

1 **Minutes of the**
2 **Fifty-Third Annual District Conference**
3 **Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren**

4 **November 12, 2016**

Modesto Church of the Brethren

5 **I. Call to Order**

6 The 2016 Pacific Southwest District Conference was called to order at 8:35 a.m. Prayer was offered
7 by Sara Haldeman-Scarr.

8 **II. Introductions**

9 Moderator John Price introduced those at the front table which included: Moderator-Elect Sara
10 Haldeman-Scarr, Clerk Karen Cosner, Board of Administration Chair Marye Martinez,
11 Parliamentarian Gerald Davis, Lois Frantz Time Keeper.

12 **III. Roll Call and Verification of Quorum**

13 A roll call was taken; 59 delegates representing 21 churches were present. A quorum was declared
14 to be present.

15 **IV. Delegate Dedication**

16 The delegates were instructed to sit at their assigned tables. The delegates were directed to page
17 7 of the Business Book for the Delegates' Dedication Litany.

18 **V. Approval of Agenda**

19 **Nelda Rhoades Clarke (Tucson) moved and Norma Sexton (Prince of Peace) seconded to**
20 **approve the agenda as presented. Approved.**

21 **VI. Introduction of Guests**

22 Russ Matteson, District Executive Minister, introduced guests from across the Denomination.
23 Present were representatives from Annual Conference, Church of the Brethren Inc., Bethany
24 Theological Seminary, Brethren Benefit Trust, On Earth Peace, McPherson College and the
25 University of La Verne.

26 **VII. Approval of 2015 Minutes**

27 **Committee to Certify the 2015 Minutes moved their approval. Philip Corr (Living Savior)**
28 **moved and Cindy Slaughter (Glendale) seconded to amend the 2015 minutes for clarification**
29 **as follows: XIX.B. The conference voted to approve sending the Query to Annual Conference**
30 **with one abstention and ten nay votes. Amendment approved. Minutes were approved as**
31 **amended.**

32 **VIII. Committee to Certify 2016 Minutes**

33 A committee of Richard Hart (Pomona), Scott Valles (Glendale) and Philip Corr (Living Savior)
34 was named to certify the accuracy of the 2016 minutes.

35 **IX. Moving Cristo Sion to Congregation Status**

36 A. Marye Martinez, Board Chair introduced the action item recommend that Cristo Sion be
37 moved to Congregational Status. Marye referred the Delegates to page 63 of the Business
38 Book and gave a history of the relationship of Cristo Sion to the PSWD.

39 B. **The Executive Board recommends to District Conference that Cristo Sion be moved to**
40 **Congregational Status. The vote passed with a standing ovation and welcome.**

41 C. Pastor David Flores shared words of thanks and the four delegates were seated.

1 **Morning Table Conversation by Delegates**

2 Moderator John Price invited the delegates into a time of conversation at their tables around the
3 conference theme “We are family. The family of God!” They were invited to reflect on the
4 following questions together: How do we live together as family in the midst of our diversity? Do
5 we ignore our differences? Do we just tolerate one another? How do we respect those who differ
6 in their beliefs? How do we move from tolerance to respect of one another’s beliefs and practices?

7 **X. Introduction of Youth Cabinet and TRIM Presentation**

- 8 A. Youth Adviser Dawna Welch introduced the 2017 Youth Cabinet: Jorge Molina (Principe de
9 Paz), Mario Cabrera (Principe de Paz) and Elizabeth Piazza (Live Oak). Russ dedicated the
10 Youth Cabinet for the year 2017. The youth were thanked for their service and were excused.
11 B. Jim Martinez presented Dawna Welch her TRIM (Training in Ministry) Completion
12 Certificate.

13 **XI. Standing Committee Report, Margaret Carl Trust and Historian Report**

- 14 A. Standing Committee Delegate Marlin Heckman directed the delegates to Page 15 of the
15 Business Book for his report. Marlin directed the Delegates to Page 27 of the Business Book
16 which shows statistics for congregations in the PSWD, their per capita giving and
17 membership. These are not accurate statistics as there are nine congregations who do not
18 report and of those reported some of their numbers are old and may have changed. Marlin
19 encouraged the congregations to complete these forms.
20 B. The Margaret Carl Trust was started in 1943 to purchase and distribute Bibles and tracts and
21 for the abolition of alcohol and tobacco. Marlin Heckman is the trustee. \$33,000 has been
22 spent over 31 years. The committee meets twice each year. Congregations can ask for monies
23 to purchase Bibles and tracts.
24 C. Marlin Heckman is the Historian for the District. In 1865 the first Brethren congregation
25 settled in the PSWD. Marlin is requesting materials documenting the history of the district to
26 be sent to him, the District Office or the archives at the University of La Verne.

27 **XII. Introduction of the Ballot**

- 28 A. Moderator-elect Sara Haldeman-Scarr directed the delegates to turn to Page 53 of the Business
29 Book and introduced the Nominees. It was asked if there were nominations from the floor.
30 **Hearing none the motion to close nominations: Al Clark(La Verne) moved, Cady
31 Laycook (South Bay) seconded. Passed.**
32 B. The body was led in prayer by the Moderator-elect.
33 C. **Motion to accept the ballot as a slate, Mike Boeger (Live Oak), Al Clark (La Verne)
34 Seconded.** Discussion from the floor. Why were ages listed? Along with other information,
35 it gives a demographic representation of the body. **The motion to approve the slate ballot
36 was approved.**
37 D. The following persons were elected to the PSWD 2017 positions:
38 1. Moderator-Elect: Karen Pierson (Living Savior)
39 2. Nominating Committee: Gerald Davis (Pomona Fellowship)
40 3. Program Committee: Linda Hart (Pomona Fellowship)
41 4. District Board of Administration:
42 a. Elizabeth Piazza (Live Oak), Youth & Young Adult Representative
43 b. Alex Sanders (Modesto), Youth & Young Adult Representative
44 c. Israel Rosas (Glendale), Youth & Young Adult Representative
45 d. Jose Rudy Amaya (Principe de Paz), At-Large Representative
46 e. Cheryl Crane (Prince of Peace), At-Large Representative
47 f. Eddie Hernandez (Modesto), At-Large Representative
48 g. Katherine Boeger Knight (Live Oak), At-Large Representative

- 1 h. Clark Youngblood (Circle of Peace), At-Large Representative
- 2 i. Dot Hess (La Verne) Southern CA East Representative
- 3 5. Linda Battram Dorosh (La Verne) Hillcrest Homes Board

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

5 Following a Video presentation, Mark Lancaster, Director of Institutional Advancement for
6 Bethany Theological Seminary, brought greetings from Bethany and David Steele brought
7 greetings from the Church of the Brethren Inc. and the Mission and Ministry Board.

8 **XIV. Policy Board Report**

- 9 A. Marye Martinez, Board Chair, shared that the transition of the board over the 7 years that she
10 has been on it has been very positive, there have been changes in the budget, new church
11 planting, closing of churches, we have worked on how do we support the congregations in the
12 district, members are taking a more active part on the commissions, the atmosphere is very
13 positive as we look ahead. Marye thanked the board for their support and hard work.
- 14 B. Tom Hostetler, chair of the Ministry Commission, referred the delegates to the Ministry
15 Commission's report page 21 of the Business book. He explained the importance of the
16 Pastor/Spouse retreat and encouraged congregations to send their pastors to the retreat. He
17 shared that the Commission continues to provide ways for ministers to earn required
18 Continuing Education Units. Tom shared that the work of the Ministry Commission has been
19 a privilege and a blessing.
- 20 C. Marye explained that the District will no longer be awarding large grants, but is transitioning
21 to Ministry Partnership Funds which are awarded by the Congregational Vitality Task Group.
22 She shared that there are 23 persons on the policy board and if anyone is interested in serving,
23 talk to a board member.
- 24 D. Joel Price, chair of the Stewards Commission, shared that there was a ruling on the Korean
25 Church lawsuit and we are waiting to see if it will be appealed. The Waterford church has
26 closed and the Parsonage has been rented out. An informational letter was sent to all
27 congregations regarding insurance coverage and practices. There will be a workshop on
28 accounting and records in early 2017. He thanked the Grant Review Committee and the
29 Investment Committee for their work. Joel shared that South Bay Congregation will be taking
30 a 20 year loan with the District for \$750,000 at 5% interest for some refurbishing and
31 expansion. Joel shared that 2017 will be the last year for grants and the oversight of the final
32 reports will be accomplished by the Stewards Commission.

33 **XV. 2017 PSWD Budget**

- 34 A. Delegates were directed to Pages 59-61 of the Business Book. A time was given for questions
35 and discussion. Questions asked were: What is the long-term intention? What does it mean to
36 reduce staff compensation? More vacation or more time off? In 14 years are we going to go
37 broke or sell 3 or 4 churches? We want to be viable for a long time. Can we explore more
38 viable income strains? Don't sit on money so that we will be in existence 20 years from now
39 and not help our congregations.
- 40 B. **The 2017 Budget comes as a recommendation from the Policy Board. Tom Hostetler**
41 **(La Verne) moved to amend the 2017 proposed budget by increasing line 7000 to allow**
42 **for staff increases not to exceed \$5,000. Al Clark (La Verne) seconded. Passed. The**
43 **PSWD Budget for 2017, passed as amended, one nay.**
- 44 C. **The Policy Board recommends that the Operating Expense maximum for 2018 budget**
45 **be \$425,000. After some discussion the recommendation passed.**

1 **XVI. Program Committee Report**

2 A. Deb Merrifield (Circle of Peace) thanked the Program Committee for their hard work on this
3 year's conference. Next year's District Conference will be held November 10-12, at Hillcrest
4 in La Verne.

5 **XVII. District Executive Minister Report**

6 Russ Matteson referred the Delegates to Pages 11-13 in the Business Book. He explained that the
7 Ministry Partnership Funds are meant to encourage congregations to experiment with new
8 ministries, to work towards renewal and revitalization or to support mission point congregations.
9 He is working at engaging congregations in the Congregations Ethic Paper that was passed by
10 Annual Conference and will be holding Ethics of Discipleship workshops in the coming year. He
11 thanked Marye Martinez, outgoing Board Chair and Mike Boeger for their service to the Board.
12 Thanks to Jim Martinez, Elizabeth Rowan, Karin Nelson and Mary Jo Swartz for their service on
13 the Grant Review Committee. Russ shared that he used I Thessalonians 5:16-21 as his guide. "Be
14 cheerful no matter what; pray all the time; thank God no matter what happens. This is the way God
15 wants you who belong to Christ Jesus to live."

16 **XVIII. Waterford Church of the Brethren**

- 17 A. Marye Martinez referred the Delegates to Page 63 of the Business Book.
18 B. **The Executive Board recommends to District Conference that Waterford Church of the
19 Brethren be closed. The question was asked if the property stayed with the District. The
20 Polity of the Church of the Brethren is that church property stays with the District. The
21 action to close the Waterford Church of the Brethren passed.**
22 C. Russ led a prayer of thanksgiving for the Ministry of the Waterford Church.

23 **Afternoon Table Conversation by Delegates**

24 Moderator John Price invited the delegates to another time of conversation around tables. Inviting
25 them to focus on the following questions: How do we move from tolerance to acceptance and
26 support? Can we support those who differ from what we believe? Can we learn from each other
27 when we have diverse points of view? Are we stronger together or separated into like beliefs?

28 **XIX. Moderator's Closing Comments**

29 John Price expressed his appreciation to PSWD for this year and the way we conducted business.

30 **XX. Passing the Gavel**

31 John Price passed the gavel to Moderator Sara Haldeman-Scarr. Sara shared that her theme would
32 be "The Witness and With-ness of Jesus!", based on the Beatitudes and distributed small footprint
33 key chains to be a reminder throughout the year that the goal is to have a world abundant with
34 Christ's unconditional love.

35 **XXI. Adjournment**

36 The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

37 _____
38 Minutes recorded by Karen Cosner, Clerk

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40 In February 2017 the draft copy of the minutes was examined and given preliminary approval by the
41 committee: Richard Hart (Pomona), Scott Valles (Glendale) and Philip Corr (Living Savior).