

Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference

BOARD MEETING

September 12 & 13, 2014

At the Pony Soldier Motel in Portland, OR

Members present: Jennifer Delanty, Moderator; Samuel Moran, Moderator-Elect; Brett Tieszen, Treasurer; Wanda Dorsing, Secretary; Jack Swaim, Sarah Hooley, Joseph Penner, Dave Hockman-Wert, Todd Lehman, Nellie Ascencio

Staff: Katherine Jameson Pitts, Executive Conference Minister (ECM); Barb Buxman, Administrative Assistant

Guests: Jeryl Hollinger, Past Moderator; Bob Buxman, Spanish Interpretation (Friday); Danny Arguello, Spanish Interpretation (Saturday)

Friday, September 12

1:00 pm Jennifer welcomed the board and opened with prayer. Jack led the group in sharing about meaningful sermons that have stuck with us. Wanda led Dwelling in the Word based on Ephesians 2:11 - 22.

2:00 pm **REPORTING/UPDATES**

Executive Conference Minister Report - Katherine

Several congregations are working on pastoral transitions including Vida Nueva, Seattle, Evergreen Heights and Jerusalén. The following congregations celebrated anniversaries this summer including Prince of Peace (25 years), Eugene (50 years), Filer (100 years), Iglesia Menonita Pentecostés (50 years), Calvary (70 years), Spring Valley (90 years, upcoming).

Lynn Miller ended his longer-term service as chair of the Pastoral Leadership Team; Rod Stafford is transitioning to chair. Victor Vargas joined Wendell Amstutz as District Pastor for CIHAN.

In order to maintain connections with conference, Katherine keeps in touch at least monthly with District Pastors; she preached in Portland and will preach in Menno this fall; she attends meeting of CIHAN and of the NW Mexico Team.

Feedback from the Annual Meeting in Kalispell was positive overall. Andre Stoner was well received, there was lots of good conversation and fellowship, and people enjoyed the food and location. Preparations for the Annual Meeting in Lebanon in 2015 will start this fall.

PNMC Video Update

-Katherine

The videos taken at conference have been digitalized and sequenced and are now being edited by Ken. The final product may be used on the website or to promote the 2015 Annual Meeting.

Seed NW Committee Update

-Katherine, Joseph

The Anawim project involving increased storage and laundry facilities for the homeless was quickly and generously funded. PNMC congregations raised \$4,200 which was matched by the Seed NW Fund for a total of \$8,400. More proposals are welcome.

Doctrine of Discovery Roundtable in San Francisco – Jennifer

Jennifer was invited to participate in a discussion concerning the repudiation of the Christian Doctrine of Discovery. This doctrine, based on papal documents issued in the 1400's, declared non-Christians as sub-human enemies of the church which led to the subjugation and enslavement of native peoples all over the world. The meeting was lead by Sarah Augustine from the Surinam Indigenous Health Fund. Jennifer will be working on education to build collective consciousness around this and to raise awareness of how this ties in with the peace and justice emphasis in our tradition.

Jeryl wondered if there might be a group in our conference interested in this issue who would reactivate Peace and Justice Committee as a passion-based ministry.

Treasurer's Report

- Brett

Income is \$26,000 ahead of budget due to contributions from congregations being higher than expected, large contributions from individuals, and the Annual Meeting in Kalispell receiving more income than expected. Expenses are about \$1,000 under budget over all.

Some lines on the balance sheet show dramatic changes compared with a year ago. Most of these changes are the result of program activities, such as the creation of the Seed NW grant program. However, total asset and liabilities and equity balances have barely changed.

Brett will be working on documenting policies and guidelines related to financial procedures. He also anticipates talking with the Gift Discernment Team about individuals with investment expertise and possibly property management to participate in a Finance Team.

Constituency Leadership Council Meeting / MC USA Pastoral Survey - Katherine, Jennifer

Katherine, Jennifer, and Dave will attend the CLC meeting to be held October 6-8 in Chicago. A survey was sent to pastors of MC USA in an effort to understand where the denomination is around issues of sexuality. This information will inform the CLC discussions.

4:00 pm

Field Trip to Peace Property

- Everybody

The board visited the Peace Property to look at the physical structures and surrounding property.

5:00 pm **Supper break**

6:00 pm **DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS**

Evening Session **Discussion of the Sanctuary/Peace Property Arrangement**

The initial 3-year arrangement with Anawim & Bethel concerning the Peace Property expired in 2013. Thinking and discussion about the issues involved and how to proceed have occurred over the past year, but nothing new has been put in place.

The board discussed issues relating to the property and the ministries operating out of it including the following questions: Who should own the property? Should ownership and management be separated? Who are the stakeholders? What sort of administrative infrastructure is needed? How sustainable are the ministries of Anawim and Bethel? What type of long term/strategic planning has taken place or needs to take place?

The board strongly values the unique ministries and wants to empower them to function in a sustainable way. The board has wrestled with its current role as property owner/manager and had anticipated that this would not be a long-term role; a new agreement is needed. The board brainstormed about how we can think bigger and more creatively about what direction God wants us to go with the resources and responsibilities of this property.

Saturday, September 13

8:30 am Jennifer opened our meeting with a time for each person to share what is going on in their life. She led the group in prayer.

9:00 am **Discussion of the 2014 Kalispell Delegate Table Feedback**

At the annual meeting in June, delegates engaged about finding value in our theological diversity, and how we can maintain unity amidst a national climate of great anxiety in our denomination. Katherine presented her synthesis of this information for the board to review and discuss.

The strongest individual item from this discussion was "Find a central and forward thinking purpose and take it back to all of our congregations and make that our conference-wide intent." Also strongly supported was the desire to "find ways to share and listen to each other's stories."

The group processed with Katherine what this means for her work. Using our value propositions can be a helpful way to sort through possible activities to support or organize at the conference level.

Discussion of the Upcoming Conference Communications Council (CCC)

The next CCC is scheduled for January 10, 2015. Katherine invited suggestions for content and format. The subject of human sexuality is one possible topic that could be focused on in preparation for the MC USA Convention to be held in July of 2015. There was strong support for including time for affinity group discussions as well.

Discussion of Membership Guidelines and Terminating Membership Policy

The board reviewed the practice of asking congregations to send delegates based on their membership. Congregations count membership in various ways. No changes to this practice were recommended at this time.

The board considered if a revision of policy no. 99-7 "Termination of Membership" needs amending, noting that it was not followed by the last church that left the conference. The board concluded that no changes would be made at this time. It is understood that congregations who choose to leave the conference may not follow the policy, but that it is helpful for the conference to have guidelines to follow regarding how to relate to congregations who leave the conference.

Dave offered to review our policies to see which ones need amendments and which are current.

Discerning Direction for Stewardship of the Peace property

Based on yesterday's board discussion and the visit to the Peace property, the board felt it important to have an updated plan defining how PNMC will relate to the Peace property and the ministries housed there.

Motion: The PNMC board moves to reaffirm its commitment to keep Anawim Christian Community and Bethel International City Church in the "Peace property" as its primary tenants. Furthermore, the board moves to appoint a task-force to explore possibilities for restructuring the arrangement between the PNMC, Anawim, and Bethel to optimize its viability, sustainability, and accountability.

MSC: Joseph, Jack

Noon	Lunch break
1:00 pm	The board went into Executive Session to review the Covenant of Understanding between Katherine and PNMC as she has completed her first term as ECM.
1:15	Next Meeting - November 21-22, 2014 in Portland

Respectfully Submitted,
Wanda Dorsing