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Western Mennonite Church Leaves PNMC and MC USA

Eric Massanari, Executive Conference Minister

In a letter dated September 10, 2025, **Chad Hochstetler**, Congregational Chair for Western Mennonite Church (WMC) in Salem, OR, shared that their congregation made the decision to withdraw membership from Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference and Mennonite Church USA. They have decided to affiliate with the Lancaster Mennonite Conference, a fellowship of Anabaptist churches based in Lancaster, PA.

WMC has been in a “relaunch” season for more than two years, and had communicated with me and with PNMC leaders that their process would include a reevaluation of their affiliation with the conference and denomination. District Pastor **Brent Kauffman**, PNMC pastor **Terry Rediger**, and I have maintained open communication and supportive connection with the congregation during these years of discernment.

On **Sunday, October 26**, PNMC Moderator **Karla Morton**, Brent Kauffman and I will be joining the WMC congregation in worship. That service will include a special time of releasing and blessing their church as they embark on this next step of their journey together.

I ask you to please hold that gathering in your heart of prayer, and to be praying for the WMC congregation in this time of transition. As we pray, we remember that the forms and structures of the church as we create and experience them in this world are of our human making. We pray and trust that these structures can be channels for the love of Christ, and we also humbly remember—especially in times of disagreement and separation—that there is a deeper union we share in Christ that cannot be severed. When we experience brokenness and separation in the church, we remain siblings in Christ, and we remain united in the deep ground of God’s great love.

Below is the letter we received from Chad Hochstetler, WMC Congregational Chairperson:



September 10, 2025

Dear Eric Massanari and PNMC Board Members,

Western
MENNONITE CHURCH

On behalf of Western Mennonite Church, Salem, OR, we write to formally communicate our decision to withdraw our membership from the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference, per article 5a(1). This letter serves as our formal communication to withdraw.

After our church relaunch and startup over two years ago, we have spent a meaningful season in prayerful discernment and discussion regarding our future.

During this time, we have struggled to find unity in church polity in our own conference and with Mennonite Church USA. This has been difficult, but in the end, our congregation has come to a consensus and decided to seek an Anabaptist affiliation elsewhere. This decision was not made lightly. We are deeply grateful for the decades of fellowship, support, and shared ministry we have experienced within the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference. Our time together has helped shape our witness to Christ and encouraged us to live out our Anabaptist convictions faithfully in our community.

We want to extend our heartfelt thanks for those relationships, encouragement, and ministry we have shared with the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference. Please know that our decision to transition to Lancaster Mennonite Conference (LMC) does not diminish the care, respect, and appreciation we hold for our brothers and sisters here. We remain united in Christ and committed to the broader mission of God’s Kingdom.

We ask for your prayers as we step forward into this new affiliation with LMC, just as we will continue to pray for the Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference and its sister congregations.

With gratitude and in Christ’s peace,
Chad Hochstetler Church Chair Western Mennonite Church Salem, OR

September 20 PNMC Board Meeting Reflections

Written by Karla Morton, PNMC Moderator

On Saturday morning, September 20, the PNMC Board of Directors met to discuss many issues that surround the conference. We spent time discussing the annual meeting in Kalispell and that there were many positive comments about the meetings with **Glen Guyton** and **Sarah Augustine**, and that overall it was good to have the opportunity to be in one place with one another. Realizing that the upfront costs were greater than usual, the overall cost of attendance was a little less per person than when a hotel and restaurant food, and we look forward to meeting in Albany at Albany Mennonite Church next year.

Discussion was led by **Eric Massanari** regarding the **Conference Safety Liaison** position that each Mennonite conference must have after the passage of a resolution this summer at the MC USA conference in Greensboro, NC. Eric has crafted a job description, which the board discussed, as well as discussing the desire to have a stipend on par with what District Pastors receive. The board agreed that the job description looked good and that a CSL should receive a stipend and travel costs.

Reports from our ECM, Moderator, CIHAN rep, Finance Team, and Treasurer were given. The Finance Team met with Everence to discuss possible ways to increase giving to the PNMC through planned/designated giving by individuals.

We discussed the desire for a concise definition of Christian Nationalism to add to the resolution. We are asking two members of the PNMC who have been studying Christian Nationalism to work on that.

And, lastly we discussed the Letter to MCC that many members of the board signed in 2024 in support of survivors of abuse that have been determined to have taken place there asking for a deeper commitment from MCC to work at rectifying the abuses that have taken place. We also discussed the letter from Western Mennonite Church to end their affiliation with PNMC and shift to a different Mennonite conference.

With these things in mind, we consider the future and are exploring possible ways we as a board can plan for and build PNMC in meaningful ways.

Meet the 2025/2026 Service Adventure Participants in Anchorage, AK:

(Left to Right) Ian Unziker (Normal, IL), Adriana Duerksen (Goessel, KS), Mir Knego (Anchorage Group Leader);
Ruben Veigel (Baden-Württemberg, Germany)



The **Service Adventure** program has kicked off another year of operations in Anchorage, AK. Prince of Peace Mennonite Church has been a presence in Anchorage since 1989. Its more than 20 members sponsor the Anchorage Service Adventure unit, which began in February 1997. As a sponsor for both Service Adventure and SOOP, Prince of Peace Mennonite Church places a high priority on service in the surrounding community. Service placements in Anchorage are varied and unique. Many participants have placements working with the homeless population in Anchorage, as the challenges faced by the homeless in Anchorage are substantial. Other participants work with children and youth, low-income families, abused women, the elderly, and the Bureau of Land Management.

To read more about Service Adventure participants in Anchorage and all SA locations, follow [this link](#).

To send words of encouragement or welcome packages directly to the unit, 1310 W. 47th St., Anchorage, AK, 99503.

PNMC CONGREGATIONS, ORGANIZATIONS & MINISTRIES



Hyde Park Mennonite Fellowship

How to Challenge Christian Nationalism: Building Peace in an Age of Extremism, presented by Drew Strait, PhD
Saturday, November 8, 10:00am—5:00pm at Boise First United Church of Christ

Drew Strait is a professor at [Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary](#) and author of the book *Strange Worship: Six Steps to Challenging Christian Nationalism*. In this seminar, we'll explore how faith communities across diverse traditions can challenge Christian nationalism, violent extremism, and Christian supremacy. Learn practical strategies and tools for confronting theologies of oppression and fostering faith-driven justice. Please use this registration [link](#) to RSVP. Registration is FREE for everyone, while [donations](#) are gratefully accepted. More information [here](#).

Portland Mennonite Church



PMCCers of all ages worked together to reduce their carbon footprint over the summer. For four Sundays, members gathered to create a [Bike Bus](#). *What's that?* It is simply a group of people riding together along a set route that others can join. Many bike buses are for students riding to school, but there are bike buses to workplaces, to ball games, and now even to church! The PMC bike bus is one of the creative ways the church is building community and making our world – starting with our city streets – more peaceful. Over the summer, 22 people made the nearly 3-mile round trip ride!

PNMC Healthy Boundaries Training, Saturday, November 15, 2025, 8am-2pm on Zoom, PST.

Topics include: Fundamentals of Healthy Boundaries; Self-Care; Safe Church Policies and Boundaries; Trauma and Boundaries.

The training will be facilitated by **Michael Danner**,
Denominational Minister for Church Vitality & Nancy Kauffmann, Director of MC USA Safe Church.

The cost is \$55 for PNMC members; otherwise \$65/person.

Please pay by check. Send payments to: PNMC Office, 22455 Finn Road, Sheridan, OR 97378.

The registration deadline is November 1, 2025.

For information or to register, contact Eric Massanari at eric@pnmc.org.

The Healthy Boundaries trainings are required of our credentialed ministry leaders at least once every three years. We encourage lay leaders in our churches, especially our congregation-led churches, to take part in these trainings. This opportunity is open to all who would like to attend.

MENNONITE CHURCH USA & OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary

“Kinship with All Creation: Pursuing Relationship, Justice and Community” was the theme for the seventh [Rooted and Grounded Conference on Land and Christian Discipleship](#), held last month at [AMBS](#) in Elkhart, IN. Read more [here](#).

Mennonite Action

Mennonite ACTION

Portland, OR | October 9

Seattle, WA | October 11

Check with local churches for details.

The Mennonite Action team is traveling across the west coast, mountains and plains, east coast, and midwest in four swings, meeting with Mennonite Action groups at every stop. We'll enjoy food and worship together, and dive into critical trainings like Grassroots Organizing 101, Nonviolent Action 101, faith based non-cooperation in the authoritarian moment, and preparing your church to meet the moment in front of us. Please visit the [website](#) to reserve your spot.

Mennonite Central Committee

Western States MCC Bike Ride 2026: Enjoy a scenic and impactful cycling experience through the breathtaking landscapes of the Flathead Valley and Glacier National Park! From **July 26 to 31**, based in Kalispell, MT, we will cycle together to support MCC's development and reconciliation work around the world. A \$500 entry fee covers food, sag vehicles, a jersey, and direct support to MCC. Limit of 40 riders. Contact Bruce Kuhns (kuhns.bruce@gmail.com) for more information.

Upcoming e-Bulletins:

Oct 20 (submissions due by 10/13)

Nov 3 (submissions due by 10/27)

Nov 17 (submissions due by 11/10)

Dec 1 (submissions by 11/24)

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>