

For New Ministers, Contact Persons, and Congregants

Getting Acquainted With BMA



Its organization, ministries, and officers

February, 2024

Welcome, Newcomer,
to Biblical Mennonite Alliance!

Whether you are a newly ordained or licensed minister or deacon, a minister, a contact person for your congregation, or in a congregation recently transferred to membership in BMA, we are happy to welcome you and trust your spiritual life will be enhanced by your contacts with persons in the broader Alliance. This brochure provides information to orient you to the leaders and organization within BMA. Hopefully you will quickly feel at home in the Alliance and will find us to be a growing circle of good friends in the Lord.

A most significant connection for you to the rest of BMA is **your overseer**. You are encouraged to contact him freely regarding any questions or situations that arise in the congregation. The overseer serves as a “pastor” to all ministers and deacons within your region, providing shepherding support and counsel as needed. The ministers and deacons of each congregation in your region meet quarterly under the leadership of your overseer for fellowship, prayer, and accountability. Jason Groff serves as chairman of the Council of Overseers in BMA. [E-mail: jason@mailjlg.com].

The **Moderator of BMA** is J. Mark Horst, who serves as chairman of the Board of Executors, the administrative arm of BMA. He and the assistant moderator preside at the two annual meetings of the Alliance, Convention and Ministers Enrichment. You may contact J. Mark at 717.377.7632 or at moderator@mailbma.com.

The **BMA treasurer** is Todd Webb. He and his bookkeeper handle all BMA income and disbursements, whether for general expenses, support of mission workers and programs, Bible institute funds, or any other Alliance funds. Checks can be mailed to BMA Office, P.O. Box 218, Elnora, IN 47529 and should be designated for their intended purpose. Monthly and annual financial reports are prepared by the BMA treasurer.

The **BMA administrative secretary** is John Ivan Byler. He cares for the organizational and operational details of the Alliance, takes care of general correspondence and communications from the BMA office to the ministerial body, and assists in planning and arranging the various schedules, board meetings, and the programs for the annual meetings. He can be contacted by phone 540.820.4194 or by email at adminsec@mailbma.com. From time to time he sends messages from BMA for all ministers or churches by email (or by phone) to each licensed and ordained leader and congregational contact persons.

ANNUAL MEETINGS OF BMA

The **Annual Convention** is held the fourth full weekend of July for the entire membership of BMA.

The **Ministers Enrichment** in late January is a weekend designed for spiritual input for all BMA pastors and church leaders, and is open to other interested persons as well. At each of these events a semi-annual business meeting for all ministers deals with organizational, financial, and business matters of the Alliance as well as spiritual issues pertinent to our witness as faithful congregations.

BMA MISSIONS

DestiNATIONS International (DNI) is the mission agency of BMA. Mission workers are supported by tax-deductible contributions sent to the BMA office by individuals and congregations designated for specific workers. For information about missions involvement and opportunities, contact **Henry Blank, president of DNI** by email at president@destinationsint.com.

DNI provides information and updates of the mission workers and programs through several publications and presentations. *DestiNATIONS Near and Far* is a quarterly publication with various articles on missions, the *DestiNATIONS Informer* is a monthly publication featuring our workers and places of interest within DNI, and the *DNI Intercessor's Bulletin* features monthly prayer updates of DNI workers and administration. If you are interested in receiving any of the publications on a regular basis or a church presentation, contact dnipartnerdevelop@gmail.com. Go to destinationsint.com for more info.

SEAMS, “Sharing Encouragement and Meaningful Service,” is a support program that pairs missionaries with BMA congregations for developing relationships and sharing support. A committee of several ministers' wives collects information and needs from the missionaries each year and shares it with a congregation who volunteers to “adopt” the worker or family for one year. Your congregation may be invited to “adopt” a DNI worker or family and to bless them throughout the year.

BMA EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

The **Ministry Training Center** in New York City offers short and long-term training for persons preparing for a cross-cultural missionary assignment. The director of MTC is Joel Yoder; Email: MTCinNYC@gmail.com or Ph: 347.870.0945. Web: mtcinnyc.com

Elnora Bible Institute, in Elnora, Indiana, currently operates a 15-week fall semester, a 3-week term in January, and two six-week terms in February through April. EBI welcomes students at least 18 years old desiring a junior college-level Bible study experience. The principal of EBI is Crit Lapp;

Ph: 717.333.0790
E-mail: clapp@elnorabi.org
Website: elnorabi.org

BMA WEBSITE

biblicalmennonite.com

You are encouraged to visit our website to learn about our organization and the services of BMA. Here you can find general information about BMA, its organization and beliefs, contact information, as well as many other specifics, such as the following:

BMA Directory: Board and committee members, congregations and regional groups, ministers and their contact information are provided in the Directory. [Printed copies of the directory are available annually for each congregation and minister. Request a copy from your overseer or from the administrative secretary for your personal use. For the password to access the online directory, contact John Ivan Byler.]

Bulletin Board: Upcoming events within BMA are listed as well as announcements such as mission opportunities and needs.

Publications: Inspirational materials are printed by BMA for distribution; some of these are available as downloads from the website. Here you will find info for subscribing to our periodicals.

Upcoming Events, dates and locations.

Missions:



Our mission agency is **DestiNATIONS International (DNI)**. Contact information and opportunities for service are briefly introduced on this page. Find more information at *destinationsint.com*

Bible Institute:



EBI is our junior college-level institute for Bible study and related subjects, located in southern Indiana. Its page *elnorabi.org* includes links to the EBI website and its catalog, handbook, application forms, school calendar, etc.

Voluntary Ministries Board Short-term mission opportunities and disaster/relief projects are organized by the VMB and their sub-committees. This page introduces upcoming trips and opportunities.

Audio recordings: Lists of recorded sermons and workshops presented at annual meetings are available for online listening or download.

Beliefs: Constitution and Policies: Read or download the latest version of the BMA Constitution or other statements of policy and positions adopted by the Alliance.

STAYING CONNECTED

To help your church connect with the BMA family, someone should be appointed to serve as the congregational reporter for these publications:

- A. **“BMA Prayer Guide”** is edited by is Sheila Gingerich, Ph: 231.652.9415; E-mail: sgprayed@gmail.com.

Your contact person submits a list of prayer and praise items from the congregation for the quarterly *Prayer Guide*. The prayer guide is then e-mailed to this contact person or the pastor for distribution in the church.

B. “**The Alliance Newsletter**” is edited by Justin Yoder: Ph: 302.535.9591; E-mail: bmaeditor@mailbma.com.

Twice a year your contact person submits an article of congregational news and every three months births, marriages, deaths, and new members for the quarterly *Newsletter*. The printed newsletters are mailed to the pastor or church office for distribution in the congregation.

As you connect with BMA you will get to know the people and organizations which are serving all of us. Feel free to ask any of us to clarify issues or answer questions that will strengthen our life together with the Lord.

John Ivan Byler
BMA Administrative Secretary