

**Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference  
Annual Meeting - Moses Lake, WA  
June 22-23, 2012**

Welcome by moderator Linda Dibble

1. Dwelling in the Word – Executive Conference Minister, Katherine Jameson Pitts, opened the conference with the theme passage, John 20:19-23, which was read in Spanish and English.
2. Worship session – was led by guest speaker, Mennonite Church USA Executive Conference Minister, Ervin Stutzman, based on John 20:19-23
  - a. Bless one another with the Shalom of God.
  - b. Linking Grace, Joy and Peace.
3. Delegate Session – Linda gave instructions and guidelines for how the table groups will function.
  - a. Directions regarding the blue sheet on the delegate tables: Fill it out as things happen, take it home, and report on the conference to your home congregation.
  - b. The evaluation form is to be filled out, as delegates feel appropriate.
  - c. Approval of 2011 PNMC Conference Minutes from 2011; Jack Swaim moved that the minutes be approved; Jo Miller seconded the motion; the delegates approved the motion.
  - d. Roll call of congregations – Charlotte Derksen, PNMC Secretary
 

Thirty-three churches had one or more delegates present; eighty-one delegates participated in the business sessions; one chaplain participated as a delegate. A signup sheet was sent around the delegates tables, for delegates and chaplains to sign.

Churches which did not have delegates present at time of roll call:

    - i. *Anawim – came later*
    - ii. Calvary
    - iii. Vida Nueva
    - iv. Eugene (delegate was sick; unable to attend)
    - v. Fusion Faith Center
    - vi. *International Bethel City Church – came later*
    - vii. Jerusalem
    - viii. Peace Community MC
    - ix. The River
    - x. River of Life
    - xi. Spring Valley
    - xii. Springwater
  - e. The ballot was presented to the delegates for the affirmation of nominees: Officer: Moderator-Elect, Jennifer Delanty; Officer: Secretary, Wanda Dorsing; Board of Directors, At-Large Member: Isaac Hooley (one year of a 4-year term); Board of Directors, At-Large CIHAN Member: Eva Mendez; Pastoral Leadership Team: Simon Rendon; Gifts Discernment Team, one year term: Bob Buxman and Anne Hege. The ballot was affirmed by the delegates.

- f. Executive Conference Minister report
  - i. Katherine gave thanks to Dave Stutzman for his service as Interim Conference Minister
  - ii. This change in PNMC leadership (Iris De Leon-Hartshorn, followed by Dave Stutzman, followed by Katherine Jameson Pitts) was the second such change in the last 4 years
  - iii. Katherine emphasized that we don't know what the church will look like in 30 years
- g. Changing role of delegates – Katherine reviewed the Mennonite Church USA document on the changing role of delegates
  - i. Delegates now are charged with discerning the direction of PNMC, and ultimately of Mennonite Church USA; the delegate role no longer is to make decisions per se.
  - ii. This change can pose the question: Who then makes decisions? This question led directly into the following presentation and table group discussions
- h. Healthy Congregations Discussion – introduction to topic given by PNMC Board Members Jack Swaim, Jeryl Hollinger, and Isaac Hooley. The questions to be considered by the delegates are:
  - i. Why are we here?
  - ii. Why do we have a PNMC board?
  - iii. What are we up to?
- i. Table discussions on Healthy Congregations topic – Table Reports:
  - i. Table #1: There is an additional need – the answer to these questions could/should be answered by CIHAN. PNMC needs to move toward being a truly multicultural conference. We need, as a conference and as members of the conference, to learn to make decisions multi-culturally.
  - ii. Table #2: Table members suggested asking the conference members and the board to work more closely with CIHAN; CIHAN and PNMC need to work together.
  - iii. Table #3: Table members suggested publicizing the in-process Ministerial Leadership Information forms as a way to improve visibility of pastoral searches; PNMC's conference minister and district pastors need to be pro-active regarding congregations and pastors; district pastors may not be called in until there is a problem. This table group suggested that Katherine be more available and visible to congregations. They also discussed plans for Sunday School & Bible schools. Table members requested that the "chain of command" be clear.
  - iv. Table #4: This table group thought that planning for the future is the greatest need in congregations. Additional resources/help in the following activities would be very helpful: planning worship, doing evangelism, growing Christian faith, and pushing congregations out of the comfort zones. They look to PNMC for resources and for ideas for pushing ahead where possible.

- v. Table #5: Members of this group request help in pastoral transitions; they have received good help from PNMC in the past; they want to continue receiving help in finding pastors when congregations are looking; they seek help in making good pastor/congregation fits. This group thought that the Executive Conference Minister is a good outside voice for the congregations. They felt that there are many concerns about finding the right fit for pastors. They raised the question: “How do we respond as congregations or as pastors, when there is conflict between a congregation and the designated District Pastor and the congregation or pastor would like support or input from the Executive Conference Minister?” As congregations plan for the future, table members hope for resources from PNMC, especially for growing congregations. Table members suggested a resource box for congregations looking for growth. Groups have been using outside resources, when PNMC didn’t have resources available. Group members would like to see fresh resources; they want to hear from congregations, where is there hope. Table members would love to hear more about resources for these conflicts, in particular, what has worked well, from other churches within PNMC, rather than from agency representatives? There was good feedback for Evangel and other reporting within PNMC. They are looking to see growth from ALL of our congregations.
- vi. Table #6: Pastoral transition can sometimes be a problem, in part because the congregation is late in asking help; this may be due to our egalitarian structure. For those that have experienced crisis, PNMC has helped with crisis. Can PNMC be a resource for church growth? Resources for strengthening pastors such as recently held workshop, pastor/spouse retreat, setting boundaries, have all been helpful. Will PNMC do these again? Can there be more of them? What about sharing between congregations regarding what we’re doing? Can PNMC facilitate informal gatherings? In PNMCs transition to the new structure, we’ve lost Passion Based ministries. Is there a way to reconnect to passion based and other missing ministries?
- vii. Table #7: Table group members talked about pastoral transitions and about the relationship between Pastors and District Pastors. District Pastors should also work with congregational committees, not just pastors.
- viii. Table #8: This delegate group gave affirmation to pastoral transition support, affirming that it has been done very well. The work done has been appreciated. They requested a plan for the future. PNMC needs to be more up front about working with church leadership, not just the pastor. The E-bulletin is appreciated and helpful. The question was raised: does the E-

bulletin need to be more culturally sensitive? Is it relevant to the PNMC Hispanic groups?

- ix. Table #9: The peer-to-peer piece will only happen if the relationship is already in place. AI – brought to congregation – that is nice for pastor to do – but what does it have to do for the rest of us? It felt top down from PNMC. Congregants need face time beforehand.
- x. Table #10: Table members affirmed the work of the District Pastors, as well as support for pastors and congregations in transitions. In addition support may need to be boosted for the lay leadership. The question was raised, how should the chair of the congregation work with multi-staff situation.
- xi. Table #11: Table group members made positive comments about pastoral reviews and the discernment process. Regarding the district pastor system, congregations are diverse; a one-person model doesn't always work here. How can we get the right District Pastor with the right church? Who decides these assignments? Fresh ideas are needed as congregations age, as experiences change the needs, as there are differences among members. How can we have a healthy congregation in all those circumstances?
- xii. Table #12: Pastoral transitions? Conference help will be needed in one form or another. Congregations can use more help in these processes. Congregations also need help in future planning, in long term planning. Where does PNMC play a role with leadership without a strategic plan? We need to become missional congregations; we need to grasp this concept. Also what can we do to extend into the local communities?

Moderator Linda Dibble requested each table group members to hold up one of the green, yellow, or red cards in place on the delegate tables. The great majority of cards held up were green, some were yellow and a few were red.

### 3:00 PM – Reporting

1. NW Mexico
  - a. Simon Rendon brought greetings from Sonora and Sinaloa. Simon read his report.
  - b. Curt Dorsing gave a report, including pictures about building projects in Mexico
  - c. Rick Troyer talked about his recent trip to Mexico.
2. Ervin presented a short video of Mennonite Church USA.
3. Iris talked about going to Phoenix. It's complicated. The Iglesia Menonita Hispana leaders are not going to Phoenix. However, they have given their blessing to others to go and support the Hispanic peoples living there. What will we do in Phoenix around the issue of immigration?

- a. Prior to Phoenix Mennonite Church USA wants to have four regional immigration events:
  - i. There is a need to educate our churches about what is going on in our country – what does God say about the stranger in our land.
  - ii. First generation immigrant churches want to share the issues that they face regarding the laws around immigration.
- b. What will we do after Phoenix? There has been a suggestion to have prayer vigils at detention centers.
- c. What will we do at Phoenix?
  - i. It is the hope to provide daily orderly trips to the border
  - ii. There is a plan to have four-hour training-learning experiences – 2 days (4,000 people) about migration, immigration, trafficking. There will also be Bible studies on immigration. These sessions will be intergenerational. The schedule will still include the usual one hour seminars, but on other days.
  - iii. Regarding the suggestion to make public witness in Arizona; our partners in Arizona are not open to and do not encourage public witness as a form of protest. People who come to protest come to town, protest, then leave, leaving the locals to pick up the pieces.
  - iv. A prayer vigil is planned.
  - v. A flash mob choir is also planned.
  - vi. There will be opportunities to tell stories of immigrants – an art form – turning of tables.
4. Mennonite Mission Network – Marlene Kroeker brought words of hope and challenge. In my job I hear about what’s going on all over the world, and all over the U.S. Simon’s [Rendon] story is happening all over. People are hungry to hear about Jesus and his message. A booklet, the new Anabaptist voices, is now available in Spanish, as well as English. People who are new to the Anabaptist voice are talked about.
5. Everence – Beryl Jantzi said that being a steward is exciting, organizing yourself in such a way that God can give you away. People are most lax about stewardship. There are 2300 references to money and possessions in the Bible. Stewardship is one of the most practical aspects of where our faith connects with personal life. Everence provides resources to scratch the surface of this topic. The Everence webpage ([www.everence.com/](http://www.everence.com/)) provides free downloadable educational materials. Stewardship is everything you do after you say you believe.
6. Hesston – Tim Lichty said that the student body is shrinking, times are changing and Hesston needs to adapt to the times. Now 45% of the students are not Mennonite.
7. Creation Care – Dave Hockman-Wert – The Peace & Justice Support Network welcomes interaction and questions from anyone on either of these subjects.
8. Bethel College – Perry White reported that Bethel will celebrate 125 years this year. “If I see further than others, I stand on the shoulders of giants who have come before me.” This year only 38% of the students are Mennonite.

9. Mennonite Education Association – Ervin Stutzman reported that schools are taking seriously the need to look in different places for students. MEA wants to reach the lives of people, not just the college students. There is now a larger number of international students in our schools.
10. Mennonite Health Services Alliance represents 70 health and health related agencies, with our way of understanding health and health related issues.
11. Western Mennonite School – Caleb Ivanitsky is excited for what lies ahead for Western. The school members are looking for ways to connect with churches. Maybe 13% of the student body is Mennonite now.
12. Iris posed the questions “why pick undoing racism” as a title and how does this tie in with intercultural transformation? Since the beginning of 1995 there have been a lot of concerns within Mennonite Church USA. For People Of Color, the question is how to be empowered? How do we identify racism and want to work against it? Let’s make it clear we are working to dismantle racism, not just racial, but also cultural differences. Undoing racism honors the idea to get rid of racism; it is also necessary to work on intercultural competency.
  - a. How to work at it together? She has had several people give her their opinions.
  - b. Power and privilege – The Intercultural Development Inventory will be tested on three Mennonites.
    - i. The theory is that intercultural competency is a development of who we are, not the idea of denial of differences, and all of a sudden we can adapt to the other. We need to deal with it and work at moving along the continuum. Our communities are becoming diverse and we don’t know how to incorporate people into our congregations.
    - ii. In October every conference is sending three people to train as facilitators. Bienvenidos, first generation immigrant groups, will help them understand the culture they live in, how they live in it. Second part of training is to train two facilitators to work through the story: who we are, how do we want to construct a new story as a congregation. In this construction, will talk about the IDI.
    - iii. The West might be on the leading edge – of course.
    - iv. What does it mean to be interculturally competent?
      - a) We need to be able to understand differences deeply.
      - b) How do we adapt to those differences? It is not about assimilation, but how do we all adapt so that all can be part of the DNA of the Mennonite Church?

Linda: Thank you every one. A lot goes on in our world – it is challenging and fun and perplexing. Worship is in this building tonight.

**SATURDAY**

Dwelling in the Word, led by Katherine Jameson Pitts, from John 20:19-23, read in Spanish and English

- Where is the place you get stuck? What parts are hard for you to grasp?
- What makes your heart leap?
- This was followed by the opening prayer and a song.

## Discernment Session II

1. Carl Hege and Cecil Miller had a discussion about the best potato; Gary Jewell introduced a California potato and then led in a prayer for reconciliation
2. Any delegates who have not previously signed the delegate sheets, were requested to do so.
3. The 2011 Finance report was given Moderator Linda, in the absence of Treasurer Harold Nussbaum.
4. Articles of Incorporation – Jerry went over the articles of incorporation
  - a. No net earnings can benefit any director of the corporation
  - b. Article 4 needs to be amended to include Article 4.C: “Upon dissolution of the Corporation or the winding up of its affairs, the assets of the Corporation shall be distributed to Mennonite Church USA, of Newton, Kansas.”
  - c. The PNMC Board recommends acceptance of these amended articles of incorporation
  - d. Brent Kauffman moved to amend the proposal to articles of incorporation to include: “Article 4.C. “Upon dissolution of the Corporation or the winding up of its affairs, **100% of** the assets of the Corporation shall be distributed to Mennonite Church USA, of Newton, Kansas.” Dave Stutzman seconded the motion; the motion was carried unanimously.
  - e. Floyd Lapp made a motion to accept the restated articles; Jeanne Rempel seconded the motion. The motion was carried.
5. By-Laws – amendment as non profit corporation. The proposal before the group is to insert Article 7 into the PNMC by-laws, regarding conflict of interest.
 

“Proposed Article 7. Periodic Reviews to ensure the Organization operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

  - a. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information, and the result of arm’s length bargaining.
  - b. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to the Organization’s written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in inurement, impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.”
  - a. The Board of directors recommend to the delegates to approve this insertion of Article 7 into the by-laws. This article allows for

- services/contracts to happen in-house, but provides adequate protection for the prevention of abuse.
- b. Rod Stafford made a motion to accept the revised by-law; Ike Kauffman seconded the motion. The motion was carried.
6. Overview of Purposeful Plan – Ervin
  7. History of Purposeful plan – Linda
    - a. Many people, including all of the delegates at the MCUSA meeting in Pittsburgh, have reviewed this document for processing and changes
    - b. The document was given to table groups for review and discussion.
    - c. The delegates were asked to consider this question: “Where do you think God is calling you as an individual to practice one of these areas?”
  8. Recognizing the work of the Interim Conference Minister, Dave Stutzman, Linda gave a blessing written by Nancy Kauffman.
  9. A Prayer shawl was presented to the new Executive Conference Minister, Katherine Jameson Pitts, as a pledge of prayer support by the congregations for the work of the Executive Conference Minister.
  10. Katherine reported that the continuing and new board members made vows to work with her and with the congregations last night. Katherine led the Commissioning service for the new board members: Jennifer Delanty (Moderator-Elect), Wanda Dorsing (Secretary), Eva Mendez (At-large Member), Isaac Hooley (At-large Member). Continuing Board Members are Jeryl Hollinger (Moderator), Harold Nussbaum (Treasurer), Jerry Barkman, Joseph Penner, Jennifer Sottolano, and Jack Swaim. Jack and Harold were not able to be present. Katherine thanked the board members for their willing service.
  11. Incoming Moderator Jeryl Hollinger thanked the two members who, having completed their service, were leaving the board: Mario Bautista and Charlotte Derksen.
  12. Moderator Linda Dibble is completing her service as Moderator. Jeryl expressed to Linda our deep appreciation for her leadership of our conference. He also expressed appreciation of her spiritual commitment. He explained that “we, the board members, are doing business, but we’re at the work of the church also.” Jeryl called forward Linda’s husband and gave thanks to Rob for lending Linda to PNMC, “especially thanking him for the commitment and the years you have supplied Linda to PNMC.”
  13. Katherine gave a blessing for new and continuing District Pastors. She pointed out that District Pastors are VERY important in our ministry. She asked all of the District Pastors to stand where they were: Wendell Amstutz, Charlene Epp, Larry Hauder, Gary Jewell, Brent Kauffman, George Leppert, Al Lind, Cecil Miller, Lynn Miller, Duane Oesch, and Dave Stutzman.
  14. Katherine led the assembly in the closing prayer.

Submitted by Charlotte Derksen, Secretary