

## **PNMC Board Meeting for October 7-8, 2016**

Present: Matt Yoder, Todd Lehman, Twila Lehman, Nelly Ascencio, Jack Swaim, Jan Yoder, Kathleen Aeschliman, Katherine Jameson Pitts, Jennifer Delanty, Brett Tieszen, Tom Brenneman

Unable to Attend: Janet Szabo

Jack opened our meeting at 1:00 p.m. with prayer, Todd led us in an “ice breaker” of sharing a highlight from our summer, and Kathleen led us in singing together.

### **Governance: What do we mean by this?**

-*Eyes and ears*, getting pulse of congregations; *looking forward*; *give* structure to meetings, gatherings, fellowship, who we want to be; *supporting* one another (building community); *providing* structure to carry out our general policy and direction (be the guardrail of our conference), keep us moving in the same direction, keep everyone “safe” in the constituency; *being* congregationally based, we give congregations freedom but try to loosely keep them together; *clarity* of our job as board in establishing where we’re headed (policy) but leaving implementation to Katherine and staff; *we speak* with one voice once a decision or meeting is over; *confidentiality*; fiscal responsibility to the member congregations; *respect* and avoid conflicts of interest

-We read and each person signed the PNMC Conflict of Interest Statement

-We discussed the 3 core values adopted at Kalispell about 10 years ago

Celebrate our similarities while respecting our differences

Be humble, flexible and patient while faithfully discipling

Make peace while practicing justice

### **Executive Conference Minister Report**

-See Katherine’s report

Additions:

-Matt Yoder has decided to accept an invitation to pastor at Grace Mennonite congregation in Pandora, OH and will be transitioning from Menno Mennonite (time-line undetermined). He also turned in a letter of resignation from PNMC board. This means that Menno will be searching for a pastor along with the other congregations listed in Katherine’s report.

-We discussed a letter from Logsdan Neighborhood Church and our termination policy in relation to this letter.

-Portland Mennonite has a group of persons meeting to discuss establishing a “Menno-costal” church.

-There is a young woman in Bend who wants to plant an inclusive Mennonite church in Bend.

-Katherine met with an Ethiopian person in Portland who has started an Ethiopian church. He has met with Rod Stafford about finding out more about Mennonites and will meet with Matt Swora and Rod in the future.

-Both Portland Mennonite Church and Hyde Park are meeting about making formal inclusion statements.

### **Annual Conference Feedback**

-Kathleen—positive reviews

-Matt—Menno’s reps enjoyed the main speaker and small congregations workshop

-Jennifer—Seattle reps wanted more delegate time

-Jack—positive reflections from persons he spoke with

-Breakout sessions

Todd found it to be a positive experience and was glad that persons could self select

Jack felt that the looking to the future workshop was positive

Brett felt that the conversation for the Seed Northwest group was good. There were several stories about what congregations were doing and suggestions about what could be done to help.

## **Sanctuary/Peace Property Update**

- Gerry Langstraat, lead of the property management team, joined our group for this update.
- Gerry basically acts as a committee chair, works at communication with the groups. He doesn't feel emotionally attached to the property but works at supporting the groups who use it.
- The house on the property will be vacated, some remodeling will be done (new roof, additional wall to make another bedroom), and Simon's family will move in (hopefully in December). The property rental money can probably cover the costs of the remodeling.
- Management team meets once a month, and everyone generally comes. Meetings are now more productive.
- City of Gresham issued a citation concerning an unlicensed camper and trash on the property. Steve talked with the neighbors about the reasons neighbors asked the city to do this. The neighbors said that persons living on the property were distributing drugs. Todd handed out 2 evictions recently. All Anawim activities are cancelled until these problems are resolved. It's hoped that there will be far fewer problems once Simon's family moves in.
- The biggest neighbor complaint is the late meetings on Sunday evenings by a congregation who meets then and has loud meetings.
- The management team may have to meet with the city to deal with the citation. Steve is now involved in this.
- Brett just received an email from a contractor who said that Gresham may be willing to work with churches to build affordable housing. Brett committed to allowing our property to be a "poster child" for churches providing affordable housing if we continue in this way.
- Todd shared that the structure (i.e., the management committee) for governance is working well.

## **CIHAN Report**

- Had most recent meeting in September. Nelly is moderator until 2017.
- IBA/SeBAH (continuing education in Bible) classes are meeting once a month and this group has one more project to do for completion of the current class.

## **Treasurer's Report**

- Budget vs Actuals
  - Logsdon has not been contributing
  - Investment income has not changed
  - Income shortfall at this point is not an issue
  - We made a little money at the annual meeting
  - Over-budget items were related to the Peace property
  - We have a net operating loss of \$12,100 as of yesterday, generally due to timing of receipts from congregations.
- Balance sheet—Even if we have a deficit budget, we still have enough assets to see us through for a few years
- Historical Society—We had given them \$6000 for the next 3 years and they had unforeseen expenses. This money helped cover those expenses (about \$2000) without using their whole budget.
- Everence has received money from Lilly Fund to provide financial assistance for eligible, credentialed pastors; the aim is to increase the likelihood of pastors' financial sustainability. The financial assistance is offered in several different forms—such as seminars to plan for retirement, funds to make sure pastors can attend the planning seminars, financial planning assistance, money to cover certain taxable debts, and \$250 matching fund for the pastor's first retirement account. Some of the financial assistance requires pastors to raise funds that Everence will then match, up to certain limits. The requirement to raise funds in order to apply for the Everence assistance may be a barrier to pastors' participation.
- We decided that we want to support our pastors financially to encourage them to participate in the Everence Pastoral Financial Assistance Program. Brett will draft a proposal, share this with Katherine, and give the proposal back to the board tomorrow morning.

—(Continued from Friday in Brett's report about Everence)—Pastoral Assistance Grant: The gist of Brett's proposal is that every pastor who fills out the paperwork and applies to Everence for assistance by Dec. 8, 2016, will receive \$300 from PNMC—even if Everence doesn't provide a matching grant.

**Action:** It was moved and seconded that PNMC will provide \$300 to each pastoral assistance applicant and solicit funds from congregations to provide additional matching funds. This motion carried unanimously. Brett will write a bulletin announcement. It will be promoted as a part of Pastoral Appreciation Month (Oct.)

Additional details, still being refined: This is to be a "kick start" fund to encourage pastors to seek assistance through this grant. We will also notify all churches and ask for contributions toward this grant. Received contributions from churches will be distributed at the rate of up to \$3000 per pastor per year. Any money left over after pastors have received the maximum of \$3000 will be distributed until all pastors who received the grant have reached the maximum, and any money left over will be rolled over for the next year.

### **Themes for 2017 Conference Communication Council and Annual Meeting**

-CCC at Albany on Feb. 4, 2017.

Alex Awad will be with us a part of the day to talk about a resolution to be made in Orlando. This would be about 1/2 day.

The other 1/2 day could be a time of congregations sitting together at tables and telling about what is going on in their groups. A topic could be best practices. After a time, groups would switch and do the process again.

-Annual Meeting is June 23-24, 2017, at Menno Mennonite.

Friday p.m. will be "optional" workshops. Some possibilities are:

Mennonite Women would like to do Sister Care.

An "equipping" group.

A continuing education workshop.

Saturday will be the business meeting day.

Alan Kreider is a possibility as a speaker, and Meghan Good is another possibility (She was also suggested for 2018 in Idaho)

Katherine and Jack will check with the Idaho group again to make sure they are willing to host Annual Meeting in 2018. Katherine will also follow up with Menno to make sure they're still willing to host the meeting since Matt will be gone.

### **Major Topics on Horizon** (brainstorming discussion)

-What is our 10-year vision?

Environmental scan—look internally at strengths and weaknesses and at our external environment (what's going on in the denomination), both opportunities and threats. (SWOT)

Mission/Vision/Values—Do we need to look at it again? What do we want to pour our energy into in the future?

Strategic objectives and challenges

-What's our job—holding things together (status quo) vs setting vision/leading

-Financial life of the conference

-How much of a missional focus (external) do we as a conference want to have?

-How do we know if a congregation is healthy or not? How is this measured?

-Do we want specific measurable goals for the conference? How do they fit both the I-5 corridor churches and outlying, more rural church groups?

-Speak to the homelessness crisis in the Pacific Northwest (a missional focus topic)

-What does it mean to be Anabaptist in the Pacific Northwest?

-What does God want us to do as a conference?

-Learning how to communicate while effectively listening and nurturing loving relationships among members

**Sat., October 8**

**Devotion**—Matt shared a reading from *Meditations for Meetings* about silence as a way of listening.

**Taking Action and Setting Direction**

-Set dates for board meetings through June 2017

Dec. 10, 2016, 10 a.m. Zoom meeting to discuss pastoral assistance and a draft of the next budget

Jan. 6-7, 2017. Place TBA (Barb and Katherine will work on the place)

Feb. 4, 2017, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. in Albany—CCC

Apr. 7-8, 2017. Place TBA

-Some topics for the board to focus on, in future meetings:

We would like to identify one or two focus areas for leadership and vision, in addition to the day-to-day activities of PNMC. Some possibilities that began to emerge are the following:

How to help our congregations be healthier and more Anabaptist—healthy congregations think outside their group, focus outwardly, get along fairly well but don't hide problems

How to help all our churches be involved in something in the community that has to do with peacemaking

Review our communication strategy

After a meeting evaluation, singing, and a closing prayer, the meeting was adjourned at 4 p.m.