

# Annual Conference Memorial Tribute Operational Guidelines

(Updated February 2019)

## OBJECTIVE

To produce a multimedia tribute to national Church of the Brethren leaders and staff (and their spouses) within the church who passed away during the previous year. This tribute, national in scope, does not preclude agencies and organizations, higher education institutions, districts, or congregations from producing a similar tribute geared to their constituency.

## HISTORY

**Origin.** This tribute originated as an honor to Pension Plan members. Names of Plan members who passed away during the preceding year were read each year at Annual Conference during a banquet for Brethren Pension Plan retirees. In about 2000, the reading of names was moved from the discontinued banquet to the BBT business report on the Conference floor. That reading evolved into a recorded program with photos of the deceased that was accompanied by music. Being a moment of reflection and honor, the Annual Conference officers in 2004 moved the tribute out of the BBT business report to be an agenda item of its own.

**Request for expanded scope.** Late in 2004 a request came at a meeting of national agency executives asking if the tribute could be expanded to include leadership who are not in the Brethren Pension Plan. The memorial tribute of 2005 reflected a first attempt at including agency and pastoral leadership not in the Pension Plan. But there were no set guidelines announced, which meant that while some additional people were included, the tribute did not include as many people as it could have or should have. That experience led to BBT staff taking the Annual Conference request and drafting the following guidelines.

## INCLUSION

People to be honored in this tribute are categorized in six ways —

1. – If they come from the Brethren Pension Plan —
  - a. All annuitants from the Annual Conference agencies, districts, camps, and congregations; or Brethren annuitants from retirement communities, or the CEO of the retirement community (even if not Brethren).
  - b. Spouses (who are Brethren) of annuitants (alive or deceased), from the Annual Conference agencies, districts, camps, and congregations.
  - c. Active Plan members from the Annual Conference agencies, districts, camps, and congregations; or active Plan members who are Brethren from retirement communities, or the CEO of the retirement community, even if not Brethren.
  - d. Spouses (if Brethren) of active Plan members from the Annual Conference agencies, districts, camps, and congregations.
  - e. Inactive Plan members (former employees but still Plan members) from the Annual Conference agencies, districts, camps, and congregations; and inactive Plan members who are Brethren from retirement communities, or the CEO of the retirement community, even if not Brethren.
  - f. Spouses, if Brethren, of inactive Plan members from the Annual Conference agencies, districts, camps, and congregations.
  - g. Divorced spouses are only included if the account was divided and the former spouse is now a member in his or her own right.
2. – If they are not members of the Brethren Pension Plan, but have or have had employment with one of the four national Church of the Brethren agencies, or with one of the denomination's 23 districts (including camps). They must —

- a. Be currently employed by one of the above organizations, OR
  - b. Be formerly employed by one of the above organizations and be members of the Church of the Brethren.
3. – If they are not members of Brethren Pension Plan but have worked for a Church of the Brethren congregation or organization, and have been called to a recognized position of pastoral/ministerial leadership within the denomination. These leaders are listed in the Church of the Brethren Yearbook as ordained, commissioned, or licensed ministers, chaplains, or pastoral counselors.
  4. All past or present moderators and Annual Conference officers of the Church of the Brethren, and all past or present board members of the four agencies of the Church of the Brethren are included.
  5. Missionaries who were placed through the General Board of the Church of the Brethren are included.
  6. – If they are not members of the Brethren Pension Plan, but are Brethren and currently serving or have served as the President of one of the six Brethren affiliated colleges or universities.

**EXCEPTION COMMITTEE**

An Exception Committee will review any names submitted for inclusion in the Memorial Tribute that may not meet the criteria of one of the above categories.

**PHOTO ACQUISITION**

Expanding the scope of who is included in the annual memorial tribute is a logical step so that the time of honor, remembrance, and reflection at Annual Conference of those who served the Church of the Brethren includes more than just members of the Brethren Pension Plan.

However, with the increased scope of who can be included comes the need to expand who helps collect the photos.

The Annual Conference Officers affirm Brethren Benefit Trust's commitment to continue producing the annual tribute, receiving photos, recording music, producing a DVD, and working with the Annual Conference office and Annual Conference stage technicians to play the program at the appropriate time. BBT needs help, however, with obtaining the names and photos of deceased church leaders and spouses who qualify to be included in the tribute.

**1. Brethren Pension Plan**

- a. BBT will continue to obtain names and photos of Pension Plan retiree members and their surviving spouses.
- b. BBT will continue to obtain names and photos of Pension Plan members, both actively and inactively employed by a Brethren church or organization.
- c. BBT will need to rely on agencies, districts, congregations, and camps for information about the deaths of active and inactive Pension Plan member spouses.

**2. Agencies, districts, congregations, and camps.**

- a. The agencies and districts will be asked to name a person who shall pass along applicable names and photos from their respective organizations to BBT staff. These should be people who have in-depth knowledge of their respective agency or district to know when someone who passes away should be honored in the Annual Conference memorial tribute. It is this person's responsibility to make certain the name and photo of the deceased is received by BBT staff.

- b. Camps and congregations can submit names and photos directly to the BBT staff, but it is the respective district representative that will need to verify that each person submitted is qualified for inclusion based on the aforementioned guidelines.

### 3. **Ministers, pastors, and lay leaders**

Although these leaders can be nominated by anyone, with names and photos submitted to BBT, it is the respective district representative that will need to verify that each person submitted is qualified for inclusion based on the aforementioned guidelines.

## REMINDERS

1. Each August, the AC moderator will send a letter to CoB agencies, districts, congregations, retirement communities, and camps explaining the mission of the annual tribute. The letter will invite these organizations to lift up significant CoB leadership who were never in the Brethren Pension Plan, asking them to send the name and photo of the person/people they want included in the tribute. A submission form for names and photographs will be included with the letter; the form will also be posted on the BBT website under "Forms." A submission, including a photo and the person's name, may be sent to the district representative and then forwarded with the representative's "OK" to BBT. A submission can be sent directly to BBT, but the district representative must affirm that person's inclusion.
2. At the beginning of each subsequent quarter (in November, February, and May), BBT will email a list to the designated district and agency contacts showing whom BBT intends to honor in the tribute. These contacts will then be able to assess whether people they believe should be included are already on BBT's list. If not, the district or agency can then send a name and photo, or arrange for a name and photo of the person they want included to be sent to BBT.
3. Send all photos and inclusion forms to **lborgmann@cobbt.org** or to —  
Church of the Brethren Memorial Tribute  
Brethren Benefit Trust  
1505 Dundee Ave.  
Elgin IL 60120
4. **Brethren Benefit Trust cannot accept photos that have a photographer's logo printed on the picture without written permission from the photographer. We encourage the submission of more candid or casual shots, because they better display the personality of the person being honored, and we encourage sending a photo that contains only the honored individual.**

If there are questions or concerns, call Loyce Borgmann at 847-688-3364

## PRODUCTION

Making the tribute.

1. Received names and photos will be logged by Communications staff, including indication of the appropriate agency or district sign-off.
  - a. BBT Communications staff will work with the Annual Conference office to make sure the event is included on the Annual Conference schedule.
  - b. Communications staff will produce copies of the tribute on DVD and flashdrive, and will make sure it gets played at the appropriate time at AC.
  - c. Communications staff will send copies of the DVD to next of kin.
  - d. Communications staff will send out the DVDs with an appropriate note.
  - e. The photos will be included in that year's *Retiree News*.
  - f. The DVD will also be sent to districts, agencies, the Annual Conference office, the Brethren Archives, and, upon request, to other organizations.
  - g. Communications staff will also produce a combined file of the Memorial Tribute from the current year as well as the prior year to be shown at NOAC.