

PNMC Board of Directors
 Jan 11, 2025 Meeting Agenda
[Zoom Link](#)

Time	Item	Host
9:00-9:15	Meet in Breakout Rooms with Prayer Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deren and Gary / Dave and Libbie / Karla and Megan • Emily and Dan / Eric and Nelly 	Chris
9:15-9:20	Opening Prayer / Centering	Libby
9:20-9:50	Budget Discussion and Approval: Please review the proposed balance sheet and profit & Loss budgets beforehand to see if you have any questions for discussion. This discussion will include a portion in which we discuss proposed raises for Eric in accordance with his COU. He will be invited to briefly excuse himself from the meeting during this discussion	Deren
9:50-10:05	Progress updates: Eric will share the current status of the two PNMC church plants and also the PNMC website revamp.	Eric
10:05-10:20	Appoint a new member to the grants committee: In our last meeting we agreed to merge the committees for approving grant applications for Healthy Congregations grants and NW Seed grants. We also agreed that the committee should have one more member. We will discuss whom to invite to this position.	Chris
10:20-10:30	Break	
10:30-11:00	Annual Meeting Conversation Tables: here is a link to the notes that you all recorded (thanks for doing this) of your table's conversations during the second delegate session. We will focus on responses to question three, which are on the last three pages.	Chris
11:00-11:15	CCC Planning: Eric will share the draft agenda for the February 1 CCC meeting. Chris will solicit thoughts on how to best use the time allotted to the BOD in the CCC meeting	Eric/Chris
11:15-11:55	Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderator (Chris) • ECM (Eric) • CIHAN (Nelly) • Finance Team and Treasurer (Deren and Dave) 	
11:55-12:00	Closing prayer and adjournment	Chris

Calendar:

- November 23, 2024 Zoom BOD meeting at 9:00-12:00 PST
- January 11, 2025 Zoom BOD meeting at 9:00-12:00 PST
- February 1, 2025 Conference Communications Council BOD to participate /Zoom
- April 12, 2025 Zoom BOD meeting at 9:00-12:00 PST

Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference
Zoom Board Meeting
Saturday, January 11, 2025

Members Present: Chris Nord, Moderator; Karla Morton, Moderator-Elect; Eric Massanari, Conference Minister, Dan Smith Derksen, Secretary; Libbie Lapp; Nellie Moran-Ascencio, Deren Kellogg, Gary Jewell, Megan Ramer, Emily Toews

Staff & Members Absent: Dave Hockman-Wert, Treasurer

Sharing time - Board members met in break-out rooms with prayer partners.

Opening prayer - Chris opened meeting with prayer.

Minutes approval - Minutes from the 11/23/2024 meeting were amended & approved by the PNMC Board of Directors.

Financial Report - shared by Deren Kellogg

- Review of draft budget presented with proposal for Fiscal Year 2026. Full details are in Treasurer's Report.
- Deren highlighted there has been some increase in budget giving this year. Annual Meeting income increase, but balanced out by increased expense.
- Expenses: Pastor's salary increase. Admin Asst. salary increase to \$25 per hour, up to 20 hours per week as a maximum. Brenda has been coming in under that amount of hours worked. (Eric clarified that the two office positions have been combined into one. Previously Brenda for Communications was at \$21/ hr and Barb as Admin Asst. was at \$25/hr.)
- Balance of the budget: deficit going up from \$37,000 for this year to \$48,000 for 2026.
- Eric provided some insight to details considered for Pastors' travel - this being a year with more a lot of planned travel.
- For Board discussion of salary increases, Eric removed himself while Board discussed compensation of the Conference Minister. Board noted the deficit, but agree with principle of granting wage and cost-of-living increases. Chris expressed support to honor the terms of Understanding and maintain the formerly agreed increases through 2026.
- Chris acknowledged that with the budget deficit, it will still be necessary to further discuss possible changes, like reduced contract, in the future. Megan added that it's important to bring this budget reality to greater awareness within the member churches and individuals within the conference. Also affirmed maintaining terms of the current contract. Emily also confirmed approval for the current contract, while agreeing with the need to make the reality very clear to all the PNMC member churches. Libbie concurred with raises planned for PNMC staff, and added this should be done "with Joy!" and acknowledging the great benefit we are receiving from the staff services, particularly of the ECM. Dan recommended automatic payment option available for people to make direct contributions. Several members felt personal story-telling is most impactful.

- Motion made to accept the proposed budget: Budget was approved by the Board.
- In approving this budget, the Board recognizes the Deficit will come, at least in part, from the endowment fund.

Church Plant updates reviewed by Eric

- Ebenezer from Jesus Fuentes: they are still in their seeding stage. Eric has been helping them know the key elements needing to be in place before membership. They aren't ready for a Safe Church policy. Not sure they have the articles of Incorporation in place yet. They are aware of these needs. Part of their mission is extending hospitality to folks on the margins. Had been a music group which had fallen away more recently. They ask for prayer for knowledge and courage in their call to serve the Lord.
- Community of Hope - Eric relates with them more often. They meet primarily online. Always folks attending from a wide range of places outside WA and even USA. 12-20 people usually in attendance. Rachel Weasley also offers book studies. They will have a unique Safe Church policy which also must consider their online activities. Her ordination will be on Saturday Feb. 15 at Bloedel Park in Bellingham. Eric will be officiating and Sylvia Shirk also attending. All are invited.
- CoH is much closer to membership readiness than Ebenezer.
- PNMC website update: placed on back burner to prioritize other changes, like Barb retiring. Focusing on that shift of staff responsibility took time. Brenda is now gathering a group to consult on website updating. Currently at a review stage. Other conference websites have been reviewed for comparison. Flint Hills design team will be maintained to do the web redesign and keep them on for tech support. Making sure options for easy-donating will be available on the website is a priority.

Recommending a New Member of the Grants Committee

- Currently the members are Eric Massanari, Megan Ramer and Emily Toews
- Reviewed the purpose and practice of the committee at this time. Grant requests received and reviewed. Committee may ask for further clarification, or redirection if the request is more appropriate for the NW Seed grant. ECM may approve anything under \$500. Anything over is approved by the whole committee. Eric likes to inform the others about even the request he approves. Once grants are approved, the committee does seek for the recipient church or group to share about the grant usage.
- Acknowledgement of reciprocal nature of support when congregations receive also support from PNMC.
- Noted that a new member does not have to be a member of the PNMC Board.
- Nelly Moran-Ascencio volunteered. Board commented about Nellie being a good choice with adding a deeper connection with the CIHAN churches. Motion made to approve Nellie. Board unanimously affirmed Nellie joining the Grants Committee.

Review of the PNMC Conference table discussions - lead by Chris Nord

Question 3: *When you think about what PNMC looks like in 5 years, or when you reflect on the information that you have heard this weekend, what are your hopes? What possibilities excite you? What possibilities cause you fear? Where should we deploy our resources? What can we do as a conference that we would not be able to do as individual congregations? What difference does it make that your PNMC exists?*

- Chris felt the responses were heartfelt and noted a lot of anxiety expressed about the future of the conference
- Many other responses affirmed the value of the conference
- Board noted that the answers are all coming from people who were at the Annual Meeting so will already have a certain bias. The answers may not contain a broadly held feeling among most individuals within the conference.
- It was identified that there are a number of “new” Mennonites among our churches. Proposed to make specific note of these and use their relative recent choice to be part of the Mennonites to learn from.
- Some discussion around one of the answers which suggested changing PNMC to Pacific Northwest Mennonite “Church,” like is done regionally in Canada. Annual Meeting could be an “assembly.” Acronym remains the same. Could that help us feel more connected? If this idea were to be pursued, it would be put forward to the annual meeting assembly, by the Board, or even by an individual. Libbie added that those more remote churches really rely on the conference membership.
- Eric informed the Board that one plan for the new website is to have resourcing which can be directly accessed by churches without going through any staff or other avenue. He also added a comment about how the lay-led churches have started meeting and plan to continue meeting quarterly as an example of one of the ways the conference is working at staying connected and building relationships to maintain that.
- Chris concluded that he plans to have these conversation table answers succinctly summarized to present at the CCC. Using what was heard as a foundation for sharing from the Board at CCC.

CCC Planning

Eric shared draft of agenda for the CCC meeting to be held 2/1/25 8:30am - 12:30 pm

Theme: The Transforming Church - Anabaptism at 500; Theme verse: Romans 12:12

(Transformation is ongoing, continuous. Using the theme to shape discussion in the meeting Resources to aid congregations in commemorating Anabaptism. Rep. from PNMC Historical Society.

- I. Opening Worship. Will include a Readers Theater written by Steve Hunter from Salem MC; Roger Piper Ruth from Hyde Park MC will lead a song he wrote around original Reformers.
- II. Congregational roll call. Sharing from each congregation.
Panel of guests to participate in a panel discussion: Olivia Krall from MCUSA Archives - Why does our history matter? How does it shape who we are called to be as Anabaptists

today?, Amy Gingerich and/or John D. Roth from AMBS- resources available through Mennon Media - Toolkit, The Anabaptist Bible, etc.

- III. Board agenda. - Introduction of each of the Board members (suggestion made for including a favorite memory of PNMC), sharing summaries from annual meeting conversation tables. Reports: Budget - both FY25 & FY26, Finance Team - launch appeal letter, Time to invite individual donors to share why they felt that's important.(suggestion made that Board could write Thank you letters to each individual donor. Another suggestion made to publicly acknowledge Thanks to churches for their financial giving at the CCC meeting.) No ECM report. Final report by the Moderator.

Reports

Chris - Moderator's Report

- No written report prepared.
- Brett Tiessen, Chair of Mennonite Village board, contacted Chris about the need to update their MOU. Still planning to meet.
- Dave, Karla, and Chris met in December to talk about the terms of the covenant of understanding and assuring it was being understood correctly. One result of the meeting was determination that the COU should be aligned with the Fiscal Year in timing. Chris will prepare a proposal (addendum) to update the COU by extending it by three months in order to come into alignment with the fiscal year transition.
- Letter from PNMC Board regarding allegations of personnel abuse was sent to MCC Executive and Board leadership in December. Until now, there hasn't been any acknowledgment by MCC of receiving the letter. Dan provided update from the MCC Abuse Survivors Together (MAST) steering committee, that there is now a website by MAST. www.mccabusesurvivors.org. Dan asked whether the letter from PNMC could be shared with the MAST steering committee. The Board affirmed Dan could share the letter with MAST, but not at this time place the letter onto the MAST website. Eric gave an update on collaboration between he and Doug Luginbill, ECM from the Central District conference, who has also sent a letter to MCC. Doug and Eric agree that conferences have no oversight role with MCC or any formal structural tie. The question is present of how much time by conference staff should be devoted to this issue. However, both agreed that they have deep concerns as Mennonites who hold accountability of one another and our organizations. They have reached out to Marty Lehman, Chair of the Leaders Council for consideration at the next leaders meeting.
- Chris noted starting to get the End-of-term performance evaluation prepared for Eric's coming end-of-term.

Eric- Executive Minister's Report

- Eric had the flu over Christmas - had to cancel preaching trip to Portland and some other meetings.
- Two key things which happened since last meeting: the lay-led churches met together. Very rich meeting. May not remain calling it by this term, but meetings will continue to happen; First gathering of current active and transitional pastors as a resourcing group

- Submitted a seminar idea for MennoCon.
- Had a really good meeting with Sarah Augustine. Conversation around the repair network and what it could mean to be part of that as a conference. Eric is a strong believer in this work and wonders how this might be shaped together.
- Prayers for Brenda, PNMC administrator, who is on a trip to the Canary Islands.
- Riverside Anabaptist Collective - Carmen Shenk from Eastern Mennonite Seminary - vision of resource center for congregations who might not be able to have full-time pastors. Website looks great, but idea is still formulating. Eric seeking ideas about how to do connecting when not physically present with a community.

Nellie - CIHAN

Nothing to share at this time.

Deren - Finance Team

Two primary topics were the Budget (already reviewed), and the Appeal letter.

The letter is somewhat of a stopgap which reviews what was done last year around the deficit.

Also notes ideas of what is planned for this coming year. There's a statement of gratitude.

Finally there's a reminder that PNMC is using the investment fund at this time to cover the deficit. Would require a 6% increase in congregational giving to cover the deficit. - Discussion about framing the 6% in a way that is flexible. Inviting giving even in excess of 6% for those churches who are able. It was suggested that churches are possibly just approving a number in their budgets for PNMC giving without really reconsidering it each year.

Remind churches that having contribution amounts included in church budgets helps the conference remain sustainable over time. Deren asked for Board to give next steps on the appeal letter. Chris offered to give a week for members to add comments, then he would sign the letter and it would be sent out.

Closing prayer - Chris prayed, thanking God for the gift of the day, fellow travelers and common work together. Asked for continue grace and focus on tasks ahead.