

# PASSION-BASED MINISTRIES

## Conceptual Framework

**Guiding Principle:** PNMC encourages and facilitates ministries that respond to God's call, emerge from the passion of individuals in Member Congregations, and are consistent with PNMC's mission. These "grassroots" ministries emerge from local initiative rather than being imposed from the top down. PNMC encourages the creativity of such ministries, while recognizing the importance of discernment, approval, and accountability before being considered a Conference ministry. Individuals and congregations with ideas for passion-based ministries are encouraged to work with others throughout PNMC, putting ideas forward for discernment, and seeking prayer support for their ministries.

**Emerging Ministries** are those undertaken by individuals and groups in response to a particular call from God.

- PNMC encourages and facilitates such ministries that appear consistent with PNMC's mission by helping explore and discern possibilities and by facilitating communication to allow persons with similar passions in different parts of the Conference to connect with each other.
- Such ministries may emerge from individual initiative or through a local congregational process and must not be antagonistic to congregational process.
- Such ministries or activities are not considered and should not be identified as Conference activities or ministries unless formally recognized as such.

**Recognized Ministries, Events, or Activities** are those undertaken by individuals and groups in response to a particular call from God that have been formally recognized as PNMC Ministries or Activities. These may include ministries that perform functions on behalf of Conference, such as welcoming new member congregations, providing youth ministry activities/events, etc.

- Persons seeking formal recognition of a ministry or activity may submit a letter to the Executive Conference Minister describing the nature of the ministry in a way that demonstrates how it is consistent with PNMC's mission. The level of detail needed will depend on the nature, duration, and complexity of the ministry or activity. Each proposal will be evaluated to ensure that it:
  - reflects the vision and mission of PNMC and is consistent with the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective;
  - does not duplicate or interfere with other Conference activities or those of a Member Congregation;
  - has appropriate safeguards so that it will not create undue risk;
  - is supported and sustained by members of more than one PNMC member church;
  - is such that formal PNMC recognition will enable more effective ministry.

After initial review, the Executive Conference Minister would pass along these requests to the Board for their approval.

- The Executive Conference Minister, on behalf of the Board, may recognize or support events, activities, or ministries that are of limited duration and are clearly consistent with PNMC's mission.

- In the case of requests for recognition of longer-term ministries, the Board may present a recommendation to the delegate body. Where the Board feels that broader discernment would be helpful, the Board may submit the proposal to the Conference Communication Council for processing and recommendation.
- The leader(s) of recognized ministries are accountable to the Executive Conference Minister.

### **Funding:**

- 1) The financial transactions of Recognized Ministries will be handled via the PNMC Treasurer in a “pass-through” type of model. Donations given to PNMC can be designated to a particular ministry. The Treasurer will account for those donations and provide available funds to the Recognized Ministries as they are needed.
- 2) Minimal funds for conference calls and publicity/communication will be made available upon request (as funds are available).
- 3) Recognized Ministries can use PNMC communication channels to request funds from PNMC congregations. The Executive Conference Minister will provide oversight to ensure a reasonable timing of such requests. In other words, requests will be spaced so that multiple requests don’t go out all at the same time.
- 4) Recognized Ministries can submit requests to the Executive Conference Minister for funding of specific projects. Such “mini-grants” will be provided as funds are available and based on criteria yet to be determined.
- 5) Recognized Ministries that are doing essential, ongoing work of PNMC, as determined by the Board, may receive budgeted funding.

### **Examples of Passion-Based Ministries:**

Welcoming New Congregations Team: A need has been expressed to have an ongoing group of individuals from PNMC work with new congregations on becoming official members of PNMC. This group could be a long-term Recognized Ministry of PNMC, working on behalf of PNMC along with the Executive Conference Minister, guiding new congregations through the process of becoming official members of PNMC and welcoming them into the Conference.

Theological Workshops: Led by Larry Eby, a group of PNMC members from Oregon have planned periodic theological workshops that have featured theologians from Mennonite colleges and seminaries. This was an excellent resource for congregations in the mid-Willamette Valley and could have been useful for congregations throughout the Conference. Under the proposed system, organizers could have the event recognized as a Conference activity by applying for that recognition.