



Sad to See It End

The Annual Meeting and Worship Conference held at Chiques Church in Manheim PA may be over but many wonderful memories remain. If you were unable to attend this conference and have not seen the many pictures and comments posted on social media, here is one last opportunity.

The meeting began on Thursday, July 18th, with several insight sessions. They ranged in topics from a bible study to children and youth ministry to missions. These were all well-presented and well-received.

The meeting boasted several exhibitors that offered conference goers the opportunity to expand their ministry opportunities with groups like Samaritan's Purse and Trail Life (a Boy Scouts type of ministry) to add to their wardrobe with CBC shirts, jackets, hats, and ties. Brethren Mutual Aid was there along with Eder Financial and the Harvest USA Foundation. There was a lot to see and learn from the exhibitors alone and that is just getting started.

Meals and morning refreshments were handled by the Chiques church and what wonderful meals they were. No one left hungry and all of the meals were well organized and flowed smoothly.

The conference started off with an amazing time of worship music led by Benjamin Palma, a CBC member of the Miracle Fishing Church in Guatemala. He is a student at Liberty University and he and his friend Santiago, who accompanied him, led us in wonderful praise and worship events throughout the conference. Adam Clemmons, a missionary from Guatemala who has been working with CBC and is helping us to develop contacts there, challenged us with a message on "Reaching Forth", preaching in



Benjamin Palma leading worship



Adam Clemmons Preaching



both English and Spanish, a true feat of skill. There was a wonderful spirit in the service full of praise and joy and hope in what God is doing in CBC. After the message Bro. Jim Myer took up one of three offerings during the conference. This one being called a Celebration Offering. The total of the three offerings came to over \$38,000 reminding us once again that what God wants, He pays for! This

brought the first day to a close but just set the stage for what God still had in store for this conference.



Jeremy Dykes

Friday began with a wonderful fellowship time around coffee, doughnuts and special cake delights local to the Lancaster PA area. Then it was time for more praise and worship as we gathered in the sanctuary led by Ben and Santiago. Jeanie Kent led the group in congregational hymns and was joined by her professional rodeo rider and pastor husband Timothy Kent. The sanctuary rang with voices being lifted up in praise, it was glorious! There were too many



Timothy & Jeanie Kent

people that led in devotions to name them all, but one new one this year was Jeremy Dykes who was elected as a new board member. His passion and humor are infectious to be around and God used him as one of many devotional blessings.

In case you haven't realized; this conference was long on Worship and Praising God with reports by committees and 2 business items sprinkled in between. There were reports given by all the committees and all of them were encouraging in their accomplishment and vision. Are there challenges ahead of us? Of course, but there are good people working hard to seek God's will on how to meet them. The prayer committee report, given by Suzanne Clarke was so touching that it left Grove Duling, our Board Chair, speechless. It would be impossible to repeat every report, but they touched on Missions, Evangelism, Disaster, Ministerial leadership and training, and much more. Lynne Rienstra from Samaritan's Purse gave a report on all that Samaritan's Purse has been doing, both domestically and internationally. As a partner with Samaritan's Purse, CBC has been actively involved in this ministry sending teams on disaster responses and sending money to needed areas for relief.



Suzanne Clarke



A check was given to Lynne that had been given by an individual, within CBC, in the amount of \$20,000 for aid and relief for Israel. Then members of the board prayed over Lynne asking God for blessing and peace in Israel and for the continued work of Samaritan's Purse.



The two items of business that were brought to the floor were the budget and the ballot. When the budget was explained and presented it passed with a unanimous vote, with no questions. This wasn't because the people were blindly following the board but it was because they unanimously believed in everything that was presented and understood the amount of prayer and thought that had gone into it.

development. Copies of the budget can be obtained by contacting our national office. The ballot saw Grover Duling, Jeremy Dykes, and Jim Nolt elected to the board. Jim and Grover for a second term.

The youth had a conference that paralleled the adult conference with two parts overlapping. The youth had taken on the project of collecting items to present to the Water Street Mission to be given out to homeless individuals. The items were brought in by the conference attendees and the response was over whelming! The youth packed 384 kits and had had boxes of material to send to the mission unpacked! Shown here are some of the youth, with just the women's bags. They also participated in the Saturday service by performing a drama to the song by



Casting Crowns titled "Set Me Free". It was a powerful drama that left many conference attendees in tears. Katlyn Bernard challenged the churches that if they would like help to jump start their children and youth program, that

there are people available to help, just contact the national office, Craig Howard or Katlyn.



A gift of \$9,412 was given to Benjamin Palma to take to his father, Walter, the



pastor of the Miracle Fishing Covenant Brethren Church for their new building program. The church is bursting at the seams and this money was collected as individuals stepped up to answer the challenge that CBC put out to sponsor the square footage of the church at \$66 per square foot. Many individuals and churches responded by sponsoring one or multiple square feet. If this is something you would like to do in your church contact the

National office.

Two special guests who were present were leaders from our new region in Puerto Rico. Jose' Calleja Otero, the regional elder, and Jamie Diaz a pastor from that region. Prayer was made over the ministry of this new region asking God to continue to bless the ministry there and see souls saved. This marked another milestone in the development of CBC as the National Youth Mission Trip will be going to work



with these churches' in Puerto Rico in 2025. We are excited to see this link develop as these churches were brought in as full voting members of CBC and represented their churches at the conference.

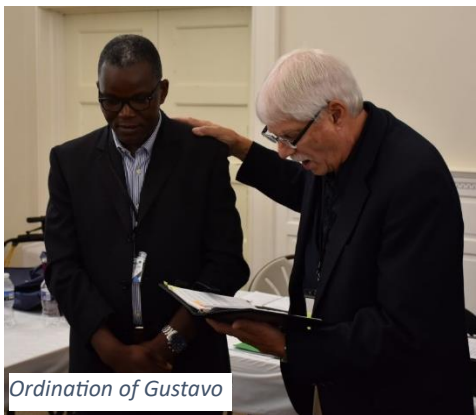


A special time in the conference came as Bro. Jim Myer was presented a certificate of appreciation for his vital role in the early development of the Covenant Brethren Church Denomination. Jim has finished his time on the Executive Board but his impact will continue and his wise council will always be valued. We doubt we have heard the last of his special calls to give for the conference offering. He has a way of loosening the purse strings in love by causing us to remember who's work we are doing.

The keynote speaker for our Saturday service was pastor Scott Kinnick. He also challenged us on the conference theme of "Reaching Forth" from Philippians 3:13-14. The message was powerful and spirit filled with the mood being set in advance by more amazing worship music and prayer. This message resonated throughout the conference during the orders of the day and the times of devotion. We are done looking back. By God's Grace we press toward the mark of the high calling in Jesus Christ. His message was translated into Spanish and the whole conference was offered in Spanish online and by a special ear piece that individuals could pick up in the sound room.



There is so much more I could share but space doesn't allow. The final highlight of the conference came



with the ordination of Gustavo Lendi Bueno, a pastor and teacher from the Dominican Republic. He had been an independent since leaving COB in 2017. He longed to be a part of a group that was holding fast to the Word of God as its authority. He has been a professor of Brethren History in the Dominican Republic for many years and loves the brethren teaching but felt he no longer had a home. At his ordination, he broke into tears and hugged Grover Duling, refusing to let go for an extended period of time. The members of the Executive Board gathered around him and prayed over him; it was described as a spirit filled time.

None that were at the conference left feeling like something was missing. It was a time of joy, unity and blessing. Next year we will be going to Greensboro, North Carolina. Make plans now to attend. You won't be sorry!

Submitted by Craig Howard – Publications Committee Chair