

*Cultivating a Culture of Call*  
Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference

Trinity Lutheran College

Issaquah, Washington

*Morning Session One – June 18, 2004*

**Welcome**

Moderator John Willems opened the first Delegate Session of 2004 at 9:25 AM with a welcome for delegates and guests. John gave a special welcome to Duane Oswald from Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference, highlighting that this is the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of both the Pacific Northwest and Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conferences. Connie Rodriguez made a wall hanging that will be presented to the PSMC conference next week by PNMC Conference Minister, Duncan Smith. John said that God led us to form these two conferences. John has been praying that this conference will be a time of refreshing, and also a time of inspiration through worship. Conference business is God's business and the Spirit will guide us in our time together.

**Moderator Comments**

Moderator Willems reflected on how we as a people of God need to be a people of compassion. Conference can be a time to share our burdens with others, to get help in carrying them. He noted that Galatians 6:2 says, "Carry each others' burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." John shared an old story about a farmer who was walking down the road carrying a hundred pound sack of chicken feed. A man came by and offered him a ride on his wagon. The man accepted the ride, but still held the bag of chicken feed on his back. The driver encouraged the man to put down his bag because he now had a ride, but the other man said he was so grateful to receive a ride he felt he could still carry the bag. John encouraged delegates to please put your sack down on the floor so we can be servants to each other and help carry each other's burdens.

We are also called to listen patiently, as in Paul's petition to King Agrippa in Acts 26: 2. John encouraged delegates to listen to each other carefully during the next two days. God is not through with any of us yet. We need to be patient. Patience is a strong fruit of the spirit. We also want our time together to "seem good to the Holy Spirit and to us," as in Acts 15:28. Let us serve each other with caring and compassion and patience. We are here working together to make our conference the best servant of the Lord that we can.

Willems added that meeting the agenda schedule will be challenging, but we will try to do our best to meet timelines. Important issues to be discussed, including the budget. Painful cuts in expenses are proposed in the budget, based on the proposed levels of funding from the churches. John concluded that our optimism lies in the Holy Spirit. May God grant us wisdom and joyful hearts. John led in prayer.

**Receiving Anawim Christian Community as a Member Church**

Moderator Willems said it is a joy to receive a new congregation into our conference. Anawim Christian Community is a church in Portland, Oregon. The congregation has met the membership requirements. Jim Wenger and John Willems met with the congregation recently on behalf of the PNMC Board, and met with Anawim's board of directors. Anawim pastor, Steve Kimes, and several congregational members were present. Steve introduced himself and the rest of the group. Anawim is made up mostly of homeless and mentally ill individuals. Some are picked up from the Portland State Hospital for worship, while others

live on streets or camp out in the community. The group meets in four different places, to be closer to where different members are. They do not have a church building. Some aspects of worship are similar to other churches, but at Anawim it is okay for people to interrupt, even if they happen to be drunk at the time. The Lord has really blessed the group so far, beginning with six people, but now they are ministering to approximately forty people. Steve praises God for the strength he has given to participants to overcome addictions, depression and other difficulties. Some people on the street and in mental institutions are already Christians, and they just need a community to meet with. Anawim is not necessarily trying to change people from being homeless.

Willems says the Board of Directors recommends that Anawim Christian Community be accepted as a member congregation of PNMC.

**M/S/C** to accept Anawim Christian Community as a member congregation of the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference.

Duncan Smith welcomed the congregation and gave a greeting from Psalm 127 to Anawim. Duncan led in a prayer of blessing.

#### *Roll Call of Congregations*

Secretary Harold Nussbaum called the roll of member congregations asking delegates from each congregation to stand to be recognized.

#### *2003 Minutes*

John Willems asked for additions and corrections to the minutes of the 2003 delegate sessions. One correction was noted on page 21, line two: the total should be \$45,000 instead of \$4,500. Another correction was noted on page 14, relating to the role of the conference teacher (last two sentences of paragraph 3): instead of "authoritative", the wording was suggested to be changed to "authentic" (two places).

**M/S/C** to approve the minutes as corrected.

#### ***Recognition of Churchwide Guests***

Moderator Willems invited numerous representatives of churchwide agencies to come forward and introduce themselves to the delegates. The following representatives responded:

- Keith Harder, MC USA Executive Board and Office of Ministerial Leadership
- Peter Wiebe, Hesston College
- Marlene Kroeker, Mennonite Mission Network
- J. David Yoder, Mennonite Education Agency
- Leroy Willems, West Coast MCC Developmental Disabilities staff (introduced by Marty Freeburne, PNMC representative to West Coast MCC Board)
- Jacob Elias, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary
- Duane Oswald, Mennonite Church USA, Moderator, and PSMC representative

- Beverly Keck, Mennonite Mutual Aid Western region
- Jeanne Zook, represented Mennonite World Conference for 12 years, but has now completed her term. She presented gifts from MWC to PNMC: a copy of the Africa Mennonite history book by African authors, CD of songs from MWC Zimbabwe, and a statuette of a daughter dancing with a mother, illustrating the history of missions – that daughter churches have grown into sister churches.
- Larry Martin, Hesston College
- Amy Barker, Bethel College

### ***Nominating Committee Report and Affirmation of the Ballot***

Joyce Royce presented the Nominating Committee report and the ballot. Joyce encouraged churches to participate as actively as possible in the nominating process next year. The lack of sufficient recommendations from congregations made the process more difficult for some positions this year.

### ***Affirmation/Election Process***

Those candidates present were asked to stand to be recognized. A question was raised whether Wendell Amstutz was recommended by CIHAN for the Pastoral Leadership Committee position. CIHAN did in fact recommend Wendell for this position.

**A motion was made to accept the ballot as printed. It was Moved/Second/Carried.**

### ***Bylaw Revision of the Evangelism and Missions Committee to the Outreach Development Committee***

Moderator Willems outlined the changes from the old Evangelism and Missions Committee structure to the new vision for the Outreach Development Committee. The Mexico work was separated out from the Evangelism and Missions Committee function last year.

**M/S/C** to adopt the bylaw revision detailed on page 69 of the delegate book, changing the name and function of the Evangelism and Missions Committee to the Outreach Development Committee.

### **PNMC Committee Reports**

#### ***Congregational Nurture Committee***

Ann Hege referred to the written report and highlighted various ways congregations are working at improving their Christian Education programs. Judy Stutzman is the PNMC Christian Education resource person who presents workshops for Sunday School teachers in various congregations. Jon Yoder, committee member, highlighted an upcoming workshop scheduled for September 10-12 featuring Michael and Addie Banks from New York City and PNMC Conference Teacher William Higgins on "Prayers of the Past." The workshop will be held at Calvary Mennonite Church and the Banks will be speaking on Sunday at Pacific Covenant Church. Anne added that the Youth Coordinator position is mentioned in the written report, but filling this role became one of the difficult cuts made by the Executive Committee in preparing the budget. This does not lessen our conference commitment to youth.

### ***Pastoral Leadership Committee (PLC)***

Pat Hershberger reported for the Pastoral Leadership Committee. A new document on Justice Making is available here at the conference in preparation for delegate action tomorrow. This document follows-up on the PNMC action on Pastoral Sexual Misconduct, originally passed in June 2001 at the Zion conference. Duncan Smith and Sheldon Burkhalter will be addressing the Justice Making paper in seminars today and tomorrow.

Hershberger acknowledged several changes in ministerial credentials, which is the responsibility of PNMC. Licensing actions during the past year included Jack Knox at Salem, Jana Gingerich at Zion, Charlene Schrag at Portland (renewal), and Scott Dyer at Prince of Peace (Oregon). Ordinations during the past year included John David Thacker at Prince of Peace (Alaska), Jeannie Rempel at Evergreen (Washington), and Jon Yoder at Pacific Covenant.

One credential was withdrawn for Herman Rodriguez (Iglesia Cristiana Monte de los Olivos), in cooperation with CIHAN. Pat reported that this was a difficult experience, but it was very valuable to work together with CIHAN.

One pastor died this past year, Wilbert Nafziger, who formerly served the Salem congregation. Pat offered a prayer of blessing for those named, and invited delegates to gather around those present and lay hands on them during the prayer.

### **BREAK**

### ***Morning Session Two***

Rob Angerman, pastor of Plainview Mennonite Church, led in prayer.

### ***Conference Teacher Report***

William Higgins referred to his written report in the delegate book. Two classes are being offered this year: Leadership Instruction for Ministry, and Mennonite Doctrinal Distinctives (a three-weekend class). William has prepared a brochure detailing the duties of the Conference Teacher. A question was raised about how the wider Mennonite Church is responding to the role of the PNMC Conference Teacher, which is quite unusual among area conferences. A word of commendation for William as a teacher was also offered. William estimated that approximately forty percent of the persons who participate in these classes are laypersons. Williams visited both Evergreen Heights and Zion Mennonite this past year, and appreciated the opportunities to interact with them. He is available for additional opportunities in other churches in the coming year.

### ***Peace and Justice Committee***

Rob Hanson reported on the work of the Peace and Justice Committee during the past year. For the past three years the committee has worked to develop a different model of linking congregations together for peace and justice activities. Recently the committee conducted a regional conference call for peace and justice contacts among the Idaho churches. An article is being written for the next issue of the Evangel.

Matt Friesen presented the Gardner Hanks Memorial Peace Award. He noted that the Peace and Justice Committee received a dozen excellent nominations this year, representing a wide range of involvements. This year's recipient of the Gardner Hanks

Memorial Peace Award is Lois Kanagy. She is involved in a variety of peace and justice activities, grounded in much prayer. She was acknowledged for the strongly spiritual basis for her work in peace and justice. Lois responded with a brief story of reading a report from the Committee to End the Occupation of Iraq, and reading a copy of Signs of the Times from Christian Peacemaker Teams. A fellow-traveler asked her, "Are all Mennonites interested in peace and justice?" Lois said that one of the challenges for each of us is to love our enemies, care for the homeless, and to care for those who are victims of injustice. These commitments don't just belong to the Peace and Justice Committee, but to all of us. Lois would like to see more participation from the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference in Christian Peacemaker Teams.

### ***Western Mennonite School***

Larry Hildebrandt, representative to the PNMC Board from Western Mennonite School, introduced two Western Mennonite School staff persons: Darrel White, Development Director, and Eric Martin, Principal. Eric reported that he is leaving the school this year after twelve years. Eric is very gratified for the opportunity to get to know so many people from PNMC during this time. Western seeks to equip students for a life of faith and learning. That mission is still very meaningful for Eric as he prepares to leave this role. He is proud that this small conference (PNMC) has such a significant educational institution as Western Mennonite School. Eric calls on the churches of the Pacific Northwest to guard and treat Western Mennonite School as a gift, and recognize it as part of the PNMC conference mission. Eric introduced Darrel White as the new Executive Director of Western. The search continues for an interim principal. Eric believes Western will be in good hands under Darrel's leadership.

Darrel White shared about the importance of the culture of call in his life. He sees his job as creating an environment that will help students look at life in different ways that promote following Christ daily in life. Students at Western have opportunities to use their gifts and discover how God wants them to grow and use their gifts. God has provided exceptional staff to Western to help provide a program that is both strongly educational and faith-building. Darrel introduced another Western staff person, Andrea Friesen.

A question was raised about how Western can retain its Mennonite identity and distinctiveness when so many students and staff come from non-Mennonite backgrounds. Eric responded that one way the school works at this is by providing training of staff with Conference Teacher William Higgins. Mennonite values are presented through Bible classes and other ways. Western strives for an integrated approach to living and demonstrating Christian pacifist values. Darrel White added the importance of Western's connection to Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference in maintaining the sense of mission.

### ***CIHAN (Hispanic Confraternidad) Report***

Samuel Moran, President of CIHAN, explained that he is working on his English, so he will give his report in Spanish, and Simon Rendon will translate. CIHAN was able to negotiate an agreement with MCC to extend an immigration worker's assignment in Portland during this year. They also developed an agreement with PNMC regarding pastor licensing and credentialing. CIHAN held their fifth annual assembly in March 2004. They are glad for a close relationship with the PNMC Moderator. CIHAN has worked on various church issues with congregations, including disagreements about calling pastors, developing leadership groups, and identifying pastors. Currently ten students in Oregon and eight in Washington are participating in theological classes. CIHAN has been able to provide scholarships to enable more students to participate in these classes. Samuel Moran recently participated in the intensive preaching institute at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, and also traveled to Mexico for work with youth and theological training with pastors. Samuel concluded that we trust in the grace of God to guide our work.

## LUNCH

### ***Afternoon Session Three***

Frank Woelk, pastor of Spring Valley Mennonite Church in Newport, Washington, led in prayer.

#### ***Conference Minister Reports***

Duncan Smith shared about his new role as conference minister team leader. Duncan encouraged the delegates to remember Victor Vargas who is on sabbatical in Costa Rica. Duncan expressed appreciation for the working relationship that has developed with Sheldon Burkhalter in the past year. As team leader, Duncan feels it is important for him to think about the vision of the conference. He noted that implementing the specifics of the vision requires budget support. Duncan reviewed a few items from his written report in the delegate book. He stressed the importance of continuing to nurture pastors and emphasize solid ethics. Duncan also highlighted the importance of continuing to address issues that affect the Hispanic congregations more directly than others. He reminded delegates that "leaders lie awake because of their responsibility for your spiritual welfare" (Hebrews 13:17, Cottonpatch Gospel).

Sheldon Burkhalter reflected on his first ten months work in the PNMC. Sheldon grew up in the Ohio Conference and was part of their youth program. Then he pastored in Franconia Conference and the Iowa-Nebraska Conference. Later he worked at the Mennonite Board of Missions and most recently at Goshen College in church relations. Sheldon observes that PNMC gets lots of work done, but also has fun doing it. He has observed the importance of a strong Mennonite, anabaptist identity among churches here on the West Coast, partly because many of the churches are widely scattered. Sheldon is deeply impressed with the quality of pastors in PNMC, while there is also a lot of diversity. He also appreciates the emphasis on Hispanic ministries in this conference. PNMC is the first (perhaps the only) conference that requested reports from Sheldon at Goshen College to be submitted in both English and Spanish. Sheldon also highly values the emphasis on the role of the conference teacher. He also appreciates the team approach he has experienced in working with Duncan Smith.

Sheldon highlighted the seminars he and Duncan will lead today and tomorrow for all pastors. Part of the emphasis is on developing a pastoral review process that will help pastors grow. He shared his experience at the Mission Board and at Goshen College where the employee review process includes a self-review and goal-setting for the coming year. This is partly what the seminar will address.

A delegate expressed appreciation for the work of the conference ministers, Pastoral Leadership Committee, and others working with congregations. Another delegate urged PNMC to explore different models for working with youth. Sheldon reported that LeRoy Redding has accepted a strong call to become the new pastor at First Mennonite Church of Nampa. Sheldon shared several pastoral prayer concerns and led in a prayer for specific needs.

#### ***Evangelism and Missions Committee***

Steve Kimes presented the report for the Evangelism and Missions Committee, now re-formed with the bylaws change as the Outreach Development Committee. Moderator Willems clarified that the Board appointed the current four-member committee and that the new members will continue as the Outreach Development Committee. Staggered terms have been developed, and then the normal Nominating Committee process will resume. Steve Kimes noted that the committee was on hiatus for about two years prior to the past year. The current members reviewed the history and developed ideas to move these functions into the future. Other members include Jeryl Hollinger (chair), Sisay Desalegn, and Karla Morton. Each of the members attending conference is presenting a seminar this year.

#### ***Mennonite Church USA Executive Board Greetings***

Jim Wenger introduced Duane Oswald (Moderator) for the Mennonite Church USA report. Duane reported that MC USA is working hard to become a missional church. Literature is available on the MC USA table. Developing a culture of call is another

priority for the denomination. There are great leadership needs among our churches. Another priority is to reach out and connect more with the international church. Church-to-church relationships are being developed with churches in the Congo. The mission churches established years ago in the Congo have now grown up.

Duane also reminded delegates of the planning for a joint meeting with Mennonite Church Canada at Charlotte 2005. MC USA plans to meet again on the West Coast in San Jose, California, in 2007.

Duane is often asked how church transformation is going. He feels it is going great. He is excited that the West Coast conferences have led the way in showing how integration/transformation can work. New York Conference recently decided to join MC USA, Lancaster Conference bishops have recommended that their churches join, and several others are moving toward becoming part of MC USA. The MC USA Executive Board met in Portland in January and had a great experience. Cleon Claassen and Pat Hershberger represent the Pacific Northwest on the MC USA Executive Board. Duane closed with the blessing of the prayer of Zechariah (Luke 1: 76-79).

#### ***Financial Report 2003-04***

Treasurer Don Bacher distributed updated copies of the PNMC financial reports as of June 16. He will review the balance sheet, then review the financial report for the current year. Finally, he will review the proposed budget for the coming year (2004-05). There is much to be thankful for and much to be concerned about as we look at these reports. The Note 110508 of \$3,000 to Cristo tu Unica Esperanza has now been paid and should be removed from the Balance Sheet statement. The previous note for Lynden has been paid and no longer appears on the Balance Sheet. Earlier this year, the Board of Directors agreed to move \$50,000 from the Money Market Fund to the Stock and Bond Fund. The interest and dividends from the three Other Asset accounts are now being transferred in equal portions to the Theological Education and the Hispanic Ministry accounts as they are earned (rather than remaining in the asset accounts). The Board of Directors took action to make this change. The Mexico Projects Fund goes up and down as people give for various work projects that have been supported for Northwest Mexico. Don offered thanks to those who contribute funds to that work. Interest earned from the Notes is now being collected in the Note Interest Holding Account and then transferred to the CES Savings Certificate fund (transfers are only possible in multiples of \$1,000).

Don reviewed several highlights of the past year – fourteen congregations met their contributions pledge for the current year (up from nine last year). Five exceeded their pledge this year, compared to seven last year. Four have not yet met their budget pledge for the current year, although Don noted he often receives additional funds at conference. Almost 96% of budgeted income has been received from congregations, which is a little higher than last year. Don highlighted several expense items that were over budget or unusual.

#### **BUDGET**

Don noted that this is currently a difficult time for many congregations as they work with their own budgets. Sixteen congregations pledged the same as last year; eleven pledges increased and three pledges are lower than the current year.

Don would very much like to receive pledges to add to the 4901 Pledged Income budget line for the coming year.

Additional Need (line 4902) is the difference between projected income and projected expenses. The Board and Executive worked very hard to reduce this line from almost \$14,000 last year to under \$10,000 for the coming year.

Don noted that the proposed budget includes a 2% increase for conference ministers. Several office categories previously listed under each conference minister were combined into one PNMC Office account line (reflecting the establishment of the PNMC Office at Peace Mennonite Church). Don highlighted several areas that were cut compared to the previous year in order to reduce the Additional Need category.

### ***Questions and comments***

One delegate suggested that the Board should have presented a larger deficit to the delegates and let the delegates grapple with making the cuts. Don clarified that the budget being presented is the recommendation from the Board. The Board recognizes that the delegates can choose to do something different. Another question was raised about the lower budget for Victor Vargas' salary. This is related to his educational leave, which spans three months in the current year and three months in the next budget year. Another question was raised about the proportion of conference resources going to Hispanic Ministries compared to the number of churches.

Another delegate expressed appreciation for the conference decision about three years ago to move to a system of pledges from congregations. This was intended to create a more equitable funding system. Another delegate wondered why the Hispanic churches are not individually listed on the budget. It was noted that CIHAN is shown as contributing on behalf of the Hispanic churches (line 4120). An Outreach Development Committee member expressed hope that delegates will be open to creativity as the ODC attempts to develop its work within the confines of the very limited budget. Another question was raised about the Additional Need actuals compared to budget for the current year. Don noted that the \$740 actual on line 4902 for the current year reflects contributions that were designated to "where needed most." The budget line of \$13,838 for that category reflected the difference between projected other income and projected expenses to result in a balanced budget.

Additional time for questions and discussion will be available in tomorrow afternoon's session.

***Saturday, June 19, 2004***

### ***Morning Session Four***

John David Thacker, pastor of Prince of Peace Mennonite Church (Anchorage, Alaska), gave the opening prayer.

### ***Dialogue with the Board of Directors***

John Willems opened the session by introducing the members of the Board of Directors and inviting the delegates to address questions to the Board.



Q – Western Mennonite School is doing a lot of good things, but there is a concern about the expansion of the school to serve more grade levels, and how to make sure the Mennonite flavor is maintained and not diluted. Larry Hildebrand responded that we think about this question often. The key answer is for Mennonites to send us your students. Western attempts to teach these values through Bible courses and through the ways our faculty and staff demonstrate their faith through daily life.

Q – What is the Board's thinking about the \$340,000 in Other Assets vs. the \$390,000 in Liabilities. This will be addressed in the afternoon session on the budget.

Q – What is the Board's thinking about the budget reduction proposed for the Mexico Transition Committee? Simon Rendon responded that this was part of the overall effort to reduce the budget.

Q – Our children love coming to conference, but there is a concern about how youth activities will happen at future conferences. Anne Hege responded that a major role of the youth coordinator is to plan youth activities for conferences. We don't currently have an answer for this concern.

Q – Can you give us more detail about the transition with the Mexico Transition Committee? As chair of the Mexico Transition Committee, Simon serves as a liaison to the churches in NW Mexico. Usually he travels once or twice a year. The relationship with NW Mexico has been ongoing for 40 years.

Q – A delegate commended the board for reconstituting a new evangelism committee, but reminded delegates that each one of us is still where mission happens. The committee can't do all of this work for us. Hope to keep mission as a strong emphasis among our churches. Karla Morton responded for the new Outreach Development Committee, noting the committee's intention to encourage congregations to continue to be mission-minded.

Q – Why are there stars beside the contribution lines for some congregations on the projected financial pledges for next year? Don Bacher responded that the stars are reminders to him that the pledges from those congregations are still under discussion.

Q – Another response from a Mexico Transition Committee member – the economic situation in Mexico has been very difficult. He views the visits of Simon Rendon and Samuel Moran (recently) as being extremely fruitful. He was previously in favor of the planned phase-out of Mexico support.

Q – An idea was presented in Sisay Desalegn's seminar to encourage the promotion of indigenous missionaries for \$1,200 a year (example, Ethiopians to Ethiopians or to neighboring Sudan). These could be very good projects for the Outreach Development Committee to promote to Sunday Schools, Vacation Bible Schools and other groups.

Q – How are conference ministers salaries determined? John Willems responded that pastoral salary guidelines are distributed annually from the national ministerial office, based on geography, education, years in service and other factors. The schedule is the same one used to determine congregational pastoral salaries.

Q -- Question about office expense changes from this year to next year. Don Bacher responded that the separate office lines for each conference minister were combined for the coming year into the Conference Office lines.

Q – A comment was shared about the extensive time commitment that is expected of Conference Ministers, including travel time and compensation. If we expect to cultivate a culture of call, we also need to address the compensation we offer to pastors.

Q – One delegate offered a pledge of \$50 per month for PNMC as long as it is needed.

### ***Historian's Report***

Ray Kauffman gave a report highlighting some new books and informational brochures. The Oregon Mennonite Historical and Genealogical Society is still looking for someone to be groomed to replace Margaret Shetter as the PNMC archivist. Several books communicate cultivating a culture of call through personal experiences of various Mennonites and others. Ray shared about the importance of the conference archives and remembering our church history.

### ***Mexico Transition Committee***

Simon Rendon referred to the written report in the delegate book. His time in Mexico last fall included pastoral teaching and evangelistic crusades. In April, Samuel Moran spent a week with Mexican youth, and also spent some time in pastoral teaching in NW Mexico. Simon noted that the PNMC board has given approval to do outside fundraising for Mexico work (non-competitive funds). The Committee also wants to promote sister church relationships between PNMC and NW Mexico. The Committee has also requested the Board to establish a policy to pay honoraria for Simon's extended trips. Simon noted that he usually spends four weeks in NW Mexico. The Committee would like additional funds to make this possible. Simon would like to involve another person from McMinnville in this work. The work project planned for San Isidro needs about \$4,000 for completion. There is about \$500 on hand currently. Because of the budget cuts, there is only \$1,500 left in the budget for travel. An additional \$1,500 is needed. The San Isidro project is now estimated to cost \$5,000. We have forty years of relationship with NW Mexico. Simon will gladly explain to interested persons why those churches are not yet able to be self-supporting.

Simon reminded the delegates that more money is spent for dog food and cosmetics than for evangelism in America. Hopefully we in the PNMC are not like that.

### ***Greetings from Mennonite Church USA***

Keith Harder gave greetings from Mennonite Church USA. He is part of the new Congregational and Ministerial Leadership Team that was created out of two previous offices. One function is oversight and credentialing. They intend to model and teach team ministry in area conferences. They will provide resources to congregations looking for pastors and for pastors looking for assignments. They will continue to provide support for conference ministers as a very important part of their role. Gilberto Flores is currently the primary point of contact for PNMC. The office also sponsors an annual meeting of conference ministers, works on

the development of lay leadership resources, and provides resourcing for congregations. This work will also emphasize a team approach to congregational leadership.

### ***Greetings from PSMC after Ten Years as New Conferences***

Duane Oswald reflected that ten years ago the West Coast churches challenged the rest of the denomination to integrate conferences. At that time, three GC and MC conferences became two integrated, geographic-based conferences. This was processed with a bit of fear, but also a lot of hope for the future. Duane was President of the Pacific District Conference that encompassed the entire West Coast of General Conference churches. From 1992-94, they created an integration implementation committee to work at improved structures to better carry out the work of the church. The initial meeting of the combined conferences occurred ten years ago in Reedley, California. First, the old conferences were dissolved, then churchwide reports were heard, and then on the same day the new, combined conferences were created: Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference and Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference. Duane Oswald said, "We will make our voices heard" [in the wider church]. Duane referred to five lessons the rest of the denomination could learn from West Coast integration actions, based on a Gospel Herald editorial by J. Lorne Peachey. Duane Oswald expressed regret that Duane Ruth-Heffelbower was not able to attend today, as previously planned. Ruth-Heffelbower played an extremely important role in the transition process.

Oswald said that PSMC today has tremendously wide diversity. We do conference and conference business differently than we did ten years ago. We are no longer stuck in cement, but are moving about in soup. Anglo congregations are a minority in our conference. There is a lot more praise included in our business meetings now. Duane presented an angel of love and friendship sculpture as a reminder of the special relations of our two conferences. This could only have happened through God's love and grace. The sculpture is by Margaret Hudson, member of a PSMC congregation. All of her sculptures include the figure of a child. The sculpture is a symbol of God's watchful care over our two conferences as we have formed and grown. Duane said his only regret is that we have not met together as originally agreed. Hopefully that will be able to take place before 15 years pass.

John Willems accepted the sculpture on behalf of PNMC, with great pleasure, noting the very happy face on the sculpture. This is very meaningful to us in PNMC. John recalled meeting for seven to ten years in at least three committees to work through the process of integration that Duane described. John added that he believes God led us through this process.

Willems asked all those present who served on one of the committees to come forward to be recognized, and he led in prayer.

## **LUNCH**

### ***Afternoon Session Five***

Jack Knox, pastor of Salem Mennonite Church, gave an opening prayer.

### ***Vision Giving Report***

Janet Buschert, PNMC Board Member, presented a report on Vision Giving. Numerous individuals across PNMC have felt called to special giving for the Hispanic Conference Minister and for the Conference Teacher. Janet expressed thanks for those contributions. The fruits of this work are being woven into the fabric of the conference. A pamphlet describing the accomplishment of these programs in the past year is available at the conference and from the Conference office in both English and Spanish. Contributions this year for Hispanic Ministries totaled over \$12,000 and over \$900 was contributed specifically for the Conference Teacher. PNMC also received a second Schowalter Foundation grant for the CIHAN Bible School and for theological education in Northwest Mexico. Over \$4,000 has already been received in response to the latest fundraising appeal which was highlighted in Sheldon Burkhalter's Evangel article. It is a blessing to receive your contributions for these projects. John Willems added his thanks to all those who have already contributed to Vision Giving.

***PNMC Board Recommendation: Process to Move Hispanic Conference Minister budget from Vision Giving to regular budget***

If the delegates approve the recommendation from the Board, \$2,025 will be moved from Vision Funding to be incorporated into the regular budget. Don Bacher clarified that this will decrease income line 4701 by \$2,025, and increase income line 4902 by the same amount. There will be no change in the corresponding expense lines.

**M/S/C** to approve the recommendation of the Board to move the amounts in expense line items 5321 and 5323 in the amount of \$2,025 from Vision Giving to inclusion in the regular budget.

***Discussion and Action on 2004-05 Budget***

Don Bacher asked all church treasurers or persons responsible for church finances to stand and be recognized. They perform very important functions in all of our congregations.

Don highlighted that the Other Asset accounts are viewed in different ways. The Money Market Fund is viewed as a "rainy day" fund by the Treasurer, to help with unforeseen circumstances as needed. The Stock and Bond fund needs additional research about the history of the account. Most of the funds became part of the conference resources almost 40 years ago. The Board plans additional research to clarify the original intentions of the use of those gifts. The Savings Certificates with Church Extension Service are available across the U.S. for churches to borrow and use for church building and remodeling projects. In this way, PNMC assets are made available to the broader church.

A delegate stated that the only question about the revolving fund (110303) is who the original donor was. It was definitely intended for "bricks and mortar" additions to church buildings or new buildings. A decision needs to be made on what the conference wants to accomplish with these funds. The investments that are selected may be different depending on the goals.

What is the congregational giving pattern to Mennonite Church USA, since it's not reflected on the current financial reports? Don reported any money received for MC USA is forwarded directly by PNMC to MC USA. Don has only received one direct contribution in this way. Jim Wenger explained the Firstfruits Funding discussions and concept. PNMC chose not to implement this model a couple of years ago. The original budgeted "pass-through" amount of \$16,000 per year is based on the historical giving patterns of PNMC churches to the denomination. Duane Oswald added that MC USA is still working on a clarification of the Firstfruits Funding model, trying to look more at how the approach looks from the giver end. A delegate said it would be helpful for churches to know more about what the expected giving levels are by MC USA from the churches. Another delegate

said it is not clear whether funds sent to MC USA also goes to seminaries and universities. More communication was requested. Oswald stated that MC USA funds are allocated by formula to the Mission Network, the Executive Board and the Education Agency.

A question was raised about what the Revolving Loan Fund (Facility) is (220701). That account represents the funds that were given forty years ago for church building loans.

**M/S** that the delegate body recommend that the delegates take back to churches or individuals a request to give to the PNMC to supply money for: 1) Mexico work to finish our covenant that will conclude in 2006; 2) church planting (Venture Fund) \$3,000; and 3) \$6,000 for youth ministry.

There was discussion on this motion. Don Bacher clarified that last year the Congregational Nurture Committee budget included \$5,000 for the Youth Coordinator and \$1,000 for related expenses.

**M/S/C** to table the previous motion.

A delegate asked whether PNMC could use the Money Market funds to meet the budget needs, by considering this a rainy day. Don clarified that perhaps he should not have used the term "rainy day" to describe the Money Market account. The other asset funds take more time to access and could have penalties for early withdrawal attached. How many days of operating cash does PNMC have? Don generally keeps between \$30,000 and \$45,000 in the checking account.

A suggestion for the future is for the Board to consider ways to reduce travel expenses, and perhaps combine certain meetings. Another delegate observed that the current budget proposal with actions already taken is still \$11,000 out of balance (shown in the Additional Need line). Don responded that the Board could have proposed a budget with zero Additional Need, but that has not been the pattern in PNMC. There are often underspent expense accounts at the end of the year. Another delegate expressed concern about the \$244,000 balance in the Stock and Bond Fund, while cuts are being made for work such as Mexico. We need to continue focusing on mission. John Willems noted that the grant to the NW Mexico Conference is continuing at \$5,000 in the proposed budget. That was only cut slightly, due to the earlier agreement to reduce the PNMC share of the Mexico budget. The Travel/Resourcing budget is the one that has been reduced. This is the line for expenses for Simon Rendon's trips to Mexico.

Larry Hildebrant, board member, reminded delegates that several years ago a decision was made to reduce the conference budget to the actual level of support from congregations. In addition, provision was made to support Vision items with additional giving. If we want a bigger budget, we need to give more. Duncan Smith noted the importance of matching budgeted expenses to available funds while not losing the larger vision.

Another delegate expressed concern about the size of PNMC's cash reserves and assets in the Stock and Bond Funds. Donors would probably be supportive of changing purposes for changing times. Perhaps we could pull down some funds gradually while we are growing contributions rather than increasing the expense budget too far ahead of the congregations ability to give.

**M/S/C** that the Board be charged with bringing a recommendation to next year's delegate session about the use of the Stock and Bond Fund.

One delegate noted that the liabilities shown on the balance sheet currently exceed the assets, so PNMC does not really have a "rainy day" fund. Don Bacher highlighted that the income from the three Other Asset accounts are divided equally among the Hispanic Minister and Conference Teacher Vision accounts. One delegate noted that it would be helpful to show the income being generated from the Other Asset accounts, and that the biggest source of failure for businesses, families and churches is the lack of capital. It is very important to remember not to use up all of our resources. One delegate noted that if we eat the hamburger from the cow, there will not be any more milk from that cow in the future.

A suggestion was made to send a letter to each church asking about the potential need for church building funds. There is also a need to have clarification about the restrictions on the gifts. Another delegate noted that we have not yet agreed to support PNMC at the level needed to balance the budget, so it may be premature to spend down our resources hoping that we can raise additional contributions later.

**M/S/C** to accept the budget as presented in the June 16, 2004 document with the changes incorporated at this meeting.

The earlier motion was then returned to the floor for additional discussion.

**M/S** that the delegate body recommend that the delegates take back to churches or individuals a request to give to the PNMC to supply money for: 1) Mexico work to finish our covenant that will conclude in 2006; 2) church planting (Venture Fund) \$3,000; and 3) \$6,000 for youth ministry.

Pat Hershberger noted that this conversation is similar to earlier conversations where we have big visions, but do not have adequate resources to carry out all of our ideas. Another delegate noted the importance of communicating to congregations PNMC's vision, more than just about money. A question was raised about what will happen for youth at conference if there is not a Youth Coordinator. John Willems responded that the motion would address this, but if the motion does not pass, the Congregational Nurture Committee and the Board will need to do additional work to address this.

A concern was expressed about adding to the budget without adding resources. Another delegate expressed support for the role of the Youth Coordinator. It is a statement about what we value as a conference. It has not been a truly paid position historically anyway. This conference is about a call. Perhaps there is someone who has a hunger and a call to work with young people within our conference. We need someone to stand up and respond to this call, even as a volunteer.

Don Bacher noted that each person has his or her favorite program within PNMC. He has a concern that certain line items in the budget get more vocal support than others do. A suggestion was made to have a sign-up sheet for people who are interested in contributing extra fund, and to send a twice yearly request for funds to those persons.

The motion failed by one vote.

**BREAK**  
***Afternoon Session Six***

Silent prayer opened the final session.

***Unfinished Business***

For clarification, John Willems read from the PNMC Policy regarding the purpose of the Revolving Loan Fund.

John recognized Floyd Lapp, who served as the final Moderator of Pacific Coast Conference before it became Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference. He played an important role in moving the integration process along to the creation of Pacific Northwest and Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conferences.

**M/S/C to receive all reports.**

***Action: "Justice Making: The Church Responds to Clergy Misconduct"***

Duncan Smith introduced this topic, noting that the Justice Making document follows-up on the earlier policy against Pastoral Sexual Misconduct. Pastors have already received this document. Copies were distributed to delegates at this time.

Duncan noted that the earlier document had some weaknesses, particularly in addressing how victims and affected congregations should be related to by the conference after an occurrence of pastoral sexual misconduct. He highlighted seven points from the new document:

Truth-telling, acknowledging the violation, compassion, protecting the vulnerable (including taking steps to prevent further abuse and/or abuse to others), imposing negative consequences, restitution, and vindication.

PNMC adopted the Policy and Procedures on Sexual Misconduct in June 2001 at the Zion conference. This is a companion document that goes with the earlier document, which had a legal, mechanical emphasis to guide conference responses. Duncan emphasized the importance of support during and after the process. All of these steps move toward reconciliation and healing as much as possible in the situation. PNMC is working with pastors to sign a covenant of ethics between each pastor and PNMC.

One delegate said he does not believe it is scriptural to say that a person may not return to fellowship in a particular congregation. Another delegate noted that every church needs a safety code, especially for children in order to work at these issues in a preventive way. This policy does not provide that. Required reporting according to applicable state and local laws will also apply to these cases.

Sheldon Burkhalter offered a summary of the changes suggested in conversations in the past two days with PNMC pastors. One suggestion was to personalize the language more in Attachment 1, rather than using third person language. Another suggestion was to change the wording from being “aware” to wording reflecting acceptance of personal responsibility. An earlier recommendation by the conference pastors and the Pastoral Leadership Committee was to change “Code” to “Covenant” on Attachment 1.

Pat Hershberger suggested adopting the Justice Making document without the attachments, leaving the attachments for further processing with the Pastoral Leadership Committee and the Conference Ministers during the next year. One pastor noted that he had just seen the document for the first time, and would be uncomfortable voting on it at this time. It was agreed to postpone a formal decision on the Justice Making document until next year, although Duncan Smith clarified that Conference Ministers will proceed as though this is already conference policy during the intervening time.

### ***Conference 2005***

John Willems reported that PNMC has received an invitation to meet in Kalispell next year, but there may be scheduling issues due to limited lodging available during the peak tourist season. Also the MC USA meeting, Charlotte 2005, will be held during the first week of July. Lebanon has also indicated openness to host PNMC 2005. The Board will firm up the plans for next year's conference and notify churches as soon as possible.

### ***Mennonite Education Agency***

J. David Yoder brought greetings from Mennonite Education Agency. This agency works to promote Mennonite education at all levels. Stronger educational institutions make stronger churches. Anne Hege is a member of the MEA Board. MEA is planning an event to discuss the meaning of a missional church school. They are also planning a discussion on the educational needs of the urban areas, and of under-represented communities. MEA is also exploring ways to support public school teachers in their important roles as part of the missional church. MEA greatly appreciates the support of PNMC.

### ***Closing Remarks***

John Willems expressed thanks for all those who planned and participated in PNMC's 2004 conference. We patiently heard each other. We made decisions that were good for the Spirit and for each other.

### ***Open Mic***

Ron Camp invited all to participate in the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration at Calvary Mennonite Church on August 15<sup>th</sup>. John Willems highlighted the Sunday worship schedule for local churches. Floyd Lapp highlighted the scholarships for ministry education available through Mennonite Men.

### ***Blessing for Conference Ministers***

John Willems asked Harold Hochstetler to come forward. Harold served twenty years as the first conference pastor in the Pacific Northwest. He began at one-quarter time while pasturing a church, and moved to half-time for several years after retiring from his congregational pastor role. Harold led a prayer of blessing for Duncan and Sheldon.



***Commissioning Service for Continuing and New Board and Committee Members***

John Willems asked all continuing and new board and committee members to stand while Sheldon Burkhalter led in a prayer of blessing. Robbin O'Leary led the delegates in singing *Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow*.

***Adjournment***

The 2004 PNMC delegate sessions were adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Recorded by Harold Nussbaum, PNMC Secretary