

Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

November 21 & 22, 2014

Pony Soldier Motel, 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; Danny Arguello, Spanish Interpretation

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21

1:00 pm GATHERING

Jennifer welcomed everyone and opened with prayer. Jack invited each person to share a Thanksgiving memory. Jeryl led Dwelling in the Word based on Luke 17:11-19.

2:00 pm REPORTING/UPDATES

Executive Conference Minister Report - Katherine

Katherine commented on the wide range of her recent involvements including work with the MC USA Structure Task Force, conversations with the Western Mennonite School board, conversations with groups using the Sanctuary property, and supporting Seattle in their pastor search.

PNMC has been invited to send 6-8 people on the next "Come and See Tour" organized by MC USA to expose people to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Katherine is looking for someone to work on promoting and organizing this.

Seed NW program update - The Anawim project is on hold while they focus on decisions around the property and ministry structure. No new grants have been submitted. Another committee member is needed to join Katherine, Joseph, and Rick.

Katherine reported that a spirit of celebration and a full sanctuary made the Spring Valley 90th celebration a positive event. Spring Valley continues to discuss what the future of their congregation will look like.

The local arrangements committee for the 2015 Annual Meeting in Lebanon, OR has met. A speaker has not yet been chosen. Zion has offered to host the Annual Meeting in 2016 or 2017.

New CIHAN pastoral assignments include Victor Fuentes at Iglesia comunidad Vida Nueva and Angel Campo at Iglesia Menonita Jerusalem-Salem.

Nelly expressed appreciation to Jennifer and Katherine for their presence at the CIHAN Annual Meeting. Nelly shared her goal of increasing CIHAN participation in PNMC events.

Sanctuary/Peace Property Task Force Update -Jennifer, Joseph, Todd

The task force has had two meetings with Anawim and Bethel City. The outcome of those meetings discerned the two congregations do not wish to pursue purchasing this property, but both wish to continue their ministries at this location, even as Anawim anticipates going on hiatus for a few months after the winter season.

For the short term two things will occur: 1) Joseph will mediate with the two groups to create some basic agreements about sharing the property. District Pastor Rose Marie Zook Barber can be a part of this process. After Anawim's hiatus, serious discussion of long-term property arrangements will continue.

2) A new rental agreement is needed to replace the previous expired agreement. Barb will provide Joseph with previous rental agreements to reference to help in creating a realistic rent agreement.

October 2014 CLC Meeting / MC USA Pastoral Survey - Katherine, Jennifer, Dave

Dave wrote and previously e-mailed a summary of the CLC experience in Chicago. Katherine shared some results of the national pastoral survey and how our PNMC pastors responded regarding beliefs about LGBTQ membership and organizational possibilities. The results point to significant differences in how pastors in the denomination and the conference feel about the inclusion of LGBTQ people. Survey results will be released by MC USA in early December.

The board processed the current climate and dynamics in the denomination relating to LGBTQ issues, denominational structure issues, and the history of MC USA in reacting to LGBTQ issues. The board reflected on what these things mean for PNMC.

5:00 pm Supper break

6:30 pm Western Mennonite School's Relationship with PNMC

The WMS Board has requested a connection with the PNMC board in the wake of contentious meetings regarding the school's perceived loss of Mennonite/Anabaptist identity. The PNMC board currently does not have a formally defined relationship with WMS. The two groups have a fraternal relationship that consists of a historical relationship and a shared constituency. Dave

shared some brief historical information regarding the PNMC & WMS relationship, noting that WMS used to have a representative on the PNMC board & that PNMC used to appoint WMS board members. Todd related recent history to explain the evolution of current issues. The Board discussed what outcomes and influences our Board would and would not wish to have in our interactions with the WMS Board. The board agreed on the following plan of action:

- 1) Katherine will contact WMS Board Chair Linda Dibble to request a copy of their bylaws.
- 2) A task force of PNMC board members will work together to examine what a relationship between the PNMC and WMS could look like. The task force will include Dave, Katherine, and Sarah (conference calls). Todd will assist if needed. They will report back to the board.

Policies that need revision – Dave

Dave reviewed all policies on record and made recommendations on which ones need significant revision, which need language updates, which should be eliminated and which are fine as is. Barb will look in electronic files for absent policies. Jennifer and Dave will work on updating the policies identified as needing work. Brett will work on any policies that involve finance.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22

8:30 am Each person shared something he or she is thankful for.

9:00 am Discuss Upcoming Conference Communications Council (CCC)

The board discussed possible conversation topics and formats for the CCC scheduled for January 10, 2015. Considerations include delegate requests from the PNMC Annual Meeting in Kalispell that the board help the conference to share stories and discern a forward-thinking purpose; the continuously unfolding events relating to LGBTQ inclusion and the need for accurate information about this; and the desire for affinity groups which provide networking and relationship-building opportunities, strengthening connections among congregations.

Arrangements will be made for the Idaho contingent to participate via teleconference as they did at our 2013 meeting. There may be others who want to participate via teleconference.

10:15 – Next meeting – Feb 27 & 28 @ Pony Soldier

10:30 – Annual Meeting Planning

The board discussed using a theme of celebrating congregational ministries. Katherine will follow up with a speaker suggestion. Nelly suggested that involving CIHAN churches in worship and workshop leadership is a way to encourage CIHAN participation.

11:00 am Resolutions and Passion-Based Ministries

The board reviewed information from Ray Kauffman about grass-roots work for universal health care in Oregon. He hopes to collaborate with Oregon pastors and congregations. The board discussed if this idea is best served by the resolution process, by forming a passion-based ministry, or by some other means. The board agreed that he can send out information to anyone he chooses to in the PNMC. If a larger conference effort emerges, it may be helpful to broaden the focus beyond Oregon.

Dave will look for a one-page write up on passion-based ministries created several years ago to help define passion-based ministry. The board will review our Passion-Based Ministries policy to determine if it needs updating to help facilitate conference-wide communication and collaboration.

The resolution policy needs to be amended to address what resolution threshold will be used when a vote occurs. Dave and Katherine will bring wording for a motion on this to the next meeting.

10:30 am Board Appointments

The Board made suggestions of who might serve in the following open positions:

--Conference Historian (3 year term)

-West Coast MCC Board Member--preferably from Idaho or Washington (or Montana or Alaska) since one of the two members our Board appoints is from Oregon

Jennifer will take these names to the Gift Discernment Team.

Noon Lunch break

11:00 am TAKING ACTION AND SETTING DIRECTION

1:00 pm Budget

Concern was expressed about passing another unbalanced budget. The board intends to work on increasing income as there are no more expenses that can be cut. The following actions will be undertaken to this end:

- 1 – Send board representatives to the Everence workshop on creating cultures of generosity
- 2 – Re-look at the capacity building document that was created several years ago to see what parts of that would be helpful.
- 3 – Jennifer will write a letter to solicit year-end giving from individuals.

Motion: The board passes the budget as proposed.

MSC: Jack, Todd

Jennifer closed the meeting in prayer.
Respectfully Submitted,
Wanda Dorsing, PNMC Secretary
Action Items

1. Katherine welcomes suggestions of who might go on the "Come and See Tour."
2. Jennifer will write a letter to delegates soliciting individual gifts.
3. Jennifer will communicate with the Gift Discernment Team about appointing people to the Finance Team.
4. Joseph will mediate with representatives of Anawim and Bethel to create some basic agreements about sharing the Peace property.
5. Joseph will work on getting a renewed rent agreement for Anawim and Bethel. Barb will provide old rent agreements to reference.
6. Katherine will contact WMS Board Chair Linda Dibble to request a copy of WMS bylaws.
7. A task force of board members will work on the relationship between PNMC & WMS: Dave, Katherine, and Sarah via conference call. Todd may be consulted as well.
8. Barb will check electronic files to see if she can find missing policies.
9. Jennifer and Dave will work on updating policies identified as needing to be updated. Brett will assist with finance related policies.
10. Katherine will follow up with a speaker suggestion for the 2015 Annual Meeting.
11. Dave will look for a write-up on passion-based ministries that was created several years ago.
12. Dave and Katherine will bring wording for a motion on resolution threshold to the next meeting.
13. Jennifer will take name suggestions for Conference Historian and West Coast MCC Board Member to the Gift Discernment Team.
14. Send board representatives to the Everence workshop in May. Re-look at the capacity building document from several years ago.