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Barb Buxman, PNMC Administrator, Retiring After 14 Years

Eric Massanari, Executive Conference Minister

When I began serving as the PNMC conference minister nearly two years ago, I remember being told, "As you learn the ropes you will be in very good hands with Barb Buxman as the PNMC Administrator. She'll keep you oriented in the right direction!" Those words have been proven true many times over, and I count myself fortunate to have been able to work alongside Barb as I learn my way into this role and into the vibrant life of PNMC.

Many of you have had the opportunity to know and work with Barb over a much longer period of time, so you are well aware what an **invaluable gift she has been to our conference**. Barb's capacity to connect with a wide array of people, her commitment to serve others with care and conscientiousness, her organizational gifts and her ability to gracefully roll with the ever-changing challenges and Opportunities of conference ministry are just a few of the many gifts she has shared with PNMC.

Barb will retire from her role as PNMC Administrator. She and her husband Bob will remain in the Portland area, enjoying time with family and friends, and additional time for play and rest. Between now and her last day on **Monday, September 30**, I encourage you to please reach out to Barb and offer your own words of affirmation, gratitude and blessing for her years of service to PNMC. You can send emails to office@pnmc.org, and cards can be sent to: Barb Buxman, 11424 NE Skidmore St, Portland, OR 97220.



Why did you say "yes" to serving in this role as the PNMC Administrator 14 years ago?

I was enjoying retirement from MCC and spending a lot of time with my grandchildren. They were small and my daughter was homeschooling. We had lots of "field trips" and taking a 2 & 4 year old anywhere was a challenge. So I accompanied my daughter in all of their quests -- including trips to Target, Costco and the grocery store. Then the 3rd grandchild arrived and I became my daughter's personal shopper. That was a wonderful time to be a Nana. Then Iris (ECM) approached me about being her executive assistant. I wasn't ready to work, but this job seemed like a good fit - I could do it at my home and on my own schedule - not interrupting Nana time.

Were there surprises or unexpected challenges/opportunities along the way that you can share with us?

From the beginning I cherished the fact that I could communicate with our Spanish Speaking brothers and sisters. I was able to translate for Katherine a number of times. But speaking in Spanish on the phone has always been a challenge. So that's when I would wing it. I would listen carefully and when I finally figured out what was the subject and where the conversation was going, I could play catch up and usually help the person calling. Another challenge was that I actually trained 3 ECM's - After Iris, there was Dave Stutzman as interim, then Katherine, now Eric. Orientation and teaching someone a job I hadn't done was quite an opportunity. I guess I did okay because all of these tremendously talented people have excelled as ECM.

Is there an experience you've had in this role that still makes you laugh to this day?

There was one time at the Zoo with the grandkids and I was chasing (literally) #3 and he was getting away (I never could chase very well). Then in one pocket the PNMC phone rang and I was fishing for it in my left pocket -- and then my personal phone rang in my right pocket and I had to make a choice. Was it going to be kid #3, or PNMC, or the personal call. It was then I decided to use one phone instead of 2 and sometimes not answer it. That has saved a lot of stress for me.

What are you most grateful for from your time as PNMCs Administrator?

I have learned to know so many people in the NW. Bob and I had our start in Oregon in 1978, he pastored and it was during that time that the Oregon MCC Sale began. We got to know a lot of people throughout the region. Then during our 6 years with MCC in Nicaragua we toured the NW more than once storytelling and sharing about MCC. Then when we took the MCC Executive Position in 1998 we travelled the NW and the whole West Coast. By that time we knew most of the congregations and people and those who participated in the MCC sales. When we came to Oregon this time in 2006 (to retire) we built on those relationships and treasure each and every friendship.

What do you hope for when you consider the future of the conference? What do you hope for personally as you retire?

I'd hope that the PNMC churches would continue to see the richness of their Anabaptist roots, and how its theological application is still as perfect for our times as it was historically. And, personally, I'm looking in the immediate future to take some trips. Because of the failure of my knees to function and because my mother was dependent on us, we have not done much in the way of travel the last 10 years. We're looking at an Alaskan cruise and also a big road trip -- but not yet, the knees are still fragile -- but soon!

Brenda Kauffman, Communications Coordinator, to Become PNMC Administrator

Eric Massanari, PNMC Executive Conference Minister

When Barb Buxman assumed the role of PNMC Administrator in 2009, she released part of the role—communications coordination—to someone else. Brenda Zook-Friesen was hired part-time to assume some of those tasks, including website coordination and publishing the conference newsletter. In 2011, Brenda Zook-Friesen left the role in order to pursue other creative endeavors and Brenda Kauffman came on board that August. More than a decade later, we are now recombining the Communications Coordinator and Administrator roles into one half-time (15-20 hours/week) position, and I am excited to share that Brenda has agreed to assume this expanded role as our new PNMC Administrator. Brenda will begin her work in this position on October 1, 2024.

Many of you know Brenda and Tony through their work as the directors of Drift Creek Mennonite Camp in Lincoln City, OR. Rest assured Brenda will continue on at DCC as she is serving in the PNMC Administrator role. We are fortunate to have her serving our broader community in these vital ways with her many gifts.

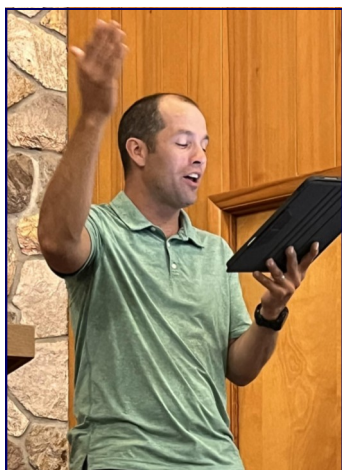
We welcome your prayers for all of us on the PNMC staff as we move into this time of endings, beginnings and much change over the coming months. May the love of God, the peace of Christ, and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit guide us on the Way!

From the PNMC Office

Updates to the PNMC Directory are in the works and we need your help to ensure that information is accurate. If you are included in the Directory, please contact Brenda@pnmc.org at your earliest convenience if changes need to be made. For congregations, please check your estimated attendance listed on page 3 and send needed corrections. *We appreciate your assistance.*

PNMC CONGREGATIONS, ORGANIZATIONS & MINISTRIES

Salem Mennonite Church—*A Reflection by Beth Yutzje Sell*



Our July 28th service was an old fashioned hymn sing - worshipping through the communal act of singing together. Singing at Salem Mennonite is always joyful, but this gathering, led by Dr. Russell Adrian (Hesston College), was on another level. Songs were chosen not only for their beauty when sung in four-part harmony, but also for their deeply meaningful lyrics and social relevance. The song “*Could It Be That God Is Singing*”, (VT #42) by Becca J. R. Lachman, was sung multiple times through the service, almost as an anthem. I've read the words over many times, I hope you will too.

Could it be that God is singing and these notes are my reply to the God-light warm within me, joining earth and sea and sky? Surely mercy has a cadence, I can feel it in my soul! Surely justice builds a chorus, making all God's children whole!

Have you carried heavy silence, have you let old sorrows win, or proclaimed psalms of forgiveness, but not offered them within? Oh, the Spirit, she was singing, even when we could not hear her abundant streams of living, waiting for us to come near.

Hallelujah for my Jesus, for his life's surprising course! May I, too, live bold resistance to injustice, hate, and force. Surely peace, it has a cadence, asking all of what we bring!

And if music is God breathing, take a holy breath and sing.

I offer a huge thank you to **Joseph Penner** for his vision and planning in making the service happen. What a wonderful gift to so many.

Mennonite Village of Albany

Mennonite Village is seeking a part-time chaplain to join its ministry team. Chaplains have the opportunity to provide spiritual support, comfort, and guidance to residents as they navigate their life journeys. This role offers a dynamic and rewarding opportunity to connect with seniors, lead worship services, offer pastoral care and facilitate meaningful spiritual programs throughout the Mennonite Village community. Help nurture a sense of belonging, peace, and spiritual growth among residents and create a warm and welcoming spiritual space where all are valued and supported. [Job Listings – Mennonite Village Jobs \(applicantpro.com\)](#).

MENNONITE CHURCH USA

Follow [this link](#) for the latest edition of MC USA's *PeaceMail*, which includes a report on the work of volunteers from Portland Mennonite Church with Mennonite Disaster Service [here](#). Follow [this link](#) for the latest edition of *Equipping*.

Upcoming e-Bulletins:

Aug 19 (submissions due by 8/12)

Sept 2 (submissions due by 8/26)

Sept 16 (submissions due by 9/9)

Oct 7 (submissions due by 9/30)

If you would like to contribute, please send a brief announcement in Spanish & English with website links to brenda@pnmc.org. Our goal is to provide a valuable resource, not an In-Box jammer. If space is tight, we may omit announcements that are not as pertinent to PNMC. Announcements will run ONE time only, unless specified otherwise. *We welcome your feedback!*

For more PNMC updates: <http://pnmc.org> e-Bulletin Archives: <http://pnmc.org/Resources/eBulletin>