

# The 67<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention of the Unity of the Brethren Convention Minutes

JULY 6-8, 2017

TEMPLE BRETHREN CHURCH

## Thursday, July 6, 2017

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A dinner for pastors, their spouses, the Executive Committee, and missionaries was hosted by the Temple Brethren Church. This was followed by the Pastor's Meeting. At this meeting, Rev. James Hejl was elected Pastor to the Pastors.

## Friday, July 7, 2017

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**Registration** was held from 7:30-8:30am. Breakfast was provided by the Temple Brethren Church.

**Total Attendance: 152**

**Voting Members: 81**

**Pastors: 22**

Rev. Charles Amos, Rev. Whitney Amos, Rev. Linda Chandler, Rev. Tim Chaplin, Rev. Joe Emerson, Rev. Adolfo Gonzalez, Rev. Michael Groseclose, Rev. Jim Heckman, Rev. James Hejl, Rev. Curtis Holland, Pastor David Johnson, Rev. Lawrence Junek, Rev. Dr. Larry Koslovsky, Rev. Dr. Mark Labaj, Rev. Denise Mikeska, Rev. Vanessa Mitchell, Rev. Al Newby, Rev. Joseph Polasek, Rev. Kay Polasek, Rev. Mark Sebek, Rev. Thomas Tallas, Rev. Dr. Jerry Terrill

**Executive Officers: 5**

**President**-Kent Laza (BCS), **1<sup>st</sup> VP**-Rev. Mark Sebek (counted with Pastors), **2<sup>nd</sup> VP**-Rev. Michael Groseclose (counted with Pastors), **Secretary**-Angie Hairrell (Snook), **Financial Secretary**-Liz Ripple (Fayetteville), **Treasurer**-Harvey Treybig (Industry), **Lay Alternate**-Wiley Marx (Ocker)

### Lay Members: 16

**BCS**-Valerie Sebek, **Caldwell**-Dr. Ron Dusek, **Crosby**-Debbie Clark, **Dime Box**-Roberta Brinkman, **Fayetteville**-Sandra Stepan, **Houston**-Dorothy Hinson, **Nelsonville**-Janell Zettel, **Ocker**-Taylor Brinkley, **Seaton**-Leonard Mikeska, **Snook**-Yvonne Kovar, **Taylor**-Sidney Srensky, **Temple**-Kellie Chaplin, **Wall**-Robert Berrie, **Wesley**-Mark Surovik, **West**-Roy Janek, **Westheimer**-Leroy Parthum

### Delegates: 33

**Austin**-Cade Chandler, **BCS**-Dawn Marie Baletka, **Caldwell**-Lynette Urbanovsky, **Crosby**-Tillman Clark, **Dime Box**-Dorothy Jean Davis, **Fayetteville**-Jerry Dove, **Industry**-Lynwood Ullrich, **Nelsonville**-Grace Fick, Brett Mikeska, Dorothy Milberger, **New Tabor**-Christine Campbell, Connie Surovik, **Ocker**-Janet Hoelscher, Chelsey Pierce, Sharon Marek, **Rosenberg**-Mary Jane Kocurek, **Seaton**-Bob Haisler, Doug Rowald, **Snook**-Justin Lewis, **Taylor**-Arnold Cuba, Virginia Grow, Henry Ripple, Marie Ann Ripple, Stanley Zamorsky, **Temple**-Grace Labaj, **Wall**-Sandy Dusek, Charlie Farmer, Lance LaBedelle, Rick Weise, **Wesley**-JT Grounds, **West**-Sandy Borrenphol, Mike James, **Westheimer**-Betty Parthum

### Committee Chairs: 5

**PRC**-Jon Farrow, **Christian Education**-Tami Laza, **Hus Encampment Trustees**-Mark Olsen, **Foreign Mission**-David Miller, **Home Missions**-Martha Dove, **Grants & Bequests**-Leroy Parthum (counted above)

### Nonvoting Members: 71

#### Missionaries: 8 (10)

Rob and Anne Theissen, Pavel and Stanya Kozac, Carolyn Groseclose, Michael Woo, Phil and Eunice Raiford (plus their two children)

#### Interim Pastor: 1

Rev. Brad Herridge

#### Alternates: 5

**Caldwell**-Martha Huffman, **Nelsonville**-Beverly Mikeska, **Rosenberg**-Alice Kocurek, **Snook**-Mary Polasek, Brad Hairrell

### Guests & Volunteers: 55

## Friday Morning Worship Service (8:30-9:30am)

The **Opening Worship Service** began at 8:30am. The Temple Brethren Church Choir gave the Call to Worship, followed by the Invocation. The congregation sang *Praise Him! Praise Him!*, *Wonderful Grace of Jesus*, and *How Great is Our God*, led by Norman Hluchan and accompanied by Valeria Miller and Jane Debenport. Special music was provided by Norman Hluchan and Jon Farrow. The message, entitled **Limitless**, was given by Rev. Tim Chaplin, based on the Convention Verse, Matthew 19:26. Communion was administered by Rev. Michael Groseclose and Rev. Mark Sebek. The congregation then sang *To God Be the Glory* and Rev. Chaplin gave the benediction. The service closed with the congregation singing *Standing on the Promises*.

## Welcome (9:30-10:00am)

A Welcome was provided by Unity President, Kent Laza and Temple Brethren Church Board of Elder's President, Gayle Farrow. President Kent Laza introduced the Synodical Executive Committee and thanked the Temple Brethren Church for hosting. President Laza provided an overview of the Convention schedule, which was different from previous Conventions. The focus this year was on educational sessions with one business session on Saturday. At several points during the day, attendees would be able to choose between various presentations. President Laza introduced Rev. Betsy Miller, President of the Northern Province of the Moravian Church. She brought greetings from this group. Jon Farrow announced how the Convention proceedings could be accessed live through Facebook.

## General Session 1

### Catechism Revision & Christian Education (10:00-11:00am)

Chair of the Christian Board of Education, Tami Laza, presented the work of the Christian Board of Education. A needs inventory was sent to all churches. The areas where help was most needed included Confirmation and teaching the Catechism and materials for instruction in PreConfirmation. This led to the call for the Catechism to be updated.

Chair Tami Laza and the Board identified another need in the area of Christian Education. Every congregation utilizes different materials for their children's

programs, sometimes different curriculums within the same church. Sunday School teachers, Confirmation teachers, and camp staff have noticed that our kids were not as biblically sound and literate as we would like. The members of the Board of Christian Education reviewed 21 commercial Sunday School Curriculums on 20 different characteristics. The results of this review were provided in the Convention Book, pages 76-78. A large print version was also provided to all Convention Attendees. Congregations and Sunday Schools were encouraged to use this tool to find curriculum for all age groups (babies – adults) that meets the church's unique needs.

Chair Laza reported that the next goal of the Board of Christian Education is to support the development of a Catechism Companion.

Rev. Dr. Larry Koslovsky and Rev. James Hejl served as members of the 2017 Catechism Revision Committee. Rev. Dr. Koslovsky presented the new Catechism. Electronic copies were sent to all Convention Members before the Convention. Pastors received a copy approximately one week prior to Convention. He shared some of the history of the Catechism and how it came to its present form. Revs. Koslovsky and Hejl referred to the 1523 Catechism translation and took a few questions from there. Goals of this revision were matching the questions and answers to relevant Bible verses. In previous versions, not all answers were related to supporting Scripture. Scripture quotations were taken from the *New Revised Standard Version of the Bible* (1989). There was some rephrasing of questions and answers.

The Catechism was also restructured. Section 2: Foundations of Brethren Belief and Practice is new. This section of the Catechism lays the foundation of what we believe. The remainder of the Catechism is divided into three major headings: Essential to Salvation, Ministering to Salvation, and Incidental to Salvation. This is a system for understanding faith and salvation.

**Essential to Salvation** is God is a real God, and humanity responds in faith, love, and hope. This was an Essential in the original faith. This portion includes six sections: God, God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, Humanity and Sin, and Salvation.

**Ministering to Salvation** (ministerials to the early Brethren) are tools that help us grow in faith. This portion includes three sections: The Bible, The Church, and Sacraments.

**Incidentals to Salvation** are important, but not Essentials. Rev. Dr. Koslovsky shared we often mix up the ministerials and the essentials. This portion includes 5 sections: Rites of the Unity of the Brethren, The Christian Life, Obligations of a Church Member and Future Things. Rev. Dr. Koslovsky reported some work was done on future things, but this is still a mystery.

Rev. Dr. Koslovsky shared that most of us have seen the catechism as solid rock. However, the writers of the 1523 printing realized immediately it could be changed. He learned that this is a living document. Revs. Koslovsky and Hejl reported it was humbling to be a part of such a great tradition that speaks to the basic understanding of what we believe.

Because you cannot reference every relevant Scripture or explain everything, a Catechism Companion will be created. Revs. Koslovsky and Hejl will write this document to expand on the Biblical and the historical understanding. The goal is to have this document completed by the 2019 Convention.

The floor was opened for questions: Rev. Kay Polasek gave God the glory for this work and thanked Revs. Koslovsky and Hejl. One underlying belief of the Brethren is humanity's response to a limitless God! This document helps do that.

Questions were raised regarding the format. It will be available electronically and in hard copies. It was suggested that printed copies be larger than the present Catechism. Eventually, the Companion and Catechism will be printed together.

Grace Labaj suggested the entire membership should go through this new version of the Catechism and all agreed. Rev. Hejl shared that the vision is for every pastor to use this Catechism to instruct the entire congregation.

Tami Laza stated this could be a great Bible Study and encourage adults to grow in their understanding.

For confirmation classes, congregations voiced a need for support. They need adult leadership and/or a pastor. One idea shared was combining churches for joint confirmation classes. An example of this was shared by Rev. Hejl. Wall, Taylor, Nelsonville/Wesley confirmation classes held a joint retreat at the Hus Encampment. Students worked through certain topics, such as what is really essential and nonessential and how love permeates all, together. They also made plaques with the Unity Motto. On Sunday morning, the group traveled to Wesley and had worship in the historic church. Rev. Tommy Tallas of Wall shared

it was a blessing for all. Rev. Hejl hoped to do it again, possibly every two years. None of the churches had the right numbers to do it this year.

The idea was shared that many churches can use and take advantage of this type of programming. It deepens relationships and builds a deep sense of fellowship. It is something well worth repeating. It was shared that this might not be possible on a Unity wide basis, but regions could accomplish this without much difficulty.

President Kent Laza reported that in business session on Saturday we will have a motion to act on the revised Catechism so congregations can begin using it with their children.

## Breakout Sessions (11:00am-12:00pm)

### Breakout Session 1: Camp Review and Panel Discussion

This session was held in the Sanctuary.

Youth Director Jennifer Chervenka introduced Camp Directors, which each provided a report on their camp.

A panel of three young adult members (Krystal Dusek, Jordan Eilers, and Taylor Brinkley) answered questions posed by Jenn regarding their activity in the church, their ideas for the church, and why they believe many of their friends do not remain in the Brethren Church.

### Breakout Session 2: Foreign Missions

This session was held in the fellowship hall.

During this session, all our missionaries reported on their work.

- Carolyn Groseclose-New Day Orphanage in Zambia
- Rob and Anne Theissen-Southern Mexico
- Rev. Pavel and Stanya Kozac-Czech Republic
- Phil and Eunice Raiford-Oaxaca, Mexico
- Michael Woo-China

## Music (1:00-1:30pm)

Music was provided by Jeremy Wentrcek.

## Breakout Sessions (1:30pm-2:30pm)

### Breakout Session 3: Technology for our Churches

Technology in churches was in the sanctuary.

Jon Farrow talked about the technology they use in Temple and how the convention is being streamed. Videos will continue to be available on the Unity Convention 2017 Facebook page. Seth Vance from Church Systems Design spoke about the technology available to churches.

### Breakout Session 4: Home Missions

Home Missions met in the fellowship hall.

An update on the Cade Lake Chapel and In God's Hands ministry was given. A written report can be found in the Convention Book beginning on page 109.

## General Session 2

### Moving our Unity Forward – Regional discussions about cooperative efforts between churches (2:30-3:30pm)

President Kent Laza stated that these discussions were started at the Spring Synodical meeting. It was requested to continue the conversations at the Convention. Discussion leaders were named for each regional group.

Churches were divided into five regions: Brazos Valley, Brenham, Temple, South Texas, and Taylor.

**Brazos Valley:** BCS, Cade Lake Chapel, Caldwell, Dime Box, New Tabor, Snook

**Brenham:** Fayetteville, Industry, Nelsonville, Wesley

**Temple:** Buckholts, Ocker, Seaton, Temple, West

**South Texas:** Crosby, Good Shepherd, Houston, Pasadena, Rosenberg, Westheimer

**Taylor:** Austin, Granger, Taylor, Wall

## General Session 3

### Hus Encampment Master Plan & Capital Improvement Program

A presentation was made by Mark Olsen, Chair of the Hus Encampment Board of Trustees, and Rick Weise, Member of the Hus Encampment Board of Trustees. The presentation included an inspiring video on the camping program and a list of upgrades for the camp facilities. A copy of the report can be found in the Convention Book beginning on page 85.

The floor was opened for questions.

- What would be the impact of the project on camper fees? *It is too early in the project to determine and largely depends on fundraising. The Board is committed to making camp affordable to any who want to attend. Priority #1.*
- What types of building materials will be used? *David Dusek helped with design and materials are still to be determined. They will certainly use durable products, and products that have lower maintenance (less repainting).*
- Will the facilities be ADA compliant? *Yes, everything will be ADA accessible.*
- Has the Board considered other uses of the Camp? *The desire is for the facility to serve the entire Unity with all ages comfortable during an overnight stay. There is the potential of making it available for other Christian programming. The Unity is the first priority.*
- Will there be a need for Full time staffing? *That is not developed at this point, but not out of the question.*
- What is the timeline? *Other than septic work which is in progress, not yet. It depends on financial support and Convention forming the committees.*
- How will this project be funded? *The Synodical Committee will direct a lot of this. The Capital Campaign is one thing. Portions of project may be done with volunteers. The Building Committee would work on that. There are some existing funds. The septic work is being done from existing funds (\$60,000). \$120,000 is currently available to the Board of Trustees.*

### Music (5:00-5:30pm)

The attendees gathered in the sanctuary to participate in praise and worship with song.



## Evening Worship & Memorial Service (6:30-7:30pm)

A worship and memorial service was held to remember three pastors who had recently passed away: Rev. Gordon Hejl, Rev. Milton Maly, and Rev. Albert Michalik. Worship was led by Rev. Tommy Tallas and Rev. James Hejl. Norman Hluchan served as song leader and Valeria Miller served as Pianist.

The service was opened with an invocation and the congregation sang *Sing Praises to God Who Reigns Above*. Special music was provided by Jon Farrow. Each pastor was then remembered. Remembering Brother Gordon was Rev. James Hejl. Remembering Brother Milton was Rev. Michael Groseclose. Remembering Brother Albert was Rev. Dr. Larry Koslovsky. Each shared poignant and joyous memories of these men of God. The congregation then shared a responsive reading of Remembrance, Thanks, and Aspiration, followed by singing *Shine, Jesus, Shine*. All former Hus School Students then sang *Hoj věrni v boj*, directed by Rev. Tommy Tallas and accompanied by pianist Donna Tallas. The service closed with a benediction.

## Saturday, July 8, 2017

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Breakfast was provided by the Temple Brethren Church.

**Total Attendance: 145**

**Voting Members: 82**

**Pastors: 23**

Rev. Charles Amos, Rev. Whitney Amos, Rev. Linda Chandler, Rev. Tim Chaplin, Rev. Joe Emerson, Rev. Adolfo Gonzalez, Rev. Michael Groseclose, Rev. Jim Heckman, Rev. James Hejl, Rev. Curtis Holland, Pastor David Johnson, Rev. Lawrence Junek, Rev. Dr. Larry Koslovsky, Rev. Dr. Mark Labaj, Rev. Denise Mikeska, Rev. Vanessa Mitchell, Rev. Al Newby, Rev. Joseph Polasek, Rev. Kay Polasek, Rev. Mark Sebek, Rev. Thomas Tallas, Rev. Dr. Jerry Terrill, Rev. Larry Zabcik

**Executive Officers: 5**

**President**-Kent Laza (BCS), **1<sup>st</sup> VP**-Rev. Mark Sebek (counted with Pastors), **2<sup>nd</sup> VP**-Rev. Michael Groseclose (counted with Pastors), **Secretary**-Angie Hairrell (Snook),

**Financial Secretary**-Liz Ripple (Fayetteville), **Treasurer**-Harvey Treybig (Industry),  
**Lay Alternate**-Wiley Marx (Ocker)

### Lay Members: 16

**BCS**-Valerie Sebek, **Caldwell**-Dr. Ron Dusek, **Crosby**-Debbie Clark, **Dime Box**-  
Roberta Brinkman, **Fayetteville**-Sandra Stepan, **Houston**-Dorothy Hinson,  
**Nelsonville**-Janell Zettel, **Ocker**-Taylor Brinkley, **Seaton**-Leonard Mikeska, **Snook**-  
Yvonne Kovar, **Taylor**-Sidney Srensky, **Temple**-Kellie Chaplin, **Wall**-Robert Berrie,  
**Wesley**-Mark Surovik, **West**-Roy Janek, **Westheimer**-Leroy Parthum

### Delegates: 33

**Austin**-Cade Chandler, **BCS**-Dawn Marie Baletka, **Caldwell**-Martha Huffman,  
**Crosby**-Tillman Clark, **Dime Box**-Dorothy Jean Davis, **Fayetteville**-Jerry Dove,  
**Industry**-Lynwood Ullrich, **Nelsonville**-Grace Fick, Brett Mikeska, Dorothy  
Milberger, **New Tabor**-Christine Campbell, Connie Surovik, **Ocker**-Janet  
Hoelscher, Chelsey Pierce, David Sebek, **Rosenberg**-Mary Jane Kocurek, **Seaton**-  
Glenn Psencik, Doug Rowald, **Snook**-Justin Lewis, **Taylor**-Arnold Cuba, Virginia  
Grow, Henry Ripple, Marie Ann Ripple, Stanley Zamorsky, **Temple**-Grace Labaj,  
**Wall**-Sandy Dusek, Charlie Farmer, Lance LaBedelle, Rick Weise, **Wesley**-JT  
Grounds, **West**-Sandy Borrenphol, Mike James, **Westheimer**-Betty Parthum

### Committee Chairs: 5

**PRC**-Jon Farrow, **Christian Education**-Tami Laza, **Hus Encampment Trustees**-Mark  
Olsen, **Foreign Mission**-David Miller, **Home Missions**-Martha Dove, **Grants &  
Bequests**-Leroy Parthum (counted above)

### Nonvoting Members: 63

#### Missionaries: 8 (10)

Rob and Anne Theissen, Pavel and Stanya Kozac, Carolyn Groseclose, Michael  
Woo, Phil and Eunice Raiford (plus their two children)

#### Interim Pastor: 1

Rev. Brad Herridge

#### Alternates: 4

**Nelsonville**-Beverly Mikeska, **Rosenberg**-Alice Kocurek, **Snook**-Mary Polasek, Brad  
Hairrell

#### Guests & Volunteers: 48

Many more joined for the Ordination Service.

## Morning Devotional (8:00-8:30am)

Rev. Brad Herridge, Interim Pastor of Ocker Brethren Church provided a devotional entitled *Wasteland*.

## General Session 4 (8:30-10:00)

### Convention Business

President Kent Laza called the meeting to order at 8:30 with prayer. He opened with an explanation of the design of convention...educational, not the typical committees. This morning business session will allow the Convention Members to go through the proposed motions.

President Kent Laza presented the Directives from 66<sup>th</sup> Convention.

1. The development of a Hus Encampment Masterplan. The presentation by the Hus Encampment Board of Trustees and the Building Committee was presented yesterday. A motion will be presented later regarding this work.
2. The revision of the Catechism. This was presented on Friday by Revs. Koslovsky and Hejl. A motion will be presented later regarding this work.
3. The hiring of an Administrative Assistant to serve the Unity. Liz Ripple has been hired in this position and already working in that role.

### *Proposed Motions*

1. **Elimination of the Board of Grants and Bequests** (recommended by the Synodical Committee)

**MOTION:** In the biennium that follows this Convention, the Executive Committee, the Synodical Committee and the Board of Grants and Bequests shall take appropriate measures to transfer management and oversight of the funds currently managed by the Board of Grants and Bequests to the Synodical Committee. The Executive Committee of the Synodical Committee shall have all management and oversight responsibilities for the funds, and have the authority to accept or disburse funds as they deem appropriate in general compliance with the existing policies and purpose of the Board of Grants and Bequests. A report of any new income or disbursements shall be made to the Synodical Committee at the first meeting following such activity. Upon completion of this transfer, the Executive Committee shall draft proposed Constitution and By-Laws changes to eliminate the Board of Grants and Bequests for consideration at the 68th Convention of the Unity of the Brethren.

**SECOND:** Rev. Mike Groseclose

This is a recommendation from the Synodical Committee. The Board was set up long ago to manage gifts to the denomination. This group has been meeting very seldom over last 15-20 years and the board is nonfunctioning at this point. According to the reports, there is approximately \$450,000 in the accounts.

**DISCUSSION:**

- a. Why was the board originally formed? *Proceeds from Dallas church were put in this account when the church disbanded with the stipulation that for first 10 years, it could only be used for starting a church in Dallas. The 10 years have passed now. The vision was this board would encourage donations, meet with individuals about giving through wills and estates and gifted to the unity. This didn't happen. Currently, the interest is used to pay for youth director position (approximately \$8,000/year).*
- b. Who will get money? *This motion is to allow the money to be managed by the Executive Committee. The investment firm will continue to manage the money and will report to the Executive Committee.*
- c. How will people give to the Unity? *The Executive Committee will follow the current guidelines.*
- d. If there is a need, how will people get/ask/access the money? *Synodical and Executive Committee will be the governing entity. It can be placed under a VP.*
- e. What could be done with this money? *Currently there is no discussion on how to use this money. Executive Committee will manage funds and bring in money. Expenditures will be done with approval by Synodical Committee. If time is short, then the Executive Committee may make decisions.*
- f. Rev. Kay Polasek recommended keeping the Board and finding people who want to do the work.
- g. Leroy Parthum was elected chair at the last Convention. When he tried to investigate the past work of the Board, he was told no one had met in years and had difficulty finding any information.

**PASSED.**

**2. Adoption of the Unity of the Brethren Catechism revisions**

The Catechism was given to pastors a week ago. The Convention needs to give some kind of approval.

**MOTION:** The revisions to the Unity of the Brethren Catechism prepared and presented to this convention by Pastor's Koslovsky and Hejl are conditionally approved as the official version for use by the denomination. Final approval authority is granted to the Pastor to Pastors following a thorough review by clergy members of the denomination and any editing that is deemed appropriate. A written statement from the Pastor to Pastors and a copy of the approved Catechism shall be presented to the Synodical Committee at its first meeting following the Catechism's approval. The Synodical Committee is directed to publish the revised Catechism in appropriate formats for distribution to the Unity churches.

**SECOND:** Debbie Clark (Synodical Committee Lay Member, Crosby)

**DISCUSSION:**

- a. When will churches be able to use? *President Kent Laza stated he was not sure. This is not the absolute final version. The final version will be available at the Fall Synodical Meeting. Rev. Linda Chandler said that fall is good time, but it is in great shape. A great job was done by Revs. Koslovsky and Hejl.*
- b. Is the final approval being done by Pastor of Pastors a conflict of interest? *Rev. Jimmy Hejl was elected to this position Friday night. This was not seen as a conflict.*
- c. *Rev. Charles Amos stated the Catechism was discussed at the Thursday evening pastor's meeting. Any changes would be minor--word changes, commas, etc.*
- d. *Rev. Tommy Tallas stated he didn't like the Pastor of Pastors having final approval; he preferred to have all pastors approve. The Pastor of Pastors can bring the decision of all the pastors to the Synodical Committee. President Kent Laza asked who will give final authority. The intent of the motion as written is to let Rev. Hejl tell the Synodical Committee when it is done.*

**MOTION TO AMEND:** by Rev. Tommy Tallas to read, *The revisions to the Unity of the Brethren Catechism prepared and presented to this convention by Pastors Koslovsky and Hejl are conditionally approved as the official version for use by the denomination. Final approval authority is granted to the ~~Pastor to Pastors~~ **Synodical Committee** following a thorough review by clergy members of the denomination and any editing that is deemed appropriate. A written statement from the Pastor to*

*Pastors and a copy of the approved Catechism shall be presented to the Synodical Committee at its first meeting following the Catechism's approval. The Synodical Committee is directed to publish the revised Catechism in appropriate formats for distribution to the Unity churches.*

**SECOND:** Robert Berrie (Synodical Committee Lay Member, Wall).

**DISCUSSION:** Rev. Dr. Larry Koslovsky asked if the Synodical Committee will read it. Rev. Kay Polasek stated this is a spiritual work. The Synodical Committee gives the stamp of approval, but this is something the pastors should oversee.

**VOTE FOR THE AMENDMENT: PASSED.**

**VOTE ON THE REVISED MOTION: PASSED.**

### **3. Review of the Minister's Retirement Program**

President Kent Laza explained that the work is in place, and the program is set up. There are still questions about who gets what and how to fund the program. These questions not answered. The purpose of this motion is to continue and move forward with this work.

**MOTION:** The Executive Committee shall appoint a committee to review the existing guidelines for payments to and disbursements from the Minister's Retirement Fund. Recommendations should be made regarding how funding requirements for churches are determined and what disbursements are made to each eligible Unity pastor. The recommendations of this committee shall be reported to the Synodical Committee by the Fall 2018 meeting and considered for implementation by the Synodical Committee as soon as practical after that report is received.

**SECOND:** Rev. Tommy Tallas.

**DISCUSSION:** It was clarified that part time pastors are eligible for retirement, per the 2015 Convention. The complicating issues are how much and how churches pay when they have a part time pastor. Any decisions will be retroactive. It was clarified that this committee is separate from Minister's Benefit and Retirement Committee. This motion creates a new committee appointed by the Synodical Committee to answer these questions.

**VOTE FOR THE MOTION: PASSED.**

### **4. Establishment of a Fundraising Program for Improvements at the Hus School Encampment**

**MOTION:** The Hus School Board of Trustees, in conjunction with the Synodical Committee, shall initiate a fundraising program to pay for planned improvements at the Hus School Encampment. Funds raised through this effort shall be used for administrative, planning and construction costs associated with the improvements presented to this Convention or for other related improvements that are deemed necessary by the Hus School Board of Trustees. Reports shall be made to the Synodical Committee on the fundraising activities and on progress related to the implementation of these improvements.

**SECOND:** Rev. Curtis Holland.

**VOTE ON THE MOTION: PASSED.**

5. **Restructuring of the membership appointments of three standing Boards.**

This restructuring is needed to bring their membership appointments in line with other standing Boards and provide better participation on these Boards by minimizing the time commitments of volunteers who serve as a representative on two or more committees. The Boards affected by this change are:

- Board of Christian Education
- Hus School Board of Trustees
- Board of Foreign Missions

Membership on the other two standing Boards (Home Missions and Brethren Journal Business Committee) are already appointed by the Synodical Committee and have similar wording as being proposed here. This restructuring involves by-law changes as shown below.

**MOTION:** The By-Laws of the Unity of the Brethren shall be amended as follows:

*Board of Christian Education*

- Article XIII.B.8 (delete)
- Article XIII.B.9 (delete)
- Article XIII.C.2 (changed to read) One member shall be the Youth Coordinator.

*Hus School Board of Trustees*

- Article XIV.C.2 (changed to read) The treasurer and six (6) other members shall be appointed by the Synodical Committee from the

membership of the Unity of the Brethren, recognizing interest as well as demographic and geographic distribution.

- Article XIV.C.3 (delete and renumber subsequent paragraphs or references)
- Appendix A-Article III.B (changed to read) Membership on the Board of Trustees is as follows: a Chairperson elected by the Convention, a Treasurer and six other members appointed by the Synodical Committee.

#### *Board of Foreign Missions*

- Article XV.A.1.b (changed to read) Six (6) other members shall be appointed by the Synodical Committee from the membership of the Unity of the Brethren, recognizing interest as well as demographic and geographic distribution.
- Article XV.A.1.c. (delete and renumber subsequent paragraphs or references)

Tami Laza, Chair of the Christian Board of Education, and Angie Hairrell, Member of the Christian Board of Education spoke on reasons for this change. The time commitment created by the need to serve on multiple boards, some of which may not be the member's passion, is a problem. The desire is to populate our boards with people who are passionate about the mission of that board and want to do the work of the Lord.

**SECOND:** Dawn Marie Baletka (Delegate, BCS).

**DISCUSSION:** Rev. Lawrence commented on the number of jobs some officers have. This will broaden the opportunities for others to serve.

**Vote on the Motion: PASSED.**

When will it go into effect? Bylaws can be changed immediately.

Constitution cannot. There is no mention of this in the constitution.

#### **6. Provide grants to local churches to help fund upgrades for technology that is needed to improve their worship experience.**

The purpose of this motion to help churches afford the technology, especially the small churches. The details will be worked out by the Synodical Committee.

**MOTION:** The Synodical Committee shall develop guidelines and implement a matching grant program to assist local churches who are seeking to enhance their worship experience through the use of



technology (i.e. A/V equipment, computer systems, Wi-Fi equipment, internet, etc.). This grant program shall be funded through the Church Extension Fund and shall terminate 3 years from the time it is established.

**SECOND:** Tami Laza (Chair of the Board of Christian Education).

**DISCUSISON:**

- a. Will money be evenly distributed all churches? How will it be handled? The motion proposed a matching grant, so it would be partially funded by local churches. There will be an application process. The Synodical Committee will decide who gets grants and the amount.
- b. It was stated that this can help churches in need of a pastor. It was also stated that this is very forward thinking for the Unity. It was asked if there would be a limit to the amount requested and if the money for grants was limited to the Church Extension Fund. Additionally, small churches may have difficulty matching funds.
- c. It was stated that other monies may be used. This would be up to the Synodical Committee. The Synodical Committee will also determine the limits of the grants. The matching may not be 50/50. This would be determined by the Synodical Committee.
- d. It was asked where the Church Extension money originated. It was not known when or where this money began.
- e. The thinking behind this motion is to assist, not take the place of the pastor. It is a way to connect churches on Sunday.
- f. Synodical Committee will develop an application.

**VOTE ON THE MOTION: PASSED.**

*Motions from the floor*

**MOTION** by Rick Weise (Delegate from Wall) to authorize Rev. Dr. Larry Koslovsky and Rev. Jimmy Hejl to prepare the companion to the revised Catechism.

**SECOND:** Rev. Tommy Tallas.

**VOTE ON THE MOTION: PASSED.**

*Officer Elections*

Rev. Mike Groseclose presented the slate of officers prepared by the Nominating Committee (Angie Hairrell (Chair), Angie Labaj, Mark Olsen, Rev. Mike Groseclose).

Rev. Kay Polasek nominated Rev. Joe Emerson for President. He declined the nomination. Each position was presented and there were no additional nominations from the floor.

- **President:** Rev. Dr. Larry Koslovsky
- **1<sup>st</sup> Vice President:** Rev. Mark Sebek
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President:** Kayla Marek
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President:** Rev. Whitney Amos
- **Secretary:** Angie Hairrell
- **Treasurer:** Lynette Urbanovsky
- **Financial Secretary:** Rev. Joe Emerson
- **Ministerial Alternate:** Rev. Tim Chaplin
- **Lay Alternate:** Wiley Marx

**MOTION** by Rev. Linda Chandler to elect the block of nominations as presented.

**SECOND:** Grace Labaj (Delegate, Temple).

**VOTE ON THE MOTION: PASSED.**

#### *Election of Board Chairs*

**Board of Christian Education Chair** nominee presented: Peggy Hejl

**MOTION** by Taylor Brinkley (Synodical Committee Member, Ocker) to elect Peggy Hejl as the Chair of the Board of Christian Education by acclamation.

**SECOND:** Rev. Joe Emerson.

**VOTE ON THE MOTION: PASSED.**

**Home Missions Board Chair** nominee presented: Martha Dove

**MOTION** by Rev. Joe Emerson to elect Martha Dove as the Home Missions Board Chair by acclamation.

**SECOND:** Rev. Linda Chandler.

**VOTE ON THE MOTION: PASSED.**

**Foreign Missions Board** Chair nominee presented: David Miller.

**MOTION** by Sid Srensky (Delegate and Synodical Committee Member, Taylor) to elect David Miller as the Foreign Missions Board Chair by acclamation.

**SECOND:** Rev. Lawrence Junek.

**VOTE ON THE MOTION: PASSED.**

**Hus Board of Trustees Chair** nominees presented: Dawn Marie Baletka, Kent Laza. Both addressed the group.

Discussion: If was asked if they could co-chair. Mark Olsen stated the bylaws do not allow for co-chairs. It was also suggested the Dawn Marie Baletka chair the Fundraising Committee because of her experience in that area. A concern was raised with one person being able to do the job with the capital campaign—can one person keep the camp going while overseeing the fundraising and building. It was stated that the Synodical Committee will put people on these committees to help with the work load.

**RESULTS OF THE VOTE: KENT LAZA ELECTED CHAIR.**

*Pastoral Relations Committee*

Two new members need to be elected. Dr. Dusek and Connie Janac each have two years left.

Two members presented by the nominating committee: Anna Woptika and Trish Groseclose. Additionally, Dr. Dusek has agreed to serve as the Chair.

**MOTION** by Rev. Mark Sebek to elect the people presented by acclamation.

**SECOND:** Connie Surovik (Delegate, New Tabor).

**VOTE ON THE MOTION: PASSED.**

*Brethren Journal*

The nominating committee presented Cathleen Schlechte as the Editor of the Brethren Journal and Ben Polasek as the Business Manager of the Brethren Journal.

**MOTION** by Rev. Joe Emerson to elect the people presented by acclamation.

**SECOND:** Justin Lewis (Delegate, Snook).

**VOTE ON THE MOTION: PASSED.**

*Ministerial Credentialing Board*

Rev. Jimmy Hejl was elected the Pastor to Pastors. It was proposed that the three pastors on the Executive Committee would serve on this Committee (Rev. Sebek, Rev. W. Amos, Rev. Emerson).

There were no nominations from the floor.

**MOTION** by Rev. Linda Chandler to elect the pastors presented by acclamation.

**SECOND:** Rev. Lawrence Junek.

**VOTE ON THE MOTION: PASSED.**

### *Board of Grants and Bequests*

It was proposed by the nominating committee that the members remain the same during the transition period. The position held by Roger Runnels, whose term was up, will remain vacant.

**MOTION** by Roy Janak (Synodical Committee Member, West) to elect the slate presented to the Board of Grants and Bequests.

**SECOND:** Sandra Stepan (Synodical Committee Member, Fayetteville).

**VOTE ON THE MOTION: PASSED.**

### *Other Business*

1. President Kent Laza provided a report on the Pastor's Meeting. Rev. James Hejl was elected the Pastor to the Pastors.
2. Wall volunteered to host the next convention.  
**MOTION:** Tami Laza (Board of Christian Education Chair) moved to hold the 68<sup>th</sup> Convention in Wall.  
**SECOND:** Dorothy Hinson (Delegate and Synodical Committee Member, Houston).  
**VOTE ON THE MOTION: PASSED.**
3. Houston Brethren Church invited all on July 16 to hear the missionaries speak.
4. President Kent Laza thanked the officers and the Synodical Committee for their work the previous two years. He asked for thoughts and feedback on the convention, especially regarding the different format.
5. President Kent Laza announced there would be no session after lunch.
6. President Kent Laza thanked the Temple Brethren Church for hosting this Convention.
7. **MOTION** by Dorothy Jean Davis (Delegate, Dime Box) to give the offerings collect to Temple Brethren Church to cover the Convention Expenses.  
**SECOND:** Betty Parthum (Delegate, Westheimer).  
**VOTE ON THE MOTION: PASSED.**
8. **MOTION** by Roy Janak (Delegate, West) to adjourn.  
**SECOND:** Sandra Stepan (Synodical Committee Member, Fayetteville).  
**VOTE ON THE MOTION: PASSED.**
9. President Kent Laza closed with prayer.

Ordination Service for Rev. Tim Chaplin (10:30-12:00)

Attendance at the Ordination Service was 201.

Celebration Luncheon hosted by Temple Brethren Church  
(12:00-1:00pm)