

# Southern Pennsylvania District Church of the Brethren

## District Conference

### 2.1 Purpose of District Conference.

District Conference is a mass meeting to which delegates and others, interested from the member congregations and fellowships, convene in business sessions to give implementation to District purpose. District Conference is the final authority of the District on policy, program, and procedure. District Conference officers are encouraged to provide an inspirational setting, but they and members of the Program and Arrangements Committee, are encouraged to regard the following agenda as indicative of its principal business functions:

- (1) To review achievements;
- (2) To analyze procedures and results;
- (3) To survey continuing opportunities and needs;
- (4) To participate in goal setting;
- (5) To approve policy;
- (6) To organize for action and delegate responsibility through an election;
- (7) To dedicate resources; and
- (8) To go forth in service.

### 2.2 Schedule of District Conference.

The District Conference shall convene in its annual session on the third Saturday and preceding Friday in September. Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the conference officers in consultation with the District Board.

2.3 **Conference Delegate Body.**

All members of the churches and fellowships of the District shall have the privilege of moving and discussing the business of the District Conference. However, only delegates shall have the right to vote.

(a) **Qualifications and Duties of Delegates.**

(i) Delegates shall be elected only from among the active, informed, and committed membership of the church. Delegates shall be expected to attend all business sessions of District Conference and all meetings of the delegate body. They shall report and communicate actions and concerns from District to congregation and vice versa. (See Annual Conference Minutes, 1947.)

(ii) Congregations shall endeavor to select delegates who are informed and interested in the life of the larger church, and/or show potential for leadership and involvement in the District and national levels of the church.

(b) **Representation and Election of Delegates.**

(i) Representation of congregations shall be as follows:

<b><u>Membership</u></b>	<b><u>Number of Delegates</u></b>
150 members or less	3
151 to 200 members	4
201 to 300 members	5
301 to 400 members	6
401 to 500 members	7
501 to 600 members	8
601 to 700 members	9
701 or more members	10

(ii) The Pastor/Moderator/Minister in charge and Church Board/Leadership Team Chair of each member body should serve as delegates by virtue of their offices. Each congregation shall select the remaining quota of its delegates from its membership at large.

(iii) Delegates selected from the membership at large of the congregation should serve for two or three years, with staggered terms, to assure continuity. Delegates may be called to succeed themselves.

(iv) Delegates shall be called at the time of the general elections in the local congregation. The delegates' term of service shall begin with the regular District Conference following their election, and they shall serve on a year-round basis. When elected, delegates' names and addresses shall be reported to the District Office to be included on the mailing list for newsletters, financial reports, and other pertinent information. Delegates shall register at District Conference to indicate their presence each day.

(v) The delegate body shall have the following functions:

(1) Serve as the final authority of the District in all matters of polity, procedure, and function.

(2) Confirm the officers of the District Conference, the members of special committees/teams authorized by the District, and members of the District Board.

(3) Review the work of the District as presented to the District Conference in the reports of the elected boards and committees.

(4) Project the program of the District, determining fields of endeavor, plans for advancement, size of budgets, and all other necessary matters.

(5) Dispose of queries that come to the District Conference.

(6) Receive reports from individuals and/or committees appointed to deal with specific problems in the life of the District.

(7) Determine what resolutions shall be the voice of the District on the problems of the day.

#### 2.4 **Participation.**

(a) Every congregation is encouraged to participate with a full contingency of delegates.

(b) District Conference attendance by all members of the District is encouraged.

(c) Announcement of coming Conferences shall be made in each congregation within the 30-day period prior to the scheduled meeting, at least two times; once early in the 30-day period, and again the preceding Sunday.

2.5 **District Officers.** The officers of the District shall be the Moderator, Moderator-Elect, Writing Clerk and Treasurer.

(a) **Election/Calling to Offices.**

(i) The Moderator shall be elected/called by District Conference one year in advance of the year of service, during which time the position shall be known as Moderator-Elect.

(ii) Upon a vacancy in the office of Moderator, the Moderator-Elect shall assume the moderatorship. The next regularly scheduled District Conference shall elect both Moderator and Moderator-Elect for the upcoming year. The Moderator shall not

immediately succeed him/herself. The Writing Clerk and Treasurer shall be appointed by the District Board.

(b) Responsibilities and Duties.

(i) The Moderator shall preside at the District Conference and shall be an ex officio member, without vote, of the District Executive Committee and District Board. The Moderator shall be chairperson of the conference Program and Arrangements Committee and shall serve on the Nominating and Personnel Committee. The Moderator shall study the needs of the District and give interpretation and counsel regarding them to the District Board and District Conference and to any other appropriate District agency. The Moderator shall not chair the Board or serve as a commission member during the term as Moderator.

(ii) The Moderator-Elect shall perform the duties of the Moderator in the Moderator's absence or request and shall become familiar with the program of the District in preparation for moderatorship. The Moderator-Elect shall be an ex officio member, without vote, of the District Executive Committee and the District Board. The Moderator-Elect shall be chairperson of the Nominating and Personnel Committee and a member of the District Conference Program and Arrangements Committee. The Moderator-Elect shall not chair the Board or serve as a commission member during the term as Moderator-Elect.

(iii) The Writing Clerk shall record the minutes of the District Conference and shall, in cooperation with the District staff, prepare the District Conference minutes for inclusion in the conference booklet. The Writing Clerk shall be an ex officio member, without vote, of the District Board, District Conference Program and Arrangements Committee, and the Nominating and Personnel Committee.

(iv) The Treasurer, in cooperation with District Staff, shall be custodian of all current District funds and acknowledge receipt of such funds. The Treasurer shall oversee the deposit of funds and disbursement of funds in accordance with the District Board Policies and procedures. Arrangements for handling funds for any significant program operation may be made by the District Board. The Treasurer shall prepare at least quarterly a financial report showing the giving from member churches and the various disbursements. The report shall be made available to the Stewards Commission, the Board, and the churches. The Treasurer shall be bonded and shall be an ex officio member, without vote, of the District Executive Committee and the District Board and the Stewards Commission. The accounts shall be submitted for an annual audit.

2.6 Conference Committees.

(a) Nominating and Personnel Committee. There shall be a Nominating and Personnel Committee. The committee shall be composed of the Moderator-elect who shall serve as the chairperson; the Moderator; the Writing Clerk (an ex officio member); and eight elected members, two from each zone. The elected members shall not be eligible to succeed themselves.

(i) Responsibilities and Guidelines:

(1) The Nominating and Personnel Committee shall present a ballot of nominees for vacancies to be filled by District Conference except for those agencies whose by-laws state otherwise (See Article 7. for further delineation.)

(2) The ballot will include nominees representative of all zones within the District. Board membership shall provide a balance between pastors and lay members, men and women, and differing theological perspectives.

(3) The term of office for all called or appointed personnel shall be three years, (from District Conference to District Conference), unless otherwise stated in the bylaws. No one shall be eligible to serve more than two full terms in succession.

(4) Approximately one-third of the membership of the District Board and continuing committees shall be called in any one year.

(5) A time shall be scheduled at each District Conference for nominations from the delegate body. A handout with a list of openings to be filled at the next District Conference will be prepared with a brief description of responsibilities of each position and the gifts and talents best suited to the position. The Moderator shall lead the delegate body in a prayer for the Holy Spirit's guidance upon this discernment process. Then time will be allowed for the delegates to consider persons they would like to nominate for each position and write the names on the handout. The handouts will be collected for use by the Nominating and Personnel Committee. Additional nominations from individuals and congregations may be forwarded to the District Nominating and Personnel Committee at any time prior to the forming of the District Conference Ballot.

(6) The Nominating and Personnel Committee shall make nominations for all openings and secure written approval of the nominees.

(7) In securing approval for nominations, the Nominating and Personnel Committee will send a listing of qualifications, abilities, responsibilities to the potential nominees.

(8) The completed ballot will be presented to the District Board for review, affirmation, and recommendation on to District Conference. The Ballot will be distributed to the delegates and congregations prior to conference, with biographical data attached.

(9) At District Conference (on the first day - Friday), the ballot will be presented by the chairperson of the Nominating and Personnel Committee (Moderator-elect), who will describe the process by which the ballot was developed.

(10) The chairperson will then move for the adoption of the ballot.

(11) Before the vote on the motion is taken, the Moderator will give opportunity for nominations from the floor.

(12) Nominations from the floor shall contain the nominee's name, congregation, and church office held. Any additional statements or speeches will be considered "out of order."

(13) Any person nominated from the floor shall have given prior written consent for the particular office. The person making the nomination will submit to the Writing Clerk of District Conference, a written consent signed by the nominee plus biographical data.

(14) The approved ballot, with printed information concerning the persons nominated from the floor, will then be presented on Saturday A.M. for voting by the delegates.

(15) A majority vote shall be required for all elections.

(b) District Conference Program and Arrangements Committee.

(i) Membership:

(1) There shall be a District Conference Program and Arrangements Committee. The committee shall be composed of the Moderator, who shall serve as chairperson; the Moderator-elect; the Writing Clerk; and four members (one from each zone) elected by District Conference for one three-year term.

(2) The local church hosting District Conference shall designate a conference director/coordinator, and that person should attend meetings of the Program and Arrangements Committee as an ex officio member, without vote.

(ii) Responsibilities:

(1) The District Conference Program and Arrangements Committee shall be responsible for planning the conference program; i.e. obtaining leadership, determining the place of meeting, securing facilities, providing for exhibits, registering delegates, appointing tellers, and making other necessary arrangements for the conference. The committee shall arrange the schedule and agenda of the conference in such a way as to provide for the most effective handling of business, while also providing an inspirational component.

2.7 Standing Committee Delegates. Delegates shall be called by District Conference to represent the District on the Annual Conference Standing Committee. The directives of Annual Conference shall be followed in determining eligibility, number allowed, and length of term. Standing Committee delegates shall serve on District Board as ex officio members, without vote, if they are not already elected members of the Board.