

Evangel

the tri-annual newsletter of Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference

Summer 2011

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Salem 2011 Report

by Gary Jewell, District Pastor and Interim Pastor of Hyde Park Mennonite Fellowship

I sometimes tell people that I'm a bit strange ... I like going to annual conference meetings. The truth is that most who attend Annual Meeting are there because they enjoy it. For many in our churches, attending conference is not possible due to schedules and work. For others, there is just not the interest. "Conference? What's that?"

My answer is that conference Annual Meeting is the chance to meet together with other churches that hold to an Anabaptist view of Christian faith and practice. With thirty-eight congregations represented, there is the opportunity to network, visit, worship, learn and reconnect.

This year the meeting was held at Western Mennonite School near Salem, Oregon. The theme was "Discerning in Community" and the majority of scheduled time focused on exploring the topic of discernment. The book of Philippians provided biblical material for exploring this theme. Robert "Jack" Suderman, former General Secretary of Mennonite Church Canada, led the assembly through sessions on Paul's

letter to the Philippians. He likened our exploration to that of a pleasant stroll through a rose garden.

Along with scholarly insights into the meaning of Paul's words, Jack related to stories from his years of teaching in Colombia and Cuba. He shared one Colombian saying which stays in my mind: "If you don't know where you've been or where you are going, then any bus will do." Such folk wisdom, as well as scripture and story, spoke to the broader theme of discerning the church's direction together.

We also looked at Philippians through the scripture reading style of *Dwelling in the Word* (also known as *lectio divina*). Craig Morton, co-pastor of Emmaus Church, lead the group on Friday and Saturday mornings. Table groups listened to the scripture reading (Philippians 3:7-21) and simply shared a phrase, thought or word that came to mind as the scripture was read. The style and practice required a contemplative frame of mind, focus and reflective listening.

Another way the discernment theme was explored was through a morning session led by the Faith and Practice Team. See Cathleen Hockman-Wert's article on page 3 for a full description.



Business was discussed and the ballot and budget approved. Finances were slightly in deficit, though generally sound. We gave our blessings to Iris de León-Hartshorn as she leaves the Executive Conference Minister position and we welcomed Dave Stutzman as he takes on the role of Interim Conference Minister.

Finally, this report would be incomplete without recognition of the wonderful work of Barb Buxman, PNMC Administrative Assistant, and the local volunteer planning committee who organized all the logistics to make this Annual Meeting a success.

Our Vision: Healing & Hope

God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

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PNMC Moderator reflects on Salem 2011



Each Annual Meeting provides opportunity to renew friendships, make new ones, to listen to inspiring and thought-provoking messages. Salem 2011 lived up to this expectation for me and I hope for you as well.

This year's conference saw about 200 attendees at various seminars, training sessions, discernment/delegate sessions and worship services. Guest speaker, Robert "Jack" Suderman, challenged us

at the Pastor/Spouse dinner with words from Philippians to "be worthy of the calling to which we have been called." The church needs to remember our calling and who we are to the world.

On Friday and Saturday, Jack continued to lead us through the scriptural garden of roses – we were encouraged to stop and smell nuggets of joy, rejoicing and hope, and to realize there is also an ominous note as Paul wrote from a Roman prison. Paul's joyful, confident words are not said lightly. We were asked if it is possible to "trudge" with a spirit of hope.

During our closing worship service, Board members offered a blessing for Iris de León-Hartshorn and Dave Stutzman as they embark on transitions in their lives and in our conference. Nancy Kauffmann, Mennonite Church USA Denominational Minister, led this time of blessing. Nancy has already met with the Search Committee and the Board, and has helped us to think about particular aspects of the search process.

Despite our current transition, I feel like PNMC is in a more stable place than during the Structure Vision time period. It feels like we are beginning our search process with more clarity for the Executive Conference Minister role than we had several years ago.

In addition to the ECM transition, delegates approved the ballot. See page 5 for a listing of these changes. The Board gives great thanks to persons who so freely share their time and talents. PNMC has been served by so many willing, dedicated and capable persons over the years and I am grateful that there continue to be persons who care about the health of our conference.

In all of this, I am reminded of Paul's writings that Jack referred to over the weekend. My hope is that we will be found "worthy of the gospel of Christ," and that we will stand "firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel." (Philippians 1:27, NRSV)

~ Linda Dibble

Exec Conference Minister's prayer

This will be my last article as Executive Conference Minister. I want to thank everyone for being welcoming and helpful in these two years that I have served. I could have not done this work without the help of two wonderful team members, Barbara Buxman and Brenda Zook Friesen. I also want to express a big thank you to the board for their guidance, partnership and their graciousness in releasing me to my new work with Mennonite Church USA. I want to share with you my three hopes, or prayers, for the conference.

First, I pray that the conference will continue to practice *Dwelling in the Word*. We need to reacquaint ourselves with the biblical narratives that shape us as people of God. Next year at Annual

Meeting, our speaker will be Ervin Stutzman, Mennonite Church USA Executive Director. I am confident that he, too, will bring the Bible alive like Jack Suderman did for us this year.

I hope that we will continue to provide trainings, in both English and Spanish, at our Annual Meeting for laity and pastors. We rely so much on our lay church leadership and I hope we find ways to continue to support them.

I hope that we will continue to be gracious to each other in the midst of our differences and that we become worthy as a discerning community. As Jack said, "This is the vocation of the church."

I look forward to joining you as a volunteer member of Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference and to serve in

whatever ways I can. May God grant you grace and peace, my brothers and sisters in Christ.

~ Iris de León-Hartshorn



**Pacific Northwest
Mennonite Conference**

Evangel is the tri-annual newsletter of Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference. Newsletter submissions, feedback and subscription information can be sent to: *Evangel* Editor communications@pnmc.org or PO Box 301036, Portland, OR 97294

In an effort to be environmentally and fiscally responsible, this newsletter is issued electronically. If this creates difficulties, hard copies are available by request. Newsletters are published in March, July and November. The next deadline for submissions is October 15, 2011.

Grab some iced tea and enjoy archived issues here: <http://www.pnmc.org/Resources/Evangel>.

Meet Interim Conference Minister, David Stutzman

by Brenda Zook Friesen, Editor

At the 2011 Annual Meeting, David Stutzman was officially welcomed and blessed as PNMC's Interim Conference Minister. Dave actually began his quarter-time term on June 15, 2011, sharing the Conference Minister responsibilities with outgoing Executive Conference Minister, Iris de León-Hartshorn. Dave will serve quarter-time until September 1st after which his commitment will increase to half-time.

PNMC is deeply grateful to Dave for his willingness to serve during this transitional time. Dave brings a wealth of experience and expertise to his role. He has served within PNMC organizations in numerous ways during the last forty-plus years. Specifically, he has served in ministerial roles for Portland Mennonite, Emmaus Fellowship, Western Mennonite, First Mennonite of Aberdeen and Albany Mennonite. Currently, he serves as District Pastor for our conference.

Dave has also volunteered in a variety of ways with PNMC and its predecessor, Pacific Coast Conference (PCC). He has served with missions committees, the Integration Exploration Committee that eventually led to the creation of the PNMC, PCC Christian Education Committee and as PCC moderator-elect and moderator.

In addition to these professional and volunteer roles, Dave is a dedicated walker, logging about three miles per day up and down the hills of West Salem. He is a sports enthusiast (bordering on sports "nut!"), favoring the teams of the Portland Trailblazers and Oregon State Beavers. He also enjoys reading, bird-watching, traveling, spending time with family and friends and being a grandpa.

Dave and his wife, Donna, have celebrated 49 years of marriage. Their three adult children and four grandchildren all live in Oregon. The Stutzman's home congregation is Western Mennonite Church.

When asked how he reacted to the invitation to serve as Interim Conference Minister, Dave replied, *"Needless to say, I was surprised ... Having been retired for a couple of years, I was enjoying my retirement immensely and was certainly not looking for another major assignment. Besides that, it is a big job for which I don't feel qualified. However, I have enjoyed serving God and the church in a variety of ways and this offered another opportunity to do that. Since the position is part time and comes with the promise of support and assistance from a variety of other people, after much prayer and the counsel of others, I decided to accept."*

“ *I am trusting that the Lord will provide what I need for the task and I am certainly desiring the prayers of many as I serve in this role.* **”**



Board members offer a blessing to Dave Stutzman (center) during closing worship at Salem 2011.

As far as what Dave envisions for his time in this role, he reflected that pastors and congregational leaders are, “key in contributing to healthy congregations and healthy congregations are so key in sharing the Good News of Jesus through their words and deeds.” In light of this, Dave’s hope is to do what he can, “to encourage and support the pastors, their spouses, and congregational leaders in the conference. One way to help in this is to encourage and equip the district pastors as they work with the pastors and congregations to which they have been assigned. That task is one of my major assignments and I hope to find ways to do that.”

Please join us in supporting Dave with your prayers as he serves as District Pastor and Interim Conference Minister. His contact information is listed on page 8. And, if you are interested in volunteering with the conference in any way, please let us know!

PNMC Treasurer

by Brenda Zook Friesen, Editor

We would like to extend heartfelt thanks to Ed Miller who has served as PNMC Treasurer for the last three years. Ed has contributed to helping us remain financially sound, even in the midst of the national budget crisis. Ed shared the full Financial Report at the Annual Meeting including the 2010 detailed financial statements, 2011 budget, and comments. All

documents can be viewed at: <http://pnmc.org/Teams/Finance/Reports>.

We would also like to welcome our new PNMC Treasurer, Harold Nussbaum from Portland Mennonite Church. Harold was unanimously approved by delegates during our Annual Meeting and began his three year term immediately following Salem 2011. Join us in praying for Harold as he serves in this crucial role.





Participants role play while using different decision-making models.



Decision-making processes turn Life upside down!



Carl Hege (l) and Cecil Miller (r) debate the merits of ID versus WA potatoes, respectively.



Faith & Practice Team member, Stephen Obold-Eshleman, tries to decide where to cast his vote.

The Potato Topping Decision (is what???)

by Cathleen Hockman-Wert, Delegate for Corvallis Mennonite Fellowship

A highlight of the Salem 2011 assembly for me was the “PNMC Potato Scenario” created and led by the Faith and Practice team. The exercise was designed to help delegates wrestle with the discussions taking place at the denominational level – and relevant to our regional conference – about how to make decisions as a church body.

In the exercise, table groups were given a scenario of a decision that needed to be made – the critical question of whether to serve butter and chives or meat gravy on potatoes – with half of the tables using a democratic (Robert’s Rules of Order) decision-making process and the other half using a discernment model process. We observed, however, that the discernment model in this exercise was more similar to consensus-building than the Spirit-led, prayer-centered discernment process intended for a real issue.

Each person was given one of five roles to play, representing different perspectives on the question at hand. With a vegan, cattle rancher, dairy

farmer, environmentalist and apple grower all at the table, coming to a group decision was going to require negotiation.

After the role-play, the group as a whole compared experiences and shared observations. More decisions were made by the Robert’s Rules tables (with results ranging from one of the stated choices to “third way” alternatives like salsa), but some of those participants shared that they didn’t feel very good about how the process went. In fact, both types of groups reported that emotions were high in the discussion.

It was fascinating to see how the exercise played out. Aside from the value of exploring the two decision-making models in this experiential way, I appreciated the exercise because I believe it’s vital for church members to learn how to talk with each other about areas of disagreement – and an imaginary issue offers a non-threatening way to practice. We tend to perceive disagreement as a negative thing, but differing viewpoints are not inherently bad. We can learn to make decisions in ways that treat all people with respect and kindness. I welcome future opportunities to develop this skill among PNMC brothers and sisters.



The Faith & Practice Team demonstrated a parable on decision-making before leading participants in the PNMC Potato Scenario role play. Above, Pat Shaver, decides what resources she relies on for discerning.

To access documents and other resources from Salem 2011, visit

<http://pnmc.org/Meetings/AnnualMeetings/Salem2011>

Salem 2011 Major Decisions & Highlights

The PNMC Board and Delegates unanimously **approved the 2010 minutes, 2011 ballot and budget.** Many thanks to outgoing Board members: **Jeanne Rempel** (Seattle, WA) and **Ed Miller** (Kalispell, MT).

Thanks to **Charlotte Derksen** (Seattle, WA) for extending one year as Secretary, and to **Jerry Barkman** (Canby, OR) and **Joseph Penner** (Salem, OR) who accepted two-year terms as At-Large Members. In addition, **Jack Swaim** (Boise, ID) has been appointed to complete the term vacated by Pat Senner last year.

A warm welcome to new members: **Harold Nussbaum**, Treasurer (Portland, OR); **Rod Stafford**, Pastoral Leadership Team (Portland, OR); **Bob Buxman** (Portland, OR) and **Anne Hege** (Aberdeen, ID) both serving on the Gifts Discernment Team.

Delegates unanimously **welcomed Centro Cristiano Pentecostés de McMinnville as a member church of PNMC.**



Opening worship with Roca de Salvación (above) and Salem Mennonite Children's Choir (below).



Guest speaker, Robert "Jack" Suderman shares on the theme of discerning together.



Participants enjoy a break in the sunshine on Western's campus (library in background).



Mennonite Church USA agency representatives pray for PNMC leadership.



Pastors and their spouses enjoy a meal catered by Maria Diaz at Salem Mennonite Church (June 23).



Gabriel Vasquez (l) shares about NW Mexico congregations with Simon Rendon (r) translating.



While *Dwelling in the Word*, participants seek out a "friendly-looking stranger" to share insights.

Visit our Facebook page for the complete photo gallery (no sign-in required)

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Pacific-Northwest-Mennonite-Conference/234830199869321>

Church Connections

Mountain View (Montana)

By Jeryl Hollinger, Pastor

How can I explain Mountain View Mennonite Church? Certainly several things should be said: We are hundreds of miles from any other MC USA congregation; we love to sing and to laugh; we are quite rural and our meetinghouse is ten miles east of Kalispell; it is difficult to imagine a church setting more beautiful than the backdrop of the Swan Mountain range. But those snapshots do not begin to capture the vitality that exists in the fellowship of our little church.

On a typical Sunday morning between 40 and 60 people meet for Sunday School and worship. By the coffee pot and always-present snacks, folks catch up with one another. We are from a variety of religious backgrounds: Roman Catholic, Southern Baptist, Mormon, Lutheran, non-churched, non-denominational, Methodists, Church of Christ, and yes, some with Mennonite roots.

One hundred years ago, Mennonite farmers learned of the rich soil of the Creston area of the Flathead Valley and began moving here. They began meeting in homes for worship. In 1913, they built a small meetinghouse and formally organized as an Amish Mennonite congregation. With large families and rural

connectedness, a healthy congregation developed with a strong sense of Mennonite separation from the world.

In recent years the church has been going through rapid transition as the older generation - born, raised and married in the church - has been passing away. Simultaneously, a growing commitment to higher education sends youth off to college from which they seldom return. So our church family is now much smaller.

Today there continues to be a strong commitment to Anabaptism, but the energizing factor seems to be a common desire to care for one another while reaching beyond our church family. The worship team has been working to integrate our worship and sense of mission. In the Sunday bulletin, a page is dedicated to ways we are reaching out that week. The introduction reads: ***"At Mountain View Mennonite Church we strive to be a Spirit-filled community celebrating and listening to Christ as he develops us into relevant disciples serving God through others in the world."***

Service is a church theme. Our most involved outreach is an after school childcare program which serves 25-30 children from two local elementary schools. Much effort also goes into our International Gift Festivals selling fair trade products and serving food in our



Mountain View Mennonite Church with Swan Range in background.

Village Café. Monthly we provide and serve a meal to the homeless in Feed the Flathead. Thursdays we sing with residents at the rehabilitation home, Heritage Place, and once a month lead Sunday worship there. For the past three years we have done a winter service project. This past year 8 persons went on a two-week MCC Work and Learn trip to Haiti.

Hundreds of prayer blankets and prayer shawls have been distributed. Mennonite Women is an active outreach. There is an annual Over 60s dinner for our community as well as Christmas caroling. We always seem to be collecting things: local Food Bank items, soup can labels for Children's Haven International, change jars for Hope Pregnancy Center and Smile Train, or Mennonite Central Committee relief items.

But the ministry theme is deeper than programs we do together. Each person is encouraged to find their own expression of personal ministry giftedness. The ministry gifts are endless.

If you would visit us on a Sunday morning, we would not seem that different from other congregations. You would find us visiting, studying, laughing, singing and praying together. And then as we combine our efforts we trust that the Spirit will grow our joy and our fellowship, enlarging our love and our witness.



Above, the International Gifts Festival is a popular community event. Below, members help with Feed the Flathead, a monthly meal for persons without homes.



Children worshipping at Mountain View



PNMC Ministerial Updates

Linda Nafziger-Meiser has resigned as pastor of Hyde Park Mennonite Fellowship. Gary Jewell is now serving as Interim Pastor.

Todd Lehman's last Sunday as pastor of Zion Mennonite Church is July 31, 2011.

A warm welcome to David Stutzman, Interim Conference Minister, who began quarter-time on June 15 and will increase to half-time as of Sept 1.

Church Connections

Eugene Mennonite (OR)

By Rose Marie Barber, Pastor

Eugene Mennonite Church began meeting together in 1964 and was officially organized in 1965. Two years later, they purchased their current property of 3.61 acres on 3590 W. 18th Avenue in Eugene, Oregon, while continuing to rent from the Four Oaks Grange Hall through 1976. The current building was dedicated in 1979, built with help from the Pacific Coast Conference Mission Board and volunteer labor from around the state.

Over the years, Eugene Mennonite has quietly been helping to birth another organization as well. In 1994, several women from the Eugene Friends Meeting approached the congregation about renting space for their dream of a private, alternative high school to meet the needs of students who did not fit well into the traditional academic climate. Thus, Wellsprings Friends School was founded.

It took great effort from the school and the church to make the arrangement work, particularly during the school's formative years. Now, 17 years later, the school is stable, thriving, has consistent and dedicated leadership and staff, and enrolls 60 high school students with more on a waiting list. Wellsprings is now the primary user group for our building and grounds.

Beginning in 2002, Wellsprings started contacting Eugene Mennonite about the possibility of purchasing the property in order to eventually build a



campus more suited to their educational goals. In 2009, a joint committee was formed to decide what the best possible scenario would be for both the church and the school. This committee met weekly for several months, looking into every possible option for the use of the grounds and ownership.

At the end of their time together, they concluded that the best course to pursue would be to reverse our current arrangement, selling the entire grounds to Wellsprings, with Eugene Mennonite being the renters. After discussion and prayer, negotiating a price and writing up an agreement, on Sunday, May 22, 2011, Eugene Mennonite Church voted unanimously to sell the property to Wellsprings, including a rental agreement along with the contract of sale.

Many, many people have come and gone through Eugene Mennonite Church over our years of existence. Likewise, many people have donated their time, talents and finances to help support us through the years, including the purchase of the property and the construction of our building. Your

The space shared by Eugene Mennonite Church and Wellsprings Friends School



support has not only birthed Eugene Mennonite Church, but now has gone on to birth Wellsprings Friends School as well.

We want to honor all who had a part in our congregational journey over the years up until now. We offer our thanks to God for those who have helped us over the years and as we look forward to God's continued leading as we take this next step in our journey.

Read more about both ministries and view pictures at <http://www.wellspringsfriends.org/> and <http://www.eugenemennonite.org/>.



Congratulations to Western Mennonite School's Lady Pioneers

On June 3, Western Mennonite School placed second in 2A/1A OSAA Softball. This is the first time in school history for the Lady Pioneers to make the state tournament. In the Championship game, they lost to the Regis Rams 4-1. They finished the season with a record of 22-7. "I'm just so proud of the girls," commented WMS Head Coach Brian Wright, "They played their hearts out and never gave up." For full article: <http://www.westernmennoniteschool.org/athletics/sports-available/softball/>.

PNMC Board of Directors

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Jeryl Hollinger
Mod-Elect, 2014

Charlotte Derksen
Secretary, 2012

Harold Nussbaum
Treasurer, 2014

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CIHAN, 2012

Jerry Barkman
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Joseph Penner
At-Large, 2013

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At-Large, 2014

Jack Swaim
At-Large, 2013



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Wendell Amstutz: Oregon CIHAN, Centro Cristiano Pentecostes, Comunidad Cristiana de Vida Nueva, Iglesia Cristiana Roca de Salvación, Iglesia Menonita Pentecostes, Ministerios Restauración, Jerusalén Iglesia Menonita

Charlene Epp: Anawim Christian Community, Bethel City Church, Portland Mennonite

Larry Hauder: Evergreen Heights Mennonite, Filer Mennonite, Peace Community Mennonite

Gary Jewell: Evergreen Mennonite, Menno Mennonite, Prince of Peace Mennonite, Seattle Mennonite, Warden Mennonite

Brent Kauffman: Albany Mennonite, River of Life Fellowship, The River Mennonite

George Leppert: First Mennonite, Hyde Park Mennonite

Al Lind: Calvary Mennonite, Eugene Mennonite, Pacific Covenant Mennonite, Zion Mennonite

Cecil Miller: Mt. View Mennonite, Shalom Church, Spring Valley Mennonite

Lynn Miller: McMinnville Mennonite, Salem Mennonite, Western Mennonite

Duane Oesch: Emmaus Christian Fellowship

Dave Stutzman: Corvallis Mennonite, Lebanon Mennonite, Logsden Neighborhood Church, Plainview Mennonite Church

Our Mission Statement is to:

Promote personal spiritual development,

Nurture healthy congregations,

Make strong connections, and

Call each other to fulfill God's purpose for the world.

PNMC CALENDAR OF EVENTS*

Aug 20: *OR MCC Sale pre-sale Picnic* at Dave & Julie Yoder's (Woodburn, OR)

Aug 20: *PNMC Board Meeting* at Portland Mennonite Church (OR)

Sept 16-17: *PNMC Board Annual Planning Retreat*

Oct 1: *WA MCC Relief Sale* at Menno Mennonite Church in Ritzville, WA

Oct 3-5: *Pastors' Retreat* at Menucha Retreat Center in Corbett, OR

Oct 8: *OR MCC Relief Sale* at Linn County Fairgrounds in Albany, OR

Oct 20-23: *Fall Quilt & Scrapbook Retreat* at Drift Creek Camp (OR)

Nov 4-6: *DCC Annual Camp Meeting* at Drift Creek Camp (OR)

June 22-23, 2012: *PNMC Annual Meeting*, central WA (TBA)

* Details for the events above can be found on the PNMC Calendar (pnmc.org/Calendar) or in archived e-Bulletins (pnmc.org/Resources/eBulletin).

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