

To My Fellow Laborers in Christ,

I look out my office window and see the snow lightly falling this Friday May 9th, 2020. This year has brought about a lot of changes. From everyone saying that this year is going to be the year where we all are going to see 2020, to facing killer bees, snow falling in the middle of May, and seeing the world faced with a pandemic that has seen many of our churches temporarily close or at least revisit how our churches have met. Hopefully our church doors will reopen soon and we will once again see familiar faces, but for now, time just marches on.

It is that time of year again though. Your ministerial reports are/were due May 10th and now it is time for you to start thinking of the dreaded statistical reports. First, I want to say that I get that for many of you it is already a stressful thing and with everything else going on it is just piles more on. However, I don't want this to be too much of a burden on you so if you are having a problem with getting me the paperwork on the due date, don't fret. I know the due date in the manual cannot be changed and Medes and Persians doesn't hold a candle to our conference, but I won't say anything if they get to me late. If you submit it online I ask that you have submitted it no later than 1 full week before conference starts. If you submit it via snail mail, I ask that you drop it off no later than 2 full weeks before conference starts. This gives two to three extra weeks more than normal, but still allows me enough time to compile and dissect the information that is given.

Second, when the statistical report asks for an average of a number, such as Sunday School attendance, according to the powers that be, please do not include weeks that services have been canceled. Otherwise, use your best judgement or contact me for further assistance.

Third, when completing the forms online, remember you can submit multiple entries. For example, the treasurer can fill out his/her portion online and submit their part at their own convenience. Then the pastor can fill out their portion at their own convenience and submit it. The only required question is the church so I know where to put the information that is submitted. Even if you only have some of the information and make a couple of entries that is fine. It only takes me a few seconds to combine all of the entries. However, if the different data is submitted for the same answers, please let me know which one to use or I will use the most recently submitted data.

Here are a few tips for your report:

1. This years starting balance should equal last years ending balance.
2. You should probably check your work. Many reports every year are \$1000's off and at least 1 a year is off by more than their income for the past few years.
3. Ask for help. If you don't know what to do or how to do something I or someone else should be able to help you.

4. Should you fill out a report? Here is a rule of thumb, if you hold a conference license or are ordained with our conference, the answer is yes. If you pastor one of our churches then the normal form. If not, then the other. Even if you didn't preach a single sermon still fill it out. It will take you less than 5 minutes, but it will let us know that you are still alive.
5. What if you don't know the answer? Then just skip it. It is better to send in a partial report than nothing at all.
6. If you pastor two churches please clarify the church on each report. I won't necessarily know by the address.
7. If you pastored two different churches in the past conference years. Submit the church's section for both churches separately that deals with you. That means two reports. If it is the pastoral section, those can be combined. For example, visits would go in the pastoral section, but if you are reporting pay, benefits, etc, that would go under the specific church's section.
8. If you need a paper form mailed to you contact me.

Again, if you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

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