

2014 PNMC Delegate Session Minutes

PNMC Annual Delegate Session – June 20-21, 2014
Northridge Lutheran Church Kalispell, MT

Opening Worship 9:00 am

The annual meeting was opened with worship centered on Colossians 1:3-6. The roll call was incorporated into worship. Each congregation present shared a short response to the question “Where is the gospel growing in you?” as pictures of the congregation were projected on the screen.

Delegate Session #1 Friday 10:30 am

Jeryl Hollinger, Moderator, introduced current board members: Jennifer Delanty, Moderator-elect; Harold Nussbaum, Treasurer; Wanda Dorsing, Secretary; Jennifer Sottolano; Joseph Penner; Jack Swaim; Dave Hockman-Wert

Members Absent: Sarah Hooley, Eva Mendez

1. Table groups were given time to get acquainted with each other, review the table group covenant, and pray.
2. The minutes of the 2013 Portland, Oregon delegate session were approved as presented in the Delegate Handbook.

MSC: Brent Kauffman – David Hockman-Wert

3. ECM report Katherine Jameson Pitts
 - District Pastors foster strong connections within the conference. There was significant turnover among District Pastors this year. Thanks to Lynn Miller, Duane Oesch, George Leppert and Charlene Epp for their years of service. Rose Marie Zook Barber, Bob Buxman, Tim Gascho, Renee Johns, and Victor Vargas have taken on the role of District Pastor. Continuing District Pastors include Wendell Amstutz, Gary Jewell, Brent Kauffman, Al Lind, and Cecil Miller. Katherine lead a prayer of blessing for District Pastors.
 - Nurturing healthy congregations: PNMC churches called two new pastors this year: Mathew Swora at Zion and Angel Campo at Jerusalén Iglesia Menonita. Katherine gave each of them anointing oil to represent their anointing as pastors and our blessing as a conference. Curt Weaver was ordained at Portland Mennonite. We mourned the loss of Nan Gascho who was serving as a chaplain at time of her death.
 - Looking ahead, Katherine anticipates strengthening congregational connections, revisiting affiliations with church related agencies and continuing to explore new ways of being church.
 - Jeryl prayed for Katherine.

4. Financial Report – Harold Nussbaum

Detailed reports are in the Delegate Handbook.

- The 2013 deficit budget ended up showing a surplus due to a \$28,000 estate gift.
- The 2014 budget projects a \$17,000 deficit, about 10% short. The board is concerned about approving deficit budgets, but notes that in recent years God has provided in surprising ways so that the deficit is covered by year end.
- PNMC assets have increased since 2012.
- Expenses remained very consistent in recent years with the main expense being ECM salary. Income from congregations is very consistent from year to year, but contributions by individuals vary each year.

Questions raised by delegates and responses:

- Would you explain what the Seed Northwest Fund is?
When the Eugene property was sold, they gave part of the money to conference, acknowledging the help conference had given them to get started. Seed Northwest is the matching fund program that makes this money available to support new outreach ventures within congregations. The committee that administers the program includes Katherine, Joseph Penner, Rick Troyer, and Angela Boss. Detailed information is available on the web.
- Does anyone analyze differences in congregational giving? What long-term things are being looked at to sustain the budget for the future?
Congregational giving is fairly consistent, but sometimes smaller congregations have difficulty giving what they would like to. The board is looking at establishing a finance team to work with the treasurer and bookkeeper to address financial concerns. The board has worked on defining what value the conference brings to congregations so congregations can be clear about what why they support conference.
- Does PNMC suggest contribution amounts to congregations based on membership number?
In the past, PNMC suggested a percentage for giving. Currently the treasurer asks churches in the fall to indicate what their projected giving is for the next year.

5. Introduction of ballot – Jennifer Delanty, Moderator

Samuel Moran – Moderator-elect

Brett Tieszen – Treasurer

Todd Lehman – 4 yr board term

Bob Buxman – Gift Discernment Team

Brent Kauffman – Gift Discernment Team

This ballot will be voted on in the next delegate session.

Board appointed positions were noted:

Nellie Ascencio – CIHAN representative

Dave Hockman-Wert – appointed to complete the unexpired term of Jerry Barkman who resigned for personal reasons

Meghan Good – appointed by the Gift Discernment Team to the Pastoral Leadership Team

Delegate Session #2 Saturday 8:30 am

Opened with singing “Heart with Loving Heart United”

1. Delegates filled out the ballot presented in the first delegate session.
2. Discernment Session – “How we deal with theological/faith differences in the church.”

a. Dwelling in the Word: Jennifer Delanty Romans 14:1-9,19-21 and 15:1-7

Table groups shared with each other in response to these questions:

- Do you feel strong or weak in faith? How does that shape your understanding of this passage? What is this Scripture saying to you today?
- What might this Scripture be saying to PNMC today?

The group concluded Dwelling in the Word by praying together Richard Foster’s “Prayer of Relinquishment.”

b. Katherine introduced the tasks for table group discernment. Time was given for table group conversation and then groups were asked to report back to the delegate body.

- Name 3 ethical or theological differences at your table and 3 ethical or theological similarities.
- What is valuable about having these differences? How can they make us a stronger church? How can we respect and honor them? To share with the entire delegate body, name something of value in diversity and something of value in commonality and a way to honor each.
- How do we build relationships across diversity? What is the glue that holds us together? Create three action plans for ways to handle our diversity to report to the delegate body.

The responses to these questions were gathered to be reviewed by the board.

Delegate Session #3 Saturday 3:15pm

1. Moderator Report Jeryl Hollinger

a) Administrative Comments

- Katherine completed her first year as ECM in May of 2013. Her evaluation was completed by Jennifer Delanty, moderator-elect and Nancy Kauffman, Denominational Minister. The evaluation was strongly positive.
- We will have our own 501c3 designation in the near future. All paperwork is completed.
- The board spent time examining how the conference adds value to congregations and noted the need to work on how to help congregations prepare for the future.
- Review of the 3-year contract between PNMC and Bethel and Anawim regarding the Sanctuary property is underway.
- The Seed Northwest Project was begun as a way to invest the money from the sale of the Eugene property in creative out-reach ideas.
- The Fusion Faith Center officially withdrew from PNMC. The board reviewed this experience to determine what can be learned for the future.
- The board began a conversation about creating a Finance Team as mentioned in PNMC governance documents, with the goal of providing financial guidance and expertise when needed. The board is still considering what models might be helpful.
- We have not effectively maintained relationships with PNMC constituency groups (e.g. Mennonite Village, Western Mennonite School.) The board anticipates giving attention to this in the coming year.

b) Reflections on the “wind of the Spirit”

- We are living in a moment of opportunity. The current debates in MC USA surrounding homosexuality have revealed that people within the denomination think differently about church governance. The movement of the Spirit can be painful and create conflict.
- We need a polity that expresses who *we* are. Have we tried to hard to model how other denominations have handled their differences over homosexuality? We must remember who we are as Anabaptist Christians. We have traditionally not responded well to authoritative structures. Rather, our tradition emphasizes the servant leadership of Jesus, characterized by suffering and humility.

2. Jeryl recognized people who have made important contributions to the life of the conference over the past year.

- Jim Wenger – led the Sanctuary Property Management Committee
 - Charlotte Derksen – served as Resource Advocate for many years
 - Lynn Miller – chaired the Pastoral Leadership Team for many years
 - Anne Hege- served on the Gift Discernment Team for many years
 - Board members who completed their terms include Harold Nussbaum, Eva Mendez, and Jennifer Sottolano. Jennifer Sottolano is the new Resource Advocate. Jerry Barkman and Isaac Hooley resigned for personal reasons.
3. The new board members were affirmed by ballot at the previous delegate session. Iris de León-Hartshorn , MC USA, led a prayer commissioning the new board.
 4. Jeryl presented Jennifer Delanty with a prayer shawl representing the prayers of the conference and led in a prayer of blessing for her as she becomes moderator.
 5. Brent Kauffman extended an invitation for the 2015 Annual Meeting to be held in Lebanon, Oregon June 19-20.
 6. The Conference Communications Council meeting is scheduled for January 10, 2015 from 8:30am - 3:30pm at Zion Mennonite Church in Hubbard, OR.
 7. Jennifer closed with prayer.