Church of the Brethren

District Conference 2019

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Greetings to you in the name our Lord, Jesus Christ! It is an honor and privilege to write to you on behalf of the employees, volunteers, and Mission and Ministry Board of the Church of the Brethren. We are praying for you, your congregations, and your district as you gather to worship, sing praises, pray, and accomplish the tasks set before you by your District Moderator.

It has been a year of anticipation for our beloved denomination as many have gathered in district settings to participate in the Compelling Vision conversation. I had the privilege of leading some of the district conversations, where I was encouraged by a hopeful spirit and a commitment to our common ministries in the Church of the Brethren. At this writing, I eagerly anticipate the continuation of the conversation this summer at Annual Conference, which will have already taken place by the time you gather for your district conference.

It is in those and other settings that I hear common themes emerging: themes of service, peace, community, mission, and discipleship, which are central to the ministry and mission of the Church of the Brethren. From preparing for events and conferences, to revitalizing congregations and equipping and supporting church planters, to outreach in established and emerging mission fields, to ongoing support of our ministerial leadership, to children's services and rebuilding efforts following disasters, we are partners on the journey as radical, compassionate disciples of Jesus Christ.

As I continue to listen to the voice of the church in my travels and through correspondence and phone calls, I can still hear a voice of hope – hope that as we discern a compelling vision for the Church of the Brethren, we continue to be called together to acts of justice, kindness, and humility toward those within our own denomination and throughout the world. I share that hope, and I pray that it is Christ's vision and not our own that emerges and guides the ministries of our congregations, districts, and denomination for years to come.

I am deeply grateful for the many ways your district and each congregation continue to faithfully live out the Gospel. The varied ministries of our congregations, both small and large, play an essential role in our common ministry together. And district ministries, from camping programs to disaster response to retirement communities, provide opportunities for faith formation, service, fellowship, and leadership development.

Together, we are the Church of the Brethren, serving the world in Jesus' name.

Your servant in Christ,

David Steele
General Secretary