

Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference  
PNMC Board Meeting Minutes  
November 21, 2020, via ZOOM  
8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. PST

**Present:** Dianna Eshleman (Moderator), Kevin Chupp (Moderator-Elect), Katherine Jameson Pitts (ECM), Twila Lehman (Secretary), Dave Hockman-Wert (Treasurer), Jan Yoder (At-Large), Leonard Nolt (At-Large), Deren Kellogg (Appointed), Megan Ramer (At Large), Kiara Yoder (At Large), Jeryl Hollinger (Past Moderator), Nelly Moran-Ascencio, (CIHAN Moderator)

**Absent:** Barb Buxman (Administrative Assistant)

**Welcome and Opening**

Dianna opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m. PST. We each shared a little about what has been going on in our lives. Jeryl led us in prayer and shared a short devotional that despite fear and disruption, our hope and the heart of the gospel is that “we are in this together.”

**Board Education**

The Board discussed Systemic Racism and three types of power—Visible, Hidden, and Invisible.

PNMC has more power in recent years and it’s important to recognize and name it and be transparent about visible, hidden, and invisible power and how they are represented. We also discussed who may be missing from our conversations (i.e. Conservative, LGBTQ) and how important it is to represent and listen to as many as possible. One suggestion was to create a way to learn more about the makeup of our congregations. Board members should reflect a broad spectrum of PNMC including age, gender, geography, ethnicity, and identity.

**Amendment to Minutes**

The PNMC Board minutes of August 29, 2020 will be amended to include the motion passed for Dianna, Kevin, and Dave to be signers on PNMC investment accounts with Everence.

**Reports**

**1. Gift Discernment Team (GDT) - Dianna**

The Gift Discernment Team will be activated in January and consists of the Moderator, Moderator Elect, ECM and 2 members elected by delegates, Joseph Penner & Renee Johns

**2. Executive Conference Minister (ECM) - Katherine**

This pandemic has been difficult for pastoral transitions without in-person gatherings.

Pastoral Transitions

- Zion – currently accepting MLIs and interviewing candidates
- Lebanon – seeking interim pastor, beginning congregational profile
- Hyde Park – preparing profile, naming search committee
- Western – working on a transitional discernment process

ECM continues to work with several folks interested in ministry in PNMC

### **Support congregations in planning for their futures**

International Bethel City Church closed. Lucy and Simon are moving to the Detroit area where they hope to be able to purchase a building. Other members may join with Clear Creek Church (where IBCC rents) or relate to the new congregation online. Other Muange family members have moved to Texas.

Church Plant efforts continue:

- Rachael Weasley – Community of Hope, Bellingham WA  
They now have a Facebook page. She is making a lot of connections with other Mennonites.
- Jesus Fuentes – Iglesia Anabautista Ebenezer, Keizer OR  
He left his current congregation and is gathering a group of people to start a new congregation online. Relating to Samuel Moran and Simon Rendon.

### **Strengthen the ministry of our pastors**

- Online Pastor Cluster has met twice - Katherine will join next time. Seems to be helpful and going well.
- Quarterly District Pastor meeting will be having second meeting Dec. 7
- In response to feedback from ECM evaluation, ECM is planning on setting up electronic visits with pastors over next three months.
- Pastoral Leadership Team met October 19, 2020
  - approved Ron Hershey for Licensing toward Ordination
  - approved Jesus Fuentes for a License for Specific Ministry for church planting
  - began process of updating pastors' ethics covenant.

### **Facilitate the sharing of fresh ideas and best practices among lay leaders**

ECM continues to promote MC USA webinars/coaching for Faith Formation

### **Build connections across the conference and with the wider church**

#### **Conference Communications Council – Feb. 6, 2021, 9 am – 12 am PST.**

Safwat Marzouk, Associate Professor of Old Testament/Hebrew Bible at AMBS will be the guest presenter on the topic "The Joseph Story in an Age of Migration." Dr. Marzouk's writings include the book, "Intercultural Church: A Biblical Vision for an Age of Migration. Additional CCC agenda items include a brief update on the state of the conference and time for sharing from congregations.

### **Annual Meeting**

Discussed changing the date this year to **August 20-21 (third weekend in August)** to strengthen the possibility that we could gather in person. Consider inviting Zion to host to avoid need for deposits in case it cannot be held in person and look to Seattle for 2022 tentatively. MCUSA Convention in Cincinnati will be a hybrid conference and will be the first week in July. Two online meetings back to back (PNMC and MC USA) might be difficult.

**MOTION:** Megan moved and Deren seconded to move the date of the 2021 PNMC Annual meeting to August 20-21 (third weekend in August). **MOTION PASSED.**

**Volunteers needed for help with Zoom and other online tools!** The pandemic has made it even more clear that this is a weakness in our communications strategy. Gary Martin from Anchorage has mentioned that he is willing to serve in this capacity. ECM will check in with him.

### MC USA connections

- ECM has an article in the current issue of *Leader* and one more column for next spring's issue. *Leader* magazine is for leaders of MCUSA. Comes out monthly.
- Conference Ministers are meeting twice a month – once for information/input, and once for sharing. They continue to process the proposed resolution on retiring the Membership Guidelines. They are having a Zoom Webinar on Dec. 3 in the place of the annual binational CM/AC Annual Retreat. Speaker is Brad Jersak: *A Christlike Approach to Leading Polarized People*.

### Anti-racism Training

**Board IDI training:** Duncan Smith will facilitate for us. Duncan is well trained in the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) process and in using it as a steppingstone toward greater racial equity in organizations). Duncan will set it up for individual board members/staff to do the Inventory online during Dec/Jan. In Feb/Mar he would like to do individual profile feedback with each person. ECM suggested that on March 27, 2021, when we have a short meeting planned that we plan to extend that time together and have Duncan for a half-day to give us group feedback and help us understand how to use what we have learned about ourselves to move forward. Duncan suggested that another half-day a few months later, perhaps after working through the *Widerstand* modules, might also be useful, but we did not commit to that at this point.

Cost: administration \$50  
half-day presentation \$500  
administration of IDI \$21/person  
individual feedback \$75/person  
total \$1894

**MOTION:** Jan moved, and Kevin seconded to approve a total of \$1894 to move forward with the IDI training. **MOTION PASSED.**

### 3. Hispanic Churches - Concilio De Iglesias Anabautista Del Noroeste (CIHAN) - Nelly

CIHAN's Board had a Council meeting in person on October 10, 2020, to appoint new Board members. The following are the new Board members: Moderator pastor Ángel Campos from Jerusalén Iglesia Menonita; Moderator-elect Eva Flores from Iglesia Menonita Roca De Salvación; Secretary Luz Maya de Campos from Jerusalén Iglesia Menonita; and Treasurer Florencio Bautista from Comunidad Cristiana Vida Nueva. Nelly decided to take a break from serving after six years.

The Annual Meeting that had been planned for Saturday, November 14 was cancelled because one of leaders of a congregation tested positive for COVID-19. It will be rescheduled, but no date decided at this point. The CIHAN's Board members will work on how the new board can take on their new positions without in-person meetings.

The Council's members were very excited to see Kiara Yoder, PNMC Board member, at their meeting. They are hoping to see her in the Concilio meetings.

Escuela Bíblica Anabautista De Formación Ministerial (EBAFOM) students are still waiting for their material to arrive to be able to start their new course.

Youth, Women, Men & Children's Committees did not have their Convention this year. They are looking forward to next year's Convention and to see who will be appointed for the new committees.

#### 4. Policy Report - Leonard

Suggested Changes to “Policies for the PNMC Board” – Leonard Nolt

These are the suggestions for replacing pronouns in the “Policies for the PNMC Board,” (The yellow pages). Under Category II: Governance Process; 2.5 Board Members’ Code of Conduct; 2.5.2.2, under the topic “conflict of interest.” Lines 241 and 242. They’re currently written as “Should a member apply for such employment, **he or she** must first resign from the Board.”

Suggested change: “**Any member** who applies for such employment must first resign from the Board.”

The second place is on the same page, lines 254-256. It’s currently written as “Board members will not interfere with the Executive Conference Minister’s duties, in day to day management, or undermine **his or her** authority with staff members.”

Suggested change: “Board members will not interfere with the Executive Conference Minister’s (ECM) duties, in day to day management, or undermine **ECM’s** authority with staff members.”

These are suggested changes under Category II: Governance Process; 2.3.1, under Agenda Planning lines 173-174. Add statement to allow meetings to be conducted in person and/or electronically.

Suggested change: The agenda cycle of four annual Board meetings, **conducted in person and/or electronically**, will begin with the first meeting following the delegate assembly.

**MOTION:** Kiara moved and Deren seconded to accept the policy changes stated above as proposed by Leonard. **MOTION PASSED.**

#### 5. Finance Team (FT) Update & Treasurer Report - Deren, Dave

**Finance Team Report:** Update on three issues: the narrative PNMC Budget, the new Covenant of Understanding with the ECM for 2021-22, and the Seed NW Fund.

##### Narrative Budget

Dave Hockman-Wert is working on a narrative budget based on the current values statement and on examples of past narrative budgets. Current values statement:

Our mission is to nurture healthy congregations in the following ways:

1. Guide congregations through pastoral transitions;
2. Support congregations in planning for their futures;
3. Strengthen the ministry of our pastors;
4. Facilitate the sharing of fresh ideas and best practices among lay leaders;
5. Build connections across the conference and with the wider church.

##### Covenant of Understanding

The Finance Team is currently working on a 2021-22 Covenant of Understanding for the ECM. Katherine has provided a draft budget and they are currently working on interpreting Everence’s geographic salary guidelines. They will have a draft budget for the COU ready for the Board’s examination by December.

##### Seed NW (Northwest) Fund

Seed NW Fund was originally set up with minimal guidelines after Eugene Mennonite sold their building and donated a portion of the proceeds (\$95,000) to the Conference. This was to be used for “congregational/development outreach.” To prevent the fund from being used up for just 2-3 large

facilities project, the Conference added a requirement that congregations wishing to draw from this also have commitments from other congregations. However, the effect of this was to keep it from being used much at all; there is approximately \$80,000 remaining in the fund.

**MOTION:** Megan moved, and Nelly seconded to end the Seed NW Grant Program and to begin a process to repurpose the money for congregational development in PNMC. **MOTION PASSED.**

**Budget Report:** Income/expenses compared with budget, use of endowment grants, performance of endowment funds v. expectations

Balance sheet – cash flow/bank accounts - from \$126K in August 29, to \$135K on November 21.

- Endowment funds – Almost \$80K increase in the last quarter (ending 8/31).
- Income/expense ahead by \$10,500
- Sharing Fund-Insurance Premiums (Line 34001) is low. May need to move more money into this account. Finance team will investigate the history of this line item and the Catastrophic line item and bring a summary and recommendations to next board meeting. (Dave has since sent the 2008 Guidelines to the Sharing fund)

Budget vs. Actuals – Feb 2020 – Jan 2021

- Member Contributions are 64% for the year (a little behind last year)
- Gross Profit is about the same
- Total Expenses are at 61% for the year
- Special note: Travel expense is 25% of usual (due to COVID and restricted travel) \$5,400 vs \$18K last year.

### Discussion items

The Board is in full agreement that we are currently in a maintenance mode and will look at long term vision next year.

1. It was suggested that we have a congregational survey to collect demographic data primarily to learn more about the PNMC congregations. Discussed using the congregational survey for congregations to use for pastoral search process. Wonderful information to have but difficult to know demographics at this time of online environments. Maybe next year, asking pastors to complete a short survey of their congregation or giving congregations the option of responding or using whatever form/technique they deem appropriate. After we get information, PNMC can determine how to use and the value. There was strong affirmation for collecting demographic data from congregations, but to wait until we are out of “survival” mode.
2. Questions for discussion to follow up on proposed MC USA membership guidelines resolution:  
**How will this affect PNMC conference and congregations?** Strength of Resolution: Gives more autonomy to local congregations and conferences and may reshape the role of conferences. Polity and relationship and how we are church together is important. Removes the punitive measure of how we do church. When asked, Nelly states if MC USA retires the membership guidelines, CIHAN will wait to see how PNMC reacts before they decide if they will leave PNMC membership.

**Should the MC USA resolution to be presented to the delegates in July be separated into two separate resolutions (to retire the guidelines and recognizing harm to LGBTQ) or keeping as one resolution?**

Most think that it should be done as one resolution recognizing the harm done.

Side Note: Calvary is part of the conference because they never formally separated from PNMC, but practically, they are not engaging and joining in any way.

**Does the Board want to contribute a statement in writing to MC USA, like some other conferences have done?** This would be foreign to how we operate as a conference. PNMC Board does not want to contribute a statement in writing.

Timeline for Resolution:

- Conference Moderators meeting (Nov. 9)
- Resolution Committee meets to review all resolutions (four plus the EB draft)
- Executive Board makes final decisions regarding resolutions for MennoCon21 (Jan 2021)
- EB staff lead implementation in collaboration with executive conference ministers and others (Jan-Jun 2021)
- EB staff develop a communication plan (Jan-Jun 2021)
- CLC receives final resolutions (Apr 2021)
- Delegates vote on final recommendations at MennoCon21 (July 2021)

### **Closing**

Be sure to fill out and return the Self-Evaluation form to Dianna.

Katherine closed the meeting with prayer at 12:35.

### **Next meetings:**

**January 23, 2021 - PNMC regularly scheduled Board meeting (8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.)**

**February 6, 2021 – CCC Meeting (8:30 a.m. to noon)**

**March 27, 2021 - One-hour meeting for CLC recap. (8:30-9:30 a.m.)**

**May 15, 2021 - PNMC regularly scheduled Board meeting (8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.)**

Submitted by Twila Lehman  
PNMC Secretary

AMBS	<b>Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary</b>
CCC	<b>Conference Communications Council</b>
CIHAN	<b>Concilio de Iglesias Anabautista del Noroeste</b>
CLC	<b>Constituency Leaders Council</b>
CM/AC	<b>Conference Minister (USA)/Area Church Minister ( Canada)</b>
COU	<b>Covenant of Understanding</b>
COVID 19	<b>the virus</b>
EB	<b>Executive Board (of MC USA)</b>
EBAFOM	<b>Escuela Biblica Anabautista de Formación Ministerial</b>
ECM	<b>Executive Conference Minister</b>
FT	<b>Finance Team</b>
GDT	<b>Gifts Discernment Team</b>
IBCC	<b>International Bethel City Church</b>
IDI	<b>Intercultural Development Inventory</b>
LGBTQ	<b>Lesbian Gay Bi-Sexual Transgender Queer</b>
MC USA	<b>Mennonite Church United States of America</b>
MennoCon21	<b>MC USA bi-annual convention</b>
MLI	<b>Ministerial Leadership Information Form</b>
PLT	<b>Pastoral Leadership Team (PNMC)</b>
PNMC	<b>Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference</b>
SEED NW	<b>Funds received from Eugene Mennonite Church</b>
THE LEADER	<b>A magazine for leaders of MC USA</b>

