



Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference

Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference
Annual Delegate Sessions
June 20-23, 1996

Western Mennonite Church & School
Salem, Oregon

Friday, June 21, Delegate Session

John Willems opened the sessions with prayer. Roll call was taken with all conference member churches represented. Minutes from the 1995 annual sessions were approved as printed.

Moderator Address

John Willems presented his address. He expressed his thanks and appreciation for the opportunity to serve as moderator and feels very comfortable in "passing the baton" to Cleon as Moderator.

He expressed two concerns for the conference: new churchwide salary guideline for pastors which impacts some pastors significantly and the need to care for pastors' children.

Areas for future discussion for the conference:

Current structure of the conference operations. Is the Board size okay? What about the present committees? Should the chair of the committee also serve as member of the board? Should there be an executive committee and conference council?

Estate planning and fundraising for the conference. A committee has been established to work on church giving for the conference. The board needs counsel on the budget.

He closed his comments reminding all of us to keep our faith in a God who is a great God!

Recognition of Churchwide Guests

Glendon Klaassen - Commission of Overseas Mission

John Esau - General Conference Mennonite Church Ministerial Services

Dale Schrag - Bethel College

Susan Janzen - Faith & Life Press

LaVonda Claassen - Faith & Life Press

Tim Burkholder - Mennonite Board of Education

Juan Wall - Mennonite Mutual Aid

John Duerkson - Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Dallas Stutzman - Hesston College

J. Lorne Peachey - Gospel Herald Editor and representative for news services

Paul & Mary Lederach - special guests and speaker for the weekend

Nominating Committee

Jeff Hackman served as chair with committee members Virgil Peters, Rick Bollman, and Linda Graber. They had 15 positions that needed to be filled. The most difficult position to find someone willing to serve was on the Congregational Nurture Committee. Two changes had occurred since the ballot had been printed. Larry Graber had since declined to serve on Bethel College Board and Teresa Moser McDermid was added to the ballot as Pastoral Leadership Committee member. Jeff Hackman made a motion to accept the ballot with the changes; motion seconded and passed. The ballots were distributed for affirmation by the delegates. Three persons volunteered to help count the ballots.

Conference Minister Affirmation

John Willems reported that Larry Hauder, Conference Minister, was evaluated by pastors and church representatives in the past year. The responses were very encouraging and affirming of the work that Larry is doing. The Board extended an invitation for Larry to serve another three year term as Conference Minister. Larry accepted the invitation. Harold Hochstetler led in a prayer of blessing and laying on of hands for Larry to serve the Conference in this capacity.

Policy Statements

Policy statements are written and approved by the Board of Directors. The statements are then presented to the delegates for further comments and suggestions. No action is required by the delegates.

An addition has been made to two policy statements:

"Membership of Member Churches Policy"

Add: Commitment to the 1995 Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective

"Nomination Process"

Add: The Board of Directors shall review any late nominations.

Harold Hochstetler asked that "late" be clarified. What is the deadline when nominations can be made?

New policies

"Termination of Membership in Conference"

A suggestion was made that the disposal of property be clarified in the statement so that the property is recommended to go to the Conference. John Willems stated that this will be set forth in another policy as "Reversionary Clause". Mary Stueben offered words of caution in carrying out this type of policy. Much care and humility need to be part of the process of termination.

"Appointment by the Board of Directors"

Lynn Miller asked that "all" in the last sentence be clarified. The conference has several organizational connections so "all" should be clarified for those positions connected directly to conference.

"Memorial Loan Fund"

Suggestion that the last sentence read as follows:

"Interest rate, if any, and length of loan will be determined by the Board of Directors."

The Board will take action on these policy suggestions for final policy submittal.

Recommendation Regarding the Evangelism & Missions Committee

The following recommendations were presented to the delegates for acceptance.

1. That the Evangelism & Missions Committee dissolve the incorporation of the "Mennonite Mission Board of the Pacific Coast District Conference" upon action of the delegates of the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference and any assets be transferred to the PNMC to be held as restricted funds for the Evangelism & Missions Committee's discretionary use.
2. That the Missions Minister become an employee of the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference effective July 1, 1996 and his current contract be extended through June 30, 1997.
3. That the budget for the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference shall include the Evangelism & Missions Committee budget with designated giving permitted and encouraged. PNMC churches are encouraged to take ownership in all programs of the conference and support the entire budget. However, all designated contributions by donors will be honored.

John Willems clarified all three points of the recommendations which the Board of Directors and Evangelism & Mission Committee had submitted to the delegates. Each recommendation was presented for acceptance.

Recommendation #1: Presently the old Mission Board has part of the title for the Albany Mennonite Home. A word of caution was noted to receive counsel to clarify the role of Evangelism & Missions Committee in relation to this property when the Mission Board's incorporation status is dissolved. A further clarification was made stating that all future "assets" will continue to be designated to the Evangelism & Missions Committee if they had originally been designated for the Mission Board. With these clarifications, it was moved, seconded and passed to accept recommendation #1.

Recommendation #2: Moved, seconded and passed to accept Recommendation #2 as stated above.

Recommendation #3: A clarification was made concerning non-conference churches giving to the Mexico work. These churches have expressed acceptance about giving to conference as long as the money is used for the Mexico work. John Miller assured all of us that this money is used only for Mexico. A question on the floor came concerning whether designated funds are above budget or part of the budget. The Board was not united on this issue so the delegates asked the Board to further clarify this before the recommendation be accepted. The initial motion on the recommendation was withdrawn.

Another motion was presented and seconded to delay the discussion on the integrated budget. The response of the motion was 35 accepting and 48 declining so the motion was not carried.

On Saturday morning, John Willems reported the decision of the Board. A significant portion of our budget is for missions but the Board views the budget as a total unified vision. All designated gifts will be honored. They will be applied to specific budget categories until budget is met and then they will be applied as above budget for that category. With this clarification on designated giving, it was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously to accept recommendation #3.

Vote on Peace & Justice Committee Member

Jeff Hackman reported that the results of the vote count was an exact tie for David Wert and Wendall King. A revote was taken.

PNMC Financial Report

Loren Hartman presented the budget for the first 10 months of 1995-96 fiscal year.

Evangelism & Missions Committee Financial Report

John Miller presented a revised financial report from the committee.

Western Mennonite School Budget

Eric Martin presented the budget for WMS for informational purposes only. No action by the delegates is required for their budget. He began by thanking all the congregations who have supported Western. The proposed budget includes a 5 percent increase for staff salaries, but it continues to be a concern of the school's Board that salaries are still quite low in comparison to other teachers. They are working hard at paying off their debt. Facilities continue to need to be updated. There has been significant turnover in staff this year. Eric noted special appreciation to Jim Miller for serving 8-1/2 years at the school.

1996-97 Budget

Loren Hartman presented the proposed budget for the coming year. Some last minutes changes were made and Loren made verbal note of these changes. He made special note of the individual congregational askings since they are higher because of the combined budget. Per member asking is about \$58 per member or \$5 per month. He also noted that we would need to use Jubilee Funds from the Evangelism & Missions Committee in order to make the budget for this year. Jubilee Funds are funds from estate donations, property sales, liquidation of assets.

Points of the discussion were as follows:

- * It does not feel right to pay \$50,000 for staff when others are only making \$20,000. The issue is bigger than just salary but involves a whole lifestyle choice.
- * The \$5 per month is about two expresso coffees a month.
- * When Jubilee Funds are used up, they are gone and we can't continue to rely on them to make our budget.
- * Can we cut our staff from 2 full time persons to 1.5 and pay what they are worth?
- * Call to faithful lifestyle.
- * One person stated she had a problem with Evangelism & Mission Committee's budget. Doesn't our Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church mission boards do the same kinds of work? Shouldn't we use their resources rather than duplicating their services?
- * If we are not fair to our staff, we will not be able to keep our very qualified staff.
- * Is Evangelism & Missions Committee doing what it needs to be doing and can we afford a full time missions minister? What ever happened to the discussion about the philosophical and theological issues of Evangelism & Missions Committee?
- * In actuality, we are not really giving our 10 percent, otherwise we would not have budgetary problems.
- * One person has been thrilled with the mission work in Mexico. This conference has a history in Mexico and it is very good. Do not pit one committee against another.
- * Things change and we are trying to figure out how God moves among us. We are to do the best we can and use the resources wisely.
- * If we retract our commitment to missions, then the wider agencies from the Mennonite church will come seeking us for more.
- * There are significant changes in the world in regard to giving and structures. Transitions are happening around both of these. We get multiple requests for money. We don't just give to churches. Over the next year we will need to make changes.
- * If we give \$1 more a month, then the Jubilee Funds can be offset so we do not use them up.
- * This conference is called by God to "seed" in Mexico. We have the fruits of this mission work among us now in the Hispanic churches that are part of us.
- * Mexico work is a child to some and a foster child to others.

An amendment to the budget was made that the Board look at the structure (philosophical and theological) of Evangelism & Missions Committee. It was moved and second to accept the budget as presented with the amendment. Motion was carried.

Church Schools Committee

Lynn Miller reported that the Church Schools Committee was dissolved but he is serving as the Church Schools Representative on the Board of Directors. He reported that the Western Mennonite School auction raised over \$102,000. He invited Michele Hershberger, Jeanette Nisly, and Dale Schrag to share as part of his report. Del Hershberger read a written note by Michele who shared how much God is moving in a mighty way at Western. Jeanette shared how the teachers and staff of both Western and the Mennonite college she attended have been so influential in her life and the choices she is making. Dale Schrag shared briefly about news from Bethel Collage.

Mennonite Board of Education

Dallas Stutzman spoke about Hesston College noting that there is an enrollment increase this year and there are 17 students from Oregon, Washington, and Idaho that attended the College this past year.

John Duerksen spoke about AMBS which had 45 students enrolled representing 10 different countries. He also shared that J. Nelson Kraybill is the next president of AMBS.

Tim Burkholder shared how Mennonite Board of Education works and how they are committed to education for the Mennonite church.

Evangelism & Missions Committee

Jeanne Zook shared that Evangelism & Missions committee is making a difference. To demonstrate that she invited Gary Hooley and Victor Vargas to share. Gary shared that he has been meeting with a small group led by John Miller to discuss church planting. They have been studying a book called Twelve Keys to an Effective Church. The book emphasizes three areas: making long range plans including a budget, building on strengths, and visitation. The book and the discussions have been good for the group. Victor Vargas shared how God has called us to be followers of Jesus. He has a vision to continue to increase the Hispanic churches in hopes to have one church for every 1,000 Hispanics.

John Miller shared that Mark and Susan Chen moved to Federal Way, Washington to plant a church in the Seattle area. The committee would like to proceed with plans to plant a church in Meridian, Idaho. John sees a lot of potential for missions when support and resources can follow the potential.

Commission on Overseas Mission

Glendon Klaassen shared that there are 125 workers in 28 countries. He noted the personnel overseas who are from the Northwest. He expressed thanks for new people, new ministries, new partnerships, and new places.

Saturday Morning, June 22

Conference attenders were invited to attend dialogue sessions with the committees or the Board. There were two separate dialogue sessions in the morning.

Churchwide Contribution Form

John Willens made some clarifications on the form which was presented to the Conference on behalf of the churchwide offices for the Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church. Each church was asked to respond as to whether they will be using the form. Since a majority of churches responded to the form, it is recommended that all churches use the form in making their churchwide contributions.

Vision Statement

Larry Hauder led a brief time introducing the vision statement ideas which the Board had drawn up over the last year. Persons were asked to complete the form which was in the delegate handbook and turn it in to Kathy Bilderback, conference secretary. The responses on this form will help the Board to formulate a more complete vision statement for the conference.

Missions Minister Blessing

John Miller begins a new one year term as Missions Minister for the conference on July 1. An evaluation of John took place in the last few months and the results were quite affirming of his work. Brent Kauffman led in prayer as several others laid hands on John.

Election Results

Moderator	Cleon Claassen
Assistant Moderator	Pat Hershberger
Pastoral Leadership Committee Chairperson	Duane Oesch
Church Schools Representative & Board Member	Lynn Miller
Director at Large	George Leppert
Pastoral Leadership Committee Member	Teresa Moser McDermid
Peace & Justice Committee Member	David Wert
Evangelism & Missions Committee Members	Ramiro Hernandez
	Dave Stutzman
	Ben Kenagy
Congregational Nurture Committee Member	Shirley Schmidt
Western Mennonite School Board Members	Dave Miller
	Dale Moyer
	Ron Kropf

Board appointments:

Evangelism & Missions Committee Member (to replace Andy Wade)	Mabel Snyder
At Large Board Member	Carl Newswanger

It was moved, seconded, and passed to ratify the appointments made by the Board.

Pastoral Leadership Committee

Duane Oesch shared a reminder to pastors of their importance in leading congregations in support of conference and the budget. He and Larry Hauder then recognized new pastoral transitions over this last year.

Licensed: Dan Rehwalt, Interim Pastor, Ranch Chapel
Gayle Scheller, Pastor, Eugene Mennonite
Jim Schweitzer, Associate Pastor, Lebanon Mennonite

Recognition of Ordination Credentials:

Paul Versluis, Pastor, Prince of Peace Mennonite
David Morrow, Pastor, Warden Mennonite
Samuel Moran, Pastor, Iglesia Restauracion
Bruno Penner, Pastor Spring Valley Mennonite
Duncan Smith, Interim Pastor, Menno Mennonite

Ordained:

Teresa Moser McDermid, Pastor, Sunrise Mennonite
Brent Kauffman, Pastor, Lebanon Mennonite
Andy Wade, Pastor, Evergreen Mennonite

Larry led in prayer for all the new pastors.

The Reconciliation Resource Team proposal which was adopted by the Board was highlighted. Larry invited suggestions of persons who have interest and some training in human resource skills to be on this committee.

Peace & Justice Committee

On behalf of the committee, Jeff Hackman presented a resolution against church burnings. Ralph Lind shared about a church burning at the Emmanuel Free Methodist Church in Portland in the last week. Portland Mennonite Church has decided not to use their building facility on July 28 as an act of solidarity with those churches which have burned. Jeff then shared the resolution on an overhead projection. One minor change was suggested, and then it was moved, seconded, and passed to accept this resolution (copy attached).

Jeff also shared that the Peace Factory should be coming to the Northwest in 1997. He encouraged churches to recognize Peace Sunday on July 7.

Congregational Nurture Committee

Rachel Yoder highlighted the areas of focus for this past year as youth and young adult. There is also a resource library available for individuals and churches to use. The committee is trying to find a space where it can be housed.

Charlene Schrag presented a written report stating the dates of the youth sponsors retreat October 11-13 in Cove, Oregon and the senior youth retreat on February 14-17 at Drift Creek Camp. Charlene would like to talk with all youth sponsors over the next year.

Ray Schrock shared about the young adult ministry. The goals he has been working on as young adult coordinator is to provide resources for congregations, be an advocate for young adults, write a quarterly newsletter, find a young adult representative in Idaho and Washington, and plan a young adult retreat.

Conference Historian Report

Margaret Sheller reported that the *Mirror of the Martyrs* exhibit was held in January at Lebanon Mennonite Church. Grace Mennonite will be celebrating 100 years this year and Lebanon Mennonite will have a 40th anniversary next year.

West Coast MCC

Gale Gingrich expressed thanks to the volunteers who are part of the MCC program. He reported that the House Against Hunger in Salem sold for over \$130,000 which was a gift to MCC.

It was moved, seconded, and passed to accept all the reports presented.

Saturday Afternoon Open Sharing Time

Comments:

Wished there would have been more dialogue between the Board and Evangelism & Missions Committee. We had time to talk but not a dialogue session.

Affirmation of Larry Hauder and Pastoral Leadership Committee for their work they have given at Ranch Chapel.

Encouragement for every church to send someone to Mennonite World Conference in India in January.

Invitation to support the Christian Peacemaker Teams.

We now have a church in Mexico that supports itself. The Evangelism & Missions Committee is a tremendous resource.

Affirmation of the theme of the conference. A call was presented to the conference leadership to set the vision of the conference.

Gratitude expressed to John Miller for the praise and prayers each month.

Expression of thanks to Western Mennonite Church and Western Mennonite School:

It is with deep appreciation to Western Mennonite School and Western Mennonite Church for providing the aesthetically wonderful facilities and atmosphere, the concern for detail in causing us to feel welcome, the clear preparation that was invested by all persons to give us a place and spirit to carry out the business meetings of PNMC. Also thanks to John Willems for his adroit leadership. Thanks for listening to the Holy Spirit, for being obedient and faithful to Him.

Conference Annual Session for next year will be June 19-22 hosted by Calvary Mennonite Church.

Cleon Claassen expressed thanks to John Willems for his leadership over the past two years. John then led in prayer to close the meeting.

Worship Services

Worship services were held on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evening and Sunday morning. Both adults and youth were in attendance for each session. The theme "Called to be Followers of Jesus" was felt in a worship time focusing on I Peter. Larry Hauder, Conference Minister, provided the message on Thursday night focusing on the call on our lives to be shaped by our faith and to be separate (holy) from evil. Paul Lederach continued the spirit of worship and teaching in the next worship times. He not only shared inspiring and challenging words but he offered a depth of faith gained from his years of service to the church and devotion to God. The worship times were enhanced through prayer and praise through song and sharing. On Saturday night a special service of commissioning highlighted those serving on committees, Board, and staff of the conference as well as new church planters Susan & Mark Chen, committed missionaries to Hong Kong Andy & Susan Wade, and Jeannette Nisly who will be serving in Guatemala. A service of communion was shared by all in small groups during the Sunday morning worship service.

Submitted by,



Kathy Bilderback
Conference Secretary