

**Minutes of the
Fifty-Second Annual District Conference
Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren**

4 **November 14, 2015**

Hillcrest, La Verne, California

5 **I. Call to Order**

6 The 2015 Pacific Southwest District Conference was called to order at 8:35 a.m. Prayer was offered
7 by John Price.

8 **II. Order of Business**

9 The Order of Business was distributed by Head Teller, Marlin Heckman.

10 **III. Introductions**

11 Moderator Eric Bishop, Moderator-Elect John Price, Clerk Laura Miller, Board of Administration
12 Chair Marye Martinez, and Timekeeper Marty Farahat were introduced.

13 **IV. Roll Call and Verification of Quorum**

14 A roll call was taken; fifty-seven delegates representing nineteen churches were present. A quorum
15 was declared to be present.

16 **V. Delegate Dedication**

17 The delegates were instructed to sit in the designated delegate area. The delegates were directed
18 to Page 7 of the Business Book for the Delegates' Dedication Litany.

19 **VI. Approval of Agenda**

20 **Mauricio Iaculli (Circle of Peace) moved and Don Wyatt (Empire) seconded to approve the**
21 **agenda as presented. Approved.**

22 **VII. Introduction of Guests**

23 Stan Noffsinger (General Secretary), Loyce Borgmann (Brethren Benefit Trust), Matt Guynn
24 (On Earth Peace), Bekah Houff (Bethany Seminary) were introduced.

25 **VIII. Approval of 2014 Minutes**

26 **Richard Hart (Pomona Fellowship) moved and Phil Corr (Church of the Living Savior)**
27 **seconded to approve the minutes from the 2014 PSWD Conference. Approved.**

28 **IX. Committee to Certify 2015 Minutes**

29 A committee of Richard Hart (Pomona Fellowship), Lois Frantz (Empire), and Cady Laycook
30 (South Bay) was named to certify the accuracy of the 2015 minutes.

31 **X. Introduction of 2016 Ballot**

32 A. The nominees on the 2016 ballot were introduced.

33 B. **Nelda Rhoades Clarke (Tucson) moved and Lois Frantz (Empire) seconded to close the**
34 **nominations for the ballot. Approved.**

35 **XI. Introduction of Youth Adviser, Youth Cabinet, and Youth**

36 A. Youth Adviser Dawna Welch introduced the 2016 Youth Cabinet: Ethan Strogon (La Verne),
37 Elizabeth Piazza (Live Oak), Harley Edwards (Modesto), Lauren Ober-Miller (La Verne), and
38 Rudy Amaya (Príncipe de Paz).

39 B. The Youth from the District who were present came forward. Eric Bishop thanked the Youth
40 for appearing and wished them well on their activities today. The Youth were excused.

1 **XII. Story of Justice**

2 Eric read a story of justice from Zandra Wagoner, chaplain of University of La Verne.

3 **XIII. Reports From Annual Conference Agencies**

4 A DVD was shown outlining the work of the four Church of the Brethren Agencies: On Earth
5 Peace, Bethany Seminary, Brethren Benefit Trust, and Mission and Ministry Board. Loyce
6 Borgmann and Matt Guynn spoke briefly about the agencies they represent: Brethren Benefit Trust
7 and On Earth Peace.

8 **XIV. Introduction of the Query “Living Together as Christ Calls” from La Verne**
9 **Church of the Brethren**

- 10 A. Delegates were directed to Page 66 of the Business Book. Mary Kay Ogden (La Verne) and
11 Susan Boyer (La Verne) gave a background of how the Query came to be.
12 B. Marye Martinez explained that there will be an insight session about the Query, and the Query
13 will be an action item during the afternoon session.
14 C. Phil Corr (Church of the Living Savior) asked if the Executive Board supports this Query.
15 Marye Martinez answered that the Executive Board supports bringing the Query to the
16 delegates for a vote.

17 **XV. Report From Standing Committee**

18 Standing Committee Delegate Marlin Heckman directed the delegates to Page 13 of the Business
19 Book for his written report. In addition to the written report, Marlin Heckman noted that half of the
20 congregations in the denomination do not turn in their statistics report; of the submitted reports,
21 only four congregations west of the Mississippi River have 100 or more people attending Sunday
22 worship. The PSWD has two of the four. Marlin Heckman shared that he appreciates the
23 opportunity to represent the PSWD as a member of the Standing Committee.

24 **XVI. Central Evangelical Church Closure**

- 25 A. Board Chair Marye Martinez introduced the business item to close the Central Evangelical
26 Church of the Brethren. Marye gave a history of the Central Evangelical relationship with the
27 PSWD.
28 B. **The Executive Board recommends that the Central Evangelical Church of the Brethren**
29 **be closed, and any group meeting under the name is not associated with the Church of**
30 **the Brethren.** A time was given for questions. A question was asked about the litigation.
31 Marye Martinez answered that her report will cover the litigation. **It was approved to close**
32 **the Central Evangelical Church of the Brethren.**
33 C. District Executive Russ Matteson led a prayer as the relationship with Central Evangelical was
34 concluded.

35 **XVII. Policy Board Report**

- 36 A. Marye Martinez directed the delegates to Page 18 of the Business Book. Marye noted that the
37 PSWD has had three different District Executive Ministers over the last few years and that
38 Russ Matteson has settled in as DE and is doing an excellent job.
39 B. Marye explained briefly about the litigation with Central Evangelical. We should hear on
40 December 2, 2015, that the property can be sold.
41 C. Marye directed the delegates to the Ministry Investment Plan in the Business Book.
42 D. Marye gave a background on the grant program and explained that the Ministry Partnership
43 Funds is a new item.
44 E. Marye Martinez acknowledged the Policy Board and Executive Board members and thanked
45 them for their work.

- 1 F. Mike Boeger spoke about the financial situation of the PSWD and directed the delegates to
2 Page 64 of the Business Book for the Ministry Investment Plan summary. Mike Boeger
3 acknowledged Ralph Carlson, bookkeeper; Jim Martinez, Chair of the Grant Review
4 Committee; and Elizabeth Rowan, Chair of the Investment Committee.
- 5 G. Mike Boeger gave some additional history about the Central Evangelical situation. Mike noted
6 that because of the situation, the PSWD has implemented policies to prevent similar problems
7 in the future. A question was asked about the proceeds from the sale of the Central Evangelical
8 property. Mike Boeger answered that there will be expenses to be paid, and the amount due
9 to the PSWD is not known at this time.
- 10 H. Russ Matteson gave a report of the Ministry Commission in Tom Hostetler's absence. Russ
11 directed the delegates to a pamphlet in the delegate packets regarding the Ministry
12 Commission and outlined the procedure in calling a person to the set-apart ministry.
- 13 I. The ministers of the PSWD were recognized with a round of applause.

14 **XVIII. Election of 2016 Officers**

- 15 A. **Erin Matteson (Modesto) moved and Thomas Dowdy (Imperial Heights) seconded**
16 **to accept the ballot as a slate.** Linda Davis (Church of the Living Savior) spoke against a
17 slate ballot.
- 18 B. **The motion to accept the ballot as a slate was approved.**
- 19 C. **The motion to approve the slate ballot was approved.**
- 20 D. The following persons were elected to the PSWD 2016 positions:
- 21 1. Moderator-Elect: Sara Haldeman-Scarr (San Diego)
- 22 2. Nominating Committee: Doris Dunham (Bakersfield)
- 23 3. Clerk: Karen Cosner (Modesto)
- 24 4. Standing Committee Alternate: Don Shankster (Papago Buttes)
- 25 5. Program Committee:
- 26 a. Robert Aguirre (Cornerstone)
- 27 b. Kirsten Storne-Piazza (Live Oak)
- 28 6. Board of Administration:
- 29 a. Erick Flores (Príncipe de Paz), Youth/Young Adult Representative
- 30 b. Rayna Harrison (La Verne), Youth/Young Adult Representative
- 31 c. Alex Sanders (Modesto), Youth/Young Adult Representative
- 32 d. Brenda Dickson (South Bay), At-Large
- 33 e. Tom Hostetler (La Verne), At-Large
- 34 f. Andrew Sampson (Pomona Fellowship), At-Large
- 35 g. Nelda Clark (Tucson), Arizona Representative
- 36 h. Dean Davis (Bakersfield), Central California Representative

37 **XIX. Query "Living Together as Christ Calls" from La Verne Church of the Brethren**

- 38 A. **There is a recommendation from the Executive Board to accept the Query as a business**
39 **item.** Discussion was held. Several people spoke in opposition to accepting the Query as an
40 item of business. One person spoke in favor of accepting the Query as a business item. **The**
41 **recommendation to accept the Query as a business item was approved, eight nays.**
- 42 1. Phil Corr (Church of the Living Savior) asked the Moderator to rule whether the Query
43 is out of order with the Query process of the Church of the Brethren. Moderator Eric
44 Bishop ruled that the Query is in line with the Annual Conference intent of queries.
- 45 2. **Phil Corr (Church of the Living Savior) moved and Joel Price (Empire) seconded**
46 **to return this document to the District Board with the understanding that the Board**
47 **will engage all the District churches in dialogue regarding the matters raised by this**

1 **document.** The motion to return the Query to the District Board was discussed. People
2 spoke both in favor and in opposition to the motion. **The motion failed to pass.**

3 3. Discussion was held on the Query. People spoke both in favor and in opposition of
4 the Query.

5 B. **The recommendation from the Executive Board to approve the Query was approved, one**
6 **abstention, ten nay votes.**

7 **XX. Program Committee Report**

8 Eric Bishop acknowledged the work of the Program Committee for their work on this year's
9 conference. Next year's District Conference will be held November 11-13 in Modesto, CA.

10 **XXI. Ministry Investment Plan**

11 A. Mike Boeger directed the delegates to Page 64 of the Business Book for the summary of the
12 Ministry Investment Plan. A time was given for questions and discussion. A question was
13 asked about some of the support given to congregations. Mike Boeger answered that there is
14 a lot of support given to support individual churches and ministers. Mike gave a brief
15 background of the grant program and explained that the recipients are being monitored for
16 congregational growth.

17 B. **The Ministry Investment Plan comes as a recommendation from the Policy Board.**
18 **Approved, one nay, no abstentions.**

19 **XXII. District Executive Minister Report**

20 Russ Matteson directed the delegates to Page 11 of the Business Book. Russ thanked the
21 congregations in the PSWD for the warm welcome as District Executive Minister. Russ has visited
22 each church in the PSWD. Russ welcomed the new pastors to the PSWD: Phil Corr (Church of the
23 Living Savior) and Nelda Clarke (Tucson). Live Oak, Waterford, and Glendale will be going
24 through transitions in the coming weeks. Russ explained that he has connected with persons in the
25 Phoenix area who are seminary trained and discovered the Anabaptist faith tradition. We will work
26 with them to build a relationship and see if they can find their home. Russ acknowledged the work
27 of the Policy Board members, the Grant Review Committee, the Nurturing and Credentialing
28 Committee, the Nominating Committee, the Program Committee, and individuals who have worked
29 as mentors. All of these people are working to further the work of Christ. A time was allowed for
30 questions of Russ Matteson.

31 **XXIII. Moderator's Closing Remarks**

32 Eric Bishop thanked the District for the opportunity to serve as the Moderator.

33 **XXIV. Passing of the Gavel**

34 Eric Bishop passed the gavel to Moderator-Elect John Price.

35 **XXV. Adjournment**

36 A. **Richard Hart (Pomona Fellowship) moved and Mauricio Iacueli (Circle of Peace)**
37 **seconded to adjourn the meeting. Approved.**

38 B. The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

39 _____
40 Minutes recorded by Laura Miller, Clerk

41 _____
42 In May 2016 the draft copy of the minutes was examined and given preliminary approval by the committee:
43 Richard Hart (Pomona Fellowship), Lois Frantz (Empire), and Cady Laycook (Southbay).