Continuing the Conversation

By Stan Dueck, ANE Director of Discipleship Ministries

Virtual Leadership Roundtables Returned in September

Pete Kontra and Stan Dueck hosted moderators and board chairpersons from congregations across the Atlantic Northeast District on September 10 and 14. Twelve leaders gathered to listen and share about their roles in the local church.

The September meetings marked the second virtual gathering for congregational moderators and board chairpersons. Participants discussed their experiences with challenging conversations in a safe space to share openly. They also shared helpful resources, with some highlighting the book *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High* as a valuable leadership resource.

Beyond the central discussion, some asked how others were addressing congregational needs, including the shortage of pastoral leadership, churches in an interim season, and congregational care.

Participants appreciated having a trusted space to learn from one another and exchange practical ideas. Many congregations across the district are grappling with similar questions. The leaders encouraged the district to continue offering these opportunities.

Future virtual gatherings for moderators and board chairs are planned for 2027.

Church Treasurers and Financial Secretaries Meet on Zoom

Adam Swartz, ANE Director of Finance, and Stan Dueck, Director of Discipleship Ministries, hosted virtual meetings that Church Treasurers and financial secretaries could attend on September 16 or 22. Altogether, seven leaders attended.

Swartz and Dueck facilitated the roundtables, which were designed as conversations rather than workshops. Rather than give presentations or lectures, participants listened to one another, shared practical ideas, and reflected together on what faithful leadership looks like amid a changing congregational landscape in the U.S.

A lively conversation explored the question: What is one challenge you're currently facing as a treasurer or financial secretary? Participants shared a range of challenges, including software issues and changing tithing habits.

One outcome of the meeting was the district's commitment to create a dedicated resource page for church treasurers and financial secretaries. ANE now hosts a private Facebook group where church finance leaders can share resources and ask each other questions about stewardship and best practices in record-keeping.

Participants valued the opportunity to learn from one another, share ideas, and recognize that congregations across the district face similar questions. They encouraged the district to continue offering opportunities for connection and conversation.

Virtual gatherings for church treasurers and financial secretaries are planned for 2027.