

PNMC Board Meeting, Sept. 29 & 30, 2017, at Buxmans' in Portland, OR

Present: Jack Swaim, Katherine Jameson Pitts, Kathleen Aeschliman, Janet Szabo (via Zoom), Twila Lehman, Jan Yoder, Barb Buxman, Tom Brenneman, Nelly Moran-Ascencio (Saturday), Nancy Kauffman (Saturday)

Absent: Nelly Moran-Ascencio (Friday), Brett Tieszen, Jenna Schlegel-Preheim (on maternity leave)

Welcome and Prayer — Jack shared a prayer.

Opening “Ice Breaker” — Jeryl asked us to talk about our complete names, their origin, meaning, etc.

Dwelling in the Word — Katherine led us twice in reading I Kings 19: 9b-13, a passage about fires and earthquakes. We then shared about a word or phrase that stood out to us, and followed this with a word or phrase that speaks something to us. A question from God found in this passage, “What are you doing here?” seems to be a good question for the conference to consider.

Executive Conference Minister Report — Katherine

- Katherine shared her report.
 - Current energy is going toward 6 pastoral transitions. Kenneth Hawes is becoming half-time pastor of Prince of Peace in Anchorage. Menno Meeting in Salt Lake City is no longer meeting.
 - Several churches in Idaho are having James Krabill continue the conversation begun at Conference 2017.
 - As of January 2018, Katherine will be the only conference official who is more than 1/4-time in the west. Other conferences (Mountain States and Southwest) have cut back on staff due to lack of funds. She is concerned about possible ramifications for leadership in the conferences.
 - There are 3 congregations with whom Katherine is working on conflict mediation at this time.
- Updated Sexual Misconduct Policy 2001-3
 - Katherine proposed that we replace the old policy with this new policy. This is an issue because of liability as well as concern for victims and congregations' possible inability to protect victims.
 - It was moved and seconded that we accept this policy. The motion carried unanimously.
- Discussion of draft document of credential review process from PLT for pastors in PNMC who perform same-sex marriages. To put the credential review process in context, here is the statement from the PNMC Executive Board in 2015:

We are a diverse conference and we will continue to treat one another with a spirit of forbearance, grace, trust, and love on this as well as other issues that divide us. As a member conference of MC USA our pastors are not free to preside at same-sex weddings with the blessing of the denomination or conference. Those whose conscience and faith leads them to do so will have their credentials reviewed as the Membership Guidelines state. PNMC is committed to remaining a member conference of MC USA and supporting all our congregations as they individually find ways to be authentic witnesses to the gospel of Christ wherever they are.'

 - The board discussed the draft credential review process from PLT.
 - Katherine will take the board's feedback to the PLT.

CIHAN Report — Nelly sent a copy via email. She was unable to join us today.

- Katherine will meet with CIHAN leaders during their regularly scheduled meeting on Oct. 2.

Sanctuary/Peace Property Update — Property Sale Workgroup (Jack, Jeryl, Brett, Katherine, Barb)

- The sale is proceeding but hasn't been finalized.

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Treasurer's Report — Brett sent his report via email. He was unable to attend our meeting due to relocation. He states:

- Congregational giving is behind budget, but ahead of where we were last year at this time by \$4700 or 5% of expectations. Annual meeting income is \$4377 below expectations. Expenses came in \$3985 under budget, so on net the annual meeting produced positive net income, but not nearly as much as usual.
- Activity on the Peace property is of note because those lines will cease to have activity once the property is sold. Rent is below budget due to Anawim's departure. Maintenance expense is above budget, and there are city code violations totaling over \$6100. This double-whammy of lower income and higher expenses further justifies our decision to sell the property.
- Overall, expenses are close to budget, but as with last year numbers the Peace property is going over budget and everything else is coming in under budget.
- Our budget begins assuming a net loss; with the results so far this year it's a good thing we're selling the Peace property, both to cut losses and increase reserves available to be tapped.

Leadership and Vision — One of the primary roles of the board is to stay focused on the longer-range vision of PNMC in support of healthy congregations. Some ideas discussed were:

- The board has energy for PNMC's becoming a bolder Anabaptist Mennonite community. Some specific ideas: Anti-racism, including helping congregations stand with their neighbors. Could we re-involve our denomination in mental health care that would affect prison population?
- Future Church Summit: What's the buzz from our various delegates and participants? What are the implications for PNMC? How do we want to be involved in shaping the denomination's journey forward?
- Longer-Term Financial Health: How best to manage our income, expenses, and assets (esp. in anticipation of closing on the sale of the Sanctuary property) so we can maximize actions that support vision in our congregations? How do we manage this money in a responsible way? Do we develop an endowment that would support our district pastor system so it wouldn't have to be a part of our budget, for example? Could we set up a foundation of some sort with Everence and this money to help the church become better equipped and to become healthy congregations? In relation to congregations, how can we have a focus or mission that everyone in the congregation can get behind and support?
- Choose a theme/book for our congregations to study and come back the following year at conference to share what they've learned and how the study or theme has changed them. Would there be a theme or idea that has to do with Anabaptist principles that would help our churches learn/return to these principles? We've done more relational work than theological work in the past few years. Do we want to rebalance and refocus on the values that have made us who we are? Anabaptist Essentials by Palmer Becker is one possibility; The Naked Anabaptist is another.
- How do we encourage members to go into the ministry and/or attract persons to the Pacific Northwest as pastors?
- Could we have a colloquium of Anabaptist leaders who meet with our conference from time to time and help pastors/lay persons to learn more about our faith?
- Do we want to assemble a toolkit for lay leaders, using ideas from congregations in and/or beyond PNMC? Help on how to be a good chairperson, a member of a board, etc. There are some resources but they need to be put in a place where they can be found and used. Central Plains has some information on congregational leadership and could make a page of links to help congregations.

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Meeting Reflections

- Strengths
 - Able to pursue tangents that were linked but nonlinear
 - Open conversation
 - Meeting space, food, lodging
 - Energizing conversation
- Opportunities for Improvement
 - Some board members could not attend

Dates of Future Meetings

December 8-9, 2017 Board Meeting in the Portland area

February 9-10, 2018 CCC/Board Meeting at Zion MC—Katherine is thinking of focusing on the topic of racism and what we can do, and Nelly is interested in discussing sanctuary churches as a part of this. These ideas are aligned with PNMC's statement of future direction: *We stand with our neighbors.*

April 20-21, 2018 — Board Meeting possibly in Idaho on the weekend of the Idaho sale

June 21-23, 2018 — Annual Meeting in Boise, ID