

Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference
June 18, 2022
Zion Mennonite Church – Hubbard Oregon
“Remembering/Re-membering (I Thessalonians 1:2-4)”

Roll Call and Delegate Session Minutes

The meeting was opened with prayer and reflection on Matthew 21:22 by Dianna Eshleman. The 2021 Zoom minutes were reviewed as printed. The motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as written. The motion carried. Kiara Yoder led the roll call:

Roll Call

Albany Mennonite- (Albany, OR) Pastor Peter Epp reported that the Outreach commission is bringing new life to the congregation with various monthly activities. Albany is also working with the city of Albany in a small housing project.

Comunidad Cristiana Vida Nueva – (Salem, OR) Leader Misael Araujo reports they are still in love with God.

Corvallis Mennonite Fellowship – (Corvallis, OR) Gerry Langstraat reports they have been active with the Oregon MCC sale. They are happy to be resuming weekly potlucks!

Emmaus Christian Fellowship – (Meridian, ID) Rick Bollman reports working with the Document of Discovery led their group to support St Joseph School in Montana with school supplies. They have also continued to support MCC with school kits.

Evergreen Heights Mennonite Church – (Caldwell, ID) Pastor Kathy Bilderback states the congregation is discerning about having a housing project on their property.

Evergreen Mennonite – (Kirkland, WA) Pastor Sandy Larson reports having their first gathering as a picnic. They are working with a member on inclusivity discrimination in the workplace.

First Mennonite Church of Aberdeen – Pastor Kevin Chupp reported they will be holding a music event “Gospel on the Grass” for all Christian churches in the local area.

Hyde Park Mennonite Fellowship – (Boise, ID) Ellen Hunt reports that the congregation has been continuing to meet as a hybrid church, working on inclusivity and the Doctrine of Discovery. They have been working to support the Corpus Christi shelter for the homeless.

Iglesia Menonita Roca de Salvación – (Aurora, OR) Pastor Victor Estrada reports involving the youth to work with the food bank in Canby along with Calvary Mennonite.

Jerusalen Iglesia Menonita - (Salem, OR) Pastor Angel Campo reports partnering with a church in Ensenada Mexico.

Menno Mennonite Church - (Ritzville, WA) Pastor Emily Toews reports having an active prayer quilt ministry and working with the Moses Lake homeless shelter. They also host the Washington MCC Auction the first weekend in October and invited all to come.

Ministerios Restauración – (Portland, OR) Pastor Samuel Moran emphasized that to do good to all is the work of the church. During the Covid pandemic they supplied food for the elderly and many in their congregation. They are thankful to finally have open doors for worship.

Pacific Covenant Mennonite Church – (Canby, OR) Jerry Barkman reports that while a small group, they have helped support one member as they obtained their PhD.

Portland Mennonite Church – (Portland, OR) Pastor Curt Weaver reports they have been working with the youth and celebrate each of their graduating high school seniors with a quilt.

Salem Mennonite Church – (Salem, OR) Pastor Jerrell Williams was recently celebrated with an ordination service. The church will be celebrating their 70th anniversary this year. They have been studying about Justice issues.

Seattle Mennonite Church- (Seattle, WA) Jennifer Delanty reported that recent discernment has led them to convert part of their campus into a development of 280 units of affordable housing. The Volunteer Service house is being converted to a support house for Solidarity Network, a group working with black and indigenous people of color.

Shalom Church – (Spokane, WA) Jan Yoder reports that the group began meeting in person again on Easter. The group has a ministry to the elderly of their congregation. Supporting places of need is a great joy to this group.

Western Mennonite Church – (Salem, OR) Cheeri Barnhart reports that the congregation has been working on discernment for the future of the congregation, looking at what their calling may be. They have also been involved with immigration assistance.

Zion Mennonite Church – (Hubbard, OR) Pastor Jana Gingerich reports the congregation has worked with farm workers and the local health authorities to provide education and to bridge cultures during the Covid pandemic.

Church Plants:

Iglesia Anabautista Ebenezer – (Keizer, OR) Pastor Jesús Fuentes reports working with Evangelism through social media. They have connections with a church in Mexico and throughout the United States. The church does not have a building and has been meeting in homes. Approximately 60 attend services on social media.

Community of Hope Church – (Bellingham, WA) Pastor Rachael Weasley reported their church is growing on the Zoom platform. They are working to build a support group for LGBTQ pastors and parents of LGBTQ children.

Minutes of Delegate Sessions

Delegate Session 1 – 10:00 -12:00

An introduction was made of persons from the wider church organizations present. The PNMC Board members were introduced.

Reports

Executive Conference Minister – Katherine Jameson Pitts referenced her final written report and highlighted the goals of nurturing healthy congregations and to stay connected were met in a variety of ways. Eighteen grants in twenty-one congregations were supported through the PNMC Healthy Congregation Grants fund for various causes. Up to three thousand dollars per year per congregation is available to help congregations support their work. Some of the money was used to help send delegates to the MCUSA Special Delegate session this year. PNMC had 17 delegates representing 60% of our conference churches. Working with the Healthy Congregation Grants committee was a great joy for Katherine.

Katherine encouraged congregations to trust their search committees. During the past ten years there have been eighteen congregational transitions. Currently four interim pastors are serving in congregations. Anointing oil was distributed to those pastors who were unable to receive it in the past two years.

Currently 24 congregations are being served by district pastors. The district pastors were recognized for their role in this ministry. **Since the inception of the District Pastor program, Brent Kauffman and Gary Jewell have served as District Pastors. They were given special recognition for their dedicated service.**

Thanks were given to the Boards and staff that Katherine has worked with.

Ordinations

Peter Epp, Albany Mennonite

Jerrell Williams, Salem Mennonite

Rachael Weasley, Community of Hope, Bellingham Washington
Stephen Obold- Eshleman, Portland Mennonite Church, Chaplaincy, Vancouver Washington

Treasurer's Report – Dave Hockman-Wert

Written reports were given as well as an overview. PNMC is on solid financial footing despite Covid and the downward spiral of investments. Less expenditures than budgeted attribute to the healthy report. Operating income for 2021-22 was short of budget due to no annual meeting income. Congregational giving was less than budgeted and expenses were greatly lowered due to less travel expense and no annual meeting expense. A net operating income of \$8600.00 was realized.

The Healthy Congregations Grant Fund was well used but still has plenty of funds.

A visual budgeting story was used for a better understanding of how funds are used. The pie chart for 2023 demonstrates the following breakdown:

Nurturing healthy congregations	38.72%
Promote personal spiritual development	9.20%
Make strong connections throughout conference	42.36%
Call each other to fulfill God's purpose for the world	9.72%

Search Team – Kevin Chupp

The first step of this process was to look at the results of the information gathering process using the tool, "Assessing the Mission of PNMC." This tool asked a number of questions to determine the purpose and process of PNMC. Out of this information a thorough job description was developed. The Search Team is in the process of looking at candidates with a strong slate for the first draft. Kevin acknowledged the Search Team members for their strong support and participation in the process.

Search Team Members are:

Kevin Chupp, PNMC moderator; Jerrell Williams, Sam Adams, Nelly Moran Ascencio, Rob Hanson, Kevin Hockman-Chupp and Jill Baker-Swiers. Attendees were asked to pray for the search team in the discernment moving forward with candidate interviews.

Moderator's Report – Dianna Eshleman

Dianna opened with verses 1-2 of Psalm 126. Our mouths were filled with laughter and songs of joy in being able to meet together again. She asked for prayers during the transition process and as we reflect on the outcomes of the Special Delegate session 2022. Dianna stated that the changes in the membership status do not change what individual congregations or conferences response may be. We all are accountable for our individual responses. We need to listen to each other and see what God is doing.

Ballot presentation

The Gifts Discernment team developed the ballot for the board and was presented to the delegates for voting.

Questions/Answers with Iris-De-Leon Hartshorn and Rachel Ringenberg Miller

Q: How can we nurture youth into ministry? A: This happens at home congregational level. Ask the youth to serve at a young age in many venues. Leading worship, serving on boards, leading music.

Q: How were people feeling on the losing side of the passed resolutions? (at Special delegate sessions)

A: People left with heaviness. The history of LGBTQ inclusion has spanned 20 years of debate. People participated in thoughtful dialogue with much discernment at the tables. MCUSA is just now processing the results. There have been no changes in how church polity happens. Churches are widening their tents to all. Churches will decide for their individual responses within conference.

Q: What is the impact of this decision (to dismiss membership guidelines) with other faiths?

A: Other churches were in observance – Church of the Brethren and MC Canada. The Brethren group were wanting to adopt the discernment process with round table discussions.

Q: How is MCUSA dealing with the rise in white nationalism in our country and congregations?

A: Start with the curricula of abolition studies available at the congregational level. Participate in the Peace and Justice programs. Partnership grants are available to churches.

Ballot Results

The following nominees were affirmed by delegate election:

Chris Nord – Moderator elect, 4 -year term (2 years moderator elect, 2 years as moderator)

Emily Toews – Board of Directors, 4 -year term

Rick Bollman – Gifts Discernment Team, 1 year term

Jennifer Gingerich – Gifts Discernment Team, 1 year term

The following nominees were affirmed by board appointment:

Kiara Yoder - Member at large, 2- year term

Julia Todd – Board Secretary – filling an unexpired term

Sam Adams – Pastoral Leadership Team, 4-year term (2nd term)

Harold Nussbaum – Finance Team, 1 year term

Jack Swaim - Finance Team, 2-year term

Workshops 1:00-3:00 pm

2nd Delegate Session 3:30 -4:15

The afternoon delegate session was a time to honor those departing the board. Departing members are: Dianna Eshleman, Jan Yoder, Nelly Moran-Ascencio.

New board members are Chris Nord, Emily Toews, Kiara Yoder and Julia Todd.

Announcements – Barb Buxman asked to have all updates for the directory reported to the PNMC office in a timely manner.

An invitation was made to the Annual meeting at Portland Mennonite Church June 23-24, 2023

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15

Closing worship and communion with Katherine Jameson Pitts and a farewell supper for Katherine closed the annual meeting time.

Submitted, Julia Todd, PNMC Secretary