

**Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference  
PNMC Board Meeting Minutes via ZOOM  
Saturday, May 15, 2021  
8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. PST**

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

**Absent:** Jeryl Hollinger (Past Moderator)

**WELCOME AND OPENING**

Dianna opened the meeting at 8:30 a.m. PST. Board members shared briefly about happenings in their lives. Twila shared scripture (I Corinthians 13) and then led us in prayer.

**MINUTES**

The minutes from the January 23, 2021, meeting were accepted electronically by Board members and posted to the PNMC website.

**REPORTS**

**1. Moderator Report - Dianna**

- a) Dianna gave a summary of Moderators MC USA monthly meeting held on 5/10/21. This meeting's special speaker was Denominational Minister for Transformative Peacemaking, Sue Park Hur, who wants to focus on rediscovering our Mennonite identity as a peace church. The latest focus during the pandemic has been developing online resources focusing on racism. Click on the Resources tab at [mennoniteusa.org](http://mennoniteusa.org) to access information about the "Defund the police? an abolition curriculum" intended for 9-10 week Sunday School classes which has been released recently.

Other upcoming releases:

- May 27th: a webinar "Laboring toward Wholeness" that addresses patriarchy with a curriculum.
- May 25th: co-sponsor of an Anti-Asian violence webinar.
- Diversity/God's Design: developing a 4-week Bible study targeted to young adults.

- b) Drift Creek Camp has been reserved for Board Retreat Sept 10-12, 2021. The retreat will begin Friday evening after supper and end Sunday morning after brunch. Immediate family members are invited to participate and cost will be sent via email.

**2. Gift Discernment Team (GDT) Report - Dianna**

GDT members are Moderator, Moderator-Elect, ECM, Joseph Penner, and Renee Johns

The following 6 candidates (filled by delegate vote and Board appointment) were identified for new terms following the Annual Conference (Zoom) on August 21, 2021:

- a) Board Member (4-year elected term) (currently Deren, who was appointed to complete Jenna Schlegel Preheim's term.)

**Deren Kellogg, Seattle, WA**

- b) Secretary (3-year elected term) currently Twila Lehman

**Katherine O'Brien (First Mennonite Church, Aberdeen, ID)**

- c) Gifts Discernment Team Member (1-year elected term) non-Board member - current & continuing **Joseph Penner, Salem, Oregon**

- d) Gifts Discernment Team Member (1-year elected term) non-Board member - currently Rene Johns, Boise Idaho  
Rick Bollman, (Emmaus) Meridian, ID
- e) Clergy Member for Pastoral Leadership Team (4-year Board Appointed term) - current and continuing Amy Epp, Seattle, WA (other continuing Pastoral Leadership Team members are Rod Stafford (Portland), Sam Adams (Bend), Angel Campo, (Salem)
- f) Lay Member for Pastoral Leadership Team (4-year Board Appointed term) - currently Linda Dibble  
Rob Hansen (Hyde Park) ID

**MOTION:** Deren moved that we appoint Amy Epp, Clergy Member for Pastoral Leadership Team and Rob Hansen, Lay Member for Pastoral Leadership Team. **MOTION PASSED.**

### 3. Executive Conference Minister (ECM) Report – Katherine

#### Guide congregations through pastoral transitions

- Zion – New pastor, Steve Bomar, begins June 1.
- Lebanon -- considering interim options
- Hyde Park – have met several times with search committee, working with a candidate.
- Portland Mennonite – Britt Carlson is leaving in August, will begin search this summer.
- Seattle Mennonite – Jonathan and Melanie Neufeld will be leaving at the end of August.

#### Support congregations in planning for their futures

- Partnering with Terry Rediger on visioning process for Western.
- Assisted Salem Mennonite hiring a consultant to help with vision/planning.
- Continued working with Community of Hope, Bellingham and Iglesia Anabautista Ebenezer (church plants).
- Met with pastor in Seattle interested in affiliating congregation with MC USA
- Healthy Congregation Grants
  - Women’s retreat approved.
  - Working with a couple of other churches on visioning/transition consultants grants to be considered.

#### Strengthen the ministry of our pastors

- Finished one-on-one meetings with active pastors.
- Continue meeting with monthly Online Pastor Cluster.
- Working to connect new pastors with appropriate educational opportunities.
- Working with PLT on revised pastoral ethics covenant/PLT meeting.
- Reorganized DPs (District Pastors) following resignations of Linda Dibble and Renee Johns.

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

- CCC was well received. Planning to continue with an equipping/education focus and an online format for Feb. 2022 (2/5/22?).
- Continue trying to get stories from congregation for E-Bulletin.

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

- Preached in 6 congregations via Zoom.
- Asked to write one more article for the Leader magazine.
- Attended several MC USA webinars.
- Attended CLC online.

- Participated in Ecumenical Ministry of Oregon Executives and Bishops Council monthly meetings.
- Met with new West Coast MCC director
- Annual Meeting planning

#### **Anti-racism Training for Board**

Debriefed with Duncan Smith on board presentation and individual IDI reports.

#### **4. CIHAN (Concilio De Iglesias Anabautista Del Noroeste) Report – Nelly**

**Concilio/Council:** Had an in-person meeting in March to look over the church calendar with another meeting scheduled today. Nelly will forward a calendar of future dates to Katherine.

Jesús Fuentes (Previous pastor at Comunidad Cristiana Vida Nueva) is back on the church council as a church planter. His current congregation is Iglesia Anabautista Ebenezer.

#### **5. Policy Report - Leonard**

Leonard proposed a “Document Retention Policy” addition to our Policy & Procedures. Discussion followed. It was decided that it needs more clarification on who has access to files, which are published, confidential, or available upon request. It will go back to the Policy committee for revisions to present at the next meeting. Dave Coffman was suggested as a person to look at the revised policy to see if it needs to be reviewed by an attorney.

#### **6. Finance Team (FT) & Treasurer Report – Deren and Dave**

##### **Check-in with congregations about annual giving**

The finance team is considering ways to annually contact congregations to remind them to add PNMC to their annual budgets and, perhaps, to increase their giving as well as thanking them for past giving. Jack Swaim has drafted a template for recording the ways that congregations have interacted with PNMC over the past four years and Dave is working with Katherine to determine what information could be included in this. Dave will draft the text of an initial email to congregations about these check-ins and will share it with the rest of the Finance Team for review. We are currently planning to send out the initial communication in early July.

##### **Narrative budget**

Deren has drafted a narrative budget for the 2021-2022 budget, dividing expenses that support the four parts of the PNMC mission statement: Promote personal spiritual development; Nurture healthy congregations; Make strong connections throughout the Conference; and, Call each other to fulfill God’s purpose for the world. The biggest challenge is dividing pastoral and/or staff time among these four categories. Simply allocating 25% to each category may not reflect the true amount of effort devoted to each category. The Finance Team recommends that the Board work with Katherine to determine a more realistic allocation. This should not be a formal budget line item that would require staff to allocate their time accordingly, but rather an estimate that can serve as a guide for the narrative budget. Finance team will talk with ECM and staff to gather a better estimate.

##### **Combining PNMC’s Stock and Bond and Investment Funds**

The Finance Team looked into the questions of whether these funds had any restrictions that would prevent them from being combined. Since that does not seem to be the case, the Finance Team will work with Everence to combine these funds.

##### **Financials – Dave**

Balance Sheet: Current assets last year to this year are stable with good cash flow. Our investment

funds are doing very well. 34001 Sharing Fund Insurance Premium account is depleted. Dave will research who and how this is used and bring information to next meeting for discussion and action. Budget vs. Actuals: We are at 17.07% of member church contributions and at 25% of expenses which is good. We are in good financial shape especially due to the return of investment funds.

## **DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS**

### **1. The 2021 PNMC Annual Conference “Love will lead us home”**

After much discussion of various options, the **Board affirmed the option to have an ONLINE DELEGATE SESSION ONLY on Saturday**. The Delegate Session will include:

- State of the conference
- Introduction of new pastors
- Treasurer’s report
- Ballot
- Recognition of those who have served and welcome new leaders  
DPs, PLT, Board
- Sharing from those who have received Healthy Congregation Grants
- Roll Call and/or Breakout group sharing

**Pastor Appreciation Dinner.** Tabled until later due to time constraints. Dianna will poll Board members in the near future by email.

### **2. Working with Church Planters in PNMC - draft proposal (Katherine).**

Katherine shared a draft proposal for “Working with Church Planters in PNMC” for discussion to act on at the next meeting.

#### ***Working with Church Planters in PNMC – A DRAFT proposal***

***Affiliated Church Plant.*** *This would not replace the category of Member in Process, but would be a prior phase of congregational development. To become an Affiliated Church Plant, a church planter would need to*

- 1. Share with the ECM a call and plan for congregational development.*
- 2. Gather a support group of at least 3 persons committed to prayer and conversation.*
- 3. Participate in MC USA Church Planting training.*
- 4. Attend PNMC meetings (CCC and AM).*
- 5. Complete an MLI including background check.*

*At this point PNMC would provide*

- 1. The companionship/oversight of a District Pastor.*
- 2. The opportunity to participate in a pastor cluster.*
- 3. Possibly connection to a supportive mature congregation or an Oversight Committee*
- 4. A pathway to credentialing:*
  - a. A group of 3 persons participating in the church plant or a sponsoring congregation and a PNMC District Pastor may request a License for Specific Ministry ministerial credential. The Pastoral Leadership Team will process this request as it does with other congregational requests.*
  - b. If the church plant grows to become a Member in Process or Member Congregation of PNMC the PLT can review this credential for reclassification as a License toward Ordination.*
- 5. Modest funding provided with application describing planned use (funds to come from SeedNW/Eugene money):*

- a. Initial grants of \$1000 (may be used for planter's participation in church planting education programs).
  - b. A second-year grant of up to \$5000.
  - c. A third-year grant of up to \$3000.
6. Yearly evaluation of progress with the ECM and District Pastor

*Affiliated Church Plant status would last for no more than 3 years by which time the group should have moved to Member in Process status or should consider dissolving.*

**MOTION:** Dianna moved and Deren seconded to give permission for Katherine to use this draft provisionally NOW. **MOTION PASSED.** Details of the proposal will be reviewed and revised as needed at the September meeting.

### 3. IDI process experience (Katherine)

We discussed (through breakout groups of 3 persons) how we experienced working with the IDI personally and what we think it tells our Board answering the following questions: What did you learn about yourself? Were you surprised? What have you thought of doing to move along the scale? How can what you learned help PNMCM?

**Nelly Moran-Ascencio, (CIHAN Representative)** gave a background and history of the CIHAN congregations, how they function and how they are structured:

- o Members are defined as active participants (attendees)
- o Pastors are not paid and have other vocations. They receive financial support from their church based on offering funds, which vary in amount
- o Congregations always go to the pastor for decisions
- o Pastor does most of the work and makes the final decisions (even with a leadership team)
- o Congregational members are from various countries including Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras.

#### **Discussion: IDI followup**

How do we want to continue moving forward? We decided to dedicate time at Board Retreat in September. Megan and Deren will follow up with Duncan to get "next steps" ideas.

Possible things we can do:

- o Reflecting on and knowing one's own individual and organizational culture.
- o Look at our history. What have been the main cultural influences?
- o Do exercises that deepen our understanding of cultural differences.
- o Naming our differences and commonalities.
- o What are the significant differences that are pushed out by an overemphasis on commonalities?
- o Listening to each other deeply.

#### **REMINDERS**

- PNMCM Annual Conference - August 21, 2021 - PNMCM Annual Delegate session online (ZOOM) from 9 – 12 AM.
- MennoCon21 hybrid convention (virtual & in-person in Kansas City) scheduled July 6-10, 2021. Proposed MC USA Bylaw changes will be sent to the Delegate Assembly to vote on these recommendations during its abbreviated virtual gathering on July 10, 2021. The proposed resolution "to retire the denomination's Membership Guidelines as active polity in Mennonite Church USA" to a future in-person Delegate Assembly for final deliberation May 27-30, 2022, in

Kansas City, Missouri. Three other resolutions are also being considered for presentation to the delegates at that time: "For justice in the U.S. Criminal Legal System"; "MC USA Accessibility Resolution 2021"; A Resolution for Repentance and Transformation."

- Share news from your congregations for the twice monthly PNMC E-bulletin
- **Next quarterly Board meeting date will be Saturday, September 11** during the (1st annual?) Board retreat scheduled for September 10-12, 2021, at Drift Creek Camp.
- Please fill out **Goggle Form** meeting evaluation within 24 hours after the meeting.

**Future meeting agenda items list:** (contact Dianna if you have additional agenda item requests)

- Continued IDI processing
- Discussion item for September meeting - Would it make sense to convert the Secretary & Treasurer positions from nonvoting to voting members?
- ECM & Executive Assistant job description - job description update proposals
- Digital Communications and Security policy proposal

### **Closing**

Katherine closed the meeting with a blessing and prayer. Adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

Submitted by Twila Lehman  
PNMC Secretary