

Evangel

the tri-annual newsletter of Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference

Spring 2014

Volume 69, Number 1

Waking up from Winter

By Katherine Jameson Pitts



It has been a quiet winter in the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference... When not one, but two significant conference-wide events have to be

cancelled due to snow and ice in a winter that only had two big storms here in Oregon, it's hard not to wonder if we're doing something wrong, at least in our scheduling system! It's been a disappointment not to gather and hear from one another how God is moving in our midst and discover new connections and ways to support each other. As much as technology enables us to have meetings with video links, to send email and make conference calls, there is something about sitting around tables face-to-face, sharing meals, and having time to let relationships build that can't be replaced. I hope many of you are making plans now to **come to Kalispell for our [annual meeting](#) this summer.** Seminars, service projects and other activities are being planned for all ages; for delegates and non-delegates alike. We want to be together as the family of God!

The theme we have chosen for our annual meeting comes from Paul's letter to the Colossians 1:3-6, "All over the world the gospel is **bearing fruit and growing**, just as it has been doing among you." As the daffodils in my

back yard begin to slowly unfold, and buds are beginning to sprout on trees, I am reminded that while sometimes it is easy to see growth and fruit-bearing happening, at other times there is much happening underground that we may not be able to see, but is necessary if the plant is ever to burst forth in fruit and flower.

The gospel is bearing fruit and growing among us. Sometimes in unseen ways, like the growth that happens in individuals as they gather for group spiritual direction at Seattle Mennonite Church, and sometimes in obvious ways like when Portland Mennonite Church struggles to find enough seats for everyone on Sunday morning. The gospel is at work in our world and we discover it's already there and growing as we join with others in our community to work for immigration rights like our congregations in Boise, or provide warm food and thick blankets for those in need of shelter from life's storms at Anawim.

The gospel is bearing fruit and growing, and we are invited to be part of its movement. As spring brings new growth, so God wants us to grow in the Spirit as the good news of God's love takes root in our lives and in our congregations. As we prepare to meet in Kalispell we want to begin looking toward the future – for our congregation and the conference as a whole. Where is the gospel growing in your community? How can we be part of encouraging and participating in that growth? What

sustains us when the growth is unseen? How can we sharpen our vision to see the places the gospel is growing around us? What fertilizes the growth of the gospel in our own lives?

Paul's words to the Colossians are mine to the congregations of PNMC, "We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints – the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the truth, the gospel." I invite you to pray with me for all the congregations in PNMC, for the wider Mennonite Church to which we belong, and for the growth of the gospel in all the world.

To register for the 2014 Annual Meeting, visit www.pnmc.org.

In This Issue

Women's Voices	2
Moderator Reflections	3
Immigration Reform	4
Treasurer's Report	5
Church Connections	6
Camp Opportunities	7
Calendar & Directory	8

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.

Women's Voices

By Brenda Zook-Friesen

On February 20-22, 2014 close to 200 mostly-Anabaptist women gathered in Leesburg, VA, for All you need is love: honoring diverse women's voices doing theology. I attended in my dual role as both participant and Mennonite Church USA staff person providing logistical support. I had attended the last Women Doing Theology conference almost ten years ago, *The Red Tent*, so I had high expectations for what happens when women gather to worship, fellowship and theologize.

It has been a struggle to summarize my experience. When I returned, folks would ask, "How was it?" I would stammer and eventually say, "It's hard to put into words. It was holy." A month later, I find I'm still filled with feelings about this time: *Profoundly grateful. Inspired. Comforted. Challenged. Humbled. Cautiously hopeful.*

Planners shared their intention asking, **"What does it mean to love in the midst of a world rife with struggle and oppression?"** The desire was to create a conference to "face these realities head on – tensions between women of greater and lesser privilege, the need to listen deeply to a wide variety of voices in matters of faith and theology, the difficulty of putting love into action and standing in solidarity with struggling sisters around the world." Intentional thought was given to open space "that allows women to work together at addressing these tensions and embrace the diversity of women's voices in theology. [We] are committed to a robust theological understanding of love, which is key in making this sort of embrace possible." (Taken from the *All you need is love* [webpage](#).)

I was immediately struck by how intergenerational the gathering was – we spanned from infant to elderly and everything in between. Like many North American Mennonite gatherings, the participants were predominantly



Malinda Elizabeth Berry offers a theological response to storytellers asking, "What does our theology say when we are told our existence is a problem?" Photo: Nekeisha Alexis-Baker/AMBS

white; the stark difference, however, was the intentional effort made to ensure a racial and ethnic mix among the planning team and presenters. I was grateful for the unapologetic addressing of power differences along the lines of race, class, gender and sexual orientation. As a group, we were invited into God's "womb" that is expansive and able to hold all of us – *without glossing over* the pain and injustice that these divides can bring.

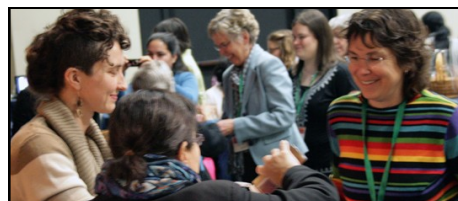
From the get-go, it became clear that this gathering would be anything but simple. Dr. Calenthia Dowdy challenged *What's Love Got to Do With It?*, exposing the emptiness of love promises that aren't backed with action. The opening worship set a tone and expectation for our time together – that True Love is complicated and messy. The conference aimed to create a space where that complexity could be met with courage, honesty and grace.

It was profoundly refreshing to be in a worship space filled with Divine feminine presence – where God was regularly and naturally referred to as Mother/She and where Sophia was not just acknowledged, but incorporated into all we did. There was dancing and breaking bread and drumming and laughter. There were tears that flowed freely when we courageously named the violence that has been committed against women within church and society. There was no need to defend our stories because our

stories overlapped so much, we knew them to be true. The fact we shared so many common hurts was heartbreaking, infuriating and comforting – all wrapped together.

Conference planners did a phenomenal job of offering many modalities for engagement. The list of workshops and paper presentations could fill a college semester syllabus. Times were set aside for meditation, prayer and reflection – or naps, if that's what one needed! A social room provided space to meet with old and new friends while also learning about supports and resources from Anabaptist organizations. An evening of slam poetry voiced words rarely spoken in "traditional" holy places – it was a delightful surprise! At the end of every day, I collapsed into bed filled to the brim emotionally, intellectually and spiritually.

I continue to struggle to put this experience into words – it was truly something that had to be felt and lived. Staff from the *Women in Leadership Project* are working to put together materials that can be shared with those who were unable to attend. I know these will be wonderfully rich resources, yet no printed document can really capture what took place. I know we experienced glimpses and tastes of God's kingdom and agape Love. My prayer is that this kind of worship and living church can flow into our congregations. I don't want to have to wait another 10 years for this kind of experience!



Joanna Shenk of Elkhart, IN., left, and Sandra Pérez of NYC serve sticky rice and honey to Cathy Stoner of South Bend, IN. Photo: Carol Roth/MC USA.

Evangel is the tri-annual newsletter of Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference. Newsletter submissions, feedback and subscription information can be sent to: *Evangel* Editor brenda@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 April, August and December. The next deadline for submissions is July 1, 2014.

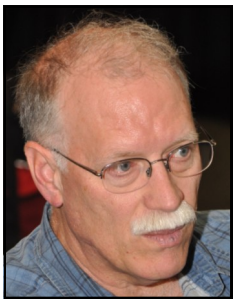
Grab a warm beverage and enjoy archived issues here: <http://www.pnmc.org/Resources/Evangel>.

**Pacific Northwest
Mennonite Conference**

Spring 2014

Being Church Together

By Jeryl Hollinger, PNMC Moderator



Being church together is a spiritual discipline. But it can be messy. Several factors make it so: The church, including Mennonite Church USA, and area

conferences, including PNMC, is institutional in nature. Jobs, structures, reputations, and lots of money are involved in helping us accomplish our common mission. But money can be withdrawn, reputations can be destroyed and jobs can be lost when difficult issues divide people. Thus the church becomes political in nature often resorting to finding the best way to keep most of the people together most of the time.

The church is a place of nurturing faith. Faith is primarily about the meaning of life and how to live faithful to that meaning. This is the most important issue for every living person and without it we cannot have a meaningful life. Our churches are committed to nurturing us along the Jesus path because we

believe Jesus is God's Word to us about life's meaning and value. This is a wonderfully healing and strengthening journey to be on together. But since faith is so important to our lives we can feel very uncomfortable when people on this journey with us come to different conclusions about specific issues in life and faith. So it is easy to get caught up in heated arguments and even walk away from those with whom we disagree.

As a leader in the church for over 30 years, these two factors have often tempted me to take my eyes off my faith and to get caught up in trying to please people who are unhappy about something in the church. That unhappiness usually concerns someone else in the church. As a leader I am sometimes approached by someone who has a concern and I am asked to straighten out that other person or in some way or to publicly condemn their action or view. Sometimes a threat accompanies this request – that unless I fix it, they will leave the church. That is a tough position in which to find one's self as a leader and it is easy to cave into that pressure.

My faith, however, cautions me from trying to solve things through the use of political power or institutional authority. Did Jesus work that way to save and heal the world? Did he instruct us to

work that way? Did he not empty himself of all that? And did not that type of thinking and acting in God's name crucify Jesus and cause the Apostles so much pain and persecution? Dealing with Jesus through political and institutional condemnation accomplished nothing. The powers were not able to stop the new work of God's Spirit. When we are tempted to try and get our way in the church by using institutional power, we might well ask ourselves why we find this path so appealing when it is so antithetical to our Lord?

Difficult issues and conversations will always mark the journey of God's people as we seek to follow Jesus. These conversations are extremely important. They go to the heart of what it means to belong to Jesus. Sometimes we will rejoice in new insights gained. Other times fear and anxiety may make us want to stop the conversation or to walk away. But this is the spiritual discipline of being church: of listening carefully to those with whom we disagree, of humbly waiting in prayer, and of joyfully letting the Spirit of Jesus lead his church. In his hands all will be well. *All will be well.*

Bible 101

By Rachel Ringenberg-Miller,
Pastor of Community Life at
Portland Mennonite Church

Don Blosser, a retired pastor and Bible professor at Goshen College (Goshen, IN) led a weekend seminar entitled **Bible 101: Sacred Stories, Radical Vision** at Portland Mennonite Church in February. The weekend's outline was:

- Friday: *How the Bible came to be*
- Saturday a.m.: *The Old Testament*
- Saturday p.m.: *The New Testament*

As it goes with pastors and professors, the conversation time that Don offered was lively and full of great questions. Out of those conversations a few thoughts to remember were "the essence of faith is to follow Jesus vs.

believing in Jesus", "Faith is moving toward, one should try to keep up with God instead of trying to keep God in history." These bits of theology and ways of understanding the Bible continued to bubble up throughout the weekend.

At the end of the weekend Don challenged the group to put more energy around the historic peace position in the Mennonite church than what it is currently doing (broadly speaking). Blosser pushed for the education of both youth and adults and for reading the words of Jesus with a more critical eye when it comes to issues of nonviolence. He also talked about pacifism as something that starts small within one's community whether that is the faith community, family,

friends, or neighborhood community. Blosser believes that Mennonites should work harder to be more proactive peacemakers vs. reactive peacemakers. To be more proactive peacemakers, knowledge of the Bible and of Jesus are essential.

It was a full weekend of conversation, biblical scholarship, and questions. May this conversation about the Bible continue to live on in our congregations as we seek together to hear God's voice in the text.

Anyone interested in hearing the sessions can do so on the PMC website: www.portlandmennonite.org/bible-seminar.html.

Academic Goals

By Caleb Ivanitsky, Communications Director
Western Mennonite School

Western Mennonite School is excited to add **Advanced Placement** courses to the list of improvements that for the 2014-2015 school year. Academic Director, Zig Derochowski, has spent the last several months working closely with teachers and other administrators evaluating ways in which Western can strengthen its mission to achieve academic excellence. Derochowski says, "We are continually seeking opportunities to strengthen the academic excellence of our students. We feel that the addition of AP courses is a necessary and exciting way to better serve our students." Guided by the School Board of Directors and school administration, Western is taking some major steps to improve what they have to offer the community and enhance the education that students are receiving. More announcements will continue to come from WMS in the coming months, it will be exciting to see the ways in which Western continues to find ways to equip students for lives of faith and learning!



WMS benefit auction is right around the corner! Please pray for event planners and help meet the following needs:

- Live auction items (\$200+ value)
- Silent auction items (\$50-\$200)
- Pies
- Refrigerator truck
- Volunteers
- Bidder Guide sponsors
- Pioneer 5K run/walk sponsors

If you have an item you would like to donate, or would like details on any of the needs listed above, please contact Charlene Schultz at 503-353-2000.

Idaho Churches Join in Supporting Immigration Reform



Above: Marc Schlegel speaking at an immigration reform rally on the steps of the Idaho State Capitol. Behind Marc are photos of "Aspiring Americans" who are the face of this movement. A press conference was held to kick-off the "11 days of prayer and fasting for immigration reform."

By Marc Schlegel, Pastor Hyde Park Mennonite Fellowship, Boise, ID

During September of 2013, Hyde Park Mennonite Fellowship, Evergreen Heights Mennonite, and Emmaus Christian Fellowship, along with several other churches throughout Idaho's Treasure Valley, took part in eleven days of prayer and fasting for immigration reform. Eleven days to symbolize the estimated eleven-million undocumented people currently living in our country.

Upon returning from the Mennonite Church, USA convention in Phoenix, I received an email from the Idaho Interfaith Alliance, looking for clergy that would be willing to join local efforts for immigration reform. After spending a week in Arizona learning about immigration reform, studying migration and the Bible, and hearing stories of those who have been unjustly impacted by our current system – I felt that if I did not answer this call, a whale might show up in my backyard. Answering this email lead our congregation to having a worship series on immigration and the Bible, which lead to a letter-writing campaign, which, eventually lead us into joining with

some of our fellow Idaho congregations in this fasting and prayer effort (including two other local Mennonite congregations who were also willing to answer this call).

As a congregation we are seeking to be more of a prophetic voice in our community – a prophetic voice that speaks from the impulse of love and not the impulse of fear. We know this means speaking from who we are as a peculiar people of faith – a people that seek to point to the God that created all people in God's very own image with limitless potential. We also know this means we must pay attention for where God is already at work within our community. Participating in this time of prayer and fasting was, for us, a clear place of intersection of those two elements: who we are as a community of faith, and where God was already at work in our community.

Gratitude from PNMC: Finance Report - Year-end 2013

By Harold Nussbaum, PNMC Treasurer

PNMC was blessed by strong contributions and spending less than budgeted, which combined to end the fiscal year more than **\$18,000 in the black**. Congregations contributed 98% of their pledged giving, and individual contributions were \$28,000 more than budgeted due to a gift from the Clarence and Ruth Reeser estate.

Expenses were \$10,000 less than budget.

The PNMC Board and staff are extremely grateful to all of the churches and individuals who made these results possible. During the past year the board has developed a matching grant program called Seed NW for congregational outreach and development, using the special 2012 gift from Eugene Mennonite.

The year ahead appears to be as challenging as ever, as the Board adopted a 2014 budget that includes a \$17,000 shortfall. Several congregations have already responded positively to our request to increase congregational contributions by 7% over the next two or three years, while some are struggling. In addition, we are very hopeful that numerous individuals and families will make contributions to help PNMC fulfill its mission this year. Contributions can be sent as checks (made out to PNMC) to the PNMC office: PO Box 301036, Portland, OR 97294. To donate with a credit or debit card, click on "Donate to PNMC" at the PNMC [website](#).

The physical distance between our churches is vast; congregations are scattered across hundreds of miles. While we in the Pacific Northwest treasure our beautiful mountains and wilderness areas, we recognize that our rugged landscape can also leave us feeling isolated. Building community requires intentional commitment. Will you consider a gift to the **Delegate Assistance Fund** so that representatives from our entire conference can participate at our annual gathering in Kalispell?

Look for details on the Kalispell 2014 registration form or send gifts, marked Delegate Assistance, to PNMC.

February 2013-January 2014 Budget

	Actual	February Year to Date Budget	%
Church Contributions	\$129,210	\$132,004	98%
	\$39,877	\$8,785	454%
Total Income	\$169,087	\$140,789	120%
Total Expenses	\$150,933	\$161,374	94%
Income vs. Expense	\$18,154	\$(20,585)	

NEW PROGRAM TO SUPPORT PNMC MINISTRIES

When Eugene Mennonite Church sold their building to the Friends School that had been sharing it with them for years, they made a generous contribution to PNMC. They made this contribution in recognition of the way that PNMC had helped them in their early days as a congregation and in the hopes that the money would be used to help other congregation as they develop.

The Executive Board of PNMC has decided to use this money to fund grants to congregations in PNMC, but more than that, to attempt to multiply this money through establishing a grant project that depends on all of us to help. We are calling this program **Seed Northwest** and you are invited to participate.

Seed Northwest offers matching grants to member congregations who need assistance with new projects for mission, outreach, and growth. Our goals are to:

- Financially assist emerging and re-developing congregations
- Encourage creative ideas for outreach and mission
- Unite all members of the PNMC in support of exciting grassroots projects

Here's how it works. Any member congregation of the PNMC may submit an application to receive grant money from Seed Northwest. If approved by the Seed Northwest project team, the grant money will be offered on the condition that the project can generate support and enthusiasm from around the conference. The amount of money that Seed Northwest offers must be matched with donations from other individuals and congregations before the grant money is awarded. Some of the donations may come from the congregation seeking the grant, however, it is our goal to unite all our member churches in support of each project and a project must demonstrate that it has broad support before funds are granted by Seed Northwest. Once a project is approved by Seed Northwest, we will assist you in promoting your project and generating financial support from around the conference.

Rejoicing in God's gifts to us, Joseph Penner, Rick Troyer, Angela Boss and Katherine J. Pitts
Seed Northwest Project Team

www.seednw.weebly.com

Visit the PNMC Facebook page
for photos and upcoming events.
(no sign-in required)

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

Church Connections

A Time to Celebrate!

Several PNMC congregations will gather to celebrate milestone anniversaries this summer. If you are traveling and find yourself in these regions, take advantage of the opportunity to join the celebration!



Iglesia Menonite Roca de Salvación, Aurora, OR

15th Anniversary, June 6, 7 & 8, 2014

Prince of Peace Mennonite Church, Anchorage, AK

25th Anniversary, June 28-29, 2014

Eugene Mennonite Church, Eugene, OR

50th Anniversary, July 13, 2014

Filer Mennonite Church, Filer, ID

100th Anniversary, July 19-20, 2014

Iglesia Menonite Pentecostés, Woodburn, OR

50th Anniversary, July 26, 2014

The folks at Mountain View Mennonite are eagerly preparing for the arrival of guests for the [PNMC Annual Meeting, June 20-22, 2014](#). As the hosting congregation, MVMC considers it a gift to host the conference and trusts that the time together will be a blessing. PNMC is excited to welcome Andre Gingrich Stoner, Director of Holistic Witness for Mennonite Church USA, as guest speaker.

As you consider your plans, there are a few matters that the MVMC Local Arrangements Planning Committee in Kalispell would like you to be aware of:

1. The Northridge Lutheran Church will be the central assembly location. Meals, worship services, delegate sessions, child care and seminars will take place at that facility. However, youth program and the Thursday evening Pastor/Spouse supper will be held at the Mountain View Mennonite Church. (The youth will use MVMC for their center of operation throughout the weekend.) Lunches and dinners for Friday and Saturday are included in all registration fees and MVMC is excited about preparing hearty “home-cooked” meals.

2. Lodging: There is no lodging at Northridge Lutheran Church, so travelers will need to make housing plans elsewhere. (Lodging options are listed at www.pnmc.org.) Again, the exception is the youth. The youth will lodge at the Mountain View Mennonite Church, so they will not have cost related to lodging. The Flathead Valley, where MVMC is located, is a tourist destination during most of the year, but especially during the summer months. **Due to heavy tourism, lodging options can become limited, full and/or more expensive as summer gets closer. Plan early to ensure space!**

3. Annual Meeting is an event for the whole family. Activities will be planned for children of all ages and there will be a service project, along with other outdoor activities available for youth.

4. The planning committee is eager make the event enjoyable for all who attend. Arrangements can be made for guests with special needs, but please contact planners in advance so they

know how best to serve. Please note needs on the registration form and include contact information in case clarification is needed.

5. Materials may be shipped ahead of time to Mountain View Mennonite Church, 795 Mennonite Church Road, Kalispell, MT 59901. Please plan accordingly so that items arrive *prior* to the assembly.

6. On Sunday morning we will worship at Mountain View Mennonite Church instead of the Lutheran Church. We need to vacate that location after the Saturday evening worship service. There will be a meal, open to everyone, at Mountain View following the worship service.

Contact office@mvmcmnt.org or call 406-755-8772, if you have questions and visit www.pnmc.org to register.

Victor Fuentes began a 6-month interim term as preacher Feb. 1, 2014 at Vida Nueva, Salem, OR.

Amy Walker began as community center coordinator Feb 3, 2014 at Salem Mennonite Church.

Curtis Weaver was ordained March 30, 2014 at Portland Mennonite. Curt serves as PMC's Pastor of Children and Youth.

PNMC
Ministerial Updates

Coming of Age

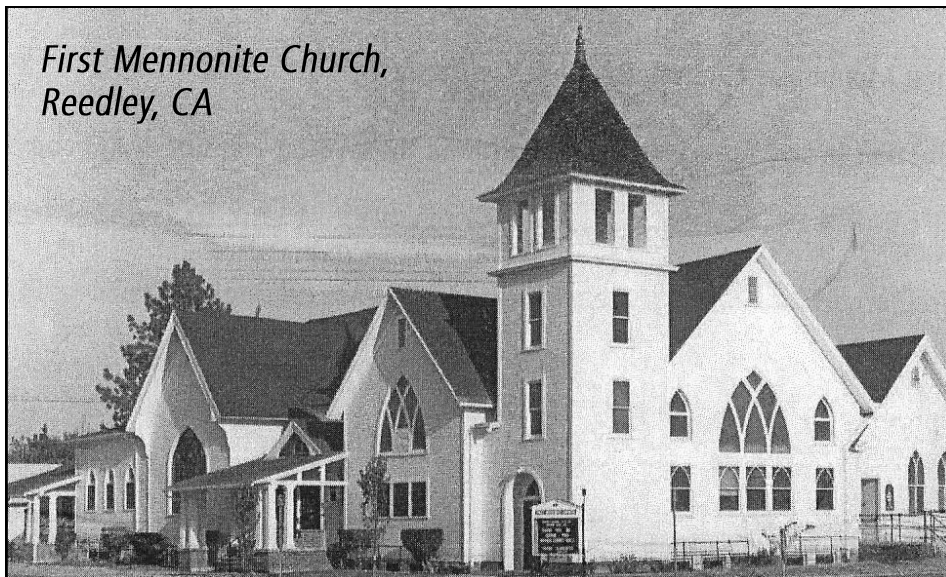
By Ray Kauffman, PNMC Historian

The Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference is 20 years old this year. This story has seeds planted earlier, but let's begin by going back to a May 30, 1986 memo from Vernon Schertz to Don E. Yoder regarding "A resolution of SMC concerning GC/MC merger" passed at their conference session meeting in Blythe, CA. Yoder responds on August 25, 1986 addressing his letter to Schertz, John Willems, and James Wenger. Yoder was the Pacific District Conference (PDC) pastor; the three he addressed were president or moderator of the three West coast Mennonite conferences: Southwest Mennonite Conference (SMC), Pacific Coast Conference (PCC), and Pacific District Conference (PDC) respectively. Yoder shared a vision of "greater cooperation and possible integration" of the Mennonite Church (MC) and General Conference Mennonite (GC) denominations. "I see our three conferences in a unique position to give leadership and work at modeling MC/GC relationships and integration church-wide."

An "Inter-Mennonite Conference Study Committee" was formed and scheduled their first meeting for May 21-22, 1987 at First Mennonite Church in Upland, CA. The three conferences at that time were composed of 64 congregations with a combined membership of just over 6,100. Committee personnel were Peter Wiebe and James Isaac (SMC), John Willems and Dave Stutzman (PCC), and Frances Ewy and Elmer Friesen (PDC). Don E. Yoder was the convener. Action taken focused on three major areas: *rationale for integration, possible steps toward integration, and organizational procedures*. Three of the ten rationales given were: Jesus' prayer for unity, common GC/MC Anabaptist understandings of faith, and geographical alignment would avoid duplication and aid in stewardship efficiency. Further planning was developed at a November, 1987 meeting of this committee at Upland, CA, including intentions to meet with the Executive Committees of the PDC and the PCC.

Fast forward to November 1993. An Integration Structures Committee had

*First Mennonite Church,
Reedley, CA*



Reprinted from *First Mennonite Church, Celebrating our Centennial 1906-2006, The Unfolding of our Story* edited by Corinna Ruth. Copyright by First Mennonite Church. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

been named to develop a PNMC organizational framework. Moderators D. Duane Oswald (PDC) and Floyd Lapp (PCC) sent a memo with draft by-laws to pastors and delegates. Late 1993 regional meetings were scheduled in ID, WA, and OR to report feedback from congregations. A mid-year delegate meeting in Portland, January 22, 1994 was productive. Delegates from both the PDC and PCC attended and moderators Duane Oswald and Floyd Lapp co-chaired the meeting. Proposed by-laws, structure and organization, and preliminary budget for the PNMC were reviewed. Concerns, questions, comments, and amendments were offered. Virtually everyone present favored moving forward toward integration. Most expressed interest in attending a tri-conference to take place in June, 1994, in or near Fresno, CA. "This meeting could give our three conferences, the SMC, PCC, and PDC, an opportunity to worship and fellowship together; to celebrate 100 years of the PDC; to bring closure to our current conference structures and to celebrate the creation of two new conferences."

Eight years of careful preparation culminated in the emergence of two new conferences in a meeting held at First Mennonite Church in Reedley, CA, June 23-26, 1994, (photo above). Each conference held its own sessions during which they terminated their separate legal identities. Then followed a

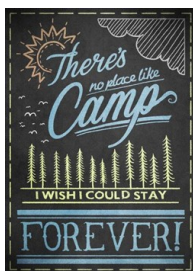
conjoint session at which time the new conferences became a reality. Thus three West coast conferences merged into two new conferences, the PNMC and the PSMC (Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference), each with new geographic boundaries and congregations to serve. By this time nine of these congregations held dual membership in GC and MC anyway.

As expected, after integration several transitional adjustments needed to be completed. Examples were how Western Mennonite School would relate to the PNMC, how the PCC Mission Board which had its own legal incorporation and budget would fit in, and how revolving funds from the former conferences would be treated. In time these issues were satisfactorily resolved.

Recently, on March 16 of this year my wife, Tina, and I attended a worship service at First Mennonite in Reedley. The few folks I talked to about the historic event that happened twenty years ago in their building were well pleased with the outcome. And as you know, not many years later, in 2001 a larger church-wide merger of the two denominations occurred. **Mennonite unity trumped historic divisions.**

(Ray Kauffman expresses gratitude to John Willems and Margaret Shetler for providing documents and source materials for this article.)

Pacific NW Mennonite Camp Opportunities



If you know anyone in the world of summer camp, you know that it's a busy time! There are registrations to process, counselors to interview, devotions to develop, cabins to clean, equipment to

repair, and much, much more. The weight of the work can feel overwhelming and if one is honest, you begin to question if it is worth it?

Mennonites have a long standing commitment to Christian camping. We have our own Mennonite Camp Association and we are passionate about providing youth with meaningful outdoor experiences where they can discover God's goodness; grow in community, build relationships and make their faith their own. *There is something about being away that provides a fresh perspective and gives kids the freedom to grow.*

The camp experience might even be more important than it was when camps first started. Youth face pressures today that didn't even exist 50 years ago. A week at camp can nourish young people spiritually and emotionally; while also allowing for personal and social development. But what has become

more relevant today is that being at camp provides a chance to unplug from technology. Spending time in nature offers youth the chance to slow down from the usually hectic teenage-pace. At camp young people have a lot of fun and enjoy goofy, even crazy group games, but they are also given the freedom to stop and be still; **to listen.**

The camp experience is a great way for kids to safely try on independence. Campers are encouraged to continue on their personal journey towards faith within the care of a loving community. It has been said that ***first, campers grow to love their counselors....and then to love their counselors' God.***

For young adults on staff, the experience can be integral to faith development on an even deeper level. It can also be an opportunity to test leadership skills, accept responsibility, build lifelong friendships and perhaps even discover vocational direction.

There is still time to register your child, grandchildren, nephews and nieces for summer camp. For those in the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference, we have three sister camps to support. Find one near you and send a kid to camp! **The experience can change a life!**

This will be the eighth year to serve as DCC food service director. Each year I ask myself why I dedicate five weeks to plan menus, recruit volunteers, make grocery lists and numerous trips in and out of camp to buy and transport thousands of pounds of groceries with which to prepare fourteen meals for hundreds of hungry kids each week. Is it worth it?

My commitment was recently reaffirmed when the MYF at Salem Mennonite led the service. Their worship theme was "Where do we meet God?" During the "sermon" several shared that their most significant experience of meeting God occurred when they were at camp. For some it happened when they were alone during a time of quiet reflection and for others as they participated in group activities. For some it was at morning chapel or evening fire-side.

I meet God when I hear about the impact that the camping experience has on the lives of the youth as they join in community. I meet God as He gives me the energy, strength, and patience to do all that is necessary to allow for campers to "Meet God." The answer to my earlier question is, "Yes, it is most definitely worth it!" A week at camp is a life changing experience.

-Glen Oesch



I loved surf camp! As a three year attendee, I felt that it brought me closer to God. Surf Camp stripped me from everyday problems and technology and placed me in a safe, natural environment. Surrounded by a positive Christian community and the ocean, I was able to calmly re-prioritize elements of my life that were previously washed out by modern day buzz.

-Kai Hovland

CAMP CAMREC DATES:

Senior High Adventure

July 17 - 20 (grades 9-12)

Staff Orientation: July 20 -21

Junior Camp

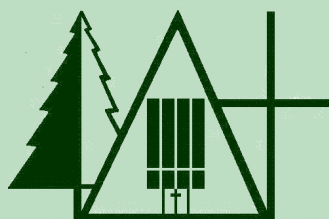
July 21 - 25, (grades 3-5)

Junior High Camp

July 26 - 31, (grades 6-8)

Pre-Junior Camp

August 1 - 3, (grades K-2)



www.camrec.org

DRIFT CREEK DATES:

Counselor Orientation

June 16-20

Parent & Me Camp

June 20 - 22, (grades K-2)

High School Camp

June 22 - 27, (grades 9-12)

Grades 7 & 8 Camp

June 29 - July 4

Grades 5 & 6 Camp

July 6 - 11

Grades 3 & 4 Camp

July 13 - 18

Surf Camp

July 27 - Aug 1, (grades 7-12)

Visit:

www.driftcreek.org

CAMP PALISADES DATES:

Junior Camp

July 13 - 17, (grades 4-7)

Senior Camp

June 17 - 20, (grades 8-12)

Campers gather at First Mennonite Church in Aberdeen, Idaho. For details, Email: aberdeenfirstmennonite@frontiernet.net



PNMC Board of Directors

Jeryl Hollinger
Moderator, 2014

Jennifer Delanty
Mod-Elect, 2014

Wanda Dorsing
Secretary, 2015

Harold Nussbaum
Treasurer, 2014

Eva Mendez
CIHAN, 2014

Dave Hockman-Wert
At-Large, 2015

Sarah Hooley
At-Large, 2016

Joseph Penner
At-Large, 2016

Jennifer Sottolano
At-Large, 2014

Jack Swaim
At-Large, 2016



Find us on
Facebook - click the
above icon.

PNMC Staff

Katherine J. Pitts
Exec. Conf Minister
kjpitts@pnmc.org
P: 503-349-5420

Barbara Buxman
Admin Assistant
office@pnmc.org
P: 888/492-4216

Brenda Kauffman,
Communications, Editor
brenda@pnmc.org
W/H: 503/921-5866

PNMC District Pastors

Wendell Amstutz: CIHAN, Centro Cristiano Pentecostés, Comunidad Cristiana de Vida Nueva, Iglesia Cristiana Roca de Salvación, Iglesia Menonita Pentecostés, Ministerios Restauración, Jerusalén Iglesia Menonita, Warden Mennonite

Dave Stutzman: Corvallis Mennonite, Lebanon Mennonite, Logsden Neighborhood Church, First Mennonite of McMinnville

Gary Jewell: Evergreen Mennonite, Menno Mennonite, Prince of Peace Mennonite, Seattle Mennonite, Hyde Park Mennonite

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

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

Bob Buxman: Salem Mennonite, Zion Mennonite

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

Renee Johns: Evergreen Heights Mennonite, Filer Mennonite, Emmaus Christian Fellowship

Rose Marie Zook Barber: Anawim Christian Community, International Bethel City Church

Tim Gascho: First Mennonite of Aberdeen, Peace Community Mennonite (SLC)

Unassigned: Western 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*

May 3, *Western Mennonite School Benefit Auction*, Salem, OR

May 16-17, *Work Weekend*, Drift Creek Camp, Lincoln City, OR

June 5-7, *Iglesia Menonita Roca de Salvación, 15th Anniversary*, Aurora, OR

June 12-15, *Birds & Blossoms Retreat*, Camp Camrec, Leavenworth, WA

June 20-21, [PNMC Annual Meeting](#), Kalispell, MT

June 28-29, *Prince of Peace Mennonite Church's 25th Anniversary*, Anchorage, AK

July 13, *Eugene Mennonite Church's 50th Anniversary*, Eugene, OR

July 19-20, *Filer Mennonite Church's 100th Anniversary*, Filer, ID

July 19 & 20, *MCC Benefit Concert with Les & Gwen Gustofson-Zook*, Portland (19) and Albany (20), OR

July 26, *Iglesia Menonita Pentecostes 50th Anniversary*, Woodburn, OR

Aug 1-2, *Iglesia Menonita Hispana National Conference*, Canby, OR

Aug 3-8, *MCC West Coast Bike Ride*, Idaho Panhandle

Aug 8-9, *CIHAN Youth Gathering*, Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, OR

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

The PNMC e-Bulletin is distributed bi-monthly and includes information about PNMC and church wide agencies. To subscribe, send an email to brenda@pnmc.org with "Subscribe e-Bulletin" in the subject line.



Pacific Northwest
Mennonite
Conference

PNMC Conference Office

PO Box 301036, Portland, OR, 97294

T: 888.492.4216

Frequently updated, bookmark this page:

<http://www.pnmc.org/>