

**GENERAL CONFERENCE MINUTES
WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON
JUNE 23, 2010**

The 53rd Session of the Churches of God, General Conference convened at the New Beginnings Church of God in Decatur, IL on Wednesday afternoon, June 23, 2010 with President Dennis Hamsher welcoming the delegates. He introduced Pastor Keith Raderstorf who gave the opening prayer.

Pastor Mark Smith of the New Beginnings Church welcomed the delegates and made them aware of the facilities of the church.

RECOGNITION OF GUESTS

Don Dennison, Director of Cross Cultural Ministries, introduced the following missionaries and international guests:

Gordon and Annie Avey from Brazil, Doug and Anna-Karin Molgaard from Sweden, Pastor Everett and Mary Teller from New Mexico and Pastor Max Normil from Haiti.

President Hamsher recognized the following guests:

Former CGGC directors Dr. William Reist and Dr. David Draper.

Dr David Draper, President, Winebrenner Theological Seminary
Dr. Kathryn Fell, President of the University of Findlay and David Ferguson, Vice President of Institutional Advancement.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Justin Meier, Western Region Church Planting Director, introduced Dr. Ed Stetzer, President of Lifeway Research, who gave the opening keynote address, "Make Evangelism and Mission Priority One (Matt 28)." Dr. Stetzer made the following remarks based on 2 Timothy 4:5:

- Action - **Do** the work of an evangelist. We can use tools but God has chosen people to do the work of an evangelist.
- You cannot lead what you do not live
- We need to be, do and tell the Good News
- We should do more social action in the name of Jesus, but tell the Good News while we are doing it
- Too often we instruct Christians to be on a recruitment mission rather than a reconciliation mission

- Labor – Do the **Work** of an evangelist. Sharing the cross is work, not always natural.
- It is increasingly difficult because people are increasingly resistant
- Focus – Do the Work of an **evangelist**
- Nowhere in the Bible is there a gift of evangelism
- Evangelism is not a gift but a call
- 2 Cor 5:19 – He has committed the message of reconciliation to us
- 2 Cor 5:21 – God made Jesus to be sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God
- If we want to lead people to proclaim the gospel then we need to proclaim the gospel to them
- A transformed life is a much better witness than a well-planned service

Following the address, the delegates formed discussion groups centered around Dr. Stetzer's address.

CALL TO ORDER

After an afternoon break, President Hamsher called to order the 53rd session of the General Conference.

He made the following appointments:

Parliamentarians – Pastor Phil Scott and Pastor Doug Nolt

Media Reporter – Rachel Foreman, Editor for Denominational Communications, was appointed as reporter for the Conference.

IT WAS VOTED to adopt the agenda with the privilege of the chair.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS

David Green, Secretary, reported for the Committee on Credentials the list of delegations from the Regions and officially seated the delegates as published and as recognized from the floor.

IT WAS VOTED to approve the printed report of the delegates as distributed as the official delegation for the Conference.

131 persons were present.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS:

Dennis Hamsher, President, introduced members of the Committee on Nominations and presented the report of the Committee. The following were nominated for Administrative Council positions for 2010-2013:

President-Elect: William Reist and Philip Scott

IT WAS VOTED to close nominations for president-elect.

Eastern Regional Conference Representatives: Dave Anderson, Cheryl Dorman, James W. Moss, Jr. (two to be elected)

IT WAS VOTED to close nominations for Eastern Regional Conference Representative to the Administrative Council.

Great Lakes Conference Representative: Mary Lehman, Will Miller. (one to be elected)

IT WAS VOTED to close nominations for Great Lakes Conference representative to the Administrative Council.

Midwest Regional Conference Representative: Darl Clemons, Ron Scott. (one to be elected)

IT WAS VOTED to close nominations for the Midwest Regional Conference representative to the Administrative Council.

Tellers were named to pick up and count the ballots.

REPORT OF CGWM

Linda Rosenberry presented the report of the Churches of God Women's Ministry. She commented on the use of Thank Offerings and introduced Morgan Scott as a recipient of the CGWM scholarship. Honorariums and Memorials can be purchased for \$25. She introduced Lynn Kaufman as the new president of CGWM. The new triennial theme is "A Royal Heritage."

IT WAS VOTED to receive the report of the CGWM.

CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Doug Nolt, chairman of the CGGC Constitution Committee, presented a proposed amendment to the CGGC Constitution in response to Winebrenner Seminary's request and CGGC Ad Council's approval last September 16, 2009.

12:02 Winebrenner Theological Seminary

12.01.01 The Control and direction of Winebrenner Theological Seminary shall be vested in a Board of Trustees of **twenty-one** members. The Executive Director of the General Conference shall be a member by virtue of the office and **two** members at large from the Administrative Council shall be elected by the Administrative Council. The other **eighteen** members shall be divided into three classes of **six** each, and, thereby preserving continuity on the Board, the **six** members of each such succeeding class shall be elected each year for three-year terms by the Administrative Council. The Administrative Council shall determine matters concerning qualifications of trustees, regional representation, and nominations of trustees and shall nominate the3 trustees not previously designated.

12.02.02 At least two-thirds of said trustees shall be members of the Churches of God, General Conference. The Board of Trustees shall, as the Administrative council may request, report to the Administrative Council.

12.02.03 The present charter of Winebrenner Theological Seminary, an Ohio not-for-profit Corporation, with its principal office at Findlay, Ohio, shall be amended in this and other respects as the Administrative council may from time to time direct.

IT WAS VOTED to adopt the amendments to the CGGC Constitution as above.
131 votes in favor.

UNIVERSITY OF FINDLAY CAMPUS MINISTRIES

Will Miller, Director of Campus Ministries, reported on the spiritual activities at the University of Findlay. He relayed stories of international students who have come to Christ on the campus as a result of ministries to them. Campus Ministry was not totally funded this year for the first time in nine years. Surplus funding from previous years has been used to fund the ministry.

IT WAS VOTED to receive the report of Campus Ministries.

WE BELIEVE UPDATE

Ed Rosenberry, presented an update on the revision of the We Believe document. He referred to the current status of revising the document but announced that work on it would continue through the next triennium and be presented at the next session for approval.

STANDARD FOR MINISTERIAL CREDENTIALS REVISION

Ed Rosenberry presented a revised document dealing with credentialing for the CGGC. Several persons voiced questions and comments concerning the changes.

Motion made to receive the revised Standards for Ministerial Credentials as a working document for the Churches of God.

IT WAS VOTED to table this item until later in the agenda since guests were waiting to report to the Conference.

There was a call for division of the house with those in favor (102) and those opposed (12) which affirmed the vote to table.

REPORT OF ELECTIONS

The tellers reported the following elections:

President-elect – A tie vote was announced, another ballot to be taken
Eastern Region Representatives: Cheryl Dorman and James Moss, Jr.
Great Lakes Representative: Will Miller
MidWest Representative: Ron Scott

UNIVERSITY OF FINDLAY

President Hamsher introduced David Ferguson who, in turn, introduced Dr. Kathryn Fell, President of the University of Findlay, to present the report of the University.

- She voiced her pleasure in being selected for the position and shared her excitement in working with the Churches of God
- She mentioned that the denomination had joyful, creative work and part of that was the establishment and support of the University of Findlay
- She spoke of the University's appreciation for the support of the CGGC
- Who have I become and what did I contribute during my time in college are two questions that students ask upon completion of their college experience

- The mission of the University is to prepare students for meaningful lives and productive careers
- Love is a major ingredient in the training process

IT WAS VOTED to receive the report of the University of Findlay.

The Session was adjourned with prayer by Dr. Tom Lucas.

WEDNESDAY EVENING SESSION

The New Beginnings Praise Team presented a time of praise and worship.

The ordinance service, under the leadership of President-Elect Douglas Nolt, was conducted with the assistance of Bob Eatherton, Kevin Richardson, Lee Kline, David Green, Beth Dunlap and Lynn Kaufman.

Sarah Baumgardner presented a concert of music followed by a closing prayer by Lance Finley.

The Wednesday Evening Session was adjourned.

THURSDAY MORNING SESSION

The New Beginnings Praise and Worship team opened the Thursday Morning Session with songs of worship. Ed Rosenberry appeared on video as John Winebrenner to share devotional thoughts on the 185th anniversary of the CGGC.

CALL TO ORDER

President Hamsher called the meeting to order and instructed delegates to complete registration forms. 135 delegates were enrolled.

ELECTION RESULTS

President Hamsher announced that an election had occurred for President-elect with Pastor William Reist being elected.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Dr. Ed Stetzer presented the keynote address, "Identify and Release Apostolic (APEST) Leaders (Eph 4) He based his remarks on 1 Peter 4 and Ephesians 4.

- Your church and my church are too filled with passive spectators rather than with active participants.
- Maturity is evidenced in one way by serving one another
- All have gifts which are received at conversion
- Everyone is gifted for the common good
- Any system that disempowers the people of God is unhealthy and unwholesome
- Too often evangelistic churches looks too much like pre-reformation Catholicism
- God intends all to use gifts as good managers of the grace of God
- We are leading our church into sin when we teach them to **know** and not **do** the Bible
- God empowers us to use our gifts
- Churches and pastors are co-dependents which is a death spiral
- The enabler must stop enabling
- God empowers our gifts to bring Him glory
- Pastors should look more like a player-coach, rather than like an actor on stage

The delegates formed discussion groups around the tables, reacting to the keynote address.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Following a morning break, Dr. Ed Stetzer presented the keynote address “Multiply and Resource New and Existing Congregations (Acts).” He used John 20 as his scriptural reference.

- All living things reproduce; disciples, churches, ministries should reproduce
- We are **sent** as Jesus was sent to be missional
- We are sent **to all different kinds of people**; not alone
- The how of ministry will be shaped by the who, when and where of culture
- We are sent to all peoples **with a message**
- The gospel calls for repentance and provides for forgiveness of sins
- God will use all different kinds of churches to reach all kinds of people
- We are sent to all people with a message, **empowered by the Spirit**

The delegates again formed discussion groups around their tables to react to the address.

The delegates were dismissed for lunch with Phil Wilson offering prayer.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

Following praise and worship by the New Beginnings team, Andrew Draper spoke to the delegates concerning the ministry of the Urban Light Community Church in Muncie, IN.

CALL TO ORDER

President Hamsher called the delegates back into session. Attendance sheets were collected. 122 persons registered.

WINEBRENNER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Dr. David Draper, President of Winebrenner Theological Seminary, and Dennis Koontz presented the report of the Seminary.

- God is writing a new chapter for Winebrenner, "Our world is changing and so are our students"
- Since the last triennial conference, 80 students have graduated with 31 of those being CGGC students
- Training institutes in Eastern and Western PA
- Attempting to provide online classes, in cooperation with the Missionary Church, for the Western areas
- A free online class will be provided in the fall
- A new capital campaign, Access Granted, is in planning stage

IT WAS VOTED to receive the report of Winebrenner Theological Seminary.

REPORT OF ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

David Green, Secretary, presented the minutes of the Administrative Council from 2007-2010 for approval.

IT WAS VOTED to adopt the minutes 1 through 8 of the Administrative Council from 2007-2010.

STANDARDS FOR MINISTERIAL CREDENTIALS

Ed Rosenberry withdrew his previous motion concerning the revision of the Standards for Ministerial Credentials.

Motion was made to adopt the revisions to the Standards for Ministerial Credentials. Several persons spoke to the motion.

IT WAS VOTED to adopt the revisions to the Standards for Ministerial Credentials.

The President directed the Executive Director to call together representatives from the various regions to discuss and find ways to solve the concerns that were discussed concerning the previous motion.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY REVISIONS

Ed Rosenberry addressed the delegates with potential changes in the Withdrawal Policy.

IT WAS VOTED to approve the revisions to the Withdrawal Policy.

Following an afternoon break, Steve Dunn introduced Josh Glacken who spoke about Global Media Outreach, an internet source for evangelism.

ARCHIVES AND MUSEUM REPORT

A written report was presented as the report of the CGGC Historical Society. Mary Lehman presented an oral report. She announced that Susan Murray has become the new curator of the Museum.

IT WAS VOTED to receive the report of the Historical Society.

REPORT OF DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES: LEADERSHIP AND YOUTH AND FAMILY LIFE

Lance Finley presented the report of the Discipleship Ministries. He provided information concerning:

- Leadership Development - Missional Leadership Initiative Retreats - Joanna Dull, Earl Mills and Brian Miller shared of their experiences with the program
- Youth and Family Ministry – What does a new tomorrow look like? We need a deep systematic change where we do things radically different. We should help our young people learn how to live on God's mission.

FINANICAL REPORT

Bob Stephenson presented the financial report of the CGGC:

- The past triennium has been one of the most active in terms of ministry and spending.
- He announced a clean audit.

Mary Lehman dismissed the session in prayer and offered the prayer for the meal.

THURSDAY EVENING SESSION

Rich Thornton presented a time of praise and worship.

President Dennis Hamsher used Exodus 17:9-16 as the text for his message. The Israelites needed to pull together to win the battle. Moses, using his well-known staff, led the people to victory, depending on the strength of the Lord.

Denominations at their best are not places to **get** something but, rather, places to give and to serve.

As his last act as president of the General Conference, President Hamsher presided over the installation of officers and the new Administrative Council, admonishing them to offer sacrifices of praise.

President – Douglas Nolt

President-Elect – William Reist

Secretary – David Green

Eastern Regional Representatives – Cheryl Dorman, Jim Moss, Jr., Lawrence Metzler, Philip Scott, Kevin Richardson

Allegheny Regional Representatives – James Monticue, Lee Kline

Great Lakes Conference Representatives – Will Miller, David Green

Mid Western Regional Representatives – Ron Scott, Robert Eatherton

Western Region Representatives – Philip Wilson, Paul Walters

Two at-large positions are yet to be filled

Newly installed President Doug Nolt and Executive Director Ed Rosenberry presented gifts to Out-going President Hamsher in appreciation of his leadership for the past triennium.

RECOGNITION AND AWARDS

A video presentation displayed names of those who gave their lives for the cause of Christ through the churches of God: Don Peters, Jim Booser, Sue Bauer, Ron Endres, Dorothy Andrews, Joe Lewis, Jim Wallace, Rhoda Kauffman, Dr. Victor Binkley.

Ed Rosenberry, Don Dennison and Lance Finley presented awards to churches and individuals for exceptional ministry:

Cross Cultural Champions:

Pastor Lowell Burrus

Dr. Victor and Donna Binkley

Caleb and Christina Acosta

Gordon and Annie Avey

Discipleship Ministry Champions:

Hanover First Church of God
United Community Church of God
Urban Light Community Church

Church Development Ministry Champions:

Chambersburg – Highest number of conversions and baptisms
Shippensburg – Second highest number of conversions
Sugar Grove – Highest average of growth in last decade
New Beginnings – Second highest average of growth in last decade
Kennedy's Valley – Third highest average of growth in last decade
Sanidad Divina – Most churches planted
River City - daughtering churches
Latrobe – daughtering churches
LifeSpring – daughtering churches

Winebrenner Leadership Award:

Dr. David Draper

Doug Nolt offered a prayer of thanksgiving for dedicated servants.

CELEBRATION OF CGGC MISSIONAL MINISTRY

Don Dennison, Lance Finley and Ed Rosenberry presided over a celebration of missional ministry happenings.

Cross Cultural Ministries:

Haiti – Response to the earthquake/Orthopedic Center developed as a result/Free Will Baptist alignment with CGGC in mission endeavors
Kenya – Micro loans made available to people to start their own businesses. 26 loans have been given to families in four churches representing \$2100.

Discipleship Ministries:

Acts team to Haiti – Six team members and four leaders/ Group of young Haitian adults moved people from Port au Prince to start a refugee home for 250 persons, but needed help with providing water to the camp. The six young people on the Acts team committed to providing funds to cap the well and provide assistance in bring fresh water.

Engage – As a replacement to IMPACT, Engage will be held for youth of the CGGC. 75-100 youth will be meeting in Mt Pleasant area for a week of service projects.

Church Development Ministries- Church Planting:

David Leragen, planting Journey Life in Cheboygan, WI
Justin Meyer, planted River City in Kansas City
Derrick Gates, planting The Way Fellowship City in Kansas City
Chuck Frank, Eastern Region Church Planting Director
Nick Stephens planting Mosaic in Lancaster
John Yoder planting New Horizons in Manheim
Gilbert Thurston planting Exponential Church.TV

Don Dennison led in prayer for planters and others who are involved in ministry.
The session was dismissed.

FRIDAY MORNING

Following a time of praise and worship led by the New Beginnings team, Dennis Arndt as F. O. Eakin presented a time of devotions.

BUSINESS SESSIONS CONTINUED

President Doug Nolt called the Friday Morning Session to order with prayer. He expressed appreciation to Anthony and the New Beginnings Worship team for leading worship throughout the sessions. 114 persons registered their attendance.

REPORT OF CROSS CULTURAL MINISTRIES: WORLD AND USA

Don Dennison, Director of Cross Cultural Ministries, presented the report of CGGC mission activities around the world.

Pastor Gordon and Annie Avey spoke of their ministry in Brazil.

- The Brazil Conference celebrates 10 years
- The Brazilian churches raised money to help with the Haiti emergency

Everett and Mary Teller spoke of their ministry in Tsaille, Arizona with the Navajo.

- They have been pastoring at Tsaille for 6 years
- He thanked their supporters for their help

Don Dennison continued the report:

- Missionary Education is offered to help persons become better acquainted with the work of CGGC missions
- The Snyders are currently doing a summer intern in Haiti
- An eye-witness tour is scheduled for November 9-23 in India and Bangladesh

Doug and Anna-Karin Molgaard reported on their work in Sweden.

- Helped to plant a church in Gothamburg
- The church serves people from many different countries
- They are networking with other church planters to create a model church
- They are working with other denominations

Don reported on the CGGC International Leaders Forum which was held in Haiti with 23 delegates from 7 countries. The next forum is scheduled for Bangladesh in 2012 or 2013. Brook and Sara Sarver are preparing to move to Bangkok following their language studies.

Don commented that the special giving efforts that have been so successful have not impacted normal giving at this point. Both cooperative and designated giving appear to be above last year's giving.

Ed Rosenberry introduced the CGGC staff.

BOARD OF PENSIONS

Bob Stephenson presented changes to the Pensions Policy as presented by the Board of Pensions. He presented proposed amendments to the Contributory Reserve Pension Plan of the Board of Pensions.

IT WAS VOTED to amend Article 1:1.19 as follows:

(a) Delete 1.19 in its entirety

Minor child: A natural or legally adopted child of a deceased Member who has not attained the legal age as stipulated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

IT WAS VOTED to **table** the motion to amend Article 1:1.30 which was presented as follows:

Current – Surviving Spouse: The person of the opposite sex who is legally married to a Member on the date of the Member's death and the death of the Member.

Proposed – Surviving Spouse: The person of the opposite sex who is legally married to a Member on the date that the Member's benefit payments under the plan commence and who survives the death of the Member.

IT WAS VOTED to amend Article 5:5.4 as follows:

(a) Add upper case letter S (spouse) of Section 5.4

5.4 Distribution must be made to the Member and Spouse (if applicable) by means of a joint member and spousal account or a joint member and spousal annuity unless the Spouse consents otherwise with a written waiver.

REPORT OF CHURCH DEVELOPMENT MINISTRIES: CHURCH PLANTING AND RENEWAL

Ed Rosenberry, Executive Director, reported for the Church Planting and Renewal Ministries of the General Conference.

- Rather than hiring a CGGC Director of Planting, the decision was made to provide directors in the regions
- Also, local conference directors were provided in Renewal instead of hiring a CGGC Director
- Lee Kline spoke of the hiring of Dennis Arndt as part time renewal director for Allegheny Region
- Two new church plants are underway in the Allegheny Region
- Chuck Frank, Director of Church Planting and Evangelism for the Eastern Regional Conference, reported on the planting activities of the Eastern Region.
- Mike Smith, Northeast Field Director for the ERC, spoke of the need for church planting. Four CGGC churches currently exist in the NE.
- Dave Williams, Director of Church Renewal for the ERC, spoke on behalf of the renewal efforts in the Eastern Region.
- Bill Shoemaker, Director of Church Planting for the Great Lakes Conference, spoke of the planting efforts in the GLC.
- Jeff Rockey, part time Field Director for Church Development in the Mid Western Region, indicated his appreciation for the opportunity to be involved in the position and offered his services to other areas.
- Fran Leeman, Pastor of the Life Spring Community Church in the Chicago area, described a network of church planting that has started in that area which involves differing cultures.
- Justin Meyer told of his church planting activities as Director of Planting for the Western Region. The GreenHouse Network partners with the Churches of God to create new churches for the CGGC.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S ADDRESS

Ed Rosenberry presented the challenge for “A New Tomorrow.” He spoke of his dream of doubling the number of congregations in the CGGC in the next decade. He asked if the CGGC is a “rising sun” or a “setting sun.” Let Jesus be above us, below us, behind us, before us. He prayed for the delegates and their ministry and mission.

IT WAS VOTED to receive the report of the CGGC Directors.

ITEM LIFTED FROM TABLE

Bob Stephenson brought clarification to questions raised concerning the proposed amendment to Article 1:1.30.

IT WAS VOTED to amend Article 1:1.30 as proposed.

OTHER BUSINESS

IT WAS VOTED for the Administrative Council to finalize the minutes of these sessions.

Appreciation was extended to all the New Beginnings personnel for their acts of hospitality.

IT WAS VOTED to adjourn the 53rd session of the General Conference of the Churches of God, General Conference.

CLOSING PRAYER

Douglas Nolt, President, offered a prayer to close the sessions of the 53rd General Conference.