

Ministry Commission Report

I praise God that the ministers in our district are very much God-directed ministers and serve their congregation with dedication and vision.

A high light for 2007 was the Clergy Spouse Retreat in February with Helen Beery from Indiana and Don Parker from Ohio, representatives from On Earth Peace as our resource people. A committee of John Price, R. Jan Thompson, Letha Ressler and Bryan Boyer were appointed by the Ministry Commission to plan the retreat. Colossians 3 was the basis of our theme, ending with “Above all, clothe your selves with LOVE” on Valentines Day.

The committee experimented with having the retreat from Sunday evening, February 22, through Wednesday, February 14, which was not a weekend. We found there were pros and cons for not having it over a weekend. It was difficult for the ministers with younger children to find adequate childcare during the week and could not attend.

Approving grants for continuing education for our pastors is one of the pleasurable parts of our commission work. We feel, along with the denominational leadership, that continuing education is important to feed the minds and souls and inspire our pastors who lead our PSWD congregations.

We are grateful to James Merrifield for his faithful work as Chair of the Nurturing and Credentialing Committee as well as the work of the other committee members:

Persons serving on the NACC committee are:

- x2011 Jim Merrifield, Chair (Circle of Peace)
- x2007 Jerry Davis (Pomona Fellowship)
- 2008 Janet Ober (La Verne)
- 2009 Elizabeth Rowan (Pasadena)
- 2010 Brenda Isaacs (Bakersfield)

Ex-Officio: Ministry Commission Chair,
District Moderator, District Board Chair,
District Executive Minister

His NACC report follows:

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– Nurturing & Credentialing Committee –
Jim Merrifield, Chair

The Nurturing & Credentialing Committee serves at the pleasure of the Ministry Commission. Persons who wish to be licensed, ordained or have their ordination recognized for term of service are interviewed with a recommendation made to the Ministry Commission. Additionally, mentor and licensed minister reports are reviewed annually with progress noted and recommendations made to the Ministry Commission.

The Nurturing & Credentialing Committee offers an interview opportunity to candidates twice per year. The committee conducted a meeting on October 6-7, 2006 at which three licensing interviews were conducted, one ordination interview and one recognition of ordination interview were convened. An additional licensing interview was conducted on October 27, 2006 at the Pacific Southwest District Conference at the Papago Buttes Church of the Brethren in Scottsdale, Arizona. Recommendations were submitted to the Ministry Commission on all of the above candidates.

Review of materials submitted by licensed ministers and their mentors was completed with recommendations made to the Ministry Commission.

A meeting scheduled for May 2007 was cancelled when no candidate submitted materials for review by the announced date.

Nurturing ministers is a huge task. Our thanks to the Ministry Commission not only for organizing a Minister’s & Spouse Retreat this past winter but especially for their inclusion of the licensed ministers.

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Another of the joys of the Commission is indebted to and want to publicly express our thanks to our Training in Ministry (TRIM) Coordinators, James Merrifield (Arizona) and Myrna Wheeler (California) for the time and energy they spend in helping to provide another route for ordination other than seminary training. Their reports follow:

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– California TRIM Coordinator’s Report –
Myrna Long Wheeler

What a pleasure to work with licensed ministers trying to find their calling in ministry. The TRIM students are dedicated to working through their learning contract at a pace that fits their personal current life needs. All students must successfully complete two classes each year as a minimum requirement for the Academy standards. A big challenge for California TRIM is the geographic distance between students when trying to get together for our Spiritual Formation Group meetings—3 or 4 times a year.

Congregations play a BIG role in the success of TRIM students. After a congregation calls someone into ministry and s/he becomes licensed, the congregation must continue to support him/her spiritually, emotionally and financially. Classes and books have costs, and sometimes travel expenses. All TRIM students need a computer and internet access in order to take classes.

Opportunities must be provided for the TRIM student to lead worship, preach, and teach various groups within the congregation. This is especially important when the student has about finished his/her class work and embarks on the Supervised Ministry component—a 400 hour requirement in a supervised setting, often in the home congregation. The congregation’s role is vital to the success and oversight of its licensed minister(s).

*This year the TRIM students in California included: **Doris Dunham** (Bakersfield), **Vicki Minyard** (Whittier), **George Sparks** (Diamond Bar), **Victor Olvera** (East LA); **Rene Quintanilla** (Fresno), and two new additions: **Paul Lovelace** (Chino Hills) and **Dawna Welch** (Claremont). Paul and Dawna went through their TRIM Orientation at Bethany Seminary in February 2007.*

The TRIM Coordinators from across the denomination meet once a year to share ideas, have inspirational time, and to look at new criteria and class offerings. This year’s gathering is October 18-20, 2007 in Elgin, IL, so we can observe a General Board meeting for part of our agenda.

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– Arizona TRIM Coordinator’s Report –
Jim Merrifield

*Brother **Michael Martin** has completed his TRIM program, received his Certificate of Completion and was ordained to the ministry at his home congregation, Papago Buttes Church of the Brethren, on Sunday, June 3, 2007. It is with thankful hearts that we extend our congratulations to Mike on his achievement and praise God for his blessing.*

*Sister **Karen Walters** continues in the TRIM program as she looks toward a ministry with special needs persons. We gather once per month, except in tax season, in our Spiritual Formation Group for prayer, study and support.*

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I will close the Ministry Commission report by again thanking all ministers who work so diligently and who give so much of themselves to God and to our congregations in the Pacific Southwest District. I also want to thank the Ministry Commission Members for their diligent and dedicated work for the Pacific Southwest District. These members are Mary Kay Ogden, John Price, Gilbert Romero and Bryan Boyer, our District Executive, who was so encouraging and helpful during my tenure as Ministry Commission Chair.

Letha Miller Ressler
PSWD Ministry Commission Chair

<p>Ministry Commission: Letha Ressler, chair (La Verne) John Price (Empire) Gilbert Romero (Bella Vista)</p>
<p><i>Ex officio</i> members and staff who spent extra time with us: District Executive Minister, Bryan Boyer; Moderator, Mary Kay Ogden</p>