelor's Degree/Pastoral Studies	$1000	The Ungerer Memorial Scholarship
Lisa Huber	Faith BFC, Lancaster, PA	Cairn University	One Life Institute	$1000	The Charles D. Weaver Scholarship Fund
Seth Johnson	Salem BFC, Lehighton, PA	Word of Life Bible Institute	Bachelor's Degree/Bible	$1000	The Charles D. Weaver Scholarship Fund
Jack Kauffman	Grace BFC, Reading, PA	Liberty University	Bachelor's Degree/Biology	$1000	The Ungerer Memorial Scholarship
Grace Lenahan	Calvary BFC, Shamokin, PA	Cedarville University	Bachelor's Degree/Nursing	$1000	The Luke 10:33, Nursing/Healthcare Endowment Fund
Ferdinand Madera	Calvary BFC, Shamokin, PA	Lancaster Bible College	Bachelor's Degree/Music Education	$1000	The Charles D. Weaver Scholarship Fund
Juan Carlos Morales	Christ Alone Fellowship, Lancaster, PA	Metro Baltimore Seminary	Bachelor's Degree/Theology	$1000	The Daniel K. Ziegler Memorial Scholarship Fund
Lillian Morton	BFC of Newark, Newark, DE	York College of PA	Bachelor's Degree/Nuclear Medicine	$1000	The Luke 10:33, Nursing/Healthcare Endowment Fund
Leilah Sallee	Trinity BFC, Blandon, PA	University of Delaware	Bachelor's Degree/Nutrition and Dietetics	$1000	The Charles D. Weaver Scholarship Fund
Hannah Shane	Trinity BFC, Blandon, PA	Lancaster Bible College	Bachelor's Degree/ Communications	$1000	The Charles D. Weaver Scholarship Fund
Kendra Smith	Cherrydale Baptist Church, Arlington, VA	Bob Jones University	Bachelor's Degree/Education	$1000	The Pinebrook Junior College Scholarship Fund
Twila Smith	Cherrydale Baptist Church, Arlington, VA	Bob Jones University	Bachelor's Degree/Education	$1000	The Pinebrook Junior College Scholarship Fund
Benjamin Spacek	New Life BFC Oley, PA	Cedarville University	Bachelor's Degree/Accounting	$1000	The Charles D. Weaver Scholarship Fund

Applicant	Church	College/ University	Expected Degree/Major	Award Amount	PEF Fund
Edwin Suthers	Grace BFC Steelton, PA	Westminster Theological Seminary	Doctor of Ministry Degree/Evangelism and Missions	$1000	The Rev. & Mrs. R.C. Reichenbach Fund
Nathan Trommler	Grace BFC Reading, PA	Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary	Master's Degree/ Biblical Counseling and History/Doctrine	$1000	The Rev. & Mrs. R.C. Reichenbach Fund
Josiah Valentine	Trinity BFC Blandon, PA	Kutztown University	Bachelor's Degree/ Applied Digital Arts	$1000	The Ungerer Memorial Scholarship
Phoebe Weber	Trinity BFC Blandon, PA	Liberty University	Bachelor's Degree/ Psychology	$1000	The Charles D. Weaver Scholarship Fund
Dylan Yellets	Trinity BFC Blandon, PA	Messiah University	Bachelor's Degree/ Physical Therapy	$1000	The Charles D. Weaver Scholarship Fund

Pinebrook Educational Foundaiton
Statements of Financial Position
December 31, 2021 and December 31, 2022

	2022	2021
ASSETS		
Cash	$ 13,954	$ 14,322
Investments	501,717	593,999
Verizon Stock	2,285	6,027
Total assets	$ 517,956	$ 614,348
NET ASSETS		
Without donor restrictions		
Undesignated	$ 782	$ 782
Board designated	125,587	176,630
Total net assets without donor restrictions	126,369	177,412
With donor restrictions		
Temporarily restricted	54,157	89,698
Permanently restricted	337,430	347,238
Total net assets with donor restrictions	391,587	436,936
Total net assets	$ 517,956	$ 614,348

Pinebrook Educational Foundaiton
Statements of Revenues, Expenses, and Other Changes in Net Assets
Years Ended December 31, 2022 and December 31, 2021

	2022	2021
REVENUES AND EXPENSES		
Investment income (loss)	-86,861	83,010
Contributions received	13,800	15,645
Scholarships awarded	-22,000	-12,000
Administrative expense	-1,331	-219
Other		100,000
INCREASE (DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS	-96,392	186,436
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING	614,348	427,912
NET ASSETS, ENDING	$ 517,956	$ 614,348

Report of the Youth & Young Adults Committee

Over the course of 2022, the Youth and Young Adults Committee met three times to conduct its business, and its three committees met as needed.

In February, Jen Whylings resigned from the Administrative Assistant position after serving in the role for almost two years due to personal health concerns. While her heart is still with the committee, she needed to step away at this time. Melissa Adams also stepped away from the committee due to other responsibilities. The committee is grateful for their selfless dedication and service to the Lord. Loren Skinker, Director of Communications at Cedar Crest BFC, joined the Youth & Young Adults Committee and has been an asset to the events sub-committee. In July, Bekah Manwiller stepped into the Administrative Assistant position. The Youth & Young Adults Committee looks forward to continuing to serve the youth and young adults of the BFC.

Events Sub-Committee

This committee is charged with planning events for the gathering and building up of youth ministries within the BFC. We held two weekends of Sno-Glo in January, 2022. Our theme was "You are What You Think," with David A. Smith of Bethel BFC in Emmaus serving as teacher. Worship through song in weekend one was led by Dave Zettlemoyer of Bethany BFC in Hatfield, leading the band Splosh. Boyce College's Worship Collective, from Louisville, KY, led musical worship in weekend two. Benjamin J. Armstrong continues to lead the Sno-Glo program and does an excellent job. We had a total of 574 attendees and 27 churches.

Sno-Glo 2023 took place over two weekends in January with Rand Hummel as speaker and Boyce Worship Collective leading music. The theme for both weekends was "Be Still & Know," based on Psalm 46:10.

We held Core Challenge at Victory Valley Camp in April, 2022; Lincoln Fitch taught on Gospel Foundations for a Changing World, a study of Genesis 1-3. We continue to evaluate the events we plan for the BFC youth groups.

Due to lack of interest and also a partnership with Curt Cutler, the director of Victory Valley Camp, we decided for 2023 to hold off on several of the events we usually do other than Sno-Glo. For the future, the plan is for Victory Valley to host and organize several youth and youth leader events this coming fall and beyond with the assistance and support of the events committee.

Leadership Sub-Committee

This committee exists to provide assistance and resources for the leaders of the Youth and Young Adult ministries in Bible Fellowship Churches, especially those that don't have a paid staff member overseeing these ministries. One of the resources we have put together is the "Another Youth Ministry Podcast." Whereas there are no recent episodes available at this time, we have assembled a large catalogue of episodes covering various topics.

The leadership committee is interested in partnering with the events committee to put on a local conference for youth workers and parents in order to train and inform

them about current cultural realities and the different pressures their teens are facing and to equip them to face these challenges together.

Young Adults Sub-Committee

The young adults committee continues to work to develop connections with young adults across the denomination and to encourage involvement in their local churches. Last year was something of a hiatus year in terms of denomination-wide young adults events. Jeremy L. Harkins, chairman of the young adults committee, has been focusing on his local church and the additional responsibilities he has taken on as Ebenezer BFC continues to search for a lead pastor. There were a number of young adults who participated in the BFC Day of Prayer in March at Cedar Crest BFC; several also volunteered as student leaders at Sno-Glo or served at Victory Valley Camp over the summer.

As we look to the future and plan YA events our prayer is to see equipping and developing men and women who can lead and serve in the local body of Christ! We continue to look for opportunities to grow this generation to carry the torch of the gospel as the harvest is plentiful! Please don't hesitate to email Jeremy for anything in regards to YA ministry within the denomination at jeremy@aplaceforyou.org.

Board of Youth and Young Adults: Timothy S. Hogan, Chairman; Cory E. Arnold, Vice-Chairman; Bekah Manwiller, Secretary; Jared Burkholder, Treasurer; Jarrod J. Cruise, Jeremy L. Harkins, Sandy H. Holbert, Loren Skinker, Christopher M. Von Holt.

Assistant Secretary Bryan C. McNally and Jared M. Burkholder, Assistant to the Secretary, keep the technology aspects of Conference running smoothly.

Report of the Ministerial Candidate Committee

God has been bringing men to the Bible Fellowship Church for ministry. The list of men continues to grow. Churches looking for men to serve in them can begin their search by looking through this list. We can be grateful for the interest and desire to serve in our denomination.

The Committee met seven times since our last report. Ten men were interviewed during that time. We continue to oversee men who are working on the Equivalency Training Program.

The following men were approved as probationers eligible to receive a call: James L. Farver, Jr., Eric E. Herb Jr.

Probationer licenses were issued to James L. Farver, Jr., Tracy Haines, Jeremy L. Harkins, John D. Haruna, Sandy Holbert, Michael Meadows, Michael Notary.

William A. Burton, Adam Crain, Daniel J. Hoffstetter, and John P. Sullivan were recommended to the Ministerial Credentials Committee for ordination or ordination recommendation.

The Orientation Seminar will be held on June 6-7, 2023. The program has been streamlined and shortened to two days.

Resolved, that the following list of men under the care of the Ministerial Candidate Committee be approved:

Probationers

(Probationers have completed all preliminary testing and are approved for service in a Bible Fellowship Church. Licensed probationers are serving under a call and are indicated by the year of their licensure in parentheses.)

Beltran, Luis, E.	Reading, PA
Burton, William A. (2020)	Birdsboro, PA
Crain, Adam (2021)	Allentown, PA
Dobrowolski, Richard	Allentown, PA
Farver Jr., James L.	Easton, PA
Franklin, Neil J. (2021)	Millersville, PA
Haines, Tracy (2022)	Chestertown, MD
Harkins, Jeremy, L. (2022)	Saylorsburg, PA
Haruna, John D. (2022)	Middletown, DE
Hebel, Andrew R. (2020)	Newark, DE
Herb Jr., Eric E.	Lebanon, PA
Hoffstetter, Daniel J. (2020)	Topton, PA

Holbert, Sandy (2022)	Shillington, PA
H, D. (2019)	Paradise, PA
Meadows, Michael (2022)	Green Lane, PA
Miller, Andrew J. (2021)	Harleysville, PA
Notary, Michael (2022)	Bethlehem, PA
Paquette, Richard	Reading, PA
Ross, Benjamin	Shillington, PA
Sullivan, John, P. (2021)	Piscataway, NJ
Vargas, Ricardo (2021)	Spring Grove, PA

Candidates

(Candidates have been interviewed and approved to take the Open Book Examination.)

Bogert, Peter	Center Valley, PA
Brunstetter, Marcus	Easton, PA
Crawford, Daryl	New Tripoli, PA
Folks, Jayonn	Harrisburg, PA
Giampa, Jeffrey, G.	Idyllwild, CA
Heath, Todd	Reading, PA
Herb, Benjamin	Newhall, CA
Hitchcock, Benenz	Quakertown, PA
Knapp Sr., James R.	Washington Boro, PA
Lenick, Michael	Manheim, PA
Lintner, Andrew	Millsboro, DE
Lockhart Jr., Thomas	Fleetwood, PA
Miller, Nathanael A.	Columbia, PA
Molina, Immer N. M.	Tapachula Chiapas, Mexico
Musselman, Jason	Slatington, PA
Noll, Matt	Denver, PA
Rohrbach, Shawn	Fleetwood, PA
Swanson, Thomas	Denver, PA
Trommler, Nathan G.	Reading, PA

Valle, Marco, A.	Brick, NJ
Vasel, Andrew J.	Pottstown, PA
Vega, Isaias	Wernersville, PA
Von Holt, Joshua	Northampton, PA
Waterman, Daniel D.	Allentown, PA
Zwingel, Jon	Easton, PA

Ministerial Candidate Committee: Andrew T. Crossgrove, Chairman; Richard E. Taylor, Secretary; Joshua P. Miller, Application Secretary; Andrew W. Barnes, Mark E. Barninger, David E. Gundrum, David A. Smith.

Kevin W. Kirkpatrick talks with Andrew R. Hebel
while elder Andrew Littlejohn listens.

Report of the Ministerial Credentials Committee

The Ministerial Credentials Committee held two in-person meetings and one Zoom meeting since last Conference.

The Faith and Order questionnaire was available to fill out online again and an email was sent by way of the bfc-pastors@emaildodo.com to the ministers holding Ordination Credentials with the Bible Fellowship Church. We are thankful for the great response from our pastors. If you are a pastor and have not signed up to receive bfc-ac and bfc-pastors@emaildodo.com emails, it is important that you get signed up. This is the main communication by the BFC to our pastors. It is easy to sign up; contact Rachel Schmoyer or Jodi Shorb at the BFC Office to do so.

The Lord in His providence has chosen to take home Daniel P. Allen, Roy A. Hertzog, Carl K. Spackman, and Dean A. Stortz since the last BFC Conference. We thank God for the many years of ministry these men had and for so faithfully serving Jesus Christ. One glorious day we will worship our Savior with them again. Please be in prayer for their families.

The Credentials Committee has the privilege of attending local recognition services of the men who are ordained and credentialed at our BFC Conferences. It is a wonderful time of celebrating what the Lord has done in bringing more quality, God-fearing men to the ministry. Attending an ordination service in your local region continues to be an important opportunity to show love and support of men called of God to minister alongside us as brothers. We are grateful for those who are present at the services of recognition. We strongly encourage all our pastors to make ordination and installation services in their region a priority. Please put these services on your calendars and affirm these brothers in the Lord's call on their lives.

When a man desires to enter the Chaplaincy in the military, he is required to have an endorser. The Ministerial Credentials Committee chairman, or another BFC-ordained minister other than the chairman appointed by and under the authority of the Ministerial Credentials Committee, shall be the endorser for the BFC to the General Commission on Chaplains and Armed Forces Personnel. We are thankful for the many faithful years that Pastor Dennis M. Cahill served on the Credentials Committee as the chairman and endorser. Dennis has a desire to see this ministry to our chaplains continue and so we are grateful for Pastor Clifford B. Boone's willingness to be the endorser this year at the military chaplains meeting. The Ministerial Credentials Committee approves men to serve in the military as chaplains serving as representatives of the BFC. Therefore, we thank those who serve in the military and recognize chaplaincy provides a unique opportunity to reach the lost. Any ordained pastor interested in the military chaplaincy should contact the Credentials Committee chairman.

The following changes in status were approved:

Jonathan H. King was changed from Ordained Ministers Between Calls to Ordained Ministers on Leave of Absence.

Philip E. Morrison was changed from Ordained Ministers Working Under the Direction of the Board of Missions of the BFC to Ordained Ministers in Retirement or on Disability.

Donald E. Kuntzman was changed from Ordained Minister Working Under the Direction of the Bible Fellowship Church to Ordained Ministers in Retirement or on Disability.

Louis Prontnicki was changed from Ordained Minister Working Under the Direction of the Bible Fellowship Church to Ordained Ministers in Retirement or on Disability.

Richard D. Harris was changed from Ordained Minister Working Under the Direction of the Bible Fellowship Church to Ordained Ministers in Retirement or on Disability.

Dennis W. Spinney was changed from Ordained Minister Working Under the Direction of the Bible Fellowship Church to Ordained Ministers in Retirement or on Disability.

Byron Widger was changed from Ordained Minister Working Under the Direction of the Bible Fellowship Church to Ordained Ministers in Retirement or on Disability.

Nathaniel C. LeTowt was changed from Ordained Minister Working Under the Direction of the Bible Fellowship Church to Ordained Ministers Working in Non-BFC Churches.

David E. Brandt was changed from Ordained Minister Working Under the Direction of the Bible Fellowship Church to Ordained Ministers Working in Other Christian Ministries.

Gerald D. Clark was changed from Ordained Inactive Ministers to allowing his credentials to be dropped after ten years in various categories.

Jason W. Blair was changed from Ordained Ministers on Leave of Absence to asking for his credentials to be removed.

David J. Peters was changed from Ordained Minister Working Under the Direction of the Bible Fellowship Church to Ordained Ministers Working in Non-BFC Churches.

The Committee met with William A. Burton III for ordination examination and also met with Adam K. Crain and Daniel J. Hoffstetter for recognition of previous ordinations. The Ministerial Credentials Committee gives thanks to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who has given these gifted men for the ministry of the Bible Fellowship Church.

Freddy A. Chi was also interviewed by the Ministerial Credentials Committee before the 2023 BFC Conference and was approved to be recommended to Conference for ordination. Due to COVID concerns and the U.S. travel restrictions, Freddy is not able to attend Conference. However, the Credentials Committee is planning an ordination service for Freddy in Mexico and will combine this service with the local church recognition of ordination service. We are planning on sending two or three ordained men to represent the BFC Conference and the Credentials Committee.

Whereas, the Ministerial Candidate Committee has recommended ordination for William A. Burton III and Freddy A. Chi, and

Whereas, the Ministerial Candidate Committee has recommended Adam K. Crain and Daniel J. Hoffstetter for recognition of previous ordination, and

Whereas, these brethren have served acceptably as ministers of the Bible Fellowship Church for the required period of time or the equivalent thereof, and

Whereas, after examination, the Ministerial Credentials Committee believes these men to be called of God to the gospel ministry and to be in accord with the Faith & Order of the Bible Fellowship Church, therefore be it

Resolved, that William A. Burton III and Freddy A. Chi be ordained to the gospel ministry of the Bible Fellowship Church, and that Adam K. Crain and Daniel J. Hoffstetter be recommended for recognition of previous ordinations.

The Ministerial Credentials Committee has placed our Ordained Ministers in the following categories as of the date of this report. (These men are eligible to serve a Bible Fellowship Church):

I. Ordained Ministers Working Under the Direction of the BFC (Voting Members)

Allen, David T.
Allison, Scott A.
Arcieri, James
Barnes, Andrew W.
Barninger, Mark E.
Benack, Jesse A.
Bertolet, Raymond R.
Bickel, Mark A.
Boyer, Brad L.
Brush, R. Jerome
Bunting, Wesley H.
Burgess, Ronnie
Burkholder, Jared
***Burton, William A. III**
***Chi, Freddy A.**
Coffman, Beau E.
Cowen, Timothy S.
***Crain, Adam K.**
Crossgrove, Andrew T.
Cruise, Jarrod J.
Davies, Larry W.
DelDuco, Steven J.
Diaz, Stephen A.
Dupiche, Joshua A.
Erb, Ronald C.
Filbert, Jason A.
Fischer, Carl J., Jr.
Gibson, Joshua P.
Grossman, Randall A.
Gundrum, David E.
Hanner, John J.
Harvey, Paul S.
***Hoffstetter, Daniel J.**
Hogan, Timothy S.
Hoy, Jason L.
Hull, Jules J. III
Johnson, Robert A.
Kauffman, Jeffrey A.
King, Daniel W.
Kirkpatrick, Kevin W.
Klase, Joel B.
Kohl, Ronald L.
Krall, Daniel Z.
Long, Keith M.
LoRusso, John R.
Mack, Ezekiel R.
Madara, Ferdie R.
McNally, Bryan C.
Miller, Joshua P.
Morales, Juan Carlos
Morrison, Mark L.
Morton, Steven J.
Nessler, Timothy R.
Orton, Mark R.
Parsons, Barry T.
Poland, David M.
Radcliff, Timothy S.
Ramirez, Marcos G.
Ravis, Richard B.
Reed, Calvin T.
Reff, James D. II.
Ritter, Ralph E.
Rissmiller, S. Wayne
Rodriguez, Carlos G.
Schmoyer, Timothy J.
Schoen, David N.
Siegrist, Roger L.
Smith, Aaron D.
Smith, David A.
Smith, Ronald B.
Soper, Ralph M.
Strunk, Keith A.
Susek, Aaron J.
Sweet, L. Marc
Triestman, Benjamin J.
Verdon II, William C.
Von Holt, Christopher M.
Walker, Michael W.
Wagner, R. Daniel
Williams, Daniel L.
Wright, R. Scott
Yerrington, Philip E.
Zuck, Timothy M.

* Contingent upon approval of recommendation of their ordination in this report.

II. Ordained Ministers Working Under the Direction of the Board of Missions of the BFC: (Voting Members)

Evans, Scott B.
Head, Jim D.
Istrate, Daniel
Johnston, Walter M.
Moyer, Jerry L.
Riddell, David W.
Studenroth, John C.

**Approved at the 2020 BFC Conference

III. Ordained Ministers Working in the Chaplaincy Under the Sponsorship of the BFC: (May be voting members)

Mack, Ezekiel R. – Military
Susek, Jacob, J., Jr. – Fellowship Manor

IV. Ordained Ministers Working in Other Christian Ministries: (May be voting members)

Bertolet, Timothy J.
Bomgardner, Clyde D., Jr.
Brandt, David E.
Clineff, Kevin W.
Dunn, William J.
Eyster, Jordan K.
Tannous, Michael J.

V. Ordained Ministers Working in Non-BFC Churches: (Advisory Members)

Commerford, Robert S. (2015)
Curcio, Louis S. (2015)
Hunter, Justin L. (2015)
Lawrence, Dennis J. (2015)
LeTowt, Nathaniel C. (2022)
Peters, David J. (2023)
Pollock, Thomas A. (2019)
Ramos, Elliot H. (2020)

VI. Ordained Ministers Between Calls: (Voting Members)

Carder, Greg W. (2021)
Fox, Sean A. (2022)
Martin, Carl T. (2015; 2018; 2020; 2021)
Morrison, Thomas H. (2016)

VII. Ordained Ministers on Leave of Absence: (Advisory members)

King, Jonathan H, (2021;2023)
Lauterback, Stanley P. (2020; 2022)

VIII. Ordained Ministers in Retirement or on Permanent Disability: (May be voting members)

Aukamp, William A.	Felty, Glenn R.	Morrison, Philip E.	Taylor, Richard E.
Baker, Delbert R. II.	Gehman, Richard J.	Norris, Philip G.	Thomann, David A.
Barber, Kenneth F.	Harris, Richard D.	Paashaus, Richard T.	Uhrich, Gregory A.
Bickings, Richard F.	Heller, LeRoy S.	Plows, Keith E.	Vandegriff, John C., Jr.
Bigley, T. James, Jr.	Herb, John H.	Prontnicki, Louis	Way, David R.
Boone, Clifford B.	Hoyle, Ronald W.	Reitz, Roger L.	Weaber, Harold C.
Buck, Leonard E.	Jones, David H.	Ruhl, Jeffrey L.	Weller, Dana E.
Cahill, Dennis M.	Kappes, W. Scott	Schlonecker, David K.	Wells, Howard N.
Clapier, G. Wayne	Kuntzman, Donald E.	Schlonecker, William G.	Widger, Byron
Cole, Charles E.	Lenahan, Frank E.	Shelly, Austin G.	Zimmerman, Paul G.
Coulbourn, Hugh C., Jr.	Mahurin, Ronald C.	Shorb, Thomas P.	
Dodson, Richard C.	Manney, David L.	Sloan, Robert A., Jr.	
Dotts, Raymond R.	Moyer, Duane E.	Smith, Gene W.	
Ellingson, Bruce A.	Moyer, Richard A.	Spinney, Dennis W.	

** do not meet requirements to vote

IX. Ordained Inactive Ministers: (Advisory members)

Dommel, Albert J. (2014; 2017; 2019)
Edwards, Joshua D. (2015; 2018; 2020)
Gysi, Andrew T. (2016; 2018)

Annual Agreement with the Faith and Order of the Bible Fellowship Church

Each year all ordained men under the care of the Ministerial Credentials Committee are required to submit a form indicating their agreement with the Articles of Faith of the Bible Fellowship Church and any reservations they might have. They are to state these reservations each year.

The reservations reported this year are as follows:

- Article 20-1 – that we should be more inclusive on the mode of post salvation baptism – 1
- Article 21 – about the wording; think it should be set aside for restful worship – 1
- 24-2; 25; 27-3 – pre-millennialism/millennialism – 8 plus 1 with serious reservations – 9

We have allowed the above reservations with caution. Our Faith & Order states what the Bible Fellowship Church believes. We have agreed, as a Conference (fellowship of churches) that what we have written is what we believe God's word teaches.

Our Faith & Order states:

511-5.2 (4.1) No minister shall be allowed to hold credentials in the Bible Fellowship Church who does not subscribe to our Articles of Faith and endeavor to follow the Rules of Order except as allowed by the Ministerial Credentials Committee. Those who are allowed to hold reservations must teach in accordance with the Articles of Faith.

God is pleased when brothers work together; "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1)

Therefore, our caution is that we do not allow these reservations to divide us. Having a different doctrinal view is not necessarily wrong or sinful but can be if it brings about division in the body of Christ.

A man may, and can, have a reservation with our Articles of Faith but recognize that they are essential, not only as our agreed-upon statement of doctrine, but as that which guides our teaching and unifies our churches; as our Faith & Order states, we "must teach

in accordance with the Articles of Faith." If a pastor cannot do that, he is to contact and meet with the Ministerial Credentials Committee.

The Credentials Committee Makes the Following Additional Recommendations:

1. **Resolved**, that an Ordination Service be held at the 140th BFC Conference; and be it further
2. **Resolved**, that Exeter Bible Fellowship Church, Exeter, PA. and Iglesia Biblica La Roca church, Merida, YUCATAN, Mexico be encouraged to hold services in recognition of the ordinations of William J. Burton III and Freddy A. Chi, respectively; and that Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church, Allentown, PA and Redeemer Bible Fellowship Church, Topton, PA be encouraged to hold services in recognition of previous ordinations for Adam K. Crain and Daniel J. Hoffstetter, and that these churches be encouraged to invite the Ministerial Credentials Committee to send representation to be present at each service.

Ministerial Credentials Committee: S. Wayne Rissmiller, Chairman; Jason L. Hoy, Vice-Chairman; Ralph M. Soper, Secretary; Jesse A. Benack, Keith M. Long, Keith A. Strunk, R. Scott Wright.

Carlos G. Rodriguez and Marco Valle speak together during one of the break times.

Report of the Ministerial Relations Committee

The Ministerial Relations Committee assists churches and pastors during transitions in ministry. The committee normally holds three regular meetings per year. In 2022, we met three times. We conducted the remainder of our normal business via email. In addition, committee representatives conversed throughout the year with pastors and churches seeking a pastor. We also met with elders and pastors to seek to strengthen the relationship between them.

The following **resignations** occurred according to our rules this year:

Church	Pastor	Effective Date
Kutztown, PA	Ezekiel R. Mack	March 1, 2022
Lagrangeville, NY	Dennis W. Spinney	May 1, 2022
Zionsville, PA	Bryan C. McNally	May 1, 2022
Maple Glen, PA	Louis Prontnicki	June 30, 2022
Long Neck, DE	Andrew W. Barnes, Sr.	July 31, 2022
Denville, NJ	Richard D. Harris	August 1, 2022
Sunbury, PA	Jules J. Hull III	August 21, 2022
Lebanon, PA	David E. Brandt	October 31, 2022
Newark, DE	Daniel W. King	July 7, 2022
Townsend, DE	John D. Haruna	December 31, 2022
Coopersburg, PA	David J. Peters	March 26, 2023
Finesville, NJ	Byron Widger	April 9, 2023

The following **calls** were issued according to our rules this year:

Church	Pastor	Effective Date
Ephrata, PA	Daniel Z. Krall	January 17, 2022
Townsend, DE	John D. Haruna (bi-vocational)	January 18, 2022
Bethlehem, PA	Michael Notary	February 21, 2022
Bethlehem, PA	Jeremy L Harkins	February 21, 2022
Church Ext Min	Tracy D. Haines	May 15, 2022
Kutztown, PA	Sandy H. Holbert	May 22, 2022
Harrisburg, PA	Andrew W Barnes, Sr.	August 5, 2022

Red Hill, PA	Michael Meadows	August 14, 2022
Reading, PA	Bryan C. McNally	August 28, 2022
Allentown/CC	Jules J. Hull III	August 29, 2022
Royersford, PA	Daniel W. King	December 12, 2022
Lebanon, PA	Eric Herb, Jr.	January 18, 2023
Quakertown, PA	Ezekiel R. Mack	February 7, 2023
Mt. Pocono, PA	James L. Farver	March 12, 2023
Long Neck, DE	Richard F. Bickings	May 1, 2023

The following churches are seeking a pastor (either a senior pastor or other pastoral staff member): Bethlehem, PA; Carmel, NY; Clinton Corners, NY; Coopersburg, PA; Denville, NJ; Finesville, NJ; Lagrangeville, NY; Lebanon, PA; Nazareth, PA: Steelton, PA; Zionsville, PA.

Pulpit supply and interim pastoral ministry have been graciously provided by the Lord to each of these churches. At the same time, the Committee routinely prays for God's provision of a pastor for each church and we ask Conference to do the same.

As a reminder to boards of elders, during times of pastoral transition, the board of elders needs to obtain the approval of the Ministerial Relations Committee before hiring an interim pastor who does not hold BFC credentials (see 409-1.1(1)).

Conference Pastor

Conference Pastor Ralph M. Soper continues his ministry to our pastors; he is now in his seventh year in this role. We thank the Lord for our brother who has faithfully cared for our ministering brethren, extending compassionate friendship and providing wise counsel.

Pastoral Compensation Proposals

The Committee reminds our churches of three resource booklets: Guidelines for the Pastoral Relations Committee, Guidelines for the Pastoral Search Committee, and Guidelines for Preparing for Pastoral Retirement. Copies are available online at https://www.bfc.org/resources/documents-for-pastors-and-churches/

The Committee makes the following recommendation and resolution to the 140th BFC Conference:

The Committee reminds churches' Pastoral Relations Committee to meet twice a year with each of its pastors, and once a year to consider the adequacy of his compensation package and to adjust where necessary (see 402-1.1 Duties 1 and 2). The Committee reminds each church of its responsibility to fulfill the terms of the pastor's call with respect to Social Security tax, parsonage and/or housing allowance, health insurance, and reimbursement for car and professional expenses. The Committee recommends that the church structure the pastor's salary package to provide maximum tax advantage to him.

Resolved, that each church provide a minimum of 3% of the pastor's salary for retirement, plus an additional 1% match if the pastor is voluntarily contributing 1%.

We are saying farewell and well-done to the long-time chairman of our committee. Byron Widger has served as our chairman since 2011, and has been a member since 2007. He has faithfully served our fellowship by helping churches and pastors during transition. The committee will miss his joyful leadership. Byron retired from ministry in early April 2023 and we pray for God's best as he transitions into his retirement years.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ministerial Relations Committee

Ministerial Relations Committee: Byron Widger, Chairman; Timothy J. Schmoyer, Secretary; Randall A. Grossman, Glen LeSuer, Ronald W. Reed, William G. Schlonecker, J. Robert Vaughn.

Donald McKinney, elder from Calvary BFC in Sinking Spring, PA, prays before a session of Conference. Donald has been serving as a delegate for over 40 years.

Report of the BFC Life Committee

The BFC Life Committee continues its work toward "promoting spiritual growth and fellowship within the BFC by providing ministry, retreat/advancement, and recreational opportunities within the denomination." The committee has continued to work with the leadership of Pinebrook/Spruce Lake to partner in a way that utilizes their experience and strengths while preserving the BFC distinctives in our ministry opportunities. This was especially evident in our Summer Bible Conference weeks as Pinebrook assumed several additional programming and staff responsibilities.

During the past year, several ministries were planned and implemented by the BFC Life Committee:

1. The Ladies Retreat was held in the spring with a positive response and encouraging time of worship, teaching, and fellowship. Casi Hoyle was the speaker.
2. The three weeks of Summer Bible Conference were held at Pinebrook. Speakers/Host Pastors for the three respective weeks included Todd Mangum/Andrew T. Crossgrove; Bryan Nevin/William G. Schlonecker; Peter Teague/Ronald L. Kohl. Attendance rebounded well from the several summers affected by COVID.
3. The Senior Saints Retreat was held in the fall with Dana E. Weller and Richard E. Taylor speaking. This retreat is a highlight for those who attend.

The following upcoming events are on the agenda for 2023:

1. The Spring Ladies Retreat is scheduled for May 5-7 with Kandy Hughes speaking.
2. Three Summer Bible Conferences will be held at Pinebrook. Speakers/Host Pastors for the three weeks are as follows: July 9-14 – Todd Mangum/Andrew T. Crossgrove; July16-21 – Philip E. Morrison/S. Wayne Rissmiller; July 23-28 – Randall A. Grossman/Ronald L. Kohl. We strongly urge folks to consider these wonderful times of worship, study of the Word, and fellowship.
3. The BFC Senior Saints Retreat is scheduled for October 16-20 with speaker(s) yet to be confirmed.

The committee is grateful for the continued support of various BFC churches. While some of our BFC-sponsored activities are self-funded, others need additional support to offer quality opportunities for the people of the BFC. If your desire is to support the BFC-sponsored ministry opportunities at Pinebrook, donations should be earmarked for the BFC Life Committee and sent to "BFC Life Committee, PO Box 3555, Allentown, PA, 18106."

The Committee welcomes suggestions of how the BFC-sponsored events can be improved as well as other events that could be held which promote our purpose. Suggestions can be sent to our committee secretary, Rachel Kessler, at

racheltaylorkessler@gmail.com. The committee wishes to recognize Rachel for her integral role in planning and implementing ministry opportunities through the year.

Daniel P. Allen, who served as vice chairman of this committee since its inception and passionately promoted the BFC's continuing ministry at Pinebrook/Spruce Lake during the transition, went home to be with the Lord in February 2023. He will be sorely missed personally as well as for his valuable contributions to this committee.

BFC Life Committee: William G. Schlonecker, Chairman; Daniel P. Allen, Vice Chairman; Rachel Kessler, Secretary; David T. Allen, Treasurer; Lisa Kellerman, Richard T. Paashaus, S. Wayne Rissmiller, Dana E. Weller.

Richard Dobrowolski, co-pastor of Citylight Bible Church in the city of Allentown, PA, gives a devotional in conjunction with Citylight Bible Church's graduation from Church Extension Ministries.

Report of the Church Health Committee

Originally created as the "Committee to Assist Weak and Dying Churches," the current Church Health Committee continues today, nearly two decades later, with its mission of promoting strong church health in the Bible Fellowship Church (see Principles of Order 511-3.1). To accomplish this task, the elected members of the Church Health Committee met five times since the 139th BFC Conference. Each meeting was filled with prayerful discussion about various Particular Churches. Committee members (see table below) provided updates on the condition of specific BFC churches and various strategies for encouragement and support were often discussed. The elected members were helped in their work by the Church Health Pastor, Robert A. Sloan, Jr., and BFC Executive Director David T. Allen. The BFC denomination is very blessed to have these servants of Jesus Christ.

The Lord graciously used various members of the Church Health Committee to bring assistance to several BFC regions and churches in the last year. Mostly notably, along with the nimble and very effective leadership of the Faith BFC Harleysville elders, the committee assisted in the successful transition of the Maple Glen BFC to new leadership. This model of a strong BFC Particular Church sacrificially coming alongside a struggling sister church with an aim of re-establishing the weaker church group has been done excellently before (consider the Whitehall, PA, and Walnutport—now Northern Lehigh, PA—model). The committee would like to thank Pastor Andrew T. Crossgrove and the leadership at Harleysville for their fine work and would also like to encourage other Particular Churches to prayerfully consider and prepare for such an opportunity in the future.

The committee also continued its work of assisting several BFC churches and regions that are particularly vulnerable. Several challenging factors facing the committee continue to include limited availability and resources, less than ideal communication at times, and the fact that the Church Health Committee does not currently carry any authority to effectuate the necessary changes to restore health to these ministries. Admittedly, this has led to some frustration. However, the Lord has been faithful and continues to work to bring glory to His name throughout His church. The Second Reading legislation which elevated the current Church Health Committee to a new Board of Church Health department is enthusiastically supported. In order to accomplish our denominational vision to be "an expanding fellowship of churches united to make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ," we need an improved capacity to bring encouragement and expertise to a number of Particular Churches. We also need a dedicated champion for church revitalization. It is the committee's prayer that this legislation will pass at the 140th BFC Conference and that the coming year will see even more success in assisting struggling churches.

By way of reminder, the Church Health Committee has produced several useful tools to assist local church leaders in assessing church health. The Distinctives of a Healthy Church booklet and "Church Health Dashboard" are available upon request. Appointments with available members of the Church Health Committee and/or Church Health Pastor may be made by contacting the secretary. The following is a list of

consultants and resources for your consideration:

- **Church Health Pastor, BFC** – Robert A. Sloan, Jr.,

777rasjr@gmail.com, (267) 664-8163

- **Natural Church Development – NCD-International.org**

Carl Shank, CarlShankConsulting.com, (717) 385-6468

- **Nine Marks** – Mark Dever, Capitol Hill Baptist

9Marks.org, (202) 543-1224

- **The Center Consulting** – Jay Desko

CenterConsulting.org, (215) 723-2325

- **Church Consulting Service, Inc**. – Richard C. Dodson

Rcdodson26@gmail.com, (302) 740-7391

- **NAMB Church Replanting** – Mark Clifton

Churchreplanters.com

Finally, the Church Health Committee is in the process of reviewing the statistical information collected from each church. The committee thanks you for your timely and thorough efforts to provide this information. It is evident that God is working in powerful ways to build His church even here in the Bible Fellowship Church. Each church is important. Every congregation tells a story of God's amazing grace. The Church Health Committee exists to support that story of divine providence and power through the preaching of Christ, the prayers of the saints, and the promotion of gospel-centered ministry throughout the world.

Church Health Committee: Jason L. Hoy, Chairman; Steven J. DelDuco, Vice Chairman; Daniel L. Williams, Secretary; Wayne W. Batten, Clyde D. Bomgardner, Jr., Beau E. Coffman, Bryan C. McNally, Aaron D. Smith, Timothy M. Zuck. Ex-officio Members: David T. Allen, BFC Executive Director; Robert A. Sloan, Jr., Church Health Pastor.

Table 1.1

Church Health Committee (2022/23)

Church Care List

Jason L. Hoy	**Steven J. DelDuco**	**Daniel L. Williams**
Brick, NJ Lehighton, PA Maple Glen, PA (Welsh Rd.) Mt. Carmel, PA Newark, DE Newark, NJ Nazareth, PA	Carmel, NY Clinton Corners, NY Lagrangeville, NY Lebanon, PA Harrisburg (Edgemont), PA York, PA Dauphin, PA	Kutztown, PA Oley, PA Paradise, PA Piscataway, NJ Reading, PA La Roca de Reading, PA Zionsville, PA Camden, DE
Aaron D. Smith	**Beau E. Coffman**	**Wayne Batten**
Emmaus, PA Finesville, NJ Harleysville, PA Hatfield, PA Hellertown, PA	Denville, NJ Ephrata, PA Graterford, PA Harrisburg, PA Philadelphia, PA Mt. Pocono, PA	Long Neck, DE Stroudsburg, PA Sunbury, PA Terre Hill, PA Wallingford, PA Woodbury Heights, NJ
Clyde D. Bomgardner, Jr.	**Timothy M. Zuck**	**Bryan C. McNally**
Bethlehem, PA Blandon, PA Coopersburg, PA Lancaster, PA Quakertown, PA Townsend, DE Northern Lehigh, PA	Cedar Crest, PA Boyertown, PA Exeter, PA Fellow. Comm. (Whitehall, PA) Whitehall, PA Redeemer (W. Norriton, PA) Orchard Hills (Fogelsville, PA)	Las Cruces, NM Red Hill, PA Royersford, PA Shamokin, PA Sinking Spring, PA Spring City, PA Merida, Mexico

Report of the Committee to Examine 139th BFC Conference Minutes

The committee worked closely with the secretaries of the BFC Conference and gave feedback on corrections after reading the minutes at Conference and before the Yearbook was published. We appreciate the hard work of the secretaries.

The following corrections should be made to the 2022 official Conference minutes:

p. 10 Report of the Study Committee on the Examination of the BPL on Sexual Identity should read, in parentheses, "See page 125," not page 161.

p. 11 In the additions to BFC BPL article 103-3.2, the following items should be bold and underlined:

Paragraph one, line one: **and the gendered roles we play in it**

Paragraph two: **and determines each person's sex at conception.** This distinction **of male and female** is…

Paragraph five: **As sexual expression and sexual union are God's design and created according to His purpose, it is sinful for a man or woman to give in to the temptation to pursue or engage in changing the sex or gender they have been given by God.**

p. 28 The section on 103-4.6 should have the following bold and underlined as in their report on page 134:

103-4.6 Within the church there exist family units **such as single-parent and blended families as well as never-married adult singles who are a part of family units** that require special attention and mercy from the church. With prayer, loving support, wise counsel, and God's abundant grace these families **and individuals** can be nurtured. The church should gladly and unwaveringly supply comfort, encouragement, ~~affirmation~~ and deep fellowship for all family units **and individuals of family units for the ministry of the Word (Ephesians 4:16).**

p. 36 In fifth whereas delete ", along with wives and family members of our pastors and delegates,"

The following additional corrections should be made to the 2022 Yearbook:

p. ix Under BFC Life Committee remove the second comma and space after Paashaus in line two.

p. 39 In Study Committee on Mode of Baptism & Church Membership the *o* in "of" should be lower case.

p. 46 In the first paragraph line six should read: "went home to be with the Lord in 2021." Delete "recently (Cassel and Herb died in 2021, Gertrude Herb in 2020)." Gertrude Herb died on December 15, 2021.

p. 93 In the second sentence of paragraph four it should read "group of men."

p. 109 In the sixth sentence of the first paragraph, it should read "strengthen the relationship" (delete "of").

p. 116 Add R. Daniel Wagner to the list of members at the end of the report of the Committee to Examine the Minutes of the 138th BFC Conference.

p. 132 In the title of the report it should read "Mode of Believers' Baptism…" with the "o" in "of" in lower case.

p. 141 The Directory of Mission Boards should be page 152 in the Appendix.

p. 144 In the headings of the BFC Statistics, the listings should read "Ordained/ Probationers". The "p" in "Membership" is missing in one column and separated from the rest in the other column. It should probably be "Member-ship" in both cases.

p. 152 The heading "Directory of Mission Boards" should be at the top of this page, instead of page 154, where it is listed.

p. 162 James Ketner is an elder and delegate from Bethany BFC in Mt. Carmel and should not be listed as a pastor.

We greatly miss the expertise of Daniel P. Allen in his careful review of the material in the Appendix. He served this committee well for many years.

Committee to Examine the Minutes of the 139th BFC Conference: Daniel P. Allen, Chairman; Philip G. Norris, Richard E. Taylor, R. Daniel Wagner.

Report of the Committee to Examine Minutes of Particular Churches

Every year our congregations gather to celebrate the goodness of God over the past year. During those meetings, we are asked to take minutes so that we can record these times when God worked through us. At these gatherings, often there are concerns that are shared as well. We spend time in prayer for one another and the ministry of the Church in our community and around the world through our supported missionaries. The Committee to Examine the Minutes of Particular Churches gathers these reports and reviews them annually so that we can share in the praises of what God is doing. According to Article 510-1.2 of our Principles of Order, we are to review these minutes in order to make sure that whatever Bible Fellowship Church you attend, the way that church operates will be familiar and uniform.

In January, churches are sent a reminder and a checklist to make sure that certain reports are given to the congregation so that they can see how God is at work in their midst. Among these reports are a financial report (including a budget for the coming year), reports from both elder and deacon boards, and a report from the members of the pastoral staff. Along with the financial report, the committee asks that some sort of statement be included that gives evidence that a financial review or audit has taken place. This shows us and others that we are operating with financial transparency.

As the committee gathers, we look to see if these reports are presented during the congregational meetings. There are a few reports that seem to not be included more often than others: a report that tells us whether or not an outside source looked at the financial records, and a report from the pastoral relations committee.

We are one of the only committees that the Principles of Order mandates must receive reports from each congregation. This committee exists to make sure that the relationships of our pastors and congregations are solid. Almost one-third of the congregations who sent in their reports did not give evidence of a financial review, and a good number did not list that the pastoral relationship committee had met. On the other hand, we did see a great number of churches who sent in their minutes—almost two-thirds of our congregations! Thanks for those who spent time writing and sending in their reports and minutes for our review.

As with last year, a member of the Church Health Committee joined us to review the minutes and then took them to be reviewed by their committee so that they can better assist some of our struggling churches. Thanks again for all who sent in their minutes and may God continue to use our congregations to reach the lost and build up the church.

Committee to Examine the Minutes of Particular Churches: Kevin W. Kirkpatrick, Chairman/Secretary; Mark R. Orton, Barry T. Parsons, Roger L. Siegrist, Robert A. Sloan.

Report of the Conference Judicatory

The Conference Judicatory received no communications from any of the churches, departments, or individuals of the Bible Fellowship Church during this year. Therefore, there was no need to convene the Conference Judicatory.

Conference Judicatory: Clyde D. Bomgardner, Jr., Secretary; Kevin W. Kirkpatrick, Donald E. Kuntzman, Glenn McCaskey, Donald D. McKinney, David J. Peters, Rodney P. Plows, Ronald W. Reed, L. James Roberts, Jr., Dean A. Stortz.

Voting is an important part of Conference. Some voting takes place with a raise of hands. Other voting requires a ballot. For the past several years, ballot voting has been done digitally through a text message or a web-based program.

Report of the Beneficiary Society

Each year, the Beneficiary Society is able to minister to the pastors of the BFC and their families. All licensed/ordained BFC pastors are required by the Faith & Order to submit the annual dues amount (currently $100) to the society officers for the purpose of assisting the families of pastors who have died. The officers manage the money through investments and disperse the funds when a qualifying death takes place. The benefit is not to be considered as a life insurance policy; neither is it an investment from which one is guaranteed to receive a return. It is simply a way to help the family when a minister or his wife dies.

In 2022 benefits were paid to Jackie Ziegler, Helen Spackman, and Diane Hertzog upon the deaths of their husbands Daniel Ziegler, Carl Spackman, and Roy Hertzog, respectively.

The officers are thankful for the continued help of Richard Volpe and his firm, Asset Planning Management, in the management strategy of the society's assets.

Donald E. Kuntzman has stepped down from serving as an officer of the Beneficiary Society. The officers are thankful for David T. Allen's willingness to volunteer to fill the unexpired term and have appointed him to fill the position of Treasurer.

After their meeting on February 6, 2023, the officers propose that the following changes be made to the guidelines of the society as found in the Faith & Order, Part IV, Resources:

A. Organization (2) – "The ~~secretary's~~ annual report and the financial report shall be submitted at this meeting." (removing the word "secretary's")

B. Organization (4) – "The accounts of the~~ secretary and the~~ treasurer shall be submitted …" (remove the words "secretary and the")

C. Organization (7) – "The ~~secretary~~ treasurer is authorized to carry out …" (replace "secretary" with "treasurer")

D. Organization (7) - "If the ~~secretary~~ treasurer is unable to carry out his duties…" (replace "secretary" with "treasurer")

E. Organization (7) – "Benefits for members are paid by check~~, signed by two officers~~." (remove ", signed by two officers")

F. Aid Grants – Discontinue the benefit and remove the whole section

Beneficiary Society: Philip G. Norris, Chairman; Bryan C. McNally, Secretary; David T. Allen, Treasurer.

Beneficiary Society
Benefits Paid
January through December 2022

Type	Date	Name	Memo	Paid Amount
5160 · Benefits Paid				
Check	03/02/2022	Jackie Zeigler	Daniel Zeigler Death Benefit	6,000.00
Check	05/06/2022	Mrs. Helen Spackman	Carl Spackman Death Benefit	6,000.00
Check	10/11/2022	Diane Hertzog	Roy Hertzog Death Benefit	6,000.00
Total 5160 · Benefits Paid				18,000.00
TOTAL				**18,000.00**

Beneficiary Society
Balance Sheet
As of December 31, 2022

	Dec 31, 22	Dec 31, 21	$ Change
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Checking/Savings			
1000 · Cash & Cash Equivalents			
1001 · American Bank - Checking	19,192.75	26,427.16	-7,234.41
Total 1000 · Cash & Cash Equivalents	19,192.75	26,427.16	-7,234.41
1030 · Fidelity Investments	178,652.50	205,154.65	-26,502.15
1050 · Wells Fargo Investment Accounts			
1051 · Wells Fargo Securities	35,414.38	43,228.53	-7,814.15
1052 · Wells Fargo Cash	20,400.60	17,606.23	2,794.37
Total 1050 · Wells Fargo Investment Accounts	55,814.98	60,834.76	-5,019.78
Total Checking/Savings	253,660.23	292,416.57	-38,756.34
Accounts Receivable			
1100 · Dues Receivable	4,100.00	4,900.00	-800.00
Total Accounts Receivable	4,100.00	4,900.00	-800.00
Total Current Assets	257,760.23	297,316.57	-39,556.34
TOTAL ASSETS	**257,760.23**	**297,316.57**	**-39,556.34**
LIABILITIES & EQUITY			
Equity			
32000 · Retained Earnings	297,216.57	274,696.89	22,519.68
Net Income	-39,456.34	22,619.68	-62,076.02
Total Equity	257,760.23	297,316.57	-39,556.34
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	**257,760.23**	**297,316.57**	**-39,556.34**

Beneficiary Society
Income & Disbursements
January through December 2022

	Jan - Dec 22	Jan - Dec 21	$ Change
Income			
4100 · Dues Income	7,400.00	11,300.00	-3,900.00
4110 · Other Receipts	500.00	500.00	0.00
4200 · Investment Income			
4210 · Checking Account Interest	45.41	56.20	-10.79
4230 · Investment Account Interest	6,418.02	7,690.77	-1,272.75
Total 4200 · Investment Income	6,463.43	7,746.97	-1,283.54
4300 · Investment Inc/Dec Market Value	-37,776.52	15,072.71	-45,027.92
Total Income	-28,686.91	34,619.68	-50,211.46
Expense			
5100 · Board Expenses	43.25	0.00	43.25
5160 · Benefits Paid	18,000.00	12,000.00	6,000.00
Total Expense	18,043.25	12,000.00	6,043.25
Net Income	**-39,456.34**	**22,619.68**	**-56,254.71**

Report of the Ministerial Convention Committee

The annual Ministerial Convention was held on Monday and Tuesday, October 3-4, 2022. The theme was "Building Healthy Churches: Discipleship" as our brothers Beau E. Coffman and Jeffrey A. Kauffman brought four messages on biblical discipleship. Our pastors and some of their wives also had time to relax, fellowship, and worship together in song, prayer, and the Word.

The committee would like to thank everyone who attended and for your prayers for us as we continue to develop the Building Healthy Churches series. The convention provides an opportunity for us as pastors and leaders in the BFC to grow together in these important themes and to unite around our convictions as the Bible Fellowship Church.

The 2023 Ministerial Convention is scheduled for October 2-3, 2023. Our theme this year is "Building Healthy Churches: Regenerate Church Membership & Biblical Church Discipline." We want to encourage all BFC pastors and elders to attend this time of refreshment in the Word. The conference is also open to those outside the BFC. We encourage you to invite brothers from other churches in your area to attend.

We hope you mark it on your calendar and make it a priority.

Ministerial Convention Committee: Scott Wright, Chairman; Timothy R. Nessler, Secretary; Beau E. Coffman, Jeffrey A. Kauffman, Barry T. Parsons; Ralph M. Soper, Advisor.

The male voices reverberate throughout the room during the musical worship times at Conference.

Report of the Prayer Committee

The Prayer Committee exists to demonstrate the BFC's dependence on God, our desire to seek His face, and to encourage greater prayerfulness in and among our churches.

The committee met three times since the 139th Conference. In addition to planning the 2023 Day of Prayer, these meetings focused on ways to further cultivate prayer within the BFC. Particular attention was given to making resources more accessible online and providing further avenues for training and equipping pastors and leaders.

Michael W. Walker led a Praying Leader cohort through Strategic Renewal, aimed at helping pastors develop a greater prayer culture in their churches. A total of eight men met online for seven sessions between September and December, 2022. The cohort featured content from three different books and a variety of videos, while the online meetings involved thought-provoking discussion and encouragement on how to cultivate a prayer culture in the local church.

There is now a page on the BFC website (bfc.org/prayer) dedicated to prayer resources, including information on weekly Zoom prayer gatherings and links for the Day of Prayer. This page will also provide information on future training cohorts.

The 2022 Day of Prayer, "The Acts 6:7 Awakening," was held on March 12 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Guest speaker Len Crowley spoke on the apostles› dedication "to prayer and to the ministry of the Word" in Acts 6:4, and how the Lord added many disciples in Jerusalem as the Word of God continued to increase in Acts 6:7. Despite a severe snow storm that passed through the area, many braved the elements to attend.

The 2023 Day of Prayer, "The Lord is at Hand," will take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on March 11 at Cedar Crest BFC. The Prayer Committee is pleased to have Clifford B. Boone leading the morning session, while the afternoon session will feature smaller group prayer.

Finally, the Prayer Committee desires to support our BFC pastors in cultivating a deeper prayer culture within their local churches or regions. If you are interested in further training or support, please contact any of the committee members.

Prayer Committee: Daniel L. Williams, Chairman; Daniel W. King, Secretary; Michael W. Walker, Treasurer; Kevin W. Kirkpatrick, James D. Reff II, Michelle Sallee.

Report of the Study Committee to Review BPLs

Since it is our understanding that the current Committee to Review Biblical Principles for Living, having been appointed by the 135th BFC Conference, remains active until the 141st BFC Conference [April 2024] votes upon proposed study committees from our schedule of motions, and that the 142nd BFC Conference [April 2025] is then required to appoint a new Committee to Review Biblical Principles for Living in compliance with the requirement for said committee to be appointed every seven years, the Committee to Review the Biblical Principals for Living presents the following schedule of motions as part of our report to BFC Conference.

Motion to 140th BFC Annual Conference (April 2023):

Resolved, that the BFC Conference appoint a committee to examine the matter of addictive behaviors, and, if it deems necessary and appropriate, to prepare statements. Examples of addictive behaviors include, but are not limited to, pornography, other sexual addictions, computer gaming, gluttony, eating disorders, and gambling. *Possibly adding to "Alcohol" and "Tobacco" (current BPLs).*

Motion to 140th BFC Annual Conference (April 2023):

Resolved, that the BFC Conference appoint a committee to examine and prepare a statement on the issues of digital technology (digital, gaming, or computerized devices) and social media by considering the following questions:

1. Where does technology belong in the biblical story of redemption? What are the benefits and detriments?
2. What guidance does the Bible offer on the use of digital technology and social media?

Motion to 140th BFC Annual Conference (April 2023):

Resolved, that the BFC Conference appoint a committee to examine the growing marginalization of Christian culture and churches.

1. What should be the response of churches to the growth of secularism and materialism?
2. What should be the response of churches if anti-biblical or anti-church initiatives are proposed by local, state, or national government?

Motion to 141st BFC Annual Conference (April 2024):

Resolved, that the BFC Conference appoint a committee to examine Article 104-3 – Civil Government and prepare a statement on the issue of Christ's church and national politics by considering the following questions:

1. How does nationalism/patriotism function in view of Christ's love for the world and His present/coming kingdom?
2. How can leaders in Christ's church address and promote biblical conduct regarding political issues without polarizing the body of Christ?

Motion to 141st BFC Annual Conference (April 2024):

Resolved, that the BFC Conference appoint a committee to re-examine its statement on Stewardship (104-1) by considering the following questions:

1. What should be the church's position with regard to climate change, its causes, and cures?

2. Are current environmental concerns consistent with the biblical concept of human stewardship of the earth and its resources?

3. Should the church express environmental concerns? If so, to what extent?

Committee to Review Biblical Principles for Living: Timothy M. Zuck, Convener; Timothy S. Radcliff, R. Daniel Wagner.

Report of the Study Committee on Mode of Believers' Baptism with Regard to Membership

Introductory thoughts

The Bible Fellowship Church is an expanding fellowship of churches united to make disciples of Jesus Christ who are growing to maturity in doctrine and life. We have always been willing to reexamine our doctrine and practice to ensure that we are consistent with the truth of God's Word. We are a denomination committed to the biblical practice of believers' baptism by immersion. This paper will not seek to change that commitment. Rather, we will address what has become a tension for an increasing number of pastors – is it right for us to exclude from our membership someone who has been baptized *as a believer* by a mode other than immersion? Is it in the spirit of Christ to forbid membership in the BFC from someone who, acting in good conscience and under the authority and conviction of their God-ordained leadership, was obedient to Christ's command to be baptized *as a believer*, albeit by another mode?

This committee will not reexamine what has already been declared by the Study Committee on Baptism and Church Membership (2002). This committee wholeheartedly affirms that only believers are candidates for baptism and the biblical mode of baptism is immersion. This is a reaffirmation of Article 20 in our Articles of Faith. However, we will address the application of these declarations in light of the nature of the church, and whether it is biblically sound to forbid from membership in the BFC a person who is truly regenerated by the Holy Spirit. Our current position creates conflict at worst and tension at best between some parts of our Faith and Order—excluding from membership someone who is a part of the universal body of Christ.

It is likely that a BFC pastor has had to explain to a prospective member that, though we acknowledge the person's genuine salvation, yet we cannot receive him or her into our fellowship – *not* because such a one has refused believers' baptism, but that their believers' baptism was not valid in our eyes. While many have submitted to the BFC doctrine and practice by being rebaptized as a believer, there are many who are unable to do so because of personal conscience and conviction. To force them into a rebaptism against their personal conviction is to put a stumbling block in their way and cause them to sin.

It is our desire to present a cogent case that the BFC is acting most consistently with the spirit and truth of Christ when we include for membership an individual who is clearly a member of the body of Christ but who has been baptized as a believer by another mode. To that end, we will first present a summary of our intentions and conclusion, including what we are proposing as a change to Article 202-3.1. Then we will present what we deem to be biblical support for this change and an appeal to the unity of the body. We will conclude by raising potential objections and our response to those objections. We have also included an appendix which elucidates the rationale for sprinkling and pouring, not with the intention of convincing our people but of informing them that many believers interact with the same biblical terms but arrive at different conclusions than we do.

In further explaining the challenge facing numerous pastors and congregants, we have found that there are a number of truly regenerated attenders in the Bible Fellowship Church who are thrown onto the horns of a dilemma by our well-meaning theological position. This particular group strongly desires to covenant with the BFC but is heretofore prevented from joining our churches as full members. It is not that these people reject salvation by grace through faith in the finished work of Christ; neither are they showing false evidence of the Holy Spirit's work in their lives. Nor are they trying to subvert Article 20 on the Ordinances. Quite the opposite—they are heartily with us! They meet all of the requirements of our Article 14 on Regeneration, yet for one reason or another they are unable to undergo what they see as a second baptism.

We might come to the hasty conclusion that such people are willfully resistant to spiritual leadership and thus are disqualified for application to membership. Indeed, that may be the case in some instances. However, as Oswald Chambers once said, "There is always one fact more in every man's case about which we know nothing." It is this committee's desire to "draw…out" such people (Proverbs 20:5). Instead of turning truly regenerated candidates away from our churches, it is our intention to gently correct their position over the course of time (2 Timothy 2:25). We earnestly hope that those who apply for membership would eventually submit to the BFC's theological understanding of baptism as well as follow in baptism by immersion, but while we wait, we want to ". . . be quick to hear, slow to speak" (James 1:19). We know from pastoral experience that motives other than pride or willful stubbornness might be in play. In many cases, we don't perceive a spirit of pride and defiance. It is to such people that we want to give an ear.

We recognize that some candidates for membership have put in a considerable amount of time studying the different modes of baptism. After weighing the evidence, they in good conscience are still not persuaded that the modes of pouring or sprinkling are deficient. Many such people, in their search for a church home, have found that the church closest to their theological position is the BFC. They are almost entirely in agreement with our Faith and Order; however, they believe their past baptism by pouring or sprinkling is in full compliance to Jesus' command to be baptized. They may even cite John Calvin, who once said, "But whether the person being baptized should be wholly immersed, and whether thrice or once, whether he should only be sprinkled with poured water—these details are of no importance, but ought to be optional to the churches according to the diversity of countries."[1]

Such people are perplexed at our rigidness when such a venerable Reformer disagrees with our stance. They may ask, "If such a notable evangelical disagrees with our position, why would we not allow a truly regenerated person to join the BFC?" So they are in a Catch-22, caught between their theological position and a faithful church's doctrinal statement. They believe that for them to submit to a second baptism would be tantamount to Esau despising his birthright. We believe it is unfortunate that they are currently barred from covenanting with us.

There are Christian believers who are convinced that baptism is better pictured by sprinkling or pouring. They emphasize the significance of purification and washing over and above immersion. It is not that they deny being plunged into Christ's death and resurrection, but in their minds the emphasis and imagery focuses more on cleansing rather than on union with Christ's death and resurrection. Since they prefer this imagery,

they are resistant to being baptized a second time. We are saddened that these brothers and sisters are prevented from joining with us.

We would be remiss to ignore others whose reasons may be less noble, but whatever the case, and through various circumstances, such people have been providentially led to BFC churches. For them, the BFC is home! In addition, many of us know of godly people who fear standing before groups. It took a momentous step of faith and courage for them to be baptized by pouring or sprinkling; now, seeking membership in the BFC, they are informed that their fortitude was all for naught. Our insistence on immersion is too much for them. Other candidates are reluctant because they were poured or sprinkled by a minister who played an influential role in their spiritual formation. Or it may be that their family has deep respect for their previous baptism; such persons believe that submitting to baptism again would agitate family relationships or friendships. While we know that fear should not be a reason to resist what God has commanded, however, in the minds of many, they have already submitted to the waters of baptism. They think we are straining at theological gnats by insisting on Baptism 2.0. It is this committee's heart to not cut them off. We desire to work with them over time, encouraging them to do the right thing as their biblical understanding and courage increases.

We believe that our Faith & Order currently includes unintended confusion in regard to our position on baptism relative to our understanding of salvation. Subcommittee A of the 2002 *Study Committee on Baptism and Church Membership* suggests that ". . . our Faith & Order create[s] a conflict between our doctrine and our practice" (p. 187). We agree.

For instance, our Articles of Faith and our Principles of Order both confess that all those whom Christ saves are part of the church:

> **Article 14—Regeneration**
>
> Regeneration…is an instantaneous creative act of God…whereby divine life is imparted to those dead in sin, **making them members of the family of God**.
>
> **Article 18—The Church**
>
> The Church is the body of which Christ is the head. All those redeemed **by His blood and born of His Spirit are members of that body….The invisible Church is composed of all those born of the Spirit.**
>
> **Principles of Order, Article 202-1.1—The Church Universal and Particular**
>
> Jesus Christ has established His rule on earth in the church. The universal church consists of **all those persons, in every nation, who make profession of faith in Christ and yield submission to Him and His rule.**

However, in another place our Principles of Order creates a contradiction. We say that the BFC retains for itself the right not to accept people as members of the Bible Fellowship Church who are already part of Christ's church because they have not been immersed.

Principles of Order, Article 202-3.1—Qualifications of Church Membership

> Anyone desiring to be a member of the BFC shall give testimony and evidence of faith in Christ and the new birth. He shall be in sympathy with the Faith & Order and be **baptized by immersion subsequent to salvation**, and manifest holiness toward God and separation from the world.

In the judgment of some members of the Committee, the statement in Article 202-3.1 is in contradiction to Articles 14 and 18 and Article 202-1.1—a contradiction to what Paul writes in Ephesians 4:4-5, where he states that there is "one body...one faith, one baptism." We state in one place that all believers are members of the church but insist in another that believers must be immersed to become part of the church.

We believe that Subcommittee A is correct in its assessment. Our Articles rightly state that members of the church universal are regenerated, redeemed, and born of the Spirit. But in practice, we insist that in order to be recognized as part of a BFC church, candidates must be baptized by immersion. It seems to us that we have added a step. We are concerned that our actions divide us from truly redeemed individuals that desire to be among our fellowship.

It is not our intention as a committee to deal with the paedobaptist/infant baptism position. We did not see that as part of our initial assignment, which according to p. 132 of the 2022 *Yearbook* is as follows: "Resolved, that the BFC Conference appoint a committee to study the issue of recognizing if the Bible Fellowship Church could recognize a believer's previous baptism by another mode, particularly as to membership in the Bible Fellowship Church."

We further noted, in last year's report, "It is not our assignment to determine whether believer's baptism is the practice of baptism that we see in Scripture. It is also not our assignment to search the Scriptures to determine whether the recognized mode of baptism practiced in the Bible is immersion." Those are settled issues in our minds; the theological and Scriptural legwork dealing with such matters has been conducted before and is available in our 1999, 2000, and 2002 Yearbooks.

For the sake of framing our report, we affirm that immersion is the mode of baptism that we believe is presented in Scripture. We further affirm that immersion is and will continue to be the mode of all baptisms in Bible Fellowship Churches, and that believer's baptism needs to continue to be a requirement for membership in the BFC.

The question with which we are dealing is both narrow and relatively simple: can we accept, as members, brothers and sisters in our churches who have previously been baptized as believers, but by a different mode than immersion?

We *are not* proposing any alteration to Article 20 – Ordinances (baptism). We *are*, however, proposing two changes.

First, as First Reading legislation, we bring the following motion related to Article 202-3.1 of the Principles of Order – Qualifications and duties of church membership—which currently reads as follows:

> Qualifications. Anyone desiring to be a member of the BFC shall give testimony and evidence of faith in Christ and the new birth. He shall be in sympathy with the Faith & Order, be baptized **by immersion** subsequent to salvation, and manifest holiness toward God and separation from the world (Acts 2:41-47).

Whereas, the BFC's current position requiring immersion for everyone, including those who have already been baptized as believers by another mode, creates conflict at worst and tension at best between some parts of the Faith & Order, thereby excluding from membership someone who is a part of the universal body of Christ, and

Whereas, some who have been baptized as believers by another mode and truly desire to be a member of the BFC are precluded from membership because personal conscience and conviction forbid them to be rebaptized as believers, and

Whereas, it is more consistent with the spirit and truth of Christ to receive such individuals as members who, acting in obedience to their God-ordained leadership at the time, were baptized as believers by another mode, therefore be it

Resolved, that we eliminate the words "by immersion" from the qualifications for church membership. Article 202-3.1 in the Principles of Order would read as follows:

> Anyone desiring to be a member of the BFC shall give testimony and evidence of faith in Christ and the new birth. He shall be in sympathy with the Faith & Order, be baptized subsequent to salvation, and manifest holiness toward God and separation from the world (Acts 2:41-47)

And further Resolved, that the "Resources" section of the Principles of Order, Suggested Forms, page 2:215, would read as follows:

> "Since the time that you were born again, have you been baptized as instructed in the Word of God. If so, answer 'Yes.'"

It is our study of Scripture, focusing on analogies and on a persistent plea for unity in Christ's church, which has led us to these conclusions. We now turn to the Bible in order to clarify our conclusions.

Biblical supports for our position

While we believe that the Greek word *baptizo*, which means to immerse or dunk, is to be most clearly understood as teaching baptism by immersion, it is our contention that we do our brothers and sisters who have been baptized, as believers, by other modes a disservice by denying them membership because we do not accept their baptism as genuine.

The overarching question that this committee seeks to address is, "How can we both hold to our position while extending grace and courtesy to our fellow believers, many of whom have come to the Bible Fellowship Church from other denominations because they strongly support our consistent emphasis on the Bible and desire to adhere to what we believe it is teaching?" Are we essentially denying the validity of their

professions of faith simply because they believe Scripture to be teaching, or at least allowing, another mode of baptism?

We believe that the Bible offers two primary supports for welcoming as members those who have come to us from other denominations where they acted in good faith and in obedience to leadership by being baptized, as Christian believers, by pouring or sprinkling. First, we will look at some analogies from Scripture that might apply to our contentions concerning baptism and members, and then second, we will focus on the New Testament's persistent plea for unity in the body of Christ.

Analogies that support a charitable response

We believe that one of our strongest supports for extending liberty and charity to our brothers and sisters by granting them membership comes by way of analogy. What do we mean? We are in agreement that we believe the Bible teaches baptism by profession of faith and by immersion. That said, we also believe that in several instances, Scripture emphasizes unity of the body over strict adherence to matters that, while important, ought not to separate believers from fellowshipping with one another.

We find that the ruling of the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 provides one such correlative. As Paul and Barnabas met with the apostles and elders in Jerusalem over the matter of whether Gentile believers needed to "keep the law of Moses" in order to be saved, James, the Lord's brother and the head of the Jerusalem church, responded after considerable deliberation, "My judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God, but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood" (Acts 15:19-20). The letter that was sent to these Gentile churches informed them that, beyond what James had conveyed, the council's decision was, "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements…If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well" (Acts 15:28-29). Translation: while Jewish Christians still saw great value in keeping the Law of Moses, they would not require their Gentile counterparts to follow every kosher law in order to be welcomed and accepted into the visible church.

This seems to us to be a reasonable parallel to the issues we are dealing with. Should baptism by immersion, while important to us, be a disqualifying factor from allowing our brothers and sisters to hold membership in a Bible Fellowship Church? While still teaching and stressing immersion, we see the value of extending grace by not burdening our fellow believers by forcing them to be re-baptized. We should not assume that the reluctance of many to be re-baptized by immersion is merely a pride issue. J.I. Packer expressed it simply: "Baptism is real and valid if water and the triune name are used… No prescription of a particular mode of baptism can be found in the New Testament. The command to baptize may be fulfilled by immersion, dipping, or sprinkling; all three modes satisfy the meaning of the Greek verb *baptizo* and the symbolic requirement of passing under, and emerging from, cleansing water."[2]

In other words, what is most important: the mode of baptism, or the meaning? Is it not the profession of faith that understands baptism to be an outward, public expression of an inward conviction that is more important than the amount of water that is used in the ordinance of baptism, and whether every inch of the baptismal candidate is submerged?

As the Jerusalem Council met to consider this important early challenge to the

unity of the church, Luke says that upon the return of Paul and Barnabas from their first missionary journey, where they witnessed large numbers of Gentiles coming to faith in Christ Jesus, opposition arose from Jewish believers. "But some men came down from Judea [to Antioch] and were teaching the brothers, 'Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.'" While Paul and Barnabas saw these Gentile believers as full members of the church of Jesus Christ, their Jewish counterparts denied that this was true. Unless they were circumcised, they maintained, they remained unsaved and unacceptable to the church.

While we would not go so far as to treat those who were baptized by, say, pouring, as non-believers, are we not saying the same thing, at least implicitly? Aren't we saying, "The Bible declares that all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ are saved, and what follows saving faith as a public identification with Jesus is baptism, but since you were baptized by a mode other than immersion, we do not believe you are worthy of full inclusion in our BFC churches"?

The Jerusalem council concluded that Gentile Christians need not become circumcised in order to be members in good standing in the New Testament church. James concluded that to do otherwise would be to add a "heavy burden"—and an unnecessary one at that—to people who had exercised genuine faith in Christ. Are we then adding a heavy burden by requiring those who were baptized by another mode, even though their prior baptisms were accompanied by professions of faith in Christ, to be rebaptized because we believe *baptizo* demands an immersion position—even though many pastors and theologians we hold in great respect (and quote in our sermons as trustworthy resources) come to other conclusions about mode, though they have engaged in the same word studies we have?

We believe that by not extending grace to our brothers and sisters, we run the risk of adding too heavy a burden to fellow Christians, and that we further run the risk of losing them from our churches because they will only be accepted as members if they submit to our rules, even though they can argue that they were previously doing so when they received baptism in their previous churches—by another mode.

The Jerusalem Council reached its decision only after considerable study and prayer. Acts 15:21 strongly suggests that James and the council took circumcision and the law of Moses very seriously. James reported that the reasons he listed for commanding these new Gentile Christians to "abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood" (Acts 15:20) was because "from ancient generations, Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath from the synagogues." In other words, it was not because these church leaders disregarded the Mosaic law but *because they held it in such high regard* that they lightened the burden upon their Gentile counterparts rather than requiring them to be satisfied. They clearly did not fear that by being lenient they risked a "slippery slope" into antinomianism or easy-believism. They were not concerned about diluting the purity of the church by being gracious.

Prior study committees have taken the position, supported by the Annual Conference of the Bible Fellowship Church, that unless you are baptized as a believer by immersion, you cannot be a member in good standing of a Bible Fellowship. This is no unwritten code, but an official position held in the BFC. In our estimation, we are imposing a "heavy burden" that goes against the spirit of the Jerusalem Council's decision. While

we do not have windows on men's souls and cannot determine in each case whether a refusal to be rebaptized constitutes a sinful pride issue (as some have argued), we have to conclude that there are many sincere believers in our congregations who represent parallels to those initial Gentile believers who were welcomed into the church. We ask, along with Subcommittee A of the study committee that reported to the 2002 Annual Conference, "Does Jesus Christ receive as members of His body, the church, un-immersed regenerate saints?" And we conclude, as brothers Carl C. Cassel, Donald T. Kirkwood, and Clayton E. Weber before us, "We believe the BFC would by unanimous vote say, 'Yes, Jesus Christ would include all such.'"[3] If our Savior would include those who were poured or sprinkled, after a valid profession of faith, in the universal church that He purchased with His blood, should we not also include them in our local churches and not deny them membership with all its benefits and responsibilities?

While we do not want to revisit the extensive research conducted by the study committee whose extensive work can be found in the 2002 *Yearbook*, we note that the majority decision of that study committee was that we should hold to baptism by immersion as a requirement for membership in a Bible Fellowship Church. One of the arguments posited by Subcommittee B in 2002 was that while prior baptism by a non-immersion mode may have been a "meaningful experience" and "the answer of a good conscience before God" for those who were poured or sprinkled, a greater understanding of Scripture that comes through sitting under teaching in the Bible Fellowship Church would lead them to conclude that immersion is the only acceptable mode of baptism according to Scripture, and that by submitting to believer's baptism by immersion, they would help to guard the purity of the church.[4] They further concluded that "an individual who has been 'baptized' as a believer by a mode other than immersion should be immersed."[5]

While we again note that we believe baptism by immersion is what the New Testament teaches—to the best of our understanding—we return to the position that what is most important in baptism is a right profession of faith in Christ and not the mode itself. To support that, we can cite multiple examples, including the baptisms that followed Peter's sermon at Pentecost in Acts 2, the baptism of the Philippian jailer and his family in Acts 16 and the baptism of Cornelius and others who heard Peter tell of his vision from heaven in Acts 10—Gentiles upon whom the Holy Spirit fell in the presence of circumcised believers.

In each of the aforementioned cases, baptism came almost immediately upon profession of faith. Indeed, it seems that the Philippian jailer and his family were baptized mere moments after their conversions. The question should be asked: How much did they know of Christian doctrine? At Philippi, these apparent Gentiles knew only what Paul and Silas could share with them in the short time between the jailer's frantic question, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" and their baptisms later that same night. As Gentiles, they were quite likely ignorant of the Christian faith up until that night, but they knew enough to understand the importance of baptism as a public identification with Christ, and they responded in obedience. We believe that the most important thing in their case, and in the case of Cornelius, and also in the case of many of our brothers and sisters who come to the Bible Fellowship Church where the gospel is preached but another baptismal mode is practiced, is that the gospel has been believed and professed. Greater understanding can come later and may lead to a decision to be rebaptized by immersion, but we believe the

Bible Fellowship Church should accept prior baptisms accompanied by professions as valid because said professions are expressions of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

Other analogies might also prove pertinent to our discussion. In Philippians 1:15-18, when asked about others who preached Christ out of envy for and rivalry with the apostle Paul, Paul answered that they were not to be prevented from preaching even if their motives were suspect. Why not? Because Christ was being proclaimed. The gospel was the main thing. Isn't that the same priority in terms of this discussion: that if the gospel is believed and a public profession of faith in Jesus is declared, shouldn't that be sufficient for membership?

Paul's bottom line in Philippians 1 was to be liberal and charitable in his support for those whose motives were questionable but whose declaration of the gospel was clear. He refers to such people as "brothers" (Philippians 1:14). With that in mind, how are we to view those who have been baptized as believers but by another mode? Do we see them as rivals or inferiors, or do we extend to them the same graciousness that Paul extended to those who preached Christ "thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment"? It is our judgment that most of those in our congregations who wish to become members but are currently prohibited from doing so because of the mode of their baptisms acted as they did out of obedience to those who were their leaders. They believe that their prior baptism was genuine and that they were submitting to authority. This is not for most of them a matter of sinful, stubborn pride but of feeling like second class citizens who are being punished because they were not baptized "the right way."

For our Mennonite friends in particular, their desire to become part of a BFC church is a sincere desire to return to strong biblical roots; they largely believe that Mennonite churches have strayed away from close adherence to biblical teachings in pursuance of social concerns and inclusivism. They want to join our churches but the step of rebaptism, many feel, is onerous to them: an unnecessary burden placed upon them. Can we treat them with liberality and generosity as Paul did in Philippians 1?

Another possible parallel by way of analogy: in Mark 2:23-28, Jesus found Himself criticized by the Pharisees because His disciples, walking through grain fields on the Sabbath, were plucking heads of grain and eating them. "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" Jesus was asked. Technically, the Pharisees were right in the sense that the Twelve were indeed violating the Sabbath as it was understood through the lens of the rabbis' traditions. And behind those traditions was a desire to take the Sabbath seriously—a good thing, to be sure. So what was Jesus' response? Did He chastise His disciples for breaking Sabbath? No, He countered by pointing His critics to an Old Testament example from 1 Samuel 21:1-6: that of David, who in a time of deprivation entered the house of God, asked Abiathar the priest for sustenance, and ate the bread of the Presence. Jesus' conclusion in Mark 2:27 was this: "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." In other words, the Sabbath had been designed by God to be a benefit for His people, not a burden.

How does this translate to our understanding of baptism? What is the point of baptism? Is it not that believers in Jesus Christ make a visible display of their faith? We say (Article 20-1) that "water baptism, the immersion of the believer, is a visible testimony to the work of regeneration and a mark of identification and union with Christ." While we believe that immersion is the mode supported by Scripture, is the main idea the mode? Or is it the visible testimony? If it is the latter, can we not recognize that

our Mennonite brothers and sisters also underwent baptism for that reason, and extend to them leniency and grace while still stressing that we believe the Bible teaches and evidences the mode of immersion?

The biblical appeal to the unity of the body

If we believe analogies from Scripture promote a charitable and compassionate approach to professing Christians who come to our churches having already undergone credobaptism but by a non-immersion mode, we also point to the New Testament's strong and persistent plea for unity between believers, recognizing that there is but one church and that unity in this present life prefigures the unity we will experience in glory as all true believers—no matter how they were baptized upon profession of faith in Jesus Christ—will share heaven together for all eternity.

In Ephesians 4:4-5, Paul wrote, "There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism." The question must immediately be asked: What baptism is Paul referring to here? Some believe He is referring to water baptism while others insist that the baptism about which Paul writes is the spiritual baptism of being baptized into Christ—into His body. We are of the opinion that Paul isn't actually speaking about water baptism but of that which marks our union with Christ: our belief and subsequent profession of faith in Jesus and the gospel. But whether this is about water baptism or faith in Christ, Paul is saying that there's only one baptism that marks and identifies all Christians: the baptism of faith-profession. And if there is but "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," then it behooves us to accept as true brothers and sisters those who have made that same profession of faith in Jesus Christ as we have and to welcome them into our fellowship.

Says Martyn Lloyd-Jones, "This is the true meaning of 'one baptism.' When and as we all realize this, and when we all live in the light of it, there can be no division. Christ is not divided, the body is one; it has an organic unity. There must not be schism in the body, there must not be civil war. We are each and all 'in Him' the living Head, and His life is in us, permeating our being, filling us with its power, shedding its love abroad within us. Thus we see what the Apostle means by this 'one baptism.' He is not thinking in terms of the rite; it is not anything magical; it is this realization that there is only one name and one Lord, there is only one life, the life of the Son of God, who has redeemed us,"[6]

Sinclair Ferguson adds, "Christ has only one body. By definition its members are members of one another. He has only one Spirit who indwells each and every believer."[7] Denominations have real purpose, allowing for different positions on important matters, but more important is membership in the body of Christ. We do not believe that, by offering membership to believers who have been baptized as such by another mode, that we are or should back away from our conviction that the Bible teaches and prescribes baptism by immersion; what we are doing is saying that those who find their way to our BFC churches, having made the same profession of faith in Christ that we have, ought not to be denied membership because they too are part of the "one Lord, one faith, one baptism" described in Ephesians 4. While John MacArthur maintains that Ephesians 4 is about water baptism, he stresses that unity and union represent the primary thrust of Paul's words. "Believers were not baptized in the name of a local church, a prominent evangelist, a leading elder, or even an apostle, but only in the name of Christ," he writes.

"Those who by one Lord are in one faith testify to that unity in baptism."[8]

Paul deals with similar material in the same fashion in 1 Corinthians 12:13 as he writes, "For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit." These words fall within the context of an extended discussion on the Corinthians' frequent disputes, most pointedly about spiritual gifts. What is v. 13 saying, with its use of the *baptizo* verb (in first person plural aorist passive indicative mood), about our "oneness" in Christ Jesus? Where is the emphasis? Is it on rigid adherence to the mode of baptism—that everyone in the church was baptized by immersion? Or is it on the fact that these Corinthian Christians are part of "one body"—no matter their differences (Jews or Greeks, slaves or free)? I think it is the latter. The differences were considerable; it is hard to imagine a greater distinction, for instance, between "slaves" and "free" people. But that which draws slaves and free persons, or Jews and Greeks, into the same fellowship is that, as 1 Corinthians 12:12 notes, all are members of the body of Christ. Believers who are free are not seen as greater than those who happen to be slaves. They are all part of "one body." And if that's the case, are we minimizing our unity and maximizing our differences by denying membership to Christian brothers and sisters who were baptized by another mode – but as believers by profession of faith in Jesus Christ?

We may ask about 1 Corinthians 12, "Is this about water baptism or about something else? And if it isn't about water baptism, is it still relevant to our discussion?" Paul has been speaking at length about spiritual gifts and their use. Spiritual gifts have been a source of division in the Corinthian church, but Paul says they are to be a source of union, for all who possess and use spiritual gifts do so as a mark of their regeneration as Christian believers, since each and every Christian possesses at least one spiritual gift. There may be many gifts, Paul acknowledges, but there is just one Holy Spirit who gives them. 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 says, "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord…it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone."

Starting in v. 12, Paul uses the analogy of the individual parts of the body to the body itself as an illustration of our unity in Christ. In v. 12 He writes, "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ." This brings us to v. 13. "For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and all were made to drink of one Spirit." The primary question is, "What does Paul have in mind here: physical water baptism or metaphorical baptism?" If he's writing about the sacrament/ordinance of baptism, this certainly applies to our discussion, but if he's writing metaphorically, does that rule it out of our discussion? Doesn't the principle Paul is stressing still apply to the matters to which we are concerned? We contend that the apostle's plea for unity applies to both possible interpretations, and that Paul's point is that faith in Christ transcends any and all distinctions.

Simon Kistemaker writes, "Here Paul stresses the unity of the church in its diverse forms. He notes the racial, cultural, and social differences that existed in the Corinthian church: there were Jews and Greeks, slaves and free. Regardless of their status and position in life, these people came together to worship God in one church. If the church should practice discrimination, it would be in direct conflict with the law of love. All people who are spiritually renewed in Christ are equal to one another."[9]

Those who have been baptized into Christ—physically or otherwise—are one body and are equals. And they should be treated as equals. Immersion is important; we continue to believe that it is the mode practiced in the New Testament and indicated by the meaning of *baptizo*. But we should not withhold church membership, as an expression of our equality in Christ, from brothers and sisters who, like us, acted in obedience to Christ's command to be baptized, though they did so by another mode. If all who are joined by the Holy Spirit into a common faith in Christ—a common faith that is by common profession of Jesus as Savior and Lord—should we not welcome them into our churches, as full members? For as Charles Hodge (who believes 1 Corinthians 12 refers to spiritual baptism) writes, "'Into one body' means, 'so as to constitute one body.' No matter how great may have been the previous difference, whether they were Jews or Greeks, bond or free, by this baptism of the Spirit all who experience it are merged into 'one body'; they are all intimately and organically united as partaking of the same life."[10]

The matter of unity was obviously close to Paul's heart as he wrote his first letter to the church at Corinth. He opened his letter with a plea that divisions within the church would cease after hearing that some were followers of Paul while others claimed to be disciples of Apollos and still others adherents of Cephas (Peter). With considerable anguish Paul responded in 1 Corinthians 1:13, "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?" Each question of course demanded a negative response; the Corinthians—who we must remember were called "saints" in Paul's opening greeting—were to remember their one-ness in Jesus. They were part of the same body and needed to see themselves in that light.

We might ask, in the same light, whether our differences in mode (Were you poured? Were you sprinkled? Were you immersed?) give us any right to be divided or to lay claim to greater spiritual maturity. The answer is no, we are part of the same greater body that is the church of Jesus Christ. If we see water baptism as the equivalent of the wedding ring that seals that we are married to Christ, the mode is of relative unimportance compared to the vows we say to one another: promises that we make in good faith. It is the vows that make us married.

Alistair Begg, in a recent *Truth for Life* broadcast, noted, "In baptizing as we do… we're not actually arguing for a certain amount of water being necessarily involved—at least I'm not. I know that Baptists with a big-B are very concerned about how deep the tub is and everything else. That to me is a very, very secondary issue. The issue is not about the amount of water involved…The issue is about whether faith precedes baptism or whether baptism precedes faith. And intellectually I came to the conclusion that faith precedes baptism and not the other way around."[11]

We are obliged to take the approach our Lord took in Mark 9:38-41 when John came to him with a potential problem. "Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him because he was not following us." Jesus responded, "Do not stop him, for no one who does a mighty work in My name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of Me. For the one who is not against us is for us." Brothers and sisters who have professed faith in Christ Jesus and have acted upon their profession by being baptized, though by pouring or sprinkling, are *for* us, not *against* us, and it is our determination that while we will continue to adhere to immersion because we believe the Bible teaches baptism by immersion, we want these dear fellow believers to be *with* us, as members in good standing of our BFC churches.

"Let us not be more restrictive than was Moses," William Hendriksen stresses. "Let us not be less broadminded than was Paul (Phil. 1:14-18). Let us follow the teaching of Jesus and, while maintaining what we ourselves regard as purity of doctrine, let us reach out the hand of brotherhood to all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ and build upon the firm foundation of His infallible Word."[12]

Possible objections and responses

Objection # 1: Baptism by a mode other than immersion is not biblical.

Response: Based on our scholarship as a denomination, we believe that baptism by a mode other than immersion, is not most consistent with our understanding of Scripture; however, we understand that throughout much of church history, that has not been the consensus of interpretation with many traditions and denominations that we recognize as authentically evangelically orthodox.

Objection # 2: Extending membership to those who have been baptized as believers by other modes compromises our theological convictions.

Response: While we have theological convictions about the meaning and mode of baptism, we also believe that there is grace and freedom in God. Paul had strong theological convictions but understood that there can be convictions that differed from his (see Romans 14). He taught that since God welcomed them, they are responsible to God, not to us, and that we all will give an account to God one day. Therefore, we should not judge or despise but should respect what was done in good conscience in honor of God.

Objection # 3: Accepting as members those who have been baptized by other modes weakens our commitment to sound exegetical teaching.

Response: Recognizing that other traditions within the Church of Jesus Christ hold different distinctives in a number of areas, including baptism (as well as eschatology, where we allow as members those who hold an eschatological position other than premillennialism as long as they are "in sympathy" with the BFC – See Article 202-3.1), and further recognizing that in some cases a regenerate individual, in obedience to the command to be baptized (although by a mode other than immersion), did so in faith, as an act of obedience, and in good conscience, does not weaken our commitment to sound exegetical teaching.

Objection # 4: Receiving members who have not been baptized by immersion when we believe that immersion is the biblical means of baptism causes confusion.

Response: While there is potential for confusion, any confusion can and should be overcome with clear, comprehensive, and consistent teaching over time regarding the meaning and mode of baptism.

Objection # 5: One's view of baptism, including mode, affects one's view of key doctrines such as salvation, sin, and the Holy Spirit.

Response: In the New Testament accounts cited earlier in this paper, the gospel was presented and people who responded by believing in Jesus for salvation immediately received baptism. There is no evidence of them receiving detailed theological explana-

tions into the significance and symbolism of baptism; they simply understood that it was commanded and that it identified them as followers of Jesus. Besides the 3,000 who were baptized immediately following Peter's gospel sermon on the Day of Pentecost, Cornelius and his household, and the Philippian jailer and his household, are notable examples of people who heard the gospel, experienced regeneration, and were immediately baptized.

Objection # 6: If we believe that to baptize is a command and baptism means to immerse, but we accept into membership those who have not been immersed, we are annulling a command of Scripture as taught by Jesus in Matthew 5:19.

Response: We would be annulling or circumventing Jesus' command if we practiced a different mode within our churches. By teaching and practicing immersion as the mode found in Scripture, we affirm the biblical command regarding the significance and symbolism in baptism. However, by recognizing the baptism of a believer post-conversion, even though by another mode, we believe we are recognizing the spirit versus the letter of the command and are respecting that the obedience of said person was done in faith and with a good conscience.

Objection # 7: Recognizing the baptism of people who were baptized by modes other than immersion and accepting them into membership weakens the theological and practical purity of our churches.

Response: Our current doctrinal and practical requirement in all other theological areas only requires members to "be in sympathy with our *Faith & Order*" (202-3.1). We have received members who are do not hold our view of election or premillennialism, and yet we do not consider these deviations a threat to our doctrinal purity.

Objection # 8: Receiving into membership those who have been baptized by pouring or sprinkling opens the door for a man who is not committed to the mode of immersion becoming an elder or a pastor in one of our churches and potentially puts our denomination on a slippery slope of having men serving in church leadership, and as delegates to BFC Conference, who could work to change our position that the mode of immersion is the biblical position.

Response: In order for a man to serve as an elder or a pastor in a BFC church, he must affirm that he is "in agreement with the *Articles of Faith*" (401-1.8 and 1.9), and not just "in sympathy" with them. That means he would have to be in agreement with Article 20, which states that we believe the mode of baptism taught in Scripture to be immersion. Further, in order to become ordained in the Bible Fellowship Church, a man must be examined by the Ministerial Candidate Committee "concerning their beliefs and practices, endeavoring to approve only those who are committed without reservation to the authority of the Scriptures and the doctrines and practices of our church as the system of doctrine taught in the Scriptures" (Article 511-4.3 (5)). Once credentialed as an ordained minister, he must annually state that he subscribes without reservation to our Articles of Faith and will endeavor to follow our Rules of Order (Article 511-5.2 (4)), and that "No minister shall be allowed to hold credentials in the Bible Fellowship Church who does not subscribe to our Articles of Faith and endeavor to follow the Rules of Order except as allowed by the Ministerial Credentials Committee" (Article 511-5.2 (4.1)). So, if a man, wishing to serve as an elder or pastor, had been baptized by another mode, he would need

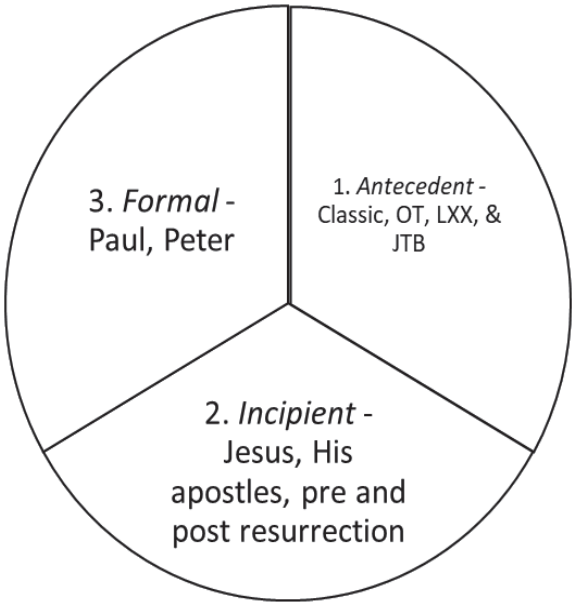
to be rebaptized by immersion to demonstrate his agreement.

APPENDIX

We recognize that some BFC pastors may believe they would be compromising their conscience if they agree to accept credo-baptism by non-immersion. Perhaps some information as to why those who practice another mode could enable a pastor to be at ease in doing so? Read the following as explaining their side of the practice—*not as an attempt to change your view*, but to understand theirs. As Scripture says, "blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves." Romans 14:22.

It has been said that some of the teachings of Scripture could be written in blood, some in ink, and others in pencil. What is remarkable in BFC history is how some teachings once regarded as "blood" have been reassigned to "ink" and others even to pencil. This change in category has caused cognitive dissonance in the pastors, and relational tension in our churches. This appendix is an attempt to prevent such consequences if possible. We admire the men of the past who courageously challenged reigning assumptions and led us to our current position. Is it possible the same movement of the Holy Spirit is afoot regarding this topic?

Perhaps a diagram, a chart, and some thoughts that illustrate how the other views of mode are taught could assist us in alleviating our apprehensions regarding membership.



First, the diagram.

Three categories of classifying the usage of baptism (*bapto, baptisma, Baptismos, Baptizo*). Taking all the references outside of and inside of the Scriptures, it is safe to say that the main concept is the function of identifying a person or object as belonging to someone or something. This includes identifying certain ideas associated with that identification.

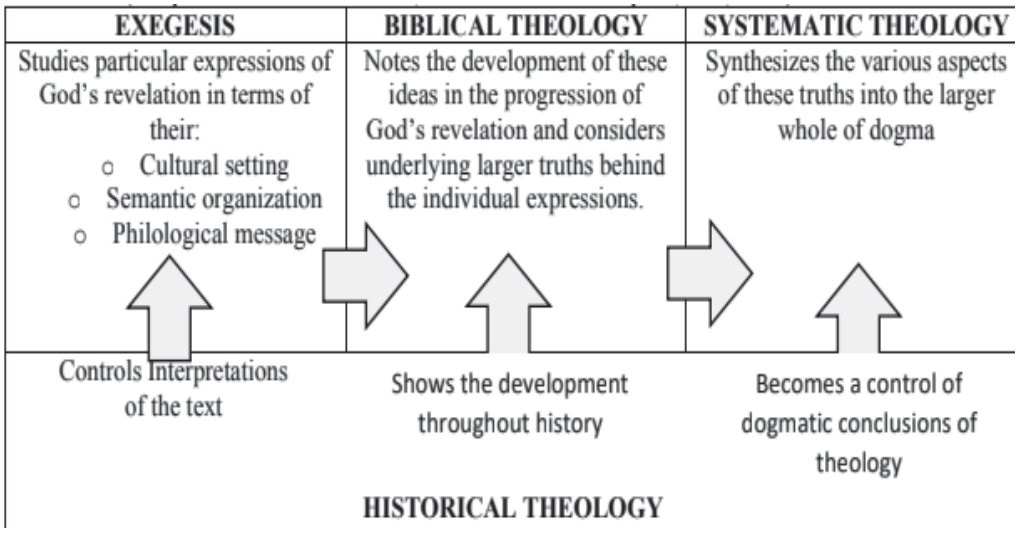
1. *Antecedent meaning:* In the ancient world, prominent figures were baptized by various modes. In the Old Testament, the mode of sprinkling or pouring was used to demonstrate purification or the presence of the Spirit. One could dip or immerse an object as well for the same reasons. The crucial ideas are mainly one of naming and relationship.

2. *Incipient*: In the OT/NT transitional time we have Jesus' baptism by John. John belonged to the old covenant but was used by God to show the initiation of the new by the One who was promised. Jesus commanded baptism for those who would enter the kingdom of God by the preaching of the apostles, who primarily ministered to the Jewish population and diaspora. Immersion would be a jarring innovation away from the theologically informed Mosaic modes. As in the Antecedent usage, naming and relationship are the important ideas when Jesus gave His commission to the disciples.

3. *Formal:* The apostle Paul provided a more theological approach to the subject, using the analogies of death, burial and resurrection, circumcision, and clothing. The exodus parallel in 1 Corinthians 10:2 is not about water, but identification with Moses as deliverer and covenant leader, a type of Christ. Paul's concepts are an addition to, not a subtraction or reduction of, the antecedent and incipient uses.

The earliest depictions of Christian baptisms are of sprinkling and pouring. This makes sense in a geographical context, given the scarcity and costliness of water. This accommodates the New Testament instances of baptizing at a home or in a prison (for example, Paul was baptized standing up; the Philippian jailer and family).

The Chart. (Adapted from Grant Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral*, IVP, 1991)



The value of the chart is to provide perspective for us: the other side considers all of the above as *essential* factors in developing the doctrine and practice of Baptism. To the other side, the view of the BFC is quite narrowly focused, i.e., merely on exegesis. In their view, we are myopic—just using the one eye of the New Testament; they claim to see through both eyes of the Old and New Testaments.

Thoughts from the other side.

1. If we use *a wide-angle lens*, we may think of the FUNCTION of baptism. The main function seems to be to IDENTIFY the recipient as a disciple of Jesus, as per Matthew 28:18-20. Paul later ADDS the word picture of burial and resurrection. Is it NECESSARY to narrow the focus to only this symbolism? Our union with Christ and its wonderful benefits includes other analogical illustrations such as ingrafting, building of a house, heart of flesh, familial loyalty, etc. Why only focus on one aspect?

2. The totality of Scripture conveys the use of blood to cleanse from sin, and to indicate purity. In the Old Testament, this is repeatedly done by sprinkling. Isaiah 52, which Phillip explained to the Ethiopian eunuch as pointing to the Messiah, states that He will sprinkle many nations, indicating they would be included with the people of God. Honesty would cause us to permit a sprinkling here, because it would be consistent with Jewish practice of 1500 years. In the mind of both Phillip and the eunuch, it is a theological fulfillment. And how much water is available in a desert?

3. Honesty also would cause us to admit, as most evangelical scholars do, that ALL of the verses that use *bapto* or *baptizo* can be read be as an immersion (and should be if etymology is the only factor). However, each instance could be read as a pouring or sprinkling (if theological continuity is an appropriate factor). Consider even the metaphorical use by Jesus about his suffering (a torrential downpour).

4. If prepositions are considered, why didn't any of the New Testament authors ever use *hupo* (under) with any of the baptism occasions? In addition, a few passages are non-sensical if immersion is seen as the only meaning (such as Mark 7:14 and Hebrews 9:10, 13, 19, 21). *Apo*, *eis*, and *en* can easily be understood as spatial relationship, not modal relationship; e.g. going ankle deep into the water, walking away from the springs, etc.

5. Jesus appeals to the origin and authority of John's baptism to justify His own. John need not use immersion, since it is pre-gospel and was only for repentance. John's argument with the Pharisees was purification, especially if John was sprinkling or pouring, because it would mean he claimed to have authority to offer righteousness with God, sealed by such a mode as Moses used.

6. Without exception, when the Father and the Son baptize, they do so by pouring.

a. Prediction: pointing in the latter to days the pouring of the Spirit (Joel 2); baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire predicted by John the Baptist; Jesus commanding disciples to stay in Jerusalem for Baptism of the Spirit.

b. Fulfillment: Peter stating that the pouring of the Spirit is the fulfillment of Joel 2, and recognizing the presence of the Holy Spirit in the home of Cornelius as falling upon them, connecting that event to John the Baptist's and Jesus' predictions.

7. Finally, the view of the other side is that they have exegetical, expositional, theological, and historical legitimacy and doctrinal soundness. They also see themselves as evangelically ecumenical because they will practice all three modes and will accept into membership any genuine believer who was baptized by any of the three modes.

In summary, the Greek words may have, depending on one's point of view, a *monosemic* (one meaning) value or a *polysemic* (more than one meaning) value. If we can grant the latter, then we need not feel that we are compromising our consciences by accepting credo-baptism by another mode.

Summary

Hopefully this brief perspective from the "other side" has enabled the reader to understand and appreciate the reasons for non-immersion credo-baptism. There is obviously more to be said, but for brevity's sake, this can only serve as an introduction. There are many scholarly resources available for further study.

Some final considerations

1. Is it possible that nothing of ultimate doctrinal value is lost with understanding baptism to have *semantic pliancy*? Is it possible that unity, spiritual, functional, and numerical growth and fruit could be lost if we must demand *semantic rigidity*?

2. We can continue to maintain redemptive integrity by accepting believers baptized as a believer by another mode.

3. We have accepted Reformed teaching in the area of soteriology (election) and ecclesiology (government by elders). Perhaps we can also make room for acceptance in this area of membership, remembering that membership itself is a post-New Testament invention? Charles Hodge: "the words *bapto*, *baptizo,* and their cognates are used with such latitude of meaning as to prove the assertion that the command to baptize is a command to immerse, to be utterly unauthorized and unreasonable."

4. To date, has our interpretative Procrustean Bed (A standard that is forced upon people for the sake of conformity and involves the sacrifice of what is useful; according to Greek mythology, Procrustes was a robber who killed his victims in a most cruel and unusual way. He made them lie on an iron bed and would force them to fit the bed by cutting off the parts that hung off the ends or by stretching those people who were too short) caused the loss of needed believers for our local fellowships? In fact, are we in violation of 1 Corinthians 1:10?

Study Committee on the Mode of Believers' Baptism with Regard to Membership: William G. Schlonecker, Convener; Ronald L. Kohl, Secretary; James Arcieri, Mark R. Orton, S. Wayne Rissmiller.

Endnotes

1 John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. 4, chapter 15, section 19, p. 599.
2 James I. Packer, "Baptism: This Rite Exhibits Union with Christ," available at https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/packer/baptism.html.
3 2002 *Yearbook*, Bible Fellowship Church, p. 191.
4 Ibid, p. 185.
5 Ibid.
6 D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Christian Unity: An Exposition of Ephesians 4:1-16* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1980), p. 130.
7 Sinclair Ferguson, *Let's Study Ephesians* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 2021 ed.), p. 101.
8 John MacArthur, *Ephesians*, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Publishing, 1986), p. 130.
9 Simon Kistemaker, *1 Corinthians*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1993), p. 430.
10 Charles Hodge, *1 Corinthians*, Crossway Classic Commentaries (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1995), p. 227.
11 Alistair Begg, *Truth for Life*, January 31, 2023 radio broadcast.
12 William Hendriksen, *Mark*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2004 edition), p. 363.

Report of the Study Committee on Strengthening Our Position on Abortion

Since it is our understanding that the current Committee to Review Biblical Principles for At the 139th BFC Conference, the elders of Berean Bible Fellowship Church in Stroudsburg, PA petitioned Conference to consider a series of resolutions to strengthen the Conference's position on abortion (See 2022 Yearbook, pp. 13, 138-140).

In response to their petition, the 139th BFC Conference appointed a committee to both evaluate and strengthen our position on abortion, and to provide guidance to churches for pregnant mothers and fathers.

The Moderator appointed a committee of four ministers and three laymen to evaluate our position and present resolutions that satisfied both the Conference and the elders of Berean Bible Fellowship Church. The committee met at the BFC Headquarters on August 10 and October 26, 2022, and January 18, 2023.

Our recommendations to the Conference are conveyed in the following resolutions:

Resolved, that the following BPL on Abortion be adopted at First Reading, with additions and changes in bold face:

Article 152 - Abortion

152-1 God is the creator, sustainer, and giver of life. Only He has the right to say under what conditions it may be taken away.[1] His Word declares that man is made in His image **and is endowed with the dignity of personhood from the moment of fertilization**,[2] and it is for this reason that the death penalty was commanded for murder in the Old Testament.[3] It is an evil before God to **intentionally murder** unborn children, since they too bear His image, even if they are disabled or the result of rape or incest. **If the life of the mother is in jeopardy, it is the moral and ethical obligation of the mother's medical care team to work to preserve the life of both baby and mother to the greatest extent their abilities and resources allow. Therefore, since abortion is murder**, as members of Christ's body, the Church, we may not have, give direct assistance to, or perform an **elective** abortion.[4] **Any BFC church member(s) who, after rejecting repeated, godly, and compassionate counsel, continue(s) to have unrepentant sinful involvement in abortion could be subject to church discipline as prescribed by our Lord in Matthew 18. [5]**

[1] Gen. 9:5,6
[2] Psa. 139:13-16; Gen. 1:27
[3] Exo. 21:14
[4] Prov. 24:11,12
[5] Matt. 18:15-20

152-2 Within the marriage bond a pregnancy and resulting child must be accepted as from God, and the parents are commanded to love the child.[6] Pregnancies resulting from promiscuous or licentious behavior are not to be terminated by abortion, which only adds sin forbidden by the sixth commandment to sin forbidden by the seventh commandment.[7] Therefore, anyone contemplating an abortion, even though outside the Church, should be encouraged to preserve life by completing the pregnancy.[8] The child can either be raised by its biological parents or be adopted by others. **The Church must strive to create a culture where women and men feel safe in coming forward to share their struggles without fear of being condemned.**

[6] Psa. 127:3-5
[7] Exo. 20:13,14; 1Cor. 6:18
[8] Heb. 10:24

Resolved, that 152-3 be added to our Biblical Principle of Living on Abortion.

152-3 As Christians, we call upon our government leaders, with complete dependence on God, to establish equal justice and equal protection for the preborn according to the authority of God's Word, at the local, state and federal levels, without exception or compromise.[9] We call upon Pastors and leaders to use their God-given gifts of preaching, teaching, and leading with one unified, principled, prophetic voice to uphold and promote God's justice for all, including our preborn neighbors, at any and all stages of development.[10]

[9] Deut. 16:18-20; Proverbs 20:10; Romans 13:3-4; 1 Pet. 2:13-14
[10] Prov. 24:11-12; Psalm 82:4; Micah 6:8; Matt. 14:1-12; Mark 6:14-29

And be it further **Resolved**, that we commend the ministry of lovelife.org and local pregnancy resource centers to churches to encourage continued support for mothers and fathers and those recovering from abortions.

Study Committee on Strengthening our Position on Abortion: Beau E. Coffman, Chairman; Sal Piccolo, Secretary; W. Scott Kappes, Juan Carlos Morales, Ronald W. Reed, John C. Studenroth, Mary Tannous.

Report of the Study Committee on the Role of Women in the Church (Majority Report)

Our committee was charged by BFC Conference to codify the prohibition against women teaching men in the gathered church from 1 Timothy 2:12: "I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet." Based on our observations of the text, the Articles of Faith, and Scripture as a whole, our group believes Paul is prohibiting women from teaching authoritatively in the gathered church in a way that is reserved for elders.

Observations from the biblical text

Context of 1 Timothy 2: Gathered Church

The book of 1 Timothy is focused on warning the church, God's household, to avoid false doctrine and false teachers.[1] Chapter 2 includes instructions on praying without anger or disputing, modest dress, and teaching and learning. Each of these instructions would only be worth noting in a setting of a formal public worship service of the gathered church.

Context of 1 Timothy 2: Authoritative Teaching

Paul flows from chapter 2 to chapter 3 without any transition words.[2] First Timothy 3 mentions that elders must be able to teach. In 2:12, Paul's prohibition of women teaching has in view the kind of authoritative teaching which belongs to elders—which he is just about to mention. Paul's prohibition of women teaching in the gathered church cannot include the type of general teaching or exhorting which Scripture expects from all believers, both men and women.[3]

Definition of "teach" in the New Testament

By basic definition, the Greek word for "teach" (διδασκω) means to tell someone what to do or to provide instruction in a formal or informal setting. It is used often in the gospels to describe Jesus' public teaching ministry in the temple and on the streets, although there are times when it refers to Jesus teaching his disciples in a smaller group. There are a few times when it simply means giving instructions. [4]

By the time of Acts and the apostles, the word began to be used more specifically.[5] Luke uses the word 15 times in Acts, mostly to describe what the apostles do as they tell others about Christ in the temple, in public, and house to house (Acts 5:42, Acts 20:20). The word is also used to describe what false teachers do, so it is not always used in a positive sense.

In the Epistles, there are a variety of uses of teaching, sometimes referring to authoritative teaching that an elder does and sometimes meaning the teaching that is open to believers in general in the life of the church. For example, in Colossians 3:16 all believers are to "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom..."[6]

In the Pastoral Epistles, the word teaching (διδασκεῖν) narrows to convey authoritative instruction from the elders in a congregational setting. [7] It is apparent that the primary teaching in the early church comes from the elders. [8] Authoritative teaching also refutes what the false teachers are teaching.[9] In Titus and 1 Timothy, the qualifications of elders include holding firmly to the word as taught and being able to teach and rebuke those who contradict it.[10]

Part of this authoritative teaching is preserving and passing along the doctrine given from the apostles. In 1 Timothy 4:11, Paul tells Timothy to teach the things that he just taught Timothy. In chapter 6 we have the clearest depiction of how Paul views authoritative teaching. It is the instruction in doctrine that he gives Timothy and others, which ultimately agrees with the sound doctrine of the Lord and godliness.[11] In 2 Timothy, Paul's instructions further describe how Timothy is to pass on the teaching that he has received from Paul in an authoritative way, differently than the way he describes laypeople teaching.[12] The teaching referred to in the Pastoral Epistles clearly suggests an authority that cannot be attributed in the same way to every use of the word teaching in the New Testament.[13]

Relationship between "teach" and "authority" in 1 Timothy 2:12

Although our committee was not charged by conference to study the issue of women and authority in the church, the issue of authority must be addressed because it also appears in 1 Timothy 2:12. Early Latin translations from the second through the fifth century AD translate the word "to domineer." The 1599 Geneva Bible and the King James Version translate the word as "to usurp authority," but most modern translations translate the word as "to exercise authority." This particular Greek word for authority is only used this once in Scripture, so we rely on the biblical context and consult extrabiblical usages of the word in order to help determine its meaning. Unfortunately, the Greek word used for "authority" only appears five times within two hundred years after Paul writes Timothy.

Most of the books, articles, and sermons we researched referenced Dr. George Knight's work when describing why the word means "to exercise authority." To see further study on the meaning of the word "authority," including an analysis of Dr. George Knight's work, see the Appendix.

Our group sees the phrase "I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man" pointing to one service in the church: authoritative teaching which belongs to elders.[14] This phrase is not merely signifying the position of elder.[15] It is referring to one action, authoritative teaching, because of the way the grammar is structured in the verse. "To teach" and "to exercise authority" are joined by the word "or." In the Greek, the word for "or" ties together the two infinitives into one idea. For a detailed analysis of the Greek grammar, see the Appendix.

Throughout 1 Timothy 2, Paul couples two related words. For example, Paul uses pairs of partly synonymous words or phrases in verses 1, 2a, 2b, 3, 4, 5, 7a, 7b, 8, 9a, and 9b, such as men should pray lifting up holy hands without anger or quarreling. Women should adorn themselves with modesty and self-control, not with gold or pearls. In every instance, the paired words are closely related and together form one single concept. This makes it overwhelmingly likely that in 1 Timothy 2:12, Paul is referring to one specific kind of teaching. [16]

How Paul uses Adam and Eve

The next two verses contain a reference to Adam and Eve that is connected to verse 12 only by the word "for." "I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve." Because the Greek word "for" has multiple uses and Paul doesn't clarify his intended meaning any further, there is a breadth of opinion among scholars (and, indeed, members of this committee) about the way this inserted narrative is meant to reflect on Paul's preceding instructions. However, an interpretation of verse 12 as prohibiting women from elder-specific teaching, as outlined above, couples well with a variety of readings of verses 13 and 14, so that the harmony of the text is preserved even when viewed from a diversity of perspectives.

A review of the positions of respected scholars reveals broad interpretive trends as well as variations and outliers. The most common complementarian view says that Paul uses "for" in the sense of "because" in verse 13, rooting his previous command in creation order in that Adam, created first, sets the stage for men to carry the weight of spiritual responsibility. He asserts that Paul's original audience, accustomed to the idea of primogeniture, would have found this idea quite sensible. The interpretive connection to the idea of headship is limited, however. For much of church history, 1 Timothy 2:14 ("and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor") was taught to mean that women are inherently more deceivable than men. This view of women being inherently deceivable has "rightly been abandoned by virtually all complementarians as well as egalitarians."[17]

While many scholars affirm the most common complementarian view in its entirety, others add nuances or take another approach altogether. One scholar follows much the same path but adds an affirmation of federal headship as an interpretive connection. The federal headship view says since the text tells us that Eve sinned first and yet we know that Adam carries the weight of humanity's sin, we can infer that Adam is the spiritual head as well as the firstborn.[18] Yet another scholar's view differs materially from these but is still compatible with the above interpretation of verse 12. The Old Testament reference does broaden the meaning of the passage, he says, but he takes "for" to introduce an explanation of its meaning by way of analogy. As Eve was led astray, so might his readers be led astray if they were not careful, and become sinners.[19] Perhaps most directly related to the present analysis, though, is another scholar's observation that the Genesis reference stresses Adam and Eve's "simultaneous unity *and* diversity" [emphasis original], which he links to the differing responsibilities of men and women—specifically, the limiting of pastoral teaching and oversight to qualified men.[20]

The reference to Adam and Eve in 1 Timothy 2:13-14 not only supports a reading that has Paul prohibiting women from taking on duties reserved for elders, but does so in a way that reinforces the strength of the interpretation and the unity of the text. The Genesis text is rich enough, and Paul's use of it is apt enough, that readers can examine its application from a variety of angles without compromising the harmony of the passage.

Observations from the Articles of Faith

The BFC Articles of Faith (Article 204-1) declare that the elders (qualified men)

have "broad responsibility and authority" in the church. They are to govern well, so they are called elders. They are overseers having administration over the life of the church and they are shepherds to care for and feed God's people. They serve so they are called ministers.[21] The BFC Principles of Order 401-1.2 says: "The Board of Elders shall have the general oversight of the life and work of the church, including worship, preaching, ordinances, evangelism, visitation, discipline, finances, and maintenance of the properties."

The word "overseer" implies that the elders are not the only ones doing the work in the church. Although elders are to be able to teach and hold the ultimate teaching authority in the church, teaching is in no way exclusive to elders. Teaching is listed as a spiritual gift given to both men and women in the church.[22] The New Testament authors expect that more than just the elders will be teachers. In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul tells Timothy to entrust what he has taught Timothy to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others. In Hebrews 5:12, the writer expects that the readers ought to be teachers by this time. In Colossians 3:16, Paul expects men and women to teach and admonish one another in the gathered church, including via the use of song.

One example of "overseeing" happens when a qualified male is in the process of ordination or is a potential elder candidate and has an opportunity to teach in an authoritative way in order for the elders to determine if he is able to teach. In this instance the elders must validate him ahead of time, since the Word of God must be honored and handled carefully.

The term "overseer" shows us the authority the elders have over the church in regard to teaching and upholding the doctrine of the church. Although they aren't to do all the work, they are responsible for making sure what is taught is correct. The buck stops with them.

Observations of other parts of Scripture regarding women and spoken word ministries

When interpreting I Timothy 2:12, we must seek to understand Paul's meaning about women and their service to the church in light of the teaching of all of Scripture. Although authoritative teaching in the church is reserved for elders, there are many instances in Scripture in which women were called on by God to share God's Word with His people, including men, through a variety of spoken word ministries. First Timothy 2:12 does not prohibit women from all spoken word ministries[23] in the church today.[24]

- **Genesis 1:26:** God commanded both man and woman to rule over the earth and subdue it, and to be fruitful and multiply. Therefore, the prohibition cannot mean that men are always in authority over women in every circumstance. God designed men and women to rule over creation together. God designed men and women to be united, interdependent, and to be co-laborers for Him.[25]

- **Old Testament women:** The Old Testament gives a few instances when God instructed women to declare the Word of God and to exhort men and/or women to follow it. For example, Deborah was a prophet, a judge over the nation of Israel, and commanded Barak in battle. She took God's

instructions and passed them along to the men under her charge (Judges 4-5). In addition, the angel of the Lord came to Manoah's wife directly to declare to her that she would be pregnant with Samson and gave her specific instructions to follow. She told these instructions to her husband, Manoah. When Manoah asked the angel to hear the instructions for himself, the angel told him to listen to his wife (Judges 13). Also, Huldah was a prophet. After King Josiah found the book of the law, he sent Hilkiah the priest and four other men to Huldah to inquire of the Lord to verify that this was the book of the Law. She verified its authenticity and gave them instructions from the Lord (2 Kings 22).

- **New Testament women:** Anna is called a prophet. She came up to Mary and Joseph and baby Jesus in the temple and "spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem" (Luke 2:36-38). After the resurrection, Jesus and the angels told the women to go tell the disciples that He was alive (Matthew 28, Luke 24, John 20). The women at Pentecost spoke to the crowd in Jerusalem. Acts 1:14 explicitly states women were in the upper room. Peter explains Joel's prophecy to the crowd. He twice mentions both men and women in regards to prophecy and the Holy Spirit (Acts 2). Priscilla and her husband Aquila together explained to Apollos the way of God more accurately (Acts 18); Priscilla was then commended by Paul for her ministry (Romans 16).[26] Philip the evangelist had four unmarried daughters who prophesied (Acts 21:9). In Paul's long list of greetings in Romans 16, he greets many men and women by name. He calls the women co-workers.
- **1 Corinthians 11:4:** When giving instructions about public worship, Paul mentions that women should have their heads covered when praying and prophesying. Therefore, Paul expected women to publicly pray and prophesy in the gatherings of the church. The head covering expectation tells us that this was a gathering of men and women.
- **1 Corinthians 14:26:** Paul expects men and women in the gathered church to give a psalm, a teaching, a revelation, a tongue, and interpretation for the edification of the body of Christ. This expectation is for men and women in the gathered church. Later in the chapter, he expects the women to remain silent. This directive does not mean that women cannot speak in the church but that they should be silent when the prophecy is being discerned,[27] a function which belongs to the elders.

These examples of women exercising various spoken word ministries creates hermeneutical grounds for closer examination of 1 Timothy 2:12. Although Scripture says women are not permitted to teach authoritatively in the gathered church, Scripture also says women read Scripture publicly (prophesy), pray publicly, evangelize, and explain God's Word to individuals or smaller groups of people.

Summary

Paul is restricting women from exercising a specific kind of teaching—authoritative teaching in the gathered church which is reserved for the recognized elders of the congregation.

Proposed legislation

Whereas, Paul wrote to Timothy, "I do not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man" in 1 Timothy 2:12, referring to an authoritative teaching in the church reserved for elders, and

Whereas, Paul allowed, expected, and commended women's participation in the early church, including public prayers (1 Cor. 11:5), public prophesying and teaching (1 Cor. 14:26), public learning (1 Tim. 2:11), and teaching and exhorting (Col. 3:16, 1 Cor. 14:26), and

Whereas, the BFC Principles of Order allows each particular church's board of elders to decide for themselves how and where laymen and laywomen can lead, serve, and teach in their church, be it

Resolved, that we codify our existing position in keeping with 1 Timothy 2:12 by adding the following to Principles of Order Article 404, *Choosing Leaders Other Than Elders and Deacons*:

404-6 The elder board of each particular church will decide for itself what teaching opportunities are authoritative (which should be reserved for elders) and what teaching opportunities are not authoritative and are therefore available to laymen and laywomen.

Possible church applications

There are a variety of ways a particular church could apply this codification of 1 Timothy 2:12. Here are some examples:

1. **Limit all teaching in the gathered church to elders only**. There are a few challenges with this approach. First, it will be difficult to provide opportunities for possible elder candidates to show they are "able to teach," although exceptions could be made for possible elder candidates as well as guest speakers who are not local elders but are a trustworthy authority from a denominational setting. Second, if sub-groups of the church, such as high school Sunday School or small groups, are considered "the gathered church," and the elders need to do all the teaching, there will be a big load on the elders' plates. Third, it will be difficult to meet the directive to Timothy to teach others so that they may also teach, an expectation that is also mentioned to the readers of Hebrews.[28]
2. **Limit all teaching in the gathered church to men only**. When we surveyed our churches for their existing by-laws about women teaching in the church, we discovered many churches have a modified version of this application, where women are not permitted to teach in any mixed group of men and women (and in some cases not even over teen boys), yet laymen are allowed to do so. If this approach is applied, care will need to be taken to provide a biblical explanation for how elders and not men in general hold the teaching authority in the church.
3. **Provide opportunities for laymen and laywomen to co-teach with an elder in the gathered church**. This way the elder is the teaching authority

in the room, yet a layman or laywoman with the gift of teaching is able to exercise his or her spiritual gift of teaching for the common good. There are many women in the BFC in the past and present who have co-taught adult Sunday School classes of men and women, Bible studies, conferences, small groups, etc.

4. **Provide opportunities for laymen and laywomen to teach in the gathered church while clearly communicating that the elders are the ultimate teaching authority in the church**. This currently happens in most of our churches where laymen are teaching Sunday School classes, small groups, Bible Studies, prayer meetings, etc. The laymen are teachers, but it is acknowledged that the elders have the ultimate teaching authority in the church. BFC churches in the past have used this approach for women to varying degrees.[29] This approach has also been applied in the gathered church to laywomen participating in other spoken word ministries, such as worship leading, reading Scripture, public prayer, sharing testimonies, or teaching a conference or special class.

Exactly how each particular church allows its laymen and laywomen to serve, teach, and lead will look different in every church because each local church has a unique context in which it is ministering. Our suggested legislation is intentionally broad in order to allow room for the Holy Spirit to guide each elder board in allowing its laymen and laywomen gifted with teaching to minister to the local body of Christ to God's glory.

Further notes for elder boards

The committee strongly advocates the adoption of the proposed resolution; however, whether or not the legislation passes, each elder board is already free to create by-laws or policies for its particular church regarding women teaching in the gathered church. Here are some points to consider which have emerged during our study:

1. **The women in your church are not mind readers.** Unless your elder board clearly defines where and how women can teach, serve, and lead in the gathered church, women will be unsure about what they are allowed to do. Without a clearly communicated policy, women are left to navigate the unstated expectations of whatever men happen to be present at the time. Many who are willing to serve will not risk asking permission. Take initiative to make the boundaries clear so women know where they have freedom to build up the body of Christ.

2. **Guide out of hermeneutical conviction and not fear**. Throughout this process we have heard some pastors comment that they will need to answer to the Lord about how they followed 1 Timothy 2:12 so, to be on the safe side, they decided not to let women teach in the gathered church. Remember, elders, you will also need to give an account for how you allowed the brothers and sisters in your churches who are gifted with teaching to serve the body of Christ. If you decide not to let women teach in the gathered church, let it be out of a strong hermeneutical conviction and not "to be on the safe side." Be

prepared to have a biblical answer to "why?" when asked. If you decide not to let women publicly read Scripture or pray or give an intro to a worship song or share a public testimony or co-lead a small group, be prepared with a biblical answer for why.

3. **The Danvers Statement and the work of the Council of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood[30] have not been adopted by BFC Conference.** While elders are free to read these resources, remember that the BFC is not bound by these documents. They cannot be used as a standard by which to measure the orthodoxy of your brothers and sisters in the BFC. Also, while reading, be on your guard against the Eternal Subordination of the Son view of the Trinity, a view which some prominent members of the Council hold.[31]

4. **Train your women to teach and lead.** This is the surprising context of our key verse. First Timothy 2:11 begins "Let a woman learn…" Regardless of where your particular church allows women to teach or lead, let them learn. Teach them doctrine. Teach them theology. Teach them how to teach. Your discipleship responsibility includes the women in your congregation. Too often BFC leadership and teacher trainings are reserved for men only. Women who are gifted to teach and/or lead are left in the dust, looking outside of the church for places to be invested in and to exercise their spiritual gifts.

Respectfully Submitted,

Study Committee on the Role of Women in the Church (majority opinion): Aaron D. Smith, Ralph E. Ritter, Rachel Schmoyer, Jocelyn Scott, Dennis W. Spinney

Appendix 1

Authentein: A deep dive into the Greek grammar

The word translated "exercise authority" is a hapax legomenon, which means it is only used once in Scripture. The earliest versions of the Bible translates αὐθεντέω as "to dominate" and not "to exercise authority over." Old Latin (second-fourth century AD): "I permit not woman to teach, neither to dominate a man [neque dominari viro]." Vulgate (fourth-fifth century AD): "I permit not a woman to teach, neither to domineer over a man [neque dominari in virum]." Geneva (1560 edition): "I permit not a woman to teache, neither to vsurpe authoritie ouerthe man." Casiodoro de Reina (1560-61): "I do not permit the woman to teach, neither to take authority over the man [ni tomar autoridad sobre el hombre]." Bishop (1589): "I suffer not a woman to teache, neither to vsurpe auctoritie ouer yeman." KJV (1611): "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor usurpe authority over the man.

More recent translations translate the word as "to exercise authority." Most of the more recent books, articles, and sermons which we consulted referred to Dr. George Knight's word study to determine the meaning of the word authority (αὐθεντεῖν). For

example, in his monumental book on manhood and womanhood, reformed professor and counselor James Hurley says it was necessary to guess whether the word meant "exercise authority" or "illegitimately exercise authority" until Dr. Knight examined every use of the term and provided analysis of the history of the interpretation and translation of authentein.[32] Hurley doesn't actually cite Knight but mentions in the footnote, "Dr. George Knight of Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri has done scholars the favor of examining every use of the term recorded in the current lexicons and of providing not only translations of those Greek texts, but also an analysis of the history of the interpretation and translation of authentein. At the time of the writing Dr. Knight's work does not yet appear in print." So, we wanted to know. Is Knight correct?

From the perspective of a reliable Greek lexicon, αὐθεντέω is described as "*to control in a domineering manner–To control, to domineer*. It is often expressed idiomatically, for example, '*to shout orders at*,' 'to act like a chief toward,' or 'to *bark at*.'"[33] Elsewhere it is described as, "*to assume a stance of independent authority***,** *give orders to, dictate***.** Practically in 1 Timothy 2:12 *'tell a man what to do.'"* [34] Those are two different ideas. Independent authority certainly can be a negative idea, along with barking at. But the idea of telling a man what to do would be much more positive or even neutral. Another definition that comes from outside the New Testament is *to have full power* or *authority over* or *to commit a murder*. [35] A lexicon that examines the usage in contemporary writings from the biblical times defines the word as being vulgar. It comes out of the word *master or autocrat*. It is related to the adjective meaning *authentic*.[36] There is a strong nuance of independence in the both the negative and positive examples. This independent authority idea will be of great necessity when Paul relates disorder to Adam and Eve.

After a study through lexicons, the meaning of αὐθεντεῖν in 1 Timothy 2:12 still has some vagueness to it based on the vast range of usages. Most of the usages provide a negative use of authority, but not all the usages even deal with authority. Fortunately, there have been a few studies that, with advances in computer technology, help to examine the usages of the verb in literature outside of the New Testament. The first study was by H. Scott Baldwin, who examined 82 different uses of the word αὐθεντεῖν.[37] Baldwin's study revealed that many of the uses of this verb have different meanings than "mere authority." Included in those usages are, "to act independently" and "to assume authority over," which Baldwin often translates as "to act on one's own authority." In some of those situations a person is in the appropriate position to convey the actions of authority; in other cases, they do not have the authority to convey such actions. It is concluded that "to exercise authority" cannot be the basic semantic concept that accounts for all the uses of this verb.[38]

One of the concerns of αὐθεντέω having a negative meaning is that it is less prohibitive. If the word has a negative meaning, God's Word is only prohibiting women from inappropriate authority. If the word αὐθεντέω simply means authority, then women would be prohibited from all authority in the presence of men. Some have even asked why only women would be addressed if such a prohibition speaks about a negative action of which a man could also be guilty. While that's a valid question, the same question can be asked for a much clearer prohibition in the same context. In the same

chapter, men were prohibited from anger and quarreling. Why aren't women prohibited from anger and quarreling? The natural assumption is men were the ones struggling with this. Similarly, the women were the ones who had the problem with overstepping their roles in the worship service.[39] God's directive was directed only toward the men in 1 Timothy 2:8. It also must be kept in mind that this prohibition to a woman is related to teaching and, more specifically, to teaching over a man.

In ancient literature, the closest known parallel usage of this word is a prohibition of a husband. This usage occurs in a writing of Chrysostom in his *Homily to the Colossians 27-31*. He says, "Μὴ τοίνυν, ἐπειδὴ ὑποτέτακται ἡ γυνή, αὐθέντει." Westfall provides the translation: "Therefore, don't be abusive because your wife is submissive to you." Clearly the word in that context is negative and not a simple representation of the man's authority in the home.[40] The strength of this example is that it deals with male and female roles while clearly showing that αὐθεντέω is used negatively. The weakness of this example is that it occurs much later (sometime in the 4th century) than the Timothy usage.

Baldwin studied 82 different uses of the word αὐθεντέω**.** In all 82 uses, there was never a positive usage of that word in a ministry leadership context. It never referred to general authority in leadership. In the fifth century, Eusebius of Alexandria instructed the deacons to carry out the commands and intentions of the elders to meet the needs of the people ,but he prohibits the deacons from performing this verb. The context is the deacons overstepping their bounds in banishing and excommunicating people when the elders are present.[41] It is used in another instance, that of Bassianos complaining that he was made bishop by an illegitimate procedure, one in which he was pressed in by violence. This is another case where it's used in a church setting and it denotes inappropriate force.[42] In an ecclesiastical context it addresses going against God's divine order.

There are five known usages of the word αὐθεντέω within a century or two of Paul's writing to Timothy. The first one is by Philodemus in *Rhetorica 2.133*, written around 110-35 BC. The word is translated as *to rule, to reign sovereignly* by Baldwin and Schreiner. Payne translates it as *murders,* or *those who murder*. The letter from Tryphon, *BGU 1208.38*, was written in 27 BC. Baldwin and Schreiner translate the word as *to compel*, *to influence*. Payne translates it as *assume authority*, "*I assumed authority against him*." The third usage was by Aristonicus Alexandrinus in *De Signis Iliadis 9.694* (27 BC-AD 37). Baldwin and Schreiner translate this usage as *to be primarily responsible for*, *to do*, or *to instigate*; "The one doing the speech." Payne translated it as *the one self-accomplishing the speech*. The usage in 1 Timothy 2:12 is from the 60s AD. Baldwin translates it as *assume authority over*. Schreiner translates it as *exercise authority*. Payne translates it as *to assume authority*, or possibly *to dominate*. The next usage existed in Ptolemy in *Tetrabiblos 3.13.10*, written about AD 127-148. It is translated as by Baldwin/ Schreiner as *to control, to dominate*. Grudem translates it as *to control, to dominate* and Payne translates it as *to dominate*. The final usage is from the 2nd century AD—a work by Moeris Attiista, *Lexicon Atticum*. Baldwin and Schreiner describe it as, t*o exercise one's own jurisdiction*. Grudem also translates it as to exercise *one's own jurisdiction*; *to have independent jurisdiction*.[43] It is clear from the data that *exercise authority* or *have authority over* is not the obvious or regular meaning during the time of Paul. It is also clear that a positive view for αὐθεντέω is not the consensus. Through linguistic studies,

through modern advances, and through discovering more usages, the conclusions are clear. The word carries a self-accomplished wielding of power and is most easily understood as a negative usage.[44]

While one of the prohibitions for women in 1 Timothy 2:12 is a negative action of self-promoted authority against God's given order in the church, it is not independent of the main prohibition of teaching. Quite the contrary! Paul's primary prohibition for the woman has to do with teaching, which is evidenced by the Greek word order. The first word in this sentence is the infinitive *to teach*, διδάσκειν. For the woman to teach in this way that Paul is instructing her not to, she would be acting in a self-promoting act of inappropriate authority. Paul's prohibition is to keep her from doing that. After the two infinitives of prohibition, he describes a proper behavior with a single idea. To avoid those things is to, "remain quiet."[45] It is difficult to see Paul providing two unrelated prohibitions for a woman and then describing the aversive in one simple term, "remain quiet." She is prohibited from teaching in a self-promoted way against the authority in place in the church. As one studies the usage of this type of authority, one can see why Paul referenced the negatively nuanced (αὐθεντεῖν) rather than the commonly used (ἐξουσία) which refers to a general, neutral authority. Paul had a specific reason in mind when he chose to use the more nuanced word of (αὐθεντεῖν).

John MacArthur speaks on the definition of "authority" in a sermon, "Does the Bible Permit a Woman to Preach?" While using the King James version, he referenced the wording of the verse as "teach and usurp authority." He speaks of a scenario in the church where women are discontent in their God-given role, and they seek for a place of prominence in taking authority over the man. Paul does not permit them to do that, even though that is their desire. MacArthur describes this scenario further as taking place in the duly constituted church. He acknowledges that when it comes together, it's official worship. The one who speaks in this official worship service is the authoritative pastor-teacher role, the one who articulates the Word of God. Nowhere in the New Testament is any women presented as teacher in the church. He describes the woman who is trying to take that role as "usurping authority."[46] After expounding on that verse, MacArthur changes directions and then provides a different meaning for the Greek infinitive αὐθεντεῖν, to simply "have authority over." He cited a recent study by Dr. George Knight in New Testament Studies as the reason for this particular interpretation.[47]

Appendix 2
Analysis of the conjunction οὐδὲ

There has been a back-and-forth debate between scholars as to whether "to teach" and "to exercise authority" form one prohibition or two separate prohibitions. The main advocate of the relation position is Philip B. Payne and the main advocate of the separate ideas position is Andreas Köstenberger. Many studies reference the work of these two scholars and draw conclusions from them. Payne sees the conjunction οὐδὲ tying the two elements of the prohibition together to form one single idea. He supports his claim with an example from Polybius, *Hist. 30.5.8*. Polybius's syntax is completely parallel in this case to 1 Timothy 2:12, with a negative finite verb, an infinitive, the presence of οὐδε, a second infinitive, ἀλλὰ, and an infinitive reiterating the *inclusio*. Polybius's statement after οὐδὲ provides clarity that "to run in harness to Rome" is

to "engage themselves by oaths and treaties to Rome." Together the two infinitives are connected with οὐδὲ to contribute to one idea of alliance with Rome. This stands in contrast to being in alliance with someone other than Rome. The next closest example found in literature comes from Josephus, *Ant.7.127*. In that case, two infinitives convey a single idea that stands in opposition to the statement following but (ἀλλὰ). The first infinitive is "to remain quiet" and the second infinitive is, "to keep the peace in the knowledge that their enemy was superior." The contrastive statement is "Instead they sent to Chalamas." [48]

After these examples from ancient literature, Payne shows examples in the New Testament where οὐδε ties two infinitives together to represent one idea and then contrasts them with ἀλλὰ and then provides the contrastive idea. These occur in Romans 2:28-29; 9:6-7; Galatians 1:1, 11-12, 16-17; 4:14; and Philippians 2:16-17. Payne provides one example from the New Testament, 2 Corinthians 7:12, that has the οὐδε but doesn't tie the two words together and they are taken as separate ideas with a following contrastive. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, but he didn't write for the sake of the one who did wrong, nor did he write for the sake of the one who suffered the wrong, but that your earnestness for us would be displayed. Payne recognizes the obvious: that even though it presents two ideas, they're still united because they must contrast together with the single ἀλλὰ clause. At the very least, the two infinitives in 1 Timothy 2:12 are united in some sort of relation so that they contrast with the idea of remaining quiet.[49]

Payne shows historical merit for οὐδὲ showing one combined idea.

Origen wrote the first known commentary on 1 Timothy 2:12. After quoting the verse, he describes it as "concerning woman not becoming a ruler over man in speaking." His use of "to become" implies entry into a position of authority over a man. Origen in this context affirms Priscilla, Maximilla, the four daughters of Philip, Deborah, Miriam, Huldah and Anna, suggesting that he received teaching by women that was authorized. Similarly, John Chrysostom, in *Epistulam ad Titum. Homilia 4.10 (PG 62.683),* sees 1 Timothy 2:12 as the sort of teaching he is not permitting women to do. Chrysostom says, "For this reason he added the words οὐδὲ αὐθεντεῖν ἀνδρός so that they can instruct the young women."[50]

Payne's extensive analysis should not be taken lightly; he provides seven pieces of proof in his defense. First, Paul typically uses οὐδὲ to join two elements to convey a single idea. Second, the two closest syntactical parallels to 1 Timothy 2:12 join two elements to convey a single idea. Third in the overwhelming majority of Paul's and the New Testament's usage of a negative with οὐδὲ and a contrastive ἀλλὰ syntactical construction, which occurs in 1 Timothy 2:12, οὐδὲ joins two expressions to convey a single idea in sharp contrast to the ἀλλὰ statement. Fourth, in the earliest known commentary on 1 Timothy 2:12, Origen treats it as a single prohibition—as does Chrysostom. Fifth is the pattern that, when οὐδὲ joins together an infinitive that has a predominately positive connotation with an infinitive that has a predominately negative connotation, the author is conveying a single idea. Payne's sixth proof states that only prohibited women in Ephesus couldn't assume authority to teach men if they did not have rightful authority. Payne provides the example of Priscilla.[51] Seventh, the idea that 1 Timothy 2:12 conveys a single prohibition of a woman seizing authority best fits the context of the following explanation of the prohibition. In conclusion, Payne's

interpretation is that Paul was prohibiting women from seizing for themselves authority to teach a man. Given his body of work, his conclusion should be supported; however, with our previous understanding of teaching in the context of 1 Timothy, our interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:12 is "Paul was prohibiting women from seizing for themselves authority to teach in the public worship service (where men are present)."[52] Even though Payne argues for the egalitarian position, this rendering does not necessitate an egalitarian conclusion, especially in light of other Scriptures. Perhaps the fact that he is egalitarian in his views is what keeps people from adhering to his scrupulous scholarship.

Köstenberger is highly quoted and well respected by commentary writers and books that have studied this topic. He has done his own study on the relationship between οὐδὲ and two activities and concepts. He has two prevailing views. The first view is that when two concepts are viewed positively in and of themselves, their exercise is prohibited due to circumstances or conditions adduced in content. His conclusion is that οὐδὲ only joins two words that are both positive or are both negative. Köstenberger presents his second view that two activities or concepts are viewed negatively, and their exercise is prohibited, or their existence is to be denied or they are to be avoided. Since all these cases are prohibitions of two items, it makes perfect sense that they are both negative from the author's view. Köstenberger's conclusion from his work determines two possible interpretations of 1 Timothy 2:12: (1) "I do not permit a woman to teach (error) or to domineer over a man," or (2) "I do not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man." He correctly notes that οὐδὲ is a coordinating conjunction and not a subordinating conjunction. That means that one of the infinitives can't be used adverbially in connection to the other. Furthermore, he states that the two concepts are never blended to the extent that they are no longer distinguishable, even though they might be perceived jointly in 1 Timothy 2:12. Köstenberger also concluded that διδάσκω was never used negatively in Timothy unless it was a compound word. From this conclusion Köstenberger supports his second view, where both infinitives must be positive and negated by the circumstances.[53]

On the contrary, there are some negative usages of teaching in 1 Timothy, but not in the adverbial usage. First Timothy 4:1 speaks of those who, led astray, were devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons. First Timothy 6:1 speaks of teaching that is reviled. Second Timothy 4:3 speaks of people acquiring teachers to suit their own passions. Köstenberger's theory faces much scrutiny when one sees a clear negative usage of the verb διδάσκω in Titus 1:11, "They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by *teaching* for shameful gain what they ought not to teach." While he presents two possible translations from his conclusion, they are a bit too narrow of a perspective. He didn't consider the fact that 1 Timothy 2:12 could be translated as "I do not permit a woman to teach in the public worship service in a role reserved for elders and I do not allow a woman to self-promote herself into an authoritative role reserved for elders." It's easy to see both words in 1 Timothy being used in a negative sense. In this context it also makes sense why Paul would prohibit these things for a woman during a worship service.

C.L. Blomberg notices a pattern that Paul uses in 1 Timothy 2, where he uses pairs of partly synonymous words or phrases, including v. 1, 2a, 2b, 3, 4, 5, 7a, 7b, 8, 9a, and 9b. He concludes that in every instance they are closely related and together form one single concept. This makes it overwhelmingly likely that in 1 Timothy 2:12, Paul is

referring to one specific kind of teaching rather than two separate activities.[54] When one looks closely at the importance that Timothy puts on the role of teaching, it carries with it considerable authority as it is maintaining true Christian doctrine. Teaching in this way is representative of community leaders, including Paul, and the apostolic delegates of Timothy and Titus. Elders were leaders who "were able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2). The strong relationship of the function of teaching to the leaders in the pastorals clearly suggests that there is an authoritative element to it.[55] It doesn't mean that οὐδὲ is a subordinating conjunction (e.g. authoritative teaching), but as a coordinating conjunction it still carries the idea of *teaching and authority that are related to one another as part of a distinct and unique ministry function*.

The idea of teaching and authority go hand in hand when it comes to describing leaders in the church. Galatians 6:6 shows a prominent teaching role in the church before the ministry of eldership was even fully developed.[56] In that setting, the congregants were to show honor by providing financial means to the teacher. While authority isn't mentioned, the honor opens the door for teaching to be a respectable position in the body of Christ. On the other hand, in 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, Paul refers to ones who labor (κοπιάω), who have a threefold role of προΐστημι, νουθετέω, and ἔργον. Ruling (προΐστημι) means to exercise a position of leadership, *rule, direct, be at the head.*[57] *V*ουθετέω means to counsel about avoidance or cessation of an improper course of conduct, admonish, warn, instruct.[58] The work is simply a noun that describes the ministry of the two verbs, ruling as the head with authority and admonishing. While one could say that admonishing is different than teaching and is even mutually done by everyone for a time in the congregation (Colossians 3:16), this is referring to a person in an authoritative role who has a clear role instructing people in the church. Paul performed this ministry in Acts 20:31 for three years while he was in Ephesus. It reflects the apostolic teaching when Paul references it of himself (Colossians 1:28, 1 Corinthians 4:14). It is very possible that this is the role that developed into the leadership and teaching role of eldership in the church as the church developed and organized. Furthermore, the household of Stephanas, who were the first converts in Achaia, gave themselves to the service of the saints (1 Corinthians 16:15). The church leader is described as a coworker (συνεργέω) and a (κοπιάω) just like 1 Thessalonians 5:13. Likewise Paul reveals the authority that these leaders have by telling the Corinthians to submit to them and those like them (1 Corinthians 16:16). By the time we get to 1 Timothy 5:17, the ministry of eldership has developed and now it is clear that it is a two-fold role of ruling and laboring in preaching/teaching.[59] The word for "rule" is once again προΐστημι, the same word that Paul used for the role of the leaders in one of his earliest writings in 1 Thessalonians 5:13. And the word for "laboring" (attached to preaching/teaching) is κοπιάω, the same word used to describe the work of the leaders in 1 Thessalonians 5.

It is clear from the very beginning of the church that leaders in the church developed into a two-fold ministry of ruling and teaching. Eventually these were the clear characteristics of elders. While teaching was the prominent function, ruling went along in proper alignment with it. This makes sense of 1 Timothy 2:12. Women were restricted from unilaterally and independently placing themselves into functions reserved for the elders in the church.

In a sermon on this topic preached in 1989, John Piper comes to a similar conclusion. Piper notices the broadness of the word "teach" when addressing the passage. "Instead of letting the word 'teach' mean anything we want it to mean or think it might mean, it's safer to say, it probably means a kind of teaching that somehow relates to authority. Teach and exercise authority go together. So at least one general thing we can say about women teaching is that Paul forbids it when it is part of the exercise of authority over men." He then says, "The key that unlocks this door is a very interesting observation. When you read the rest of 1 Timothy about the role of elders in the church, what you find is that the elders had two basic responsibilities: they were to govern and they were to teach." "Elders rule or govern, and elders teach or preach." "He [Paul] is saying in essence: I do not permit women to fill the office of elder in the church. The elders are charged with the leadership and instruction of the church." That's a summary of their job. So when Paul puts those two things together and says, "I do not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority," the most natural sense is, "I do not permit a woman to assume the office of elder in the church."[60]

Endnotes

1 The book begins with this warning in 1 Timothy 1:3-5. Chapter 3, the center of the book, begins with the qualifications of elders who uphold/protect/teach doctrine with authority in the church. Chapter 4 exhorts Timothy to tell the people not to be persuaded by myths and false teaching; chapter 6 speaks about false teachers, and the book ends with Paul telling Timothy to avoid false teaching so he is not swayed.

2 We also know that Paul has elders in mind because the qualification of elders in 1 Timothy 3 follows this section. Something in this discussion triggered Paul to discuss the qualification of elders without any transition words that would assume he was onto a new topic. Elsewhere in Pauline literature, he uses the same phrase "the saying"—ὁ λόγος—to continue to develop his point (1 Corinthians 15:54-55). Paul does the same thing in 1 Timothy 1:15 where he provides the words, "the saying"/ὁ λόγος to help validate his idea. He also uses this idea in 4:9, 4:11, and Titus 3:8.

3 "Finally, given that 1 Timothy 3 will make mention of elders who must be apt to teach, Paul may have intended 2:12 to eliminate women from consideration by prohibiting them specifically from any *official* teaching within the church. In this way, Paul is seen not to be prohibiting the general sort of Christian teaching and mutual exhortation, much of which is to take place within the assembly, that the Scripture enjoins on all believers, male and female, in such passages as Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 3:13; 5:12; 10:24; 1 Corinthians 14:26; 1 Peter 3:15, among many others." Gordon P. Hugenberger, *Women in Church Office: Hermeneutics or Exegesis? A Survey of Approaches in Journal Evangelical Theological Society: 1 Timothy 2:8-15,* September 1992, p. 344.

4 Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, University of Chicago Press, 2000, p. 241. The example shared is Matthew 28:15, where the soldiers were paid off and "instructed" to lie about what happened to the body of Jesus. They were told what to do.

5 Rengstorf, K. H. (1964–). διδάσκω, διδάσκαλος, νομοδιδάσκαλος, καλοδιδάσκαλος, ψευδοδιδάσκαλος, διδασκαλία, ἑτεροδιδασκαλέω, διδαχή, διδακτός, διδακτικός. edited by G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, & G. Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.* Eerdmans. Electronic edition, Vol. 2, p. 144.

6 w. acc. of pers. (SIG 593, 15; PLond I, 43, 6 [II b.c.] p. 48 παιδάρια) Hebrews 8:11 (Jeremiah 38:34); Matthew 5:2; Mark 9:31; Luke 4:31; John 7:35 al.; Colossians 3:16 w. νουθετεῖν; Israel B 5:8. Colossians 3:16 is the verse of interest. It reveals that a health aspect of believers interacting is to have opportunities to speak into one another's lives in a smaller-scale or individualized setting. We need to admonish and teach one another. It a similar idea as Hebrews, where we are called to exhort one another so that no one would be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Exhort is the word

παρακαλέω, which speaks of coming along someone in a less formal setting. Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 2000, p. 241.

7 Witherington III, B., *Women in the Earliest Churches*, Society of New Testament Studies Monograph Series 59, Cambridge University Press, 1988, p. 121.

8 Fee, Gordon. *New International Biblical Commentary: 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus.* Hendrickson Publishers, 1988.

9 Titus, like 1 Timothy, is set against the backdrop of false teachers. There is a rebuke of false teachers who are teaching with the wrong attitude (shameful gain) and what they ought not to teach (1:11). They are to be silenced! Titus is contrasted with the false teachers and is to teach sound doctrine. In his teaching he is to show integrity, dignity, and sound speech, and the result of his conduct is that the doctrine of God our Savior is to be adorned.

10 Titus also mentions the older women are to teach what is good (καλοδιδάσκαλος), so that they can train (σωφρονίζω) the younger women to love their husbands and children, along with conducting themselves in godly character. The word for "teach what is good" (καλοδιδάσκαλος) is in an adjective form in this case—the only place the word occurs like this in Scripture. Since the verb deals with training rather than teaching, the usage of teaching in a compound word is different from the other usages in the Pastoral Epistles.

11 This passing down is further revealed with the command to Timothy to guard the deposit that was entrusted to him (1 Timothy 6:20).

12 Saucy, Robert L. *Women's Prohibition to Teach Men: An Investigation into its Meaning and Contemporary Application*. Journal of Evangelical Theological Society, March 1994, pp. 79-97. Saucy points out that there were people called teachers only four times in the NT, including Acts 13:1, 1 Corinthians 12:29-29; Ephesians 4:11, James 3:1). God didn't want the church to be divided by different lines of teaching, but under the unity of Christ. (1 Corinthians 1:10-17). The role seems to gain permanency and formality in the church (Galatians 6:6, Ephesians 4:11). These roles of teaching are distinct and separate for the role of teaching all church members have towards one another (Colossians 3:16, Hebrews 5:12).

13 Ibid., 90.

14 "This has reference solely to the function of the authoritative teacher of doctrine in the church. Dana & Mantey, in their *Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament,* have this to say on the subject: "The aorist infinitive notes that which is eventual or particular while the present infinitive indicates a condition or process…Thus, didaxai (aorist) is to teach, while didaskein (present, 2:12) is to be a teacher. Paul, therefore, says, I do not permit a woman to be a teacher." *Homer Kent's Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles, p. 112-113*

15 "The words translated 'to teach' in verse twelve means to be a teacher. The text refers to official, doctrinal, biblical instruction for the church. It is not talking about dialogue in an informal setting, but about having authority over a man or over the church. God has designed the office of pastor/teacher to be reserved for men." Moore, R. D. *Cultural Commentary: Television Sex: Too Boring for Christians.* Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, 8(2), 2003, p. 59–66. Cf. Paul refers, then, with authentein to exercise of a leadership role or function in the church (the contextual setting), and thus by special application the office of episkopos/presbuteros, since the names of these offices (especially episkopos) and the activities associated with them (cf., 3:4, 5; 5:17; Titus 1:9ff.: Acts 20:17, 29ff). indicate the exercise of authority. It is noteworthy, however, that Paul does not use office terminology here. (bishop/presbyter) but functional terminology (teach/exercise authority). It is thus the activity that he prohibits, not just the office (cf. again 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35). Knight, p. 142.

16 Blomberg, C.L, "Neither Hierarchicalist nor Egalitarian: Gender Role in Paul," *Two Views on Women in Ministry*, edited by. J.R. Beck and C.L. Blomberg, Zondervan, 2001, pp. 329-72, 363.

17 Craig Blomberg, "Women in Ministry, a Complementarian Perspective," *Two Views on Women in Ministry*, Counterpoints Exploring Theology, edited by Stanley N. Gundry and James R. Beck, Zondervan, 2005, p. 171.

18 Thomas R. Schreiner, "An Interpretation of I Timothy 2:9-15: A Dialogue with Scholarship," *Women in the Church*, eds. Andreas J. Köstenberger and Thomas Schreiner, Crossway, 2016, p. 215. Schreiner is drawing from Paul Barnett, "Wives and Women's Ministry (I Timothy 2:11-15)," *Evangelical Quarterly* 61 vol. 3, 6 September 1989, pp. 225-238.
19 Walter L. Liefeld, *I & II Timothy, Titus*. New International Version Application Commentary Series, edited by Terry Muck, Zondervan, 1989, p. 100.
20 Robert W. Yarbrough, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary Series, edited by D.A. Carson, 2018, p. 182.
21 BFC Article 204-1.2 Elders, Deacons, Staff.
22 Ephesians 4:11; Romans 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:28.
23 "Second, since it is a public worship service that is the alleged immediate context of these exhortations [1 Timothy 2:12], it may be that Paul intends only to prohibit public teaching at such a formal gathering. In this way it is seen that Paul is not forbidding the kind of informal teaching within a private setting that is seemingly approved in the case of Abigail who taught David (1 Samuel 25), the wise woman of Tekoa who taught David (2 Samuel 14:1–20), the wise woman of Abel Beth Maacah who taught Joab (20:16–22), Anna who instructed all those 'who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.'" Gordon P. Hugenberger, *Women in Church Office: Hermeneutics or Exegesis?: A Survey of Approaches in Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society: 1 Timothy 2:8-15,* September 1992, p. 343
24 John Piper was asked the question, "I'm a guy. Is it wrong for me to listen to a message by Beth Moore?" His answer was, "No, not unless you begin to become dependent on her as your shepherd." Piper also said the same goes for occasional women Sunday School teachers. He said it is clear that woman cannot be the authoritative teachers of the church, though that does not mean that a man can't learn from a woman or that she is incompetent. Piper, John, "Is It Wrong for Guys to Listen to Female Speakers?" in *Desiring God*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MyT2fDrb0vo 2011. Accessed on January 21, 2023. Piper admits his own affinity to the teachings of Elisabeth Elliot.
25 For a complete look at these concepts, read *Beyond Authority and Submission: Women and Men in Marriage, Church, and Society* by Rachel Green Miller, P&R Publishing, 2019. Miller maintains qualified men are to be elders and pastors in the church while challenging popular but unbiblical beliefs about the definitions of biblical manhood and womanhood in regards to marriage, church, and society.
26 John Calvin also noted in reference to Priscilla and Apollos that "one of the chief teachers of the Church was instructed by a woman." John Calvin, Commentary on Acts 18, https://biblehub.com/commentaries/calvin/acts/18.htm.
27 Gary Shogren, *1 Corinthians*, Zondervan, p. 454.
28 1 Timothy 2:2 and Hebrews 5:12
29 From 1885-1898, when we were ruled by presiding elders, Lucy Musselman, Dora Rote, and Agnes Messinger were licensed preachers. In 1898, women were placed in the newly-formed Gospel Workers Society. Around the same time, Sarah Brunner was one of the main teachers of the Gospel Heralds, which was the church planting/new pastor training ground. She also occasionally preached in mission churches. Later in our history, after we became rule-by-elders, Ruth Hartman and Bea Koch were heralded as terrific Sunday School teachers of mixed men and women classes. Ruth Hartman's class met in the sanctuary, but she taught from a lectern on the side and not the main pulpit which the pastor used for Sunday morning worship, thus communicating that she was not a pastor or an elder. Before each lesson, she reiterated that the elders were the authority in the church, not her. Source: https://mhep.org/women-in-ministry-in-the-mennonite-brethren-in-christ-church/
30 The Council of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood released its Danvers Statement in December 1987. Its goal was to set forth the biblical view of manhood and womanhood, especially in the church and at home. In 1991, the Council's popular book *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* was published. Find out more at https://cbmw.org/about/danvers-statement/.
31 In addition, as you study the resources from the Council of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood,

please be on your guard against the view of the Trinity called the Eternal Subordination of the Son (ESS) which is held by some of the members of the council. This view of the Trinity places the Son as eternally subordinate to the Father in order to support a fixed relationship of authority and submission between men and women. For more information on ESS see *Trinity without Hierarchy: a Response to Eternal Functional Subordination* by Tim Bertolet in Fall 2022 OneVoice Magazine and bfconevoice.com.

32 Hurley, James B., *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective*. Eugene, Wipf and Stock, 2002, p. 202.

33 Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, United Bible Societies, 1996, p.473.

34 Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. University of Chicago Press, 2000, p. 150

35 Liddell, H. G., Scott, R., Jones, H. S., & McKenzie, R. (1996). *A Greek-English Lexicon*. Clarendon Press, 1996, p. 275.

36 J.H. Moulton and G. Milligan. "αὐθεντέω 831 in Vocabulary of the Greek Testament," Peabody and Hendrickson, 1930, p. 91.

37 Baldwin, Scott H., "A Difficult Word: αὐθεντέω in 1 Timothy 2:12," *Women in the Church: A Fresh Analysis of 1 Timothy 2:9-15*, edited by Köstenberger, Andreas J., Schreiner, Thomas and Baldwin, Scott H., Baker Books, 1995, pp. 65-80, and Baldwin, "Appendix 2," in the same volume, pp. 269-305.

38 Westfall, Cynthia Long. "The Meaning of αὐθεντέω in 1 Timothy 2:12." *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism*, ChJ 10, 2014, p.145.

39 Perhaps the men equally had trouble not permitting the women from taking on roles that she was not ordained to do (Adam was present when Eve sinned, since he was alongside of her to also partake of the fruit).

40 Westfall p. 162. Westfall puts this example in the category of "forced authority" that is synonymous with abuse, including domination and other emotional, mental or physical abuse.

41 Ibid, pp. 165-166. Westfall is citing examples from Baldwin's great study.

42 Ibid, pp. 166-167. Westfall is a linguist who quotes Concilium universal Chalcedonese anno 451 2.1.3.48.12. Westfall establishes a working description of the semantic range of αὐθεντέω. She describes it as the autonomous use or possession of unrestricted force.

43 Hubner, Jamim. "Translating αὐθεντέω in 1 Timothy 2:12a." *Priscilla Papers: The Academic Journal of CBE International,* Spring 2015, Vol. 29, No. 2.

44 Ibid.

45 Marshall, I. H., & Towner, P. H. *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*. T & T Clark International, p. 453. I agree with Marshall and various other commentators on the usage of ἡσύχιος. It is a term used to mean keep silent while someone is teaching, while showing deference to the teacher. It also allows for other forms of utterances that women are allowed to do in the church, such as praying, singing, prophesying, and encouraging in the church. I would add teaching to that in settings that would not deem it inappropriate or taking an authority that isn't given, such as back-and-forth edification as seen in Colossians 3:12, where women aren't eliminated from that activity and the same word for teaching, διδάσκω, is used in participial form.

46 MacArthur, John. "Does the Bible Permit Women to Preach?" *YouTube*, uploaded by Grace to You, January 24, 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n8ncOf82ZJ0, accessed 1/11/2023. Up to this point MacArthur agrees with our paper. He sees the two prohibitions pointing to one service in the church, pointing to the Pastor/teacher or elder. He also agrees with the translation of the KJV as usurping authority.

47 Ibid. MacArthur emphasizes that it's not a prohibition against abusive authority or inappropriate authority, but it's a prohibition of women taking this type of authority in the church. While his point is well taken, it could equally be argued that if a woman is not called to the authority of pastor or elder in the church, she would be taking on inappropriate authority.

48 Payne, Philip B. "οὐδὲ Combining Two Elements to Convey a Single Idea and 1 Timothy 2:12 in Missing Voices*,"* cbinternational.org, p. 24.
49 Ibid, pp. 24-25.
50 Ibid, p. 25.
51 While I agree with Payne's notion, there are several factors to consider. The authoritative teaching was reserved for elders/pastors/bishops/overseers only in the context of a worship gathering. Women did not have the authority to fill those positions. He uses the example of his interpretation allowing Priscilla to teach a man; however most interpretations of this verse would still allow for that scenario.
52 Ibid, pp. 31-32.
53 Köstenberger, Andreas J. *A Complex Sentence Structure in 1 Timothy 2:12 in Women in the Church: A Fresh Analysis of 1 Timothy 2:9-15*. edited by Andreas J. Köstenberger et al, Baker Books, pp. 81-103.
54 Blomberg, C.L, "Neither Hierarchicalist nor Egalitarian: Gender Role in Paul." *Two Views on Women in Ministry,* edited by J.R. Beck and C.L. Blomberg, Zondervan, 2001, pp. 329-72, 363.
55 Saucy, Robert L, 88.
56 Merkle, Benjamin L. *The Elder and Overseer: One Office in the Early Church*. Peter Lang, 2003, pp. 94-95. Merkle sees this as a class of instructors or catechizers who needed financial support.
57 Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature*, University of Chicago Press, 2000, p.870.
58 Ibid, p. 679.
59 It could be a three-fold role if preaching and teaching is separated as two separate functions. At the very least, for the sake of this paper, they will be kept in the same genre, since they are honored and rewarded similarly.
60 Piper, John, from person preached on on June 18, 1989: *Manhood, Womanhood, and the Freedom to Minister*, accessed 1/23/2023, https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/manhood-womanhood-and-the-freedom-to-minister.

Aaron D. Smith looks towards the Study Committee on the Role of Women while presenting the majority report.

Report of the Study Committee on the Role of Women in the Church (Minority Report)

It is our conviction that now is the time for the Bible Fellowship Church to make clear its belief regarding Scripture's prohibition for women to teach or to exercise authority over men within the local church, as stated in 1 Timothy 2:12. With respect to our colleagues who form the majority opinion, we do not believe their proposed resolution fully represents the instruction of the biblical text nor protects the BFC from the growing societal and cultural pressure on this issue. While most of our churches have functioned with a unified understanding and application of the prohibition in 1 Timothy 2:12, there is a pressing concern that this unity is being challenged.

Since the 1960s there has been a gradual rise in the influence of an evangelical feminist hermeneutic that has sought to minimize and dismiss the distinct roles of men and women within the local church. Multitudes of churches and denominations have collapsed under the pressure to compromise the teaching of Scripture on this matter. From mainline denominations like Evangelical Lutheran, the Reformed Church in America, and the PCUSA (Presbyterian Church-USA), to more conservative denominations such as the SBC (Southern Baptist Convention) and PCA (Presbyterian Church in America) many have been influenced and effected by this movement. While we would not accuse churches within the BFC of adopting an evangelical feminist hermeneutic, it is naïve to think that we are exempt from the threat of compromise.

It is our contention that the BFC's ability to maintain functional unity on this issue has been more the result of unspoken doctrinal pre-commitments about not having women preachers than it has been about an established stated belief built upon hermeneutical convictions. This study committee was launched out of concern for a disregard of the commands given in 1 Timothy 2:12. The fact that our proposed legislation is the minority view on our committee only serves to heighten our concern.

Christ rules over and gives guidance to his church by his Word. As Paul states in 1 Timothy 3:14-15, "I am writing these things to you so that … you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth." Thus, it is necessary for us, in a spirit of submission and worship, to seek out what God requires for his church. A failure to heed God's instruction for the church diminishes our effectiveness as a pillar and buttress of the truth, brings shame on our Lord, and hinders the spiritual growth of those under the care of the church.

We believe that our proposed legislation represents the instruction given in 1 Timothy 2:12, does justice to the text by not clouding its authority and purpose in interpretive confusion, and allows for local elders to lead their congregations in the application of its teaching.

The complementarian position, which recognizes distinct roles for men and women in the home and in the church, seems unloving and discriminatory to many, and the general atmosphere of our society encourages people to liberate themselves from traditional views. But the warning from theologian John Leith has proven true: "Theology becomes self-destructive when its primary goal is accommodation to culture."[1] And many theologians are waking up to the destruction this recent wave of compromise has caused

the church.[2] One such author writes,

> The impact of a consumerist, therapeutic culture can be seen in the way that traditionalist evangelical feminism focuses on using the Bible to meet the perceived needs of the individual and in its reliance on individual reason to judge the truth of Scripture, without the assistance of an institutional and historical church. This trend, which emphasizes individual preference and rationality, indicates that even in evangelicalism, authority has been minimized.[3]

We believe 1 Timothy 2:8-15 provides specific instructions for men and women as to how they are to conduct themselves within the context of the gathered church. Men are instructed to pray with holy hands free of anger and quarreling (v. 8). That is, there is to be sincerity and integrity in their public demonstrations of worship and spiritual leadership. The instructions to women fall into two categories: that of their adornment (vv. 9-10) and their role in the church with respect to men (vv. 11-12). This is then followed by Paul's rationale (vv. 13-14) and a closing word of encouragement regarding the honor of womanhood (v. 15).

Our position upholds Paul's dual prohibition in 1 Timothy 2:12, which prohibits a woman from teaching or exercising authority over a man within the assembly of the gathered church. It thus falls upon the local elders to protect and implement this instruction as under-shepherds to the Chief Shepherd. Biblical instruction carries with it inherent authority and when given to the church, God calls upon men to fill the role of teacher. In addition, when functioning as a minister and servant of the church, a woman is not to govern, preside, or rule over a man in carrying out the ministry of the church.

Our position does not exclude or diminish the proper use of a woman's giftedness as a teacher of God's Word. Nor does it preclude a woman from giving instruction or guidance to men on various matters in church life. We whole-heartedly recommend that local elders take seriously the need to train and instruct the women of their congregation so they might be able to train other women. Where a woman proves exemplary in communication and biblical instruction, we consider it the responsibility of the local elders to foster this giftedness with appropriate opportunities for teaching. Also, it is proper and wise for men in leadership to seek out the counsel and instruction of godly women on various matters pertaining to the church and biblical instruction for which a woman might be particularly gifted, trained, or experienced. It is in submission to God's Word on this matter that women are properly honored, cared for, and esteemed.

In direct response to our colleagues, Paul is not merely prohibiting non-elders from usurping the role and function of an elder. Nor is he merely prohibiting a woman from usurping the role of an elder. While teaching and exercising authority are the prerogative of the elders, 1 Tim. 2:12 specifically applies this prohibition to women in their relation to men.

Our Faith and Order properly recognizes that only qualified men are to serve as elders in the local church. But the teaching of 1 Timothy 2:12 also prohibits women from carrying out the practices of teaching or exercising authority over men.

This is evidenced further by Paul's rationale in vv. 13-14. He references Adam's position of being created prior to Eve as a demonstration of the proper roles in the church and as something that was established at creation. The Genesis account expands on the

significance of Eve being created after Adam; she was created from Adam; it is Adam who names Eve; she was given responsibility to help Adam fulfill God's mandate to be fruitful and multiply; she was to receive God's instruction regarding the tree through Adam, which was given to him prior to her creation (Gen. 2:16-17).

First Timothy 2:14 presses the matter further by reminding the reader that it was a rejection of this God-ordained order of leadership and instruction by which sin entered the world. Rather than the woman following her head (Adam), she follows one of the creatures. And Adam, rather than acting as head, follows his wife. Note that Genesis 3:17 specifically condemns Adam for "*listening to the voice of his wife*, and eating of the tree..."

Paul's argumentation is that this order of instruction and authority must be maintained in the local church and regarded as good and right before the Lord. The issue is not one of gifting. No one would deny that women have considerable gifts, even teaching gifts. The issue is whether God has directed the use and exercise of these gifts in a specific manner for the building up of his church.

Both men and women reflect the image of God and together constitute the human race (Gen. 1:26-27). Both men and women are redeemed in Christ and share together the privilege of being heirs of the grace of life (Galatians 3:28, 1 Peter 3:7). Though equal in who they are before the Lord, men and women are not called upon to fill equal roles in the home and in the church.

The Bible teaches that in the home and in the church, God has assigned positions and functions of leadership to men. In marriage this is intended to model the relationship of Christ and the church (Eph. 5:31-32). The church is portrayed in Scripture as a larger family which is governed in the same way (1 Tim. 3:4-5).

Accordingly, the church is to be led by elders, all of whom are qualified Christian men (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). For this reason, the Bible explicitly forbids women from the two activities within the church which are most descriptive of an elder's work—teaching and exercising governing authority (1 Tim. 2:11-15). This prohibition is clearly grounded in the order of God's creation, not on circumstances that surround humanity's fall into sin nor any other cultural consideration.

Proposed legislation

Whereas, Jesus Christ is the Lord of His church and has left us His Word to direct and instruct His church, and

Whereas, 1 Timothy 3:15 states that this letter was written "that one may know how to behave in the household of God," and

Whereas, 1 Timothy 2:12 gives specific instruction on how women are to conduct themselves with respect to men in the gathered church, and

Whereas, 1 Timothy 2:12 prohibits women from teaching or exercising authority over men in the gathered church, and

Whereas, a refusal to submit to this instruction is in opposition to Jesus Christ's authority over His church, and

Whereas, clarity and unity on gender roles in the church has become a distinctive belief for churches and denominations, therefore be it

Resolved, that we codify our position on women teaching or exercising authority over men by adding the following statement to Article 18 - The Church

> *"Teaching in the gathered assembly of the church is to be done by qualified men under the oversight of the elders."*

And be it further

Resolved, that we codify our position on women teaching or exercising authority over men by adding the following statement to Article 18 - The Church

> *"Preaching in the gathered assembly of the church is to be done by qualified men under the oversight of the elders."*

And be it further

Resolved, that we codify our position on women teaching or exercising authority over men by adding the following statement to Article 18 - The Church

> *"Functions of governing authority over the church are to be done by qualified men under the oversight of the elders."*

Respectfully Submitted,

Study Committee on the Role of Women in the Church (minority opinion):
Daniel Z. Krall, John R. LoRusso, Joshua P. Miller, Keith A. Strunk

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Supplemental Papers
"A Look at 1 Timothy 2:12 in its Context"

First Timothy 2:12 supplies no shortage of difficulties and challenges, both in its interpretation and in its application. But we must not disparage these challenges or the discussions and arguments that surround them as though they are a tedious and useless burden. When done in faith and in submission to the Spirit and His Word, these discussions can produce the fruit of precision and a fuller understanding of the Spirit's direction for his church.

It is undeniable that 1 Tim. 2:12 forbids a woman from teaching or exercising authority over a man. To deny this is to render words and phrases as meaningless and attempts at communication useless. But, of course, this doesn't end the discussion. Quite the contrary, it provokes a litany of good and consequential questions pertaining to both meaning and application – What is the meaning of "quiet"? Is this instruction limited

to a specific situation? Does this instruction include all forms of teaching, in both public and private settings? Is the teaching here connected to "exercising authority," or are they distinct? How might the church apply this instruction?

The immediate context of 2:8-12 picks up Paul's instruction that began in verse 1, where he called upon the congregation to pray for all people. Verse 8 calls upon the men "in every place" to pray, "lifting holy hands without anger or quarrelling."

It is safe to conclude that the phrase "in every place" refers to the various places that Christians gathered together in community. Thus, the instructions he gives are to be applied within the context of the local church.[4] Also, notice that Paul's instruction is not just *ad hoc* guidance for the local situation in Ephesus, but to those "in every place," what 1 Tim. 3:15 refers to as the "household of God."[5] What Paul is presenting here is a general presentation of decorum for the believer within the household of God.

Returning to verse 8, the prayer posture of lifting hands is not Paul's focus. There were all sorts of prayer postures represented in the Bible–lying prostrate, standing, kneeling–and not one is preferred above the other. Rather, as one prays it is to be done with a holiness marked by peacefulness, absent of anger and quarrelling. Paul's instruction moves from the outward act or appearance of prayer to the internal attitude of the heart. Thus, as the men prayed, they should do so without animosity and an argumentative spirit, which seemed to be an issue in Ephesus (6:3-5).

Verses 9-15 continue Paul's instruction to the household of God but shifts the focus from men to women. You will notice that the "likewise" that begins this verse serves to connect the flow of thought. Where Paul had instructions for the men, he likewise has instructions for the women. He calls upon women to dress in respectable apparel, and he qualifies this with three clarifying statements. First, women are to dress with modesty and self-control. Second, women are not to adorn themselves with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire. And third, they are to adorn themselves with good works. In summary, women are to avoid flaunting their wealth and are to resist using sensuality to draw attention to themselves and instead demonstrate propriety and strive to gain a reputation of good works. "A woman's adornment, in short, lies not in what she herself puts on, but in the loving service she gives out."[6]

It is sometimes argued that because Paul makes a cultural reference to braided hair in 2:9 that the other commands to women in this text are cultural and we are free to disregard them as well. But Paul's main point was not to prohibit braiding hair, gold, or pearls. None of these things were intrinsically wrong. The problem was in the abuse of these things when used to draw attention to oneself.

Paul continues in verse 11, "Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness." This phrase is not meant to be condescending or discouraging to women, for it is worth noting that Paul's invitation for a woman to learn the Scriptures would have been counter-cultural within the educational system of Judaism. Paul was eager to have women learn the Word, provided they did so in quietness with all submissiveness.

The call to quietness[7] is not a call to silence but is a command to avoid contention and disruption; to be settled and peaceable. It is used this way earlier in the chapter in 1 Tim. 2:2, "…that we may lead a peaceful and *quiet* life." The prepositional phrase "with all submissiveness" gives the explanation for how they are to learn in quietness. Within the household of God, women are to cultivate a spirit of submission, honoring the God-ordained design for men and women.

Verses 11-12 seem to form a single unit, with two commands for quietness bracketing the instruction. In the middle we are given the explanation and application of this call to quietness: namely, that women are not to teach and should not have authority over a man.

It is possible that Paul's explanation of what it means to learn with quietness and full submission was confronting some sort of abuse going on in the church. Maybe there was a group of women who were teaching error and needed to be silenced. Maybe there was a pervasive rejection of God-ordained order in the home and church that Paul needed to confront. Maybe women were unlearned and needed to first be taught before they became teachers. But to use any of these potential background matters to nullify a clear command regarding the household of God is dubious and is a potentially dangerous hermeneutic technique. The passage says nothing about the women teaching error or being unlearned (Remember, Paul was in Ephesus for three years, teaching night and day, Acts 20:31). And Paul is not shy about confronting false teaching as he does in 1 Tim. 1:3 and 6:3; yet that is not what he does here. The prohibition is against women teaching men.[8]

In addition, some place undue weight on the notion that Ephesus was a sort of breeding ground for first-century radical feminism, and thus Paul's instruction for quietness with all submission is a counter to the influence this feminism was having upon the church. It is true that the cult of the goddess Artemis, complete with a massive temple complex and worship practices, was located in Ephesus. But from what we are given in the New Testament it appears that Ephesus was a typical Greco-Roman city and that extreme feminism was not infiltrating Timothy's congregation.

We are introduced to Ephesus in Acts 19, and all the leading characters in the city mentioned by Luke are men. Demetrius, who made silver shrines to Artemis (Acts 19:24), was a man. Demetrius addresses the crowd as men (19:25). The town clerk was a man (19:35). The Asiarchs (high priests of Asia) in 19:31 were most likely men. The biblical presentation of Ephesus gives no indication that men were not in charge of the religious activities and political interests in the city.[9]

At a minimum, it seems a bit of an overreach to interpret Paul's command through the lens of some presumed radical feminism that was encroaching on the church in Ephesus. Not to mention the point made previously about 1 Timothy 2:8 and 3:15, where Paul indicates his emphasis was not particularly narrow, but concerned "every place" and "the whole household of God." Certainly, every piece of literature is influenced by the situation of its recipients, yet the principles set forth in his writing should not be dismissed as culturally limited.

The next command is "nor to exercise authority over a man." As with the practice of teaching, Paul is not here confronting some abusive domineering by women. Albert Wolters, who has done extensive work on the term *authenteo*, demonstrates from the term's cognates (the immediate context, ancient versions, patristic commentary, and the broad usage of the verb elsewhere) that it is very unlikely for the term to have a pejorative or an ingressive meaning.

> Since Paul in this text forbids women to teach and exercise "authority" of some kind and tells them instead to be quiet and submissive, we can reasonably assume that he is addressing a situation in Ephesus where women were doing (or proposing to do) what he is here prohibiting. But this reasonable assumption is

> often expanded into the broader claim that women were doing these prohibited things in an aggressive or overbearing manner and by so doing were disturbing the church. However, the text, in fact, gives no evidence for such a reading. We have no reason to believe that the women in Ephesus were teaching and exercising authority in an aggressive or overbearing way…The negative portrayal of the Ephesian women teachers as strident demagogues is, in fact, a speculative reconstruction of the situation in Ephesus at the time, and cannot be used as evidence that "*authenteo*" carries a pejorative sense.[10]

According to this text, women in the household of God are prohibited from two distinct but related activities: teaching men and exercising authority over men. Paul has stated the principle positively, "Let a women learn in quietness with all submission," and has further explained what this means with his prohibition, "I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man."

In verses 13-14, Paul proceeds to give two reasons for his instruction. First, Adam was formed first. Second, Eve was deceived. This is a kindness of Paul, for he owes no defense for his apostolic instruction given previously.

The first reason given demonstrates that this order of authority and submission was established prior to the fall of mankind into sin, is thus part of God's good plan, andis to be honored and protected within the household of God. Adam's position as the one who names, leads, and protects was established in his formation. Eve's position as the one who nurtures, helps, and supports was established in her formation.[11]

The second reason given by Paul is not quite as clear. He is certainly not saying that the woman's position of submission is some sort of punishment, for he has just noted that the order of authority/instruction and submission was established before Eve's fall into sin. I am inclined toward the explanation that sees Paul's reference to Eve's deception as a statement about what happens when the roles are reversed. Eve took the lead and Adam failed to lead and, having abandoned God's ordained positioning, opened themselves up to deception. This explanation fits with Paul's focus of the text, which has been on the roles of men and women in the household of God.

As such there is both a reason and a warning given here by Paul. If the women in the church refuse to act in submission to the God-ordained order established at creation, refusing to learn in quietness with all submission and instead seeking roles that have been reserved for men in the church, they will make the same mistake as Eve and open the household of God to destructive consequences.

"A Consideration of the Term *Authentein*"

In the wider debate among evangelicals concerning women in ministry, 1 Timothy 2:12 lies at the center, and within the discussion of 1 Timothy 2:12, the meaning and application of the Greek term *authentein* is the most controversial. Thus, it is worthy of an extended evaluation.

The most common definition of *authentein* is "to have or to exercise authority over." But wait, that can't be what it really means, can it? The cultural norm today

would immediately drive one to think that there must be some other meaning to this word. While it is always good and healthy to have questions and seek to answer them biblically, assigning meaning to a biblical word or phrase can only be done in ways that are consistent with the rest of Scripture and do not violate the hermeneutical rules that are necessary for biblical interpretation. This particular Greek word (*authentein*) is used only once in all the Bible—in 1 Timothy 2:12. A term used in this way is called a hapax legomena, of which there are singular occurrences in the New Testament. Whenever a term such as this occurs, the meaning can and should be determined first by its plain normal reading within its biblical context, and then any insights gained from extra biblical usage within its historical/cultural timeframe and context can then be allowed to influence our definition.

Since the plain normal reading of the word means "to exercise or to have authority over," and we observe that there are no pressing biblical arguments to cause a reevaluation of its previously understood meaning, we must acknowledge that the orthodox historical, biblical usage over the centuries hasn't changed. This interpretation would be consistent with Bible translators of the NIV, NKJV, RSV, ESV, NAS, and many others.

After the plain reading of the words used by Paul in his apostolic authoritative writing, we next move to the overall context to discover the meaning. We believe the context of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 gives us conclusive evidence for how to interpret the term. Scholar Henry Scott Baldwin of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School said "language must be viewed as an interconnected system wherein the context provides the clues to the meaning of the words used." He goes on to give a helpful example from the English language. "Every competent English speaker knows that 'raise' may have several distinct meanings: 'to raise the flag,' 'to raise corn in Nebraska,' 'to raise children.' Our ability to contextualize alerts us to the fact that by "raise" we do not mean 'nurture the flag,' 'hoist corn,' or 'plant and water children.'"

When we hear a word, we hear it within the context or situation in which we have heard it or similar words before. This explanation fits well in 1 Timothy 2:12. The immediate context certainly suggests that *authentein* has to do with the exercise of authority and is directed to the relationship between women and men in the local church. It remains then, in line with other role/gender distinctions concerning leadership and the exercise of authority in the home and the church throughout the Scriptures (1 Cor. 11:3, 8, 9). First Cor. 14:33-35 supports this interpretation, as do a host of gender specific references penned by the Holy Spirit: Gen. 2:18, Gen. 3:16, Col. 3, 1 Pet. 3:1-7, Eph. 5:22-33, to name a few.

Paul goes on to ground this prohibition in 1 Tim. 2:12 with the Creation order referred to in 2:13-14—an indispensable foundation for our contextual interpretation. Without getting into the application of 2:15, what we can take away is that it certainly supports the foundational aspects of 2:13-14. Regarding verse 15, Philip Ryken states in his expository commentary on 1 Timothy, "A culture may do everything it can to obliterate the differences between males and females, but there is one thing it can never do: make men give birth. Labor and delivery are unique to women, a divinely ordained fact which indicates the differences between men and women are rooted in creation." The vast majority of what we understand about the Scriptures are based on our belief of the actual historical narrative of the Scriptures in Genesis chapters 1

through 11.

Regarding Paul's use of *authentein*, some of this is the very "quarreling over words" that Paul spoke negatively of and warned about in 2 Timothy 2:14. Yes, we need to carefully interpret the words of the biblical text, but we do so in order to seek understanding as governed by the context of the passage, the book, and certainly of the whole Bible. To over-interpret this word and conclude that Paul intended to allow for a hidden meaning that would actually give women the very authority over men in the gathered church that the text was written to prohibit is to twist and pervert Scripture.

It becomes evident that this discussion is about more than 1 Timothy 2:11-15; it is about what we believe concerning the perspicuity, sufficiency, and authority of Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16).

Responding to Common Arguments

It is claimed that *authentein* in 1 Timothy 2:12 is unclear and cannot be understood because it is a hapax legomenon (i.e. only one occurrence of the term in the New Testament). However, there are over 600 hapax legomena in the New Testament. If we questioned the interpretive clarity of all the passages where hapax legomena occurred, we would begin to follow in the footsteps of Thomas Jefferson, who notoriously cut out all the portions of Scripture that he found problematic.

Extra-biblical usage as a consideration in defining this term is no simple task. Contemporaneous usage of this word is almost non-existent. Of the eight occurrences that can be sited as probably used before 312 AD, Al Wolters states "most are debatable in one way or another, either because the text is dubious, the context is unclear, or the date disputed." The obvious lack of usage of this verb only leads us back to the conclusion as stated above: the understood context of the usage of this word is its best guide to interpretation as well as our complete dependence on the holy Scriptures to bear a proper relationship to the thoughts of other inspired books of the infallible Word of God.

In addition, the pastoral epistles in general apply to the life of the gathered church. First Timothy 3:15 says, "If I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth."

Another common argument is that the interpreter is free to dismiss the instruction given in 1 Tim. 2:12 because the passage is bound to a specific historical context and local controversy in the first century Ephesian church. Margaret E. Kostenberger helpfully responds to this argument:

> While it can be at times helpful to read between the lines, we'll want to be careful not to substitute an unstated possible background for what is stated explicitly in the text. This is especially true since what Paul says here about women dressing modestly, learning quietly with all submissiveness, and submitting to male authority in the church is amply corroborated by Pauline and New Testament teaching elsewhere (see 1 Cor. 11:2-16, 14:33b-36; Eph. 5:21-33; 1 Pet.3:1-7). In other words, writings addressed to Corinth or Rome contain the same injunctions to women as Paul's first letter to Timothy, which makes it less likely that 1 Timothy 2 is some kind of special teaching.

The verse specifically, and the passage more generally, refers to the role of men and women toward each other in the gathered church and is consistent with the instruction given throughout the rest of Scripture—which is why Paul is free to base his instruction in the Creation order of Genesis 2-3.

Still others point to the examples of women giving instruction and prophesying in the New Testament as an argument that 1 Tim. 2:12 doesn't actually mean what it says. While we can all fully endorse the wise biblical teaching of women in many circumstances, we must remember that the prohibition is directed to men and women in the context of the gathered church. Here are some examples:

1. Speaking about Apollos, Acts 18:26 says, "He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, *they took him aside* and explained to him the way of God more accurately." We can happily admit that Priscilla contributed to the explanation given to Apollos. However, it is important to note that they were not in the gathered church but outside of that setting "took him aside." This passage actually serves to strengthen the argument of the clear meaning of 1 Tim. 2:12.
2. Acts 21:9 tells us that the unmarried daughters of Philip prophesied. But as we read on in 21:10, it is observed that these daughters did not speak for many days but waited until a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. Verse 11 states, "And coming to us, he took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands and said, 'Thus says the Holy Spirit.'" Why is there no prophecy until Agabus arrives? Could it be that there was a difference in their roles? It is also important to observe that this is not an example of the gathered church, nor are the women teaching. It is thus improper to use this as a defense for women teaching over men in the gathered church.
3. Another example often cited is Paul's commendation of women as co-workers in Romans 16. Because they served alongside him, they should be permitted to serve in the teaching roles of the church. But this is to assume too much of the text. Paul says nothing about them teaching in the context of the gathered church.
4. The accounts of the prophetess Anna in Luke 2:36-38 and the fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32—of women prophesying as given in Acts 2:14-21—each fall outside the parameters of 1 Timothy 2:12. The women are speaking to unbelievers, not in the gathered church of the saints, which is exactly like our present-day missionary women do daily out in the unbelieving world. Praise God!

Some argue that the Greek term translated "to teach" can have both an authoritative and non-authoritative function, and that Paul is merely prohibiting non-authoritative teaching in 1 Tim. 2:12. This is to make a mockery of a clear New Testament term. The basic definition of the Greek word *didasko* is to give another person information or instruction, which inherently implies authority. No teacher teaches without this authority over his or her students, pupils, or disciples. To teach is to exercise some measure of authority.

Another attack on the clear meaning of 1 Tim. 2:12 is that Paul's use of Adam and Eve in 2:13-14 is unclear and inconclusive. However, Paul uses this pre-fall explanation as incontrovertible evidence of the truth of verse 12. Adam was created prior to Eve; thus the idea that the responsibility of leadership, authority, and instruction rested with him flows directly and naturally from the account given in Genesis 2:1-24. Paul goes on to add in 1 Tim. 2:14 a second reason supporting his instruction in 2:12. "Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor." This is not to say Adam didn't sin, but that we should take notice of the fact that the devil avoided the one in authority and went to Eve, tempting her to act apart from Adam, and he then used her to lead Adam into sin. Gender roles are here evidenced as biblical and necessary for spiritual protection. Paul uses the example of Adam and Eve to defend his prohibition of women teaching men, not non-elders teaching elders or anyone else.

Finally, freeing up women to use their gifts of teaching in the context intended is a wonderfully desirous thing that honors the Lord. 1 Timothy 2:11 is clear that *women are to learn.* "Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness." Titus 2:3–5 tells us "Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. *They are to teach what is good*, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled."

Let us give all that we are, and all we have been created to be, to obeying the Lord within the roles He intends for us. When we leave those bounds, we invite deception and instability to the church.

Some may find the biblical instruction offensive, particularly in this cultural moment. While this ungodly culture attempts to obliterate all gender specific identification and roles, rendering us indistinct without the created, colorful sexual identity that God created, we must resist it and declare with our Lord that this created order is very good, as stated in Genesis 1:31—"God saw everything that he had made, and behold, *it was very good*.")

"Consideration of Paul's use of *oude* in 1 Timothy 2:12:
A response to the majority report"

Our culture is wreaking havoc on the church. The "Social Justice Movement" is corrupting the gospel of Jesus Christ in such a way that many churches have abandoned a biblical philosophy of ministry that focuses on the salvation of lost souls to eternal life with Christ in favor of one that focuses more, or even exclusively, on the temporal needs of the oppressed in the here and now.

Feminism is certainly a part of that movement, for it involves the characterization of men as the oppressors and thus includes women with the oppressed. Terms like "toxic masculinity" are becoming commonplace, even in some churches. But even in churches where that movement may not seem to be intentional or overt, we still find traces of it in the deconstruction of biblical texts that clearly delineate divinely-established roles for men and women: most notably, 1 Timothy 2:12.

This deconstruction of the plain meaning of the text often begins with the coordinating conjunction between the two verbs in the text: the Greek word *oude,*

translated "or." "I do not permit a woman to teach *or* exercise authority over a man…"

Greek scholars agree that this conjunction syntactically indicates two separate prohibitions, neither one qualifying the other. Yet many in this debate either ignore *oude* completely or claim that it confuses the text to the point that we must not assert any dogma in our interpretation of it—which is a familiar tactic used in deconstructing the Bible and its doctrines in general.

But the words of Scripture matter, even this little word, and it is a key to what Paul was teaching his protege. But without *oude* or without a clear understanding of its purpose in the text, we're free to imagine other ideas about the text, such as the idea that Paul was really trying to say "I'd prefer if a woman didn't teach authoritatively over men in church." Many have understood the text this way, seeing only one prohibition, using *authentein* to qualify *didaskein*, however inaccurate it may be to do so.

Andreas Kostenberger represents our understanding of how these terms relate to one another:

> To sum up this point, it is important to keep in mind that *oude* functions as a coordinating conjunction in 1 Timothy 2:12, and as such—particularly as a negative conjunction—it does not combine two separate elements in the sense that it excludes any consideration of those elements individually. While the elements may overlap conceptually and a larger "single idea" may legitimately be posited that encompasses or includes both elements, they retain a certain degree of distinctness. Bringing this greater nuance into the present analysis of 1 Timothy 2:12 and given a proper understanding of *didaskein* and *authentein*, if we were to set forth an overarching "single idea" from the compound prohibition of 1 Timothy 2:12, it would be that women ought not to serve in authoritative positions, whether by teaching men (as part of the entire congregation) or by ruling over men. These functions, both of which are reserved for male elders (1 Timothy 3:1-2), are closely related while retaining a level of distinctness…Exercising authority is evidently the broader concept, for authority may be exercised in ways other than teaching: by making decisions binding upon the entire church, for instance, or by exercising church discipline. Conversely, the sort of teaching Paul has in mind always involves this exercise of authority. The two activities he prohibits are thus clearly related and overlap to a degree, yet at the same time they retain their distinctness.[12]

Furthermore, if Paul wanted to say "I do not permit a woman to teach *with* authority over a man…" he certainly had the vocabulary to do so, as he demonstrates in verse 11—"Let a woman learn quietly *with* all submissiveness" (1 Tim. 2:11), but he didn't write that in verse 12.

Which raises another issue with the alternate view on our study committee; namely, that there are degrees or types of teaching delineated in *didaskein* which Paul expected Timothy to deduce apart from the text of his letter. Kostenberger writes, "Conversely, the sort of teaching Paul has in mind always involves this exercise of authority."[13]

While our counterparts on the study committee write that nearly all the uses of *didaskein* by Paul and Luke reference "authoritative" teaching, they also suggest that

there is a sort of teaching in the gathered church that does *not* involve this authority, which women are permitted to practice over men. They seem to suggest that it's only the exhortation of sacred doctrine, or something of the like, that Paul prohibits in 1 Timothy 2:12.

The removal or ignoring of *oude* permits them to suggest that Paul was only prohibiting women from being a teacher of sacred doctrine in the presence of men. But if the Word of God is authoritative, as we confess in BFC Article of Faith Article 1—"[The Holy Scriptures] are the supreme and final authority of faith and conduct," then there is no scriptural, doctrinal teaching in the church that is *not* authoritative. It is not appropriate, therefore, for an elder to "delegate" his authority to a woman for the purpose of her teaching over men in the gathered church, because the authority is in the Word, and it is in part that authority a woman is prohibited from exercising over a man.

This assertion has led to the question of whether or not non-elder men are allowed to teach with authority. Both sub-committees seem to agree that the New Testament does not prohibit non-elder men from teaching men in the church, but the question arises about the authority of the teaching. And again, because they eliminate or obscure *oude* and thus qualify teaching with authority, making the text about elder vs. non-elder, they suggest even non-elder men are not permitted to teach with authority in the church. We disagree. 1 Timothy 2:12 does *not* prohibit non-elder men from teaching authoritatively in the church.

In support of women teaching men, other texts in the New Testament are cited in an attempt to validate the idea that the New Testament church commonly allowed the very thing Paul prohibits in 1 Timothy 2:12. By citing Colossians 3:16 ("Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God"), they assert that Paul clearly allowed women to teach men in the gathered church. But that simply neglects the intended meaning of the text. It is simply not reasonable or prudent to think that Paul was intentionally permitting women to teach men in the gathered church in that text, nor even in 1 Corinthians 11:5, which was also cited. In that text, while Paul obviously mentions women prophesying, the context shows that he very clearly intends to delineate spiritual and gender roles in the home and in the church. The primary intention of the text must be considered in these arguments, and the primary intention of 1 Timothy 2:12 is undeniably clear and is *not* jeopardized by these other texts.

The proximity of the prohibition to the defining of eldership in chapter 3 also leads many to conclude that the prohibition is only in regard to the office or position of elder, so that the issue is between elders and non-elders. But Paul uses no vocabulary to indicate that is the case. The prohibition in chapter two is between men and women, as verses 13-15 prove.

The deconstruction of 1 Timothy 2:12 also includes the misinterpretation of *authentein* which is addressed elsewhere in our paper, but for the scope of this section, it's useful to note the alternative position's use of that word to qualify "teaching" suggests that the rarity of its usage really leaves no other options. Thus, our subcommittee has been repeatedly challenged to articulate ways, beyond teaching, that 1 Timothy 2:12 might prohibit a woman from exercising authority over a man. Relying again on Kostenberger as noted above, there are an abundance of ways authority is exercised in the church apart from teaching. It is our position that this text prohibits the hiring of a woman

to a church staff position which assumes the exercise of authority that is binding upon the entire church. Yet many churches do just that and justify it by not calling her an elder. But again, the contrast of the text is *not* between elders and non-elders, but between women and men.

The overall tenor and tone of the New Testament on this issue is very clear. This is not a one-text doctrine. Thus, this debate is about more than gender roles; it's about our view of Holy Scripture—its clarity, its inerrancy, its sufficiency, and its authority. Dozens of denominations have forsaken Scripture completely, and many of them began doing so with this very doctrine. The evangelical landscape at present is being painted by this doctrine, so it is indeed a primary doctrine, and one of first importance, because it reflects what we believe about, and how we submit to the Bible. Our faith calls us to be different from the world, set apart, and distinct; and yet it seems we're allowing the world to dictate our understanding of Scripture, and our practice in the church. We must not follow those who fell into apostasy on this doctrine; we must fear God more than we fear man, and we must hold fast to the truth of His Word, believing our heavenly reward depends upon it.

Joshua P. Miller presents the minority opinion during the Role of Women in the Church discussion.

Endnotes

1 John Leith, *Crisis in the Church* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 23.

2 Carrie Sandom, *Different by Design: God's Blueprint for Men and Women*, 2012; Claire Smith, *God's Good Design: What the Bible Really Says About Men and Women*, 2012. Margaret Kostenberger, *Jesus and the Feminists: Who Do They Say That He Is?*, 2008. A 2007 report in *The Christian Century* included an analysis of a study completed by the Hartford Institute for Religion Research. This study concluded that churches who reported growth between 2000 and 2005 exhibited certain common attributes. Among them were robust male participation. "Among congregations in which at least three out of five regular participants were men, 59 percent reported growth. But among churches where no more than two in every five regular participants were men, only 21 percent said they had experienced growth."

3 Pamela D.H. Cochran, *Evangelical Feminism: A History* (New York: NYU Press, 2005), 193-94.

4 Douglas Moo, "What Does It Mean Not to Teach or Have Authority Over Men?" in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. by John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton: Crossway, 1991), 182.

5 That Paul is here presenting standard guidance for the church and not just a limited situation in dispute is supported by Paul's use of the phrase "in every place." This phrase indicates Paul's intentions for churches everywhere. First Cor. 11:16 and 1 Cor. 14:33 provide similar universal application to the churches outside the direct recipients of his letter.

6 Donald Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles* in Tyndale NT Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 75.

7 I prefer the term "quietness" to the ESV's "quietly" because the Greek term *heisuxia* is a noun, not an adverb.

8 In his prohibition of women teaching men, Paul is prohibiting a positive activity within a certain context (Contra. any who would contend that Paul is merely prohibiting some form of abusive teaching). Andreas Kostenberger writes, "Even more significant than the use of *didasko* in the Gospels and Acts is Paul's usage of *didasko*. Where he uses the term in an unqualified sense—that is, unaccompanied by qualifiers in the immediate context such as those denoting the content of someone's teaching—he views the activity positively." Andreas Kostenberger, "A Complex Sentence: The Syntax of 1 Timothy 2:12" in *Women in the Church: An Interpretation & Application of 1 Timothy 2:9-15,* ed. by Andreas J. Kostenberger and Thomas R. Schreiner (Wheaton: Crossway, 2016), 132.

9 S. M. Baugh, "A Foreign World: Ephesus in the First Century," in *Women in the Church: An Interpretation & Application of 1 Timothy 2:9-15,* ed. by Andreas J. Kostenberger and Thomas R. Schreiner (Wheaton: Crossway, 2016), 25-64.

10 Al Wolters, "The Meaning of *AUTHENTEO,"* in *Women in the Church: An Interpretation and Application of 1 Timothy 2:9-15*, ed. by Andreas Kostenberger and Thomas Schreiner. Wheaton, Ill: Crossway, 2016.

11 Kevin DeYoung, *Men and Women in the Church: A Short, Biblical, Practical Introduction*, Wheaton: Crossway, 2021, 75-87.

12 Andreas Kostenberger, "A Complex Sentence: The Syntax of 1 Timothy 2:12" in *Women in the Church: An Interpretation & Application of 1 Timothy 2:9-15,* ed. by Andreas J. Kostenberger and Thomas R. Schreiner (Wheaton: Crossway, 2016), 149-50.

13 Ibid, 150.

Report of the Study Committee on Eternal Conscious Torment

This study committee was formed as a response to a petition from the Whitehall BFC congregation to the 139th BFC Conference, asking that a study committee be formed "to examine what Scripture teaches about the eternal destiny of the unregenerate, with careful attention to both its apologetic and shepherding use."

The committee met three times in 2022 and has already met once in 2023. It is not our intention to report at the 140th BFC Conference, but we hope to present our findings at the 141st BFC Conference in 2024.

Noting that the Whitehall petition was generated as a result of interaction with some to whom that church ministers who "have serious doubts regarding the eternal conscious torment of the unregenerate," this committee desires to address those concerns while supporting what we believe the Bible teaches concerning the eternal destiny of unbelievers.

Our game-plan is to briefly interact with the Universalist and Annihilationist positions, then to devote the bulk of our paper to the biblical supports for eternal conscious torment as God's holy and righteous judgment on the unregenerate that is in keeping with God's love. Recognizing that our target audience is pastors and elders who need to be able to provide counsel and comfort, we intend to conclude with materials that will enable those in leadership positions to interact with those who hold alternate views or are struggling with what the Bible teaches.

Study Committee on Eternal Conscious Torment: Calvin T. Reed, Convener; Ronald L. Kohl, Secretary; Stephen A. Diaz, Daniel J. Hoffstetter.

Report of the Study Committee on Mode of Baptism for Believers with Disabilities and Infirmities

The study committee met at various times throughout 2022 and into 2023 regarding the task given to us concerning the mode of baptism for believers with disabilities and infirmities.

As we worked through this issue and as we were in contact with members from the study committee on the mode of believer's baptism with regard to membership, it became clearer to us that these are two separate issues.

Therefore, for the sake of clarity and time at the 140th BFC Conference, our committee has chosen to wait another year to report so that time can be focused on the report of the Study Committee on the Mode of Believer's Baptism with Regard to Membership.

Study Committee on Mode of Baptism for Believers with Disabilities and Infirmities: Scott Wright, Convener; Joshua P. Gibson, David E. Gundrum, Joseph Kim.

APPENDIX

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Schedule of Payments

BEFORE BFC CONFERENCE:

Beneficiary Society - $100 per member (or $50 paid semi-annually April 28 & Nov. 1)

Payment should be sent to the Secretary of the Society or paid at BFC Conference:

Beneficiary Society, c/o Bible Fellowship Church
PO Box 3555
Allentown, PA 18106

QUARTERLY:

Conference Assessment - make checks payable to Bible Fellowship Church and mail to:

Bible Fellowship Church
PO Box 3555
Allentown, PA 18106

Church Extension - make checks payable to Board of Church Extension and send to:

Church Extension Department
PO Box 3534
Allentown, PA 18106

Missions - make checks payable to Board of Missions and send to:

Board of Missions
PO Box 3555
Allentown, PA 18106

BY MARCH 1:

Victory Valley Camp - make checks payable to Victory Valley and send to:

Victory Valley Camp
7352 Salem Bible Church Road
Zionsville, PA 18092

BY APRIL 1:

Education Training Committee - make checks payable to Bible Fellowship Church & mail to:

Bible Fellowship Church
PO Box 3555
Allentown, PA 18106

Board of Youth - Make checks payable to Board of Youth and mail to:

Jared Burkholder
c/o Bethel Bible Fellowship Church
418 Elm Street
Emmaus, PA 18049

Pinebrook Educational Foundation - make checks payable to Pinebrook Educational Foundation and mail to:

Dr. Andrew T. Crossgrove
c/o Faith Bible Fellowship Church
140 Harleysville Pike
Harleysville, PA 19438

BFC Life Committee - make checks payable to BFC Life Committee & mail to:

BFC Life Committee, c/o Bible Fellowship Church
PO Box 3555
Allentown, PA 18106

BFC Statistics

Church Location: Name	Lead or Senior Pastor	Ordained/ Probationers	Elders	Deacons	Baptisms	2022 Membership	New Members	Members Lost	Net Gain/Loss	Membership	Church Family Size
Allentown, PA: Cedar Crest BFC	Hoy, Jason	7	12	13	18	577	35	50	-15	562	1200
Bethlehem, PA: Ebenezer BFC	vacant	5	11	11	8	333	26	14	12	345	753
Blandon, PA: Trinity BFC	Williams, Daniel	3	5	10	12	217	18	21	-3	214	395
Boyertown, PA: Harvest Fellowship	Parsons, Barry	1	3	5	1	121	0	6	-6	115	136
Brick, NJ: Community Bible Fellowship Church	Sweet, Lyle										
Camden, DE: BFC of Camden	Wagner, R. Daniel	2	2	1	0	49	0	0	0	49	25
Clinton Corners, NY: Cornerstone BFC	Way, David	1	2	1	0	15	0	1	-1	14	20
Coopersburg, PA: Calvary BFC	Peters, David	5	9	6	10	286	17	84	-67	219	480
Dauphin, PA: Freedom BFC	Barninger, Mark	1	4	2	4	41	0	0	0	41	105
Denville, NJ: BFC	vacant	0									
Emmaus, PA: Bethel BFC	Smith, David	7	8	6	3	257	8	27	-19	238	553
Ephrata, PA: BFC of Ephrata	Krall, Daniel	3	10	6	6	155	44	7	37	155	180
Exeter, PA: The Church at Exeter	Burton, Bill	1	5	5	6	94	0	0	0	94	200
Finesville, NJ: The Finesville Church	Widger, Byron	2	2	3	0	45	0	1	-1	44	100
Fogelsville, PA: Orchard Hills Church	Triestman, Benjamin	3	7	7	13	60	41	1	40	100	249
Gloucester County, NJ: New Beginnings BFC	Nessler, Timothy	1	3	2	0	43	1	24	-23	20	33
Graterford, PA: Graterford BFC	Orton, Mark	1	5	6	5	76	4	6	-2	74	123
Harleysville, PA: Faith BFC	Crossgrove, Andrew	4	9	5	4	132	11	19	-8	124	323
Harrisburg City, PA: Grace Fellowship	Folks, Jayonn	4	3	2	2	22	0	5	-5	17	17
Harrisburg, PA: Grace BFC	Miller, Joshua	4	7	4	5	153	13	7	6	159	437
Hatfield, PA: Bethany BFC	Klase, Joel	2	5	5	5	107	7	5	2	109	109
Hellertown, PA: Saucon Community BFC	Strunk, Keith	1	3	1	8	57	21		21	78	175
Kutztown, PA: Kutztown BFC	Holbert, Sandy	2	3	0	0	29	2	6	-4	25	35

Church Location: Name	Lead or Senior Pastor	Ordained/ Probationers	Elders	Deacons	Baptisms	2022 Membership	New Members	Members Lost	Net Gain/Loss	Membership	Church Family Size
LaGrangeville, NY: Valley BFC	vacant	1		2	0	26	0	1	-1	25	33
Lancaster, PA: Faith BFC	Long, Keith	6	9	13	10	347	17	24	-7	340	475
Las Cruces, NM: Grace Bible Church	Poland, David	1	3	2	0	39	5	4	1	40	60
Lebanon, PA: Lebanon BFC	Reed, Calvin	5	10	8		230	0	2	-2	228	406
Lehighton, PA: Salem BFC	Johnson, Robert	1	3	3	0	31	2	4	-2	29	65
Longneck DE: New Life BFC	Bickings, Richard	2	3	2	0	53	2	4	-2	51	55
Maple Glen, PA: Welsh Road Church	Crossgrove, Andrew	6	9	5	0	23	12	2	10	33	50
Mt. Carmel, PA: Bethany BFC	Siegrist, Roger	1	3	4	0	54	2	6	-4	50	87
Mt. Pocono, PA: Pocono Mountain BFC	Farver, James	2	2	1	0	35	3	10	-7	28	50
Nazareth, PA: Grace BFC	Fischer, Jr., Carl	2	6	2	2	84	3	10	-7	77	134
Newark, DE: BFC of Newark, Delaware	Hebel, Andrew	2	12	7	13	321	12	32	-20	301	570
Newark, NJ: Newark BFC	Burgess, Ron	2	3	1	0	42	1	0	1	43	48
Oley, PA: New Life BFC	Allison, Scott	1	7	30	39	326	31	29	2	328	1240
Paradise, PA: Paradise BFC	Benack, Jesse	2	5	2	2	80	6	3	3	83	115
Philadelphia, PA: Wissinoming BFC	Ritter, Ralph	2	4	0	0	16	2	0	2	18	25
Quakertown, PA: Grace BFC	Kohl, Ron	5	5	6	2	159	14	24	-10	149	210
Reading, PA: Grace BFC	Grossman, Randall	4	9	10	2	295	25	69	-44	251	300
Reading, PA: La Roca de Reading	Rodriguez, Carlos	1	3	1	0	49	0	1	-1	48	140
Red Hill, PA: Community BFC	Meadows, Michael	2	6	4	9	95	7	0	7	102	155
Royersford, PA: Royersford BFC	King, Daniel	2	4	3	2	58	5	2	3	61	112
Shamokin, PA: Calvary BFC	Madara, Ferdie	3	7	0	2	83	0	3	-3	80	100
Sinking Spring, PA: Calvary BFC	Rissmiller, S. Wayne	2	9	20	41	552	48	0	48	600	2182
Spring City, PA: Faith BFC	Kauffman, Jeffrey	1	2	4	0	41	3	2	1	42	65
Stroudsburg, PA: Berean BFC	Coffman, Beau	2	6	6	5	89	7	8	-1	88	120
Sunbury, PA: Emmanuel BFC	Gibson, Joshua	1	7	11	5	237	0	7	-7	230	400

Church Location: Name	Lead or Senior Pastor	Ordained/ Probationers	Elders	Deacons	Baptisms	2022 Membership	New Members	Members Lost	Net Gain/Loss	Membership	Church Family Size
Terre Hill, PA: Berean BFC	Kirkpatrick, Kevin	1	3	3	3	59	6	2	4	63	95
Townsend, DE: theMission	Smith, Ronald	1	2		7	39	0	7	-7	32	60
W. Norriton, PA: Redeemer BFC	Wright, Scott	1	2	0	1	17	4	2	2	19	40
Wallingford, PA: Grace BFC	Susek, Aaron	4	11	11	5	166	14	12	2	168	401
Walnutport, PA: Northern Lehigh BFC	Smith, Aaron	1	3	5	9	46	4	1	3	49	130
Whitehall, PA: Whitehall BFC	Schmoyer, Timothy	3	9	8	0	126	3	13	-10	116	303
York, PA: Faith BFC	Bunting, Wesley	4	3	3	2	54	10	2	8	62	150
Zionsville, PA: BFC of Zionsville	vacant	0	3								
TOTAL		**134**	**291**	**278**	**271**	**6741**	**496**	**570**	**-74**	**6630**	**14024**
Allentown City, PA: Citylight Bible Church	Diaz, Stephen										
Cape May Court House, NJ: Cape Community Church	Boyer, Brad								0	0	
Chestertown, MD: Grace Community Church	Reff, James	2	2		0	27	5	0	5	32	32
Elverson, PA: CROSSroads, a BFC	Radcliff, Timothy	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	30
Forks, PA: Forks Community Church	Zuck, Timothy	1	2	0	6				0	0	110
Gettysburg, PA: BFC of Adams County	Hanner, John	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	35
Lancaster City, PA: Christ Alone Fellowship	Morales, Juan Carlos	1									
Milford, DE: Hope Community Bible Fellowship Church	Dupiche, Joshua	1							0	0	40
Naples, FL: Covenant Bible Fellowship	Filbert, Jason	1									
Topton, PA: Redeemer BFC	Hoffstetter, Daniel	3	0	0	11	0	25	0	25	25	150
Villa Magna, Merida, Mexico	Chi Chu, Freddy										
TOTAL		**12**	**6**	**0**	**17**	**27**	**30**	**0**	**30**	**57**	**397**

Church Location, Name	Church Buildings	Parsonages	Total Debt on Facilities	Unrestricted Offerings	Total Income
Allentown, PA: Cedar Crest BFC	1	0	$-	$1,847,411	$2,045,879
Bethlehem, PA: Ebenezer BFC	1	0	$-	$1,143,459	$1,169,438
Blandon, PA: Trinity BFC	1	0	$-	$591,057	$595,267
Boyertown, PA: Harvest Fellowship	1	0	$-	$224,156	$225,651
Camden, DE: BFC of Camden	1	0	$-	$83,644	$83,644
Clinton Corners, NY: Cornerstone BFC	1	0	$-	$-	$4,505
Coopersburg, PA: Calvary BFC	3	0	$489,581	$763,174	$785,007
Dauphin, PA: Freedom BFC	2	0	$100,000	$178,029	$187,424
Emmaus, PA: Bethel BFC	1	0	$897,517	$914,025	$935,252
Ephrata, PA: BFC of Ephrata	1	0	$-	$359,155	$434,583
Finesville, NJ: The Finesville Church	1	1	$-	$141,171	$159,225
Fogelsville, PA: Orchard Hills Church	1	0	$447,926	$356,109	$356,109
Gloucester County, NJ: New Beginnings BFC	0	0	$-	$50,376	$50,468
Graterford, PA: Graterford BFC	5	2	$-	$312,721	$313,134
Harleysville, PA: Faith BFC	1	2	$-	$548,063	$627,206
Harrisburg City, PA: Grace Fellowship	1	0	$-	$58,575	$58,575
Harrisburg, PA: Grace BFC	1	1	$-	$559,645	$585,442
Hatfield, PA: Bethany BFC	1	1	$-	$266,630	$345,604
Hellertown, PA: Saucon Community BFC	2		$50,000	$249,000	$312,857
Kutztown, PA: Kutztown BFC	1	0	$-	$75,294	$75,406
LaGrangeville, NY: Valley BFC	1	1	$-	$76,369	$76,419
Lancaster, PA: Faith BFC	2	0	$-	$989,176	$995,552
Las Cruces, NM: Grace Bible Church	0	0	$-	$113,420	$113,558
Lebanon, PA: Lebanon BFC	2	0		$642,773	$990,302
Lehighton, PA: Salem BFC	1	1	$-	$77,161	$77,161
Longneck DE: New Life BFC	1	0	$-	$111,261	$111,264
Maple Glen, PA: Welsh Road Church	1	0	$-	$108,823	$111,474
Mt. Carmel, PA: Bethany BFC	1	1	$-	$90,378	$115,777
Mt. Pocono, PA: Pocono Mountain BFC	1	0	$-	$86,459	$94,730
Nazareth, PA: Grace BFC	1	1		$207,002	$211,930
Newark, DE: BFC of Newark, Delaware	3	0	$1,617,898	$1,204,972	$1,258,524
Newark, NJ: Newark BFC	1	0	$-	$91,485	$91,485
Oley, PA: New Life BFC	2	1	$-	$1,256,877	$1,480,411

Church Location, Name	Church Buildings	Parsonages	Total Debt on Facilities	Unrestricted Offerings	Total Income
Paradise, PA: Paradise BFC	2	0	$-	$213,132	$213,148
Philadelphia, PA: Wissinoming BFC	1	1	$-		$-
Quakertown, PA: Grace BFC	1	1	$-	$419,442	$477,125
Reading, PA: Grace BFC	1	1	$-	$486,025	$489,625
Reading, PA: La Roca de Reading	0	0	$-	$120,381	$120,381
Red Hill, PA: Community BFC	1	0	$	$289,589	$287,885
Royersford, PA: Royersford BFC	1	1	$-	$216,800	$229,849
Shamokin, PA: Calvary BFC	3	0	$-	$145,454	$145,463
Sinking Spring, PA: Calvary BFC	2	0	$-	$1,864,274	$1,864,274
Spring City, PA: Faith BFC	1	1	$-	$101,424	$135,926
Stroudsburg, PA: Berean BFC	2	1	$-	$198,082	$198,094
Sunbury, PA: Emmanuel BFC	1	0	$-	$452,501	$468,009
Terre Hill, PA: Berean BFC	1	1	$-	$120,196	$127,445
Townsend, DE: theMission				$83,453	$72,143
W. Norriton, PA: Redeemer BFC	0	0	$-	$114,230	$114,230
Wallingford, PA: Grace BFC	1	2	$-	$674,494	$695,918
Walnutport, PA: Northern Lehigh BFC	1	0	$96,000	$147,401	$165,625
Whitehall, PA: Whitehall BFC	1	0	$420,129	$362,470	$393,025
York, PA: Faith BFC	1	1	$-	$253,382	$253,382
Zionsville, PA: BFC of Zionsville					
TOTAL	**65**	**22**	**$4,119,051**	**$20,040,580**	**$21,530,809**
Cape May Court House, NJ: Cape Community Church	3	1	$-		$-
Chestertown, MD: Grace Community Church	1	0	$-	$59,550	$70,515
Elverson, PA: CROSSroads, a BFC	1	0	$72,231	$36,513	$43,035
Forks, PA: Forks Community Church	0	0	$-	$176,872	$180,872
Gettysburg, PA: BFC of Adams County	2	0	$150,000	$52,964	$60,089
Lancaster City, PA: Christ Alone Fellowship			$220,653		
Milford, DE: Hope Community Bible Fellowship Church	1				$-
Naples, FL: Covenant Bible Fellowship					
Topton, PA: Redeemer BFC	0	0	$-	$204,761	$205,905
South Allentown, PA: Citylight Bible Church					
TOTAL	**8**	**1**	**$442,884**	**$530,660**	**$560,416**
Grand Total	**73**	**23**	**$4,561,935**	**$20,571,240**	**$22,091,225**

Church Location, Name	BFC Asessment	BFC Missions	BFC Church Extension	BFC Life Committee	Victory Valley Camp	Pinebrook Educational Foundation	Total Conference Disbursements
Allentown, PA: Cedar Crest BFC	$34,988	$142,165	$36,000	$ -	$3,530	$ -	$216,683
Bethlehem, PA: Ebenezer BFC	$23,332	$87,980	$33,400	$3,600	$3,600	$3,600	$155,512
Blandon, PA: Trinity BFC	$10,648	$35,724	$25,645	$ -	$ -	$ -	$72,017
Boyertown, PA: Harvest Fellowship	$4,784	$ -	$6,773	$ -	$ -	$ -	$11,557
Camden, DE: BFC of Camden	$1,456	$2,712	$2,200	$ -	$511	$500	$7,379
Clinton Corners, NY: Cornerstone BFC	$648	$4,203	$2,880	$ -	$ -	$ -	$7,731
Coopersburg, PA: Calvary BFC	$14,792	$88,655	$14,000	$ -	$3,300	$500	$121,247
Dauphin, PA: Freedom BFC	$3,172	$3,100	$2,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	$8,272
Emmaus, PA: Bethel BFC	$21,060	$58,330	$2,000		$1,200		$82,590
Ephrata, PA: BFC of Ephrata	$6,960	$56,463.00	$6,500.00				$69,923.00
Exeter, PA: The Church at Exeter	$5,518	$ -	$960	$ -	$ -	$ -	$6,478
Finesville, NJ: The Finesville Church	$2,268	$9,570	$1,000	$ -	$2,000	$ -	$14,838
Fogelsville, PA: Orchard Hills Church							$ -
Gloucester County, NJ: New Beginnings BFC	$2,688		$1,200				$3,888
Graterford, PA: Graterford BFC	$5,904	$39,507	$12,480	$ -	$1,800	$125	$59,816
Harleysville, PA: Faith BFC	$11,628	$40,530	$17,300	$1,000	$1,500	$500	$72,458
Harrisburg City, PA: Grace Fellowship	$1,088	$ -	$2,400	$ -	$ -	$ -	$3,488
Harrisburg, PA: Grace BFC	$11,716	$70,178	$19,000	$500	$1,000	$500	$102,894
Hatfield, PA: Bethany BFC	$5,898	$16,167	$3,280	$700	$1,000	$ -	$27,045
Hellertown, PA: Saucon Community BFC	$5,000		$20,000				$25,000
Kutztown, PA: Kutztown BFC	$1,396	$3,000	$50	$ -	$ -	$ -	$4,446
LaGrangeville, NY: Valley BFC	$1,432	$4,500	$1,500	$ -	$ -	$ -	$7,432
Lancaster, PA: Faith BFC	$19,616	$57,510	$12,500	$500	$700	$2,500	$93,326

Church Location, Name	BFC Asessment	BFC Missions	BFC Church Extension	BFC Life Committee	Victory Valley Camp	Pinebrook Educational Foundation	Total Conference Disbursements
Las Cruces, NM: Grace Bible Church	$2,000		$300				$2,300
Lebanon, PA: Lebanon BFC	$14,572	$44,364	$19,000		$1,000		$78,936
Lehighton, PA: Salem BFC	$1,100	$660	$660	$ -	$660	$ -	$3,080
Longneck DE: New Life BFC	$3,370		$6,041				$9,411
Maple Glen, PA: Welsh Road Church	$2,736	$300	$1,500	$100	$ -	$ -	$4,636
Mt. Carmel, PA: Bethany BFC	$1,880	$9,600	$100	$ -	$3,000	$ -	$14,580
Mt. Pocono, PA: Pocono Mountain BFC	$1,852	$4,260	$2,660	$ -	$ -	$ -	$8,772
Nazareth, PA: Grace BFC	$5,168	$21,517	$1,000		$400		$28,085
Newark, DE: BFC of Newark, Delaware	$25,200	$17,166	$59,150	$1,000	$8,821	$ -	$111,337
Newark, NJ: Newark BFC	$1,713	$300	$400	$ -	$ -	$ -	$2,413
Oley, PA: New Life BFC	$22,344	$81,548	$30,938	$ -	$16,000	$ -	$150,830
Paradise, PA: Paradise BFC	$4,148	$44,004	$2,608	$500	$750		$52,010
Philadelphia, PA: Wissinoming BFC	$ -	$350	$20				$370
Quakertown, PA: Grace BFC	$11,000	$43,000	$20,000	$500	$3,000	$ -	$77,500
Reading, PA: Grace BFC	$10,220	$51,550	$12,400	$ -	$2,000	$ -	$76,170
Reading, PA: La Roca de Reading	$4,372		$7,000				$11,372
Red Hill, PA: Community BFC	$5,112	$2,400	$2,400	$ -	$500	$24	$10,436
Royersford, PA: Royersford BFC	$4,396	$505	$1,000				$5,901
Shamokin, PA: Calvary BFC	$2,728	$6,800	$200	$200	$200	$ -	$10,128
Sinking Spring, PA: Calvary BFC	$37,285	$56,808	$16,800				$110,893
Spring City, PA: Faith BFC	$2,644	$200	$1,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	$3,844
Stroudsburg, PA: Berean BFC	$4,028	$300	$1,000	$ -	$100	$ -	$5,428

Church Location, Name	BFC Asessment	BFC Missions	BFC Church Extension	BFC Life Committee	Victory Valley Camp	Pinebrook Educational Foundation	Total Conference Disbursements
Sunbury, PA: Emmanuel BFC	$9,828	$30,990	$6,000	$500	$1,500	$ -	$48,818
Terre Hill, PA: Berean BFC	$4,684	$2,700	$3,500	$ -	$ -	$ -	$10,884
Townsend, DE: theMission	$2,100		$2,500				$4,600
W. Norriton, PA: Redeemer BFC	$2,024	$ -	$500	$ -	$ -	$ -	$2,524
Wallingford, PA: Grace BFC	$13,564	$27,700	$12,400	$370	$245	$ -	$54,279
Walnutport, PA: Northern Lehigh BFC	$3,032		$6,300				$9,332
Whitehall, PA: Whitehall BFC	$6,208	$22,756	$11,500	$ -	$250	$ -	$40,714
York, PA: Faith BFC	$3,575	$11,750	$18,250	$ -	$ -	$ -	$33,575
Zionsville, PA: BFC of Zionsville							
Total	**$408,875**	**$1,201,822**	**$470,195**	**$9,470**	**$58,567**	**$8,249**	**$2,157,178**
Cape May Court House, NJ: Cape Community Church							$ -
Chestertown, MD: Grace Community Church			$31,300				$31,300
Elverson, PA: CROSSroads, a BFC							$ -
Forks, PA: Forks Community Church	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$4,000	$ -	$4,000
Gettysburg, PA: BFC of Adams County	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Lancaster, PA: Christ Alone Fellowship							
Milford, DE: Hope Community Bible Fellowship Church							$ -
Naples, FL: Covenant Bible Fellowship							
Topton, PA: Redeemer BFC	$ -	$ -	$24,500	$ -	$5,000	$ -	$29,500
South Allentown, PA: Citylight Bible Church							
Total	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$55,800**	**$ -**	**$9,000**	**$ -**	**$64,800**
Grand Total	**$408,875**	**$1,201,822**	**$525,995**	**$9,470**	**$67,567**	**$8,249**	**$2,221,978**

Church Location, Name	Senior Pastor's Salary	Senior Pastor's Benefits	Senior Pastor's Housing Allowance	Church Ministry Staff Salaries and Benefits	Total Church Ministry Staff Salaries and Benefits
Allentown, PA: Cedar Crest BFC	$69,438	$19,722	$33,500	$527,166	$649,826
Bethlehem, PA: Ebenezer BFC	$10,679	$4,580	$2,417	$472,950	$490,626
Blandon, PA: Trinity BFC	$65,965	$4,500	$22,535	$162,726	$255,726
Boyertown, PA: Harvest Fellowship	$47,596	$7,553	$17,000	$43,118	$115,267
Camden, DE: BFC of Camden	$12,624	$8,088	$18,000	$ -	$38,712
Clinton Corners, NY: Cornerstone BFC	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Coopersburg, PA: Calvary BFC	$51,790	$26,361	$40,000	$229,767	$347,918
Dauphin, PA: Freedom BFC	$56,450	$9,166	$18,000	$7,000	$90,616
Emmaus, PA: Bethel BFC	$39,250	$3,090	$38,000	$444,196	$524,536
Ephrata, PA: BFC of Ephrata	$27,375.00	$15,487.00	$30,514.00	$53,649.00	$127,025.00
Exeter, PA: The Church at Exeter	$35,000	$6,600	$5,000	$3,475	$50,075
Finesville, NJ: The Finesville Church	$47,500	$18,388	$2,200	$ -	$68,088
Fogelsville, PA: Orchard Hills Church	$38,607	$25,661	$30,000	$27,737	$122,005
Gloucester County, NJ: New Beginnings BFC	$54,000		$25,000		$79,000
Graterford, PA: Graterford BFC	$68,675	$14,656	$ -	$20,592	$103,923
Harleysville, PA: Faith BFC	$76,103	$29,281	$17,630	$183,824	$306,838
Harrisburg City, PA: Grace Fellowship	$22,198	$ -	$ -	$ -	$22,198
Harrisburg, PA: Grace BFC	$85,115	$11,640	$12,000	$173,607	$282,362
Hatfield, PA: Bethany BFC	$45,240	$15,600	$ -	$33,808	$94,648
Hellertown, PA: Saucon Community BFC	$70,000	$3,000	$25,000	$14,000	$112,000
Kutztown, PA: Kutztown BFC	$28,574	$1,143	$10,563	$10,726	$51,006
LaGrangeville, NY: Valley BFC	$3,200	$4,965	$ -	$6,940	$15,105
Lancaster, PA: Faith BFC	$51,290	$29,520	$28,825	$348,015	$457,650
Las Cruces, NM: Grace Bible Church	$28,104	$3,240	$12,000		$43,344
Lebanon, PA: Lebanon BFC	$46,900	$38,901	$15,000	$227,694	$328,495
Lehighton, PA: Salem BFC	$ -	$267	$30,550	$ -	$30,817
Longneck DE: New Life BFC	$51,936	$7,150	$20,164		$79,250
Maple Glen, PA: Welsh Road Church	$32,275	$11,400	$12,125	$ -	$55,800
Mt. Carmel, PA: Bethany BFC	$36,750	$22,211	$ -	$ -	$58,961

Church Location, Name	Senior Pastor's Salary	Senior Pastor's Benefits	Senior Pastor's Housing Allowance	Church Ministry Staff Salaries and Benefits	Total Church Ministry Staff Salaries and Benefits
Mt. Pocono, PA: Pocono Mountain BFC	$ -	$6,981	$13,582	$ -	$20,563
Nazareth, PA: Grace BFC	$75,375	$15,752	$9,000		$100,127
Newark, DE: BFC of Newark, Delaware	$40,792	$22,821	$48,000	$383,014	$494,627
Newark, NJ: Newark BFC	$29,400	$1,012	$7,200	$ -	$37,612
Oley, PA: New Life BFC	$54,789	$18,054	$30,000	$328,913	$431,756
Paradise, PA: Paradise BFC	$39,736		$25,000	$10,101	$74,837
Philadelphia, PA: Wissinoming BFC	$ -	$1,800	$ -	$ -	$1,800
Quakertown, PA: Grace BFC	$65,872	$28,300	$ -	$112,168	$206,340
Reading, PA: Grace BFC	$48,910	$25,550	$17,800	$100,480	$192,740
Reading, PA: La Roca de Reading	$55,000	$1,072		$7,950	$64,022
Red Hill, PA: Community BFC	$24,648	$314	$14,583	$23,727	$63,272
Royersford, PA: Royersford BFC	$56,600	$17,600		$13,680	$87,880
Shamokin, PA: Calvary BFC	$45,320	$14,755	$ -	$ -	$60,075
Sinking Spring, PA: Calvary BFC	$83,344	$25,715	$20,000	$564,591	$693,650
Spring City, PA: Faith BFC	$41,972	$1,678	$20,000	$5,897	$69,547
Stroudsburg, PA: Berean BFC	$49,100	$15,632	$ -	$27,084	$91,816
Sunbury, PA: Emmanuel BFC	$50,146	$5,976	$15,854	$167,964	$239,940
Terre Hill, PA: Berean BFC	$34,000	$6,149			$40,149
Townsend, DE: theMission	$6,000	$29,000	$6,000		$41,000
W. Norriton, PA: Redeemer BFC				$82,683	$82,683
Wallingford, PA: Grace BFC	$59,666	$28,994	$15,885	$236,127	$340,672
Walnutport, PA: Northern Lehigh BFC	$38,350	$27,850	$20,000	$86,200	$172,400
Whitehall, PA: Whitehall BFC	$47,165	$9,000	$20,000	$57,853	$134,018
York, PA: Faith BFC	$41,565	$ -	$ -	$61,993	$103,558
Zionsville, PA: BFC of Zionsville					
Total	**$2,190,384**	**$646,175**	**$748,927**	**$5,261,415**	**$8,846,901**

Church Location, Name	Senior Pastor's Salary	Senior Pastor's Benefits	Senior Pastor's Housing Allowance	Church Ministry Staff Salaries and Benefits	Total Church Ministry Staff Salaries and Benefits
Cape May Court House, NJ: Cape Community Church					$ -
Chestertown, MD: Grace Community Church	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Elverson, PA: CROSSroads, a BFC					$ -
Forks, PA: Forks Community Church	$48,672	$ -	$25,000	$17,750	$91,422
Gettysburg, PA: BFC of Adams County	$26,141	$ -	$ -	$ -	$26,141
Lancaster, PA: Christ Alone Fellowship					
Milford, DE: Hope Community Bible Fellowship Church					$ -
Naples, FL: Covenant Bible Fellowship					
Topton, PA: Redeemer BFC	$36,050	$14,843	$22,000	$34,800	$107,693
South Allentown, PA: Citylight Bible Church					
Total	**$110,863**	**$14,843**	**$47,000**	**$52,550**	**$225,256**
Grand Total	**$2,301,247**	**$661,018**	**$795,927**	**$5,313,965**	**$9,072,157**

Church Location, Name	Debt Service	Benevolence	Operating Costs	Total Operations Disbursements	Total Disbursements	Grand Total Disbursements
Allentown, PA: Cedar Crest BFC	$ -	$91,000	$848,601	$1,143,226	$2,009,735	$2,107,889
Bethlehem, PA: Ebenezer BFC	$ -	$21,898	$387,304	$482,937	$1,129,075	$1,221,903
Blandon, PA: Trinity BFC	$ -	$26,874	$94,713	$185,554	$513,297	$683,672
Boyertown, PA: Harvest Fellowship	$ -	$ -	$52,548	$64,548	$191,372	
Camden, DE: BFC of Camden	$ -	$300	$14,992	$19,094	$65,185	$69,075
Clinton Corners, NY: Cornerstone BFC	$ -	$224	$5,406	$10,134	$17,865	$17,866
Coopersburg, PA: Calvary BFC	$4,171	$8,799	$231,853	$290,969	$760,134	$1,109,682
Dauphin, PA: Freedom BFC	$ -	$4,000	$62,929	$69,129	$168,017	$168,017
Emmaus, PA: Bethel BFC	$111,281		$158,749	$404,428	$1,011,554	$1,410,573
Ephrata, PA: BFC of Ephrata	$ -	$20,006	$120,810	$143,316	$286,632	$374,287
Exeter, PA: The Church at Exeter	$ -	$7,305	$339,328	$378,134	$434,687	$444,806
Finesville, NJ: The Finesville Church	$ -	$530	$20,954	$28,649	$111,575	$117,488
Fogelsville, PA: Orchard Hills Church			$56,504	$61,447	$183,452	$183,452
Gloucester County, NJ: New Beginnings BFC			$1,781	$1,781	$84,669	$84,669
Graterford, PA: Graterford BFC	$ -	$ -	$73,907	$82,508	$246,247	$278,734
Harleysville, PA: Faith BFC	$ -	$18,293	$161,382	$234,542	$613,838	$613,838
Harrisburg City, PA: Grace Fellowship	$ -	$ -	$ -	$1,200	$26,886	$115,418
Harrisburg, PA: Grace BFC	$ -	$26,051	$281,822	$367,383	$752,639	$752,639
Hatfield, PA: Bethany BFC	$67,623	$6,674	$102,767	$198,554	$320,247	$320,247
Hellertown, PA: Saucon Community BFC	$25,000	$6,000	$91,000	$122,000	$259,000	$259,000
Kutztown, PA: Kutztown BFC	$ -	$ -	$15,474	$15,549	$71,001	$82,550
LaGrangeville, NY: Valley BFC	$ -	$1,000	$32,685	$39,685	$62,222	$62,219

Church Location, Name	Debt Service	Benevolence	Operating Costs	Total Operations Disbursements	Total Disbursements	Grand Total Disbursements
Lancaster, PA: Faith BFC	$ -	$8,690	$247,786	$329,641	$880,617	$881,977
Las Cruces, NM: Grace Bible Church		$750	$62,531	$74,081	$119,725	$119,725
Lebanon, PA: Lebanon BFC	$106,178		$587,979	$706,860	$1,114,291	$1,114,291
Lehighton, PA: Salem BFC	$12,475	$568	$23,598	$45,028	$78,925	$78,925
Longneck DE: New Life BFC	$ -		$31,887	$32,637	$121,298	$121,498
Maple Glen, PA: Welsh Road Church	$ -	$9,090	$28,419	$56,309	$116,745	$162,665
Mt. Carmel, PA: Bethany BFC	$ -	$839	$29,618	$39,407	$112,948	$112,948
Mt. Pocono, PA: Pocono Mountain BFC	$ -	$811	$50,907	$79,691	$109,026	$109,026
Nazareth, PA: Grace BFC		$226	$97,987	$101,499	$229,711	$229,711
Newark, DE: BFC of Newark, Delaware	$341,095	$20,264	$265,139	$798,667	$1,404,631	$1,516,028
Newark, NJ: Newark BFC	$ -	$ -	$51,819	$51,819	$91,844	$97,245
Oley, PA: New Life BFC	$ -	$32,603	$155,464	$315,342	$897,928	$1,405,191
Paradise, PA: Paradise BFC		$1,200	$55,098	$56,298	$183,145	$195,058
Philadelphia, PA: Wissinoming BFC	$ -	$1,800		$2,000	$24,170	$24,170
Quakertown, PA: Grace BFC	$ -	$22,098	$162,718	$226,316	$510,156	$733,969
Reading, PA: Grace BFC	$ -	$13,346	$170,100	$226,550	$495,460	$482,114
Reading, PA: La Roca de Reading	$ -	$4,576	$26,761	$35,257	$110,651	$110,651
Red Hill, PA: Community BFC	$ -	$5,242	$142,570	$168,012	$241,720	$241,720
Royersford, PA: Royersford BFC	$ -		$188,503	$211,659	$305,440	$199,463
Shamokin, PA: Calvary BFC	$ -	$725	$80,614	$94,839	$165,041	$165,366
Sinking Spring, PA: Calvary BFC		$70,208	$801,712	$938,912	$1,743,455	$1,766,544
Spring City, PA: Faith BFC	$5,222	$ -	$52,775	$61,497	$134,888	$131,044

Church Location, Name	Debt Service	Benevolence	Operating Costs	Total Operations Disbursements	Total Disbursements	Grand Total Disbursements
Stroudsburg, PA: Berean BFC	$ -		$68,410	$113,071	$210,315	$217,827
Sunbury, PA: Emmanuel BFC	$ -	$8,325	$87,496	$166,325	$455,083	$623,229
Terre Hill, PA: Berean BFC	$ -	$80	$39,523	$44,403	$95,436	$99,462
Townsend, DE: theMission		$2,700	$45,000	$52,600	$98,200	$98,200
W. Norriton, PA: Redeemer BFC			$25,408	$25,408	$110,615	$110,615
Wallingford, PA: Grace BFC	$ -	$9,439	$226,363	$327,587	$722,538	$755,561
Walnutport, PA: Northern Lehigh BFC		$2,907	$158,559	$167,166	$348,898	$167,166
Whitehall, PA: Whitehall BFC	$55,801	$7,021	$164,714	$230,586	$405,318	$434,233
York, PA: Faith BFC	$ -	$3,354	$108,811	$112,165	$249,298	$249,298
Zionsville, PA: BFC of Zionsville						
Total	**$728,846**	**$465,816**	**$7,393,778**	**$10,236,399**	**$21,206,845**	**$23,232,944**
Cape May Court House, NJ: Cape Community Church				$ -	$ -	
Chestertown, MD: Grace Community Church			$36,700	$36,700	$68,000	$68,000
Elverson, PA: CROSSroads, a BFC				$ -	$ -	
Forks, PA: Forks Community Church	$ -	$ -	$83,905	$85,450	$180,872	$180,872
Gettysburg, PA: BFC of Adams County	$ -	$209	$26,576	$26,785	$52,926	$53,926
Lancaster, PA: Christ Alone Fellowship						
Milford, DE: Hope Community Bible Fellowship Church				$ -	$ -	
Naples, FL: Covenant Bible Fellowship						
Topton, PA: Redeemer BFC	$ -	$3,000	$60,228	$80,613	$217,806	$217,806
South Allentown, PA: Citylight Bible Church						
Total	**$ -**	**$3,209**	**$207,409**	**$229,548**	**$519,604**	**$520,604**
Grand Total	**$728,846**	**$469,025**	**$7,601,187**	**$10,465,947**	**$21,726,449**	**$34,753,548**

Directory of Departments & Others
BFC Denomination

Corporate Address:	1011 Brookside Road, Suite 145, Allentown, PA 18106
Mailing Address:	PO Box 3555, Allentown, PA 18106-0555
Phone:	610-398-8776
Websites:	BFC.org; BFChistory.org
Executive Dir.:	David T. Allen - dallen@bfc.org
Office Manager:	Julie Sebastian - jsebastian@bfc.org

Board of Missions

Office Location:	1011 Brookside Road, Suite 145, Allentown, PA 18106
Mailing Address:	PO Box 3555, Allentown, PA 18106-0555
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Website:	bfcBOM.org
Email:	BOMoffice@bfc.org
Director:	James Arcieri - jarcieri@bfc.org
Admin. Ass't:	Jodi Shorb - jshorb@bfc.org

Conference Pastor

Soper, Ralph M., Sharon ..... (H) 717-615-8520
6 Red Leaf Lane, Lancaster, PA 17602
srsoper2@aol.com (Cell) 717-615-8520
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Mailing Address:	Church Extension, PO Box 3534, Allentown, PA 18106
Phone:	610.769.4337
Website:	ChurchPlantingBFC.org
Email:	CEMoffice@bfc.org
Director:	David E. Gundrum - davgun@dejazzd.com
Admin. Ass't:	Laurie Kuhns - lkuhns@bfc.org
Office Ass't:	Rachel Schmoyer - rschmoyer@bfc.org

Committee on Communications

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OneVoice.	Ralph E. Ritter - bfc.onevoice@gmail.com
Comm. Coordinator:	Rachel Schmoyer - rschmoyer@bfc.org

Pinebrook Education Foundation

Director:	Dr. Andrew T. Crossgrove
Address:	c/o Faith Bible Fellowship Church 140 Harleysville Pike Harleysville , PA 19438
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BFC Life Committee

Mailing Address:	PO Box 3555, Allentown, PA 18106
Phone:	610.398.8776
BFC Finishers:	Dana Weller - finishers@bfc.org
Chairman:	Bill Schlonecker - schlonwg@aol.com

Victory Valley Camp

Mailing Address:	7352 Salem Bible Church Road, Zionsville, PA 18092
Phone:	610.966.5880
Fax:	610.967.2267
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Email:	info@victoryvalleycamp.org
Director:	Curtis Cutler

Allentown, PA; Cedar Crest BFC
1151 S. Cedar Crest Blvd
Allentown, PA 18103
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Pastor(s): Jason L. Hoy, John L. LoRusso, Adam K. Crain, Christopher Von Holt, Jules J. Hull III

Allentown, PA; Citylight Bible Church
1921 Union Blvd
Allentown, PA 18109
Phone: 484-387-0936
Website: CitylightBible.Church
Email: steve@citylightbible.church

Pastor(s): Stephen A. Diaz, Richard Dobrowolski

Bethlehem, PA; Ebenezer BFC
3100 Hecktown Rd.
Bethlehem, PA 18020
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Website: aPlaceForYou.org
Email: office@aplaceforyou.org

Pastor(s): Jeremy L. Harkins, Michael Notary, Josh Von Holt

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Pastor(s): Daniel L. Williams, R. Jerome Brush, Brad Kunkle

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Pastor(s): Barry T. Parsons

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1759 NJ-88
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