

August 1, 2009

Dear Chairperson of Executive Committee/Pastoral Committee,

At this time of year, I am aware that many churches are working on their 2010 budgets. We have received several items that will be helpful to you as you work on the Pastoral Compensation part of your budget. Here are a few notes for your information:

1. Update on Minister's and church workers medical insurance. If there are any persons or churches having problems finding affordable and adequate medical insurance, you can contact Brethren Benefit Trust (1-800-746-1505) and speak with Randy Yoder. Others in our district have been pleased with the minister's group plan offered through Virginia Farm Bureau and Southeastern Ministers Association. For information on this option, contact Janet Rickmann 1-800-277-8323, ext 1118. If I can be of assistance, please feel free to give me a call.
2. 2010 Recommended Minimum Cash Salary Table for Pastors. Attached with this letter is the 2010 Recommended Minimum Cash Salary Table for Pastors from Annual Conference. This table reflects a 0% increase to compensate for cost of living increases, as well as the tenure step increase. I hope you will give careful consideration to the Annual Conference recommended salary levels as you negotiate arrangements for the next year. Congregations served by part-time pastors should calculate the salary according to the recommended scale, then prorate it for the time of employment (1/2 time, 1/3 time, etc.). Please read the notes on the back page for common questions regarding pastoral salary.

A Renewal Agreement is included. Please review the current Renewal Agreement. Since there is no denominational Medical Insurance Plan for pastors, there is a new work sheet section (section 4) that goes over the various components of medical insurance. By January 15, please see that a copy of the Renewal agreement is sent to the District Office for your congregational file. Having the Renewal Agreement in your file can be helpful if issues related to disability, pension or retirement arise.

3. The Brethren Pension Plan: The Brethren Pension Plan remains the same. Please see the *Guidelines for Pastors Salaries and Benefits* for instructions in formulating the pension amounts (see Section I., Item C. Pension and Medical Plans, Number 1). (Copies are available to download at <http://www.brethren.org/genbd/ministry/LeadershipManual/Guidelines4PastorsSalaryBenefits.pdf>)

4. Suggested Annual Conference Expenses for 2010. Annual Conference in 2010 will be in Pittsburgh, PA July 3-7. Our estimate is approximately \$1,250.00. If the pastor also serves as delegate, add \$180.00.

<u>Non Delegate Registration</u> and book	\$ 95.00
Lodging @ \$140.00/night	\$560.00
Parking @ \$20.00 night	\$ 80.00
Meals @ \$35.00 (plus one travel day)	\$175.00
Travel (530 miles, RT, @ 0.55/mile)	\$300.00
Misc (Tips, tolls, etc)	<u>\$ 40.00</u>
Total Cost	\$1,250.00

5. Conduct An Evaluation of the Pastor's Performance for the Past Year. Churches and pastors need to do this each year, preferably in the spring, so that there is a separate session in late summer or fall to discuss issues related to salary, expenses and benefit package. Information gained from the spring review of pastor and church relationships and performance does enter into salary considerations, as do continued training and tenure.

6. Brethren Woods. Encourage your pastor to serve a week as a counselor or dean at Brethren Woods. For some, this could be an annual event, but hopefully at least every third year. This is an outreach ministry of your congregation and should not be considered vacation time.

7. Continuing Education Requirements. Annual Conference adopted denominational *Continuing Education Guidelines for Pastors* which can be viewed or downloaded at <http://www.brethren.org/genbd/ministry/index.htm>.

Professional Growth/Expenses - To keep your pastor on the growing edge, we recommend you provide adequate funds and time off for professional growth events. A minimum expectation for full-time pastors would be \$500 and five days. Pastors will be expected to complete 5 Continuing Education Units (each CEU is equivalent to 10 contact hours) with an accredited institution over a 5-year period. In addition, a pastoral leader is expected to engage in at least one elective study annually. Pastors are responsible for sending a copy of their CEU certificates to the district office for inclusion in their file.

Sabbatical - [Church of the Brethren guidelines](#) have called for a sabbatical for a pastor after seven years of service in one congregation. Action at the 2002 Annual Conference now make provision for shorter sabbaticals after 4, 5, or 6 years or a full sabbatical after 7 years. Contact the District Executive for assistance and information regarding the preparation process for a sabbatical. See August 2009 **Pastor's Memo** for Sabbatical Grants from Louisville Institute.

8. For good pastoral relations, it is important to have a clear understanding of expectations by all parties involved. Regular and systematic evaluation of your church and pastoral relationships, clarification of expectations of the pastor by the congregation, and discovering ways for the church to be supportive of the pastor and family at various times in their ministry proves working relationships. If I can be of any help at this point, please feel free to give me a call. May God continue to bless you in your work and ministry!

Sincerely,

Jim Miller
District Executive

Enc: Recommended Minimum Cash Salary Table for Pastors: 2010 (canary)
Renewal Agreement, (white)

CC: Pastors, District Ministry Commission, and Mary Jo Flory-Steury (Office of Ministry)