

Spirit-Filled Gathering: Highlights from the 2025 ANE District Conference

The 2025 ANE District Conference was a vibrant and inspiring time for individuals across the District to come together in fellowship, worship, and meaningful conversation. It was more than just a business meeting—it was a celebration of unity, faith, and shared purpose.

The week began with a powerful Bible Study on Tuesday, October 7 led by Sara Haldeman-Scarr, Interim Pastor at Ambler CoB. Centered on Ephesians 4:1–6, Sara invited us to reflect deeply on what it means to live as one body in Christ, especially in today's world. Her message reminded us that our unity is divinely created and spiritually sustained.

[Friday evening's worship service](#) at Spring Creek CoB was a joyful and heartfelt gathering, welcoming 91 in-person and 25 virtual attendees from across the District and Denomination. Moderator Adam Ulm and the Spring Creek Praise Team set a beautiful tone for the evening, focusing on our oneness in Christ. The service included a touching recognition of ministry milestones, honoring 50-year ministers Jim Eikenberry, Earl Foster, and Ervin Huston, as well as SeBAH graduate Wilfredo Muñoz. A generous offering of \$1,693 was raised for the Barnabas Fund, supporting outreach and evangelism efforts in our communities. The bilingual reading of this year's conference verses and Josiah Ludwick's message—"same same, but different, but still same"—captured the diversity and unity within our District. The evening concluded with a piano and organ duet by Bob



*Worship Service at Spring Creek CoB
(Photo: District Staff)*

Kettering and Dennis Garrison, sending us off with music that lifted our spirits and hearts.



*Moderator Adam Ulm and head table
(Photo: Glenn Riegel)*

Saturday's business session at Elizabethtown College began with a warm buffet breakfast and worship led by a multi-congregational Praise Team, thanks to Ryan Arndt's leadership. Throughout the day, we heard updates from District ministries, partner agencies, and friends of the District. A highlight was the story-sharing and panel discussion from Parker Ford Church, detailing their inspiring journey of merging three local congregations into one unified body. Their testimony of faith and transformation was



*Pastors DJay Martin and David Hakes from Parker Ford Church
(Photo: Glenn Riegel)*

deeply moving—and they plan to share their journey in an upcoming book.

Director of Witness and Outreach and Interim Director of Nurture, Mary Etta Reinhart's years of dedicated service and retirement were celebrated.

Afternoon insight sessions offered something for everyone, from financial guidance with Eder Financial, to conflict resolution strategies with our ANE Shalom Team, to a Brethren Hymn Sing exploring the stories behind beloved songs. Attendees also enjoyed visiting Expo tables hosted by ministries such as COBYS Family Services, Brethren Disaster Ministries, Eder Financial, On Earth Peace, ANE's Shalom Team, Susquehanna Valley Ministry Center, and Camp Swatara.

The 2026 District Slate was joyfully affirmed, welcoming new leaders and commission members who will help guide our shared mission forward. The 2026 District Slate was affirmed as follows: Moderator Elect, Karen Hackett; Annual Conference Standing Committee, Brian Messler; Alternate Standing Committee, Joe Detrick; Program & Arrangements Committee, Shelley Kontra; Gifts Discernment Team, Jeff Glisson and Michael Shearer; Church Development Commission, Jeff Keller; Ministry Commission, Naomi Kraenbring and Mark Nichols; Nurture Commission, Sam Frankhouser; Witness and Outreach Commission, C. Franklin Iyasere and Timothy Speicher. William Kepner was also affirmed for the Board of COBYS Family Services.

Later in the day, Q&A time with Pete Kontra, Jim Grossnickle-Batterton, and David Steele offered valuable insights into the work of the Denomination, District, and local congregations.



ACTS Graduates: C. Franklyn Iyasere and Kevin Zurin (Photo: Glenn Riegel)

Susquehanna Valley Ministry Center recognized three ACTS graduates in their presentation: C. Franklyn Iyasere, Kevin Zurin, and Matt Kramer.

Throughout the day, attendees had the opportunity to write notes to Brethren Volunteer Service workers and to add positive happenings from their congregations to leaves on a “Good Things Tree.” Moderator Adam Ulm later read out these contributions, which included

churches growing, youth participating, feeding the community, outreach to neighbors, older adult programs, and partnering with schools. Wonderful things are happening!



Moderator Adam Ulm Celebrates the Good Things from Congregations (Photo: Glenn Riegel)



2026 District Conference Moderator, David Sollenberger (Photo: Glenn Riegel)

Adam Ulm passed the gavel to our 2026

Moderator, David Sollenberger, who said that a loving, unified church still has some unfinished business. He is drawn to Hebrews 12, “Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.” Jesus is calling us to care for others and invite all people to God’s family. We cannot be distracted by all the commotion in the world.

Throughout the conference, one theme rang clear: the love of Jesus is alive and active in our churches, and we are stronger together. The stories shared, the worship experienced, and the connections made all reflected a District deeply committed to walking in faith, unity, and love.

Other notables of Conference: Average attendance for Saturday was 140. There were 108 delegates present out of 113 registered out of a total possible 187. Out of a possible 57 congregations and fellowships, there were 45 present out of 46 registered.