

Operations Team Meeting
PNMC Office
Saturday, April 12, 2008
8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Present: Jeanne Rempel, Linda Dibble, Pedro Olvera, Wendell Amstutz, Sheldon Burkhalter, Victor Vargas, Don Bacher, Duncan Smith, Audrey Lowen, Dave Hockman-Wert, Charlotte Hardt, Diane Isaak, Brad Roth

Audrey Lowen led in singing and Victor Vargas led devotions, reading from Psalm 24:1-2.

The minutes from the January 5, 2008 Operations Team Meeting were approved.

CLC Report

Linda Dibble, Dave Hockman-Wert and Sheldon Burkhalter reported on the MC USA Constituency Leaders Council meeting they recently attended.

Dave reported that the focus of the meeting was the Executive Board's recent action of having a unified communication system, funding system, central person to operate it, and one Board.

Linda shared how the worship services and theme song were very meaningful and set the stage for the meetings. MCUSA is facing changes, some of the same changes that PNMC is facing. She was excited to be there, and it was exciting to meet people she had previous connections with.

Sheldon described the implications of a unified MCUSA as he understands it – in the merger of 2 denominations also came a history of different structures (for example Mission Board), publications, multiple colleges. The idea of a unified conference ([denomination?](#)) is tied to that aspect of how do we keep a central focus on the mission of the church.

Sheldon also reported that Keith Harder has been leader of the MC USA Leadership Office but is now moving into the MMA pastoral insurance program. Gilberto Flores has been appointed as director of the Leadership Office. Another change is that the office has developed the concept of denominational minister. Every conference in MC USA has a denominational minister from this office. Gilberto will continue as our denominational minister.

Health Care Access Committee Update

Don Bacher reported that he, Duncan Smith and Victor Vargas met with Larry Miller, CEO of MMA. It was a good meeting, and they felt he really listened. They gave him a pretty good indication of what we are working at doing, i.e. providing medical assistance for our folks. They suggested we would like MMA to consider some matching situations with us; Larry was very open and had some ideas we hadn't thought about. They were pleased with the conversation and his philosophy that we need to be more "in the trenches" providing the types of things congregations need. The next steps are to continue to work with MMA. Charlotte suggested we have some kind of statement in the delegate book regarding our health care access program. Don is willing to continue working on this committee after June. Duncan reported that shortly after the meeting he was contacted by Phyllis Bixler. She will be the MMA contact with the PNMC on these projects. She confirmed with Duncan that if the PNMC gives money to a congregation, this can be considered as a donation from the congregation, and MMA will match up to the amount or the amount the congregation is eligible to receive.

Policy Development Update

Brad Roth reported that the 3 team members (Brad, Dave, Wendell) had a conference call recently to discuss policy development. They have agreed to take our conference vision statement as a framework

for an Ends Policy. They reviewed the current policies and are committed to preparing Policy Governance policies but haven't completed anything yet. It was asked if there would be something to present at conference in June. The feeling is that policies are an internal matter and would not be submitted in a formal way to the delegate body. If we are developing policies that substantially affect congregations, we need to inform, but they would not be voted on by delegates.

Bylaws Update

The Bylaws Committee feels like they are done with the bylaws and are passing them on to the Operations Team now. Duncan forwarded them to our attorney and they came back with a lot of comments that we need to reconcile. We don't think we will be able to come out of this meeting today with approved bylaws ready for the delegate book and annual meeting. We could consider possibly proposing these to the delegates this year as provisional and continue to work on them over the next year. If Dave and the committee go through it one more time with the attorney's suggestions, then they would send them out to the Operations Team by email for a vote to approve a one-year provisional. Dave will work with the bylaws team to make the suggested changes and will email it out to the Operations Team for vote in the next several weeks. Charlotte urged the Operations Team to respond as quickly as possible. They will be presented as 2008 Provisional Bylaws. Sheldon reminded us that the old Board is still responsible for the Operations Team and they should see the final bylaws after the Operations Team has approved them, before it goes out to delegates. Dave agreed that once the Operations Team has finalized the provisional bylaws, they would be sent to the current Board for their approval.

Response to CIHAN Letter

CIHAN is the council of Hispanic churches in the Pacific Northwest. This year is their 10 year anniversary and they will be having a celebration in July. Wendell Amstutz reviewed the document from CIHAN "Position Statement on CIHAN's Place in PNMC Structure." This document was made in response to PNMC's reorganization and where they view CIHAN's place in the new structure. This position statement responds to what they felt was a realistic and operational place in the conference. What are the expectations of CIHAN from the Operations Team regarding this document? After discussion the Operations Team affirmed the general direction of the document with the following statement:

The Operations Team of PNMC recognizes and affirms the ministry of CIHAN within the PNMC district during the past ten years. We also acknowledge the work that has been done by CIHAN in developing their Position Statement, and fully support and encourage them in this effort. As the Operations Team we commit ourselves to working together with CIHAN as a constituent group in transforming PNMC into an intercultural and antiracist church.

Annual Meeting Update

Audrey Lowen reported that since there is no host church this year, the name of the conference will be "Common Ground 2008" and the theme is "Fragile Pots and Ordinary Lives: Testifying to God's Grace." It will be held at Canby Grove Convention Center in Canby, Oregon. Each church will be getting an informational flyer. The format will be different this year with more worship and less and shorter delegate sessions. There will be a great deal of singing and sharing/testifying to God's grace/what He's doing among us. Jana Gingerich, Jennifer Gingerich and Jill Swiers are working on youth activities. Pedro Olvera requested there be a time to acknowledge the 10 years of CIHAN walking with PNMC.

The River Mennonite Church Application

The first page of the River Mennonite Church bylaws was distributed for review. Dave attended their church service last Sunday to do a Board visit, which is part of the membership process. His comments: it was a small group – 20 people including children and visitors; they meet in a nice old stone church building; it was a fairly informal service with children's church, singing, scripture reading, youth meeting separately, sermon, discussion, and communion. The pastor is completely volunteer at this time. He does

all the preaching, everyone else helps with worship planning/leading. They seem to have a good sense that they have all they need to be a church. The Outreach Development Committee has recommended they be received into membership. The Operations Team is in consensus agreement that we want to accept the membership recommendation for River Mennonite Church.

Sheldon gave a brief update on the church plant in Salt Lake City, Utah. They are a group of people who are drawn to being Mennonite. Four of the people are seminary trained and committed to Anabaptist teachings. Several have doctorates. They have not been moving very rapidly towards MIP. Their congregation has been named Peace Community Mennonite Church.

Passion Based Ministries Update

Dave distributed a draft policy. The working group has had one conference call to discuss initial ideas on how things could look concerning passion-based ministries. The policy is largely modeled after Mountain States Mennonite Conference's policy. They have met with some of the existing committee members and asked them how they can see themselves move into this new model. It gives more flexibility and ability for new things to emerge. If written well, it can have ministries emerging from all over and keep things tied into our core and mission statement. Funding issue is a big concern, especially for existing committee moving to this new model. The policy was reviewed and comments noted and discussed. Comments included participation from individual churches to joint effort, passion-based ministries should have the view of the entire conference, not just a region of the conference. Dave and the group will rework the policy document and have a draft copy for the informational packet at Annual Conference.

Capacity Building Update

The decision was made by the Operations Team to use the Jantz Estate funds to finance the Capacity Building activities. Dave, Duncan and Linda met with Phil Bergey and Mark Vincent. Mark asked a lot of questions; they tried to give him a clear picture of the state of PNMC. They asked him to prepare a proposal for our meeting today. Duncan remarked that Mark has been around the Mennonite Church for a long time and has a lot of experience with fund raising. The Service Proposal was reviewed. It did a nice job of laying it all out for us. After discussion, it was the general feeling that we want Mark to proceed with the Feasibility Study and pay the full \$7,200. The goal of this is to develop a capacity building team. Linda recommended that the Operations Team commit to finding a team leader by July to be able to work with Mark and have a team in place by the middle of August. It was the general consensus to do this in phases, paying 25% down and monthly payments. We were encouraged to make this a high priority prayer item. Duncan will continue to be the point of contact with Mark, but it is suggested we keep in mind the transition.

Delegate Book Reports

Reminder that reports need to be to Sue Palmer by April 15. Luke Harris is doing a logo for the registration materials and book cover.

Executive's Report

Duncan thanked Sheldon for going to Salt Lake and the CLC meeting. He asked Sheldon to share more about his sabbatical. Sheldon gave words of thanks for granting him a sabbatical. He is going to be very busy during his sabbatical but is anticipating significant experiences. He will be doing a combination of research and reading on Anabaptist history. A prayer of blessing was offered for Sheldon.

Duncan reviewed his submitted report, highlighting several items, including upcoming events (elder training in E. Washington, polity course) He suggested going to a .pdf form of the Evangel and passed around an example. He is planning to put together a binder with the various entities of the PNMC so that the various parts do not get lost. Several expressed their thanks to Duncan for his assistance and service.

The Operations Team then dismissed staff and went into Executive Session.

Following the Executive Session, the Operations Team returned to open session and took the following action:

The Operations Team approves proposing to Delegates a personnel budget model in 2 phases:

Budget Phase 1: for Jul 2008 – Jan 2009 (after Duncan leaves)

- Victor extends 7 mo. as conf. minister to Jan 09.
- Sheldon completes contract in Jun 09

Budget phase 2: for Feb 2009 – Jan 2010

- 1 FTE Executive Conference Minister
- 0.5 FTE Administrative Assistant

10 district pastors with annual stipends of \$3000 to oversee 3-5 local pastors.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Diane Isaak
PNMC Secretary