

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

4 **November 9, 2019**

Franciscan Renewal Center, Scottsdale, Arizona

5 **I. Call to Order**

- 6 ● Opening Song: The attendees sang together “Thou True Vine.”
- 7 ● The 2019 Pacific Southwest District Conference was called to order and led in prayer by
- 8 Moderator Bob Morris at 8:35 a.m.

9 **II. Roll Call and Establishing of Quorum**

10 The roll was called with 63 delegates from 19 congregations in attendance establishing a quorum
11 so that we can conduct the business of the Pacific Southwest District at this 56th District
12 Conference.

13 **III. Approval of Agenda**

14 **Approval of the Agenda, page 3 in the 2019 Business Book, was moved by Richard Hart**
15 **(Pomona Fellowship)/Susan Price (Empire), passed.**

16 **IV. Approval of the Minutes**

- 17 A. **Approval of the Minutes of the 2018 meeting, page 43-47 in the 2019 Business Book, as**
18 **found to be accurate by the review committee, was moved by Cheryl Crane (Prince of**
19 **Peace)/Cindy Slaughter (Glendale), passed.**
- 20 B. The following persons volunteered to certify the accuracy of the 2019 Minutes: Mariza Naylor
21 (La Verne), Felton Daniels (Modesto), Stephanie Doser (Papago Buttes).

22 **V. Business Item: H. Organizing Centro Ágape en Acción as a Fellowship (See page 59 in the**
23 **2019 Business Book)**

- 24 A. **The Policy Board recommends to the District Conference to organize Centro Ágape en**
25 **Acción as a Fellowship. Passed.**
- 26 B. Sara Haldeman-Scarr (San Diego) led prayer first in Spanish and then English in the Business
27 Session to welcome Centro Ágape en Acción as a Fellowship as their delegates were seated
28 and added to the body.

29 **VI. Delegate Dedication**

30 Moderator Bob Morris led the Delegates’ Dedication Litany from page 7 in the Business Book.

31 **VII. Introduction of Leadership**

32 Moderator Bob Morris introduced Mary Kay Ogden, Moderator Elect; Karen Cosner, Clerk; Alfred
33 Clark, Parliamentarian; Dot Hess, Time Keeper; and Tellers: Erik Brummett, Julia Wheeler, Tom
34 Hostetler, Alan McLearn-Montz.

35 **VIII. Parliamentary Procedure**

36 Bob Morris explained the Parliamentary Procedure found on page 9 in the 2019 Business Book.

1 **IX. Introductions at Tables**

2 Bob Morris encouraged the attendees to introduce themselves and answer three out of the five
3 following questions:

- 4 1. What is the flavor of your favorite fruit?
- 5 2. How do you stay connected to the Vine?
- 6 3. What spiritual fruit would you like to produce in your life?
- 7 4. What does “Apart from me (Jesus) you can do nothing” mean to you?
- 8 5. In what ways has God pruned (cleansed) you?

9 **X. Introduction of Guests**

10 Russ Matteson introduced:

- 11 ○ Annual Conference Moderator Paul Munday and his wife Robin.
- 12 ○ Brethren Benefit Trust president Nevin Dulabaum
- 13 ○ Stan Dueck, Director of Transforming Practices for Church of the Brethren Inc.
- 14 ○ Shannon McNeil, Mission Advancement Advocate for Church of the Brethren Inc.
- 15 ○ Mission and Ministry Board members residing in our district
 - 16 ○ Thomas Dowdy, Pastor of Imperial Heights
 - 17 ○ Lauren Seganos Cohen, new Pastor of Pomona Fellowship
- 18 ○ Professor of New Testament, Bethany Theological Seminary, Dan Ulrich
- 19 ○ Russ Matteson welcomed Andrew Sampson Pastor of Modesto Church of the Brethren as a
20 returning pastor to the district.

21 **XI. Business Item: B. Presentation of the Ballot** (See page 48-52 in the 2019 Business Book)

22 A. Mary Kay Ogden, Nominating Committee Chair, introduced the Ballot.

23 B. The moderator asked for nominations from the floor. There were none.

24 C. **Motion that the delegates accept the ballot as a slate, Linda Lovelace (Pomona
25 Fellowship)/Alan McLearn-Montz (Bakersfield), passed.**

26 D. The following persons were elected to the PSWD 2020 positions:

- 27 1. Moderator-Elect: Al Clark, La Verne
- 28 2. Nominating Committee: Lillian Hopson, Imperial Heights
- 29 3. Program Committee, District Conference: Karen Pierson, Church of the Living Savior.
- 30 4. District Board of Administration:
 - 31 a. Dot Hess, La Verne, Southern California East and Nevada Representative
 - 32 b. Erik Brummett, Live Oak, At-Large Representative
 - 33 c. Cheryl Crane, Prince of Peace, At-Large Representative
 - 34 d. Edward Hernandez, Modesto, At-Large Representative
 - 35 e. Jeremiah Irizarry, Empire, At-Large Representative
 - 36 f. Richard Zapata, Principe de Paz, At-Large Representative
 - 37 g. Mario Cabrera, Principe de Paz, Youth & Young Adult Representative
 - 38 h. Hannah Nelson, La Verne, Youth & Young Adult Representative

39 **XII. Welcome of the Waterford New Church Plant Project**

40 Russ Matteson introduced Florecita and José Merlos. Florecita has been tasked with beginning a
41 new ministry in Waterford. As she has begun to become familiar with the community she is finding
42 that English speaking people are interested in a new ministry and this presents a challenge to her
43 as she speaks Spanish. She asked for our support as she discerns her calling in this community.
44 Rigoberto Berumen (Centro Ágape en Acción) offered a prayer for this new ministry.

1 **XIII. Greetings from Annual Conference**

2 Paul Munday brought greetings from Annual Conference and shared his excitement about
3 the Conference in Grand Rapids. There will be the largest orchestra assembled in the history of the
4 Conference, a lot of bible study is scheduled and Paul shared that “The Future of Church is in the
5 Vision.”

6 **Announcements:** Mary Kay Ogden made some announcements followed by a fifteen minute break.
7 Then Susan Price brought us back to order by leading a song.

8 **XIV. Business Items: F. & G.** (See page 59 in the 2019 Business Book)

9 **A. Action Item F. Disorganizing the Tucson Congregation. Passed.**

10 There was a question from the floor regarding the use of the funds from the closing of the
11 Tucson congregation. Nelda reported that the congregation asked that the funds be held for 5
12 years in a trust in the event that a new church might be planted in Tucson within that time.

13 **B. Action Item G. Disorganizing the Paradise Congregation. Passed.**

14 **C.** Moderator Bob Morris paused for a word of prayer.

15 **XV. Policy Board Report** (See pages 19-25 in the 2019 Business Book)

16 **A.** Nelda Clarke Board Chair gave the Policy Board Report.

17 **B.** Ministry Commission, Clark Youngblood chair (See page 21 in the 2019 Business Book)

18 1. Clark expressed his gratitude to Tom Hostetler, Russ Matteson, Joe Vecchio and the
19 Members of the Ministry Commission for all of their support and help. In addition he
20 thanked Dr. Dan Ulrich for his leadership of the pre-conference workshop.

21 2. Annali Murray Topf has been approved for Ordination.

22 **C.** Stewards Commission, Joel Price chair (See page 22 in the 2019 Business Book)

23 **D.** Congregational Vitality Task Group, Cheryl Crane chair. The group is formulating suggestions
24 for different ways churches can ask for Ministry Partnership Funds.

25 **XVI. Ministry Anniversaries** (See page 13 in the 2019 Business Book)

26 The anniversaries were recognized by Ministry Commission Chair Clark Youngblood. Ministers
27 came forward for a presentation of a certificate of service. Russ Matteson led us in prayer for the
28 service of these ministers.

29 **Announcements:** Mary Kay Ogden made announcements regarding the insight sessions. Following the
30 insight sessions and lunch, Susan Price will bring us back to order by leading a song.

31 **XVII. Business Item: D. Ministry and Improvement Fund** (See page 57 in the 2019 Business Book)

32 **A.** In considering the proposal of how to use the monies from the sale of District Property in
33 Koreatown, Board Chair Nelda Clarke introduced the proposal as stated in the Business Book
34 and asked the attendees to consider: What is exciting about the proposition?, What concerns
35 you?, and How might this proposal bring us closer to Christ? She then gave time for discussion
36 around the tables.

37 **B.** Discussion followed:

38 1. What if the church can't match the funds in order to receive the funds?

39 2. How successful were we in the past. In the past the funds were mostly used for staffing
40 and none was self-sustaining.

41 3. We should invest in empowering teams.

42 4. What is the difference between these funds and the Congregational Vitality *Ministry*
43 *Partnership Funds*?

- 1 5. What about giving each church a set amount of money with also money in reserves?
- 2 6. If we worked more cooperatively we could get more money.
- 3 7. How is youth defined?
- 4 8. Can the term youth be expanded to young adults?
- 5 9. Can we make a motion to change youth to children, youth and young adults? (Answer)
- 6 The action item is to create the fund then we will fill in the details.
- 7 10. Voting is a blessing!! Go dream big!
- 8 **C. Action Item: Call for the question: Vote now on the proposition. Action: The Policy**
- 9 **Board recommends to the District Conference the proposal for use of the monies from**
- 10 **the sale of Koreatown Property to create the “Ministry and Improvement Fund.” Passed.**
- 11 **XVIII. Business Item: E. Use of Paradise Funds for Real Property Purchase or Additions “Growth**
- 12 **from the Ashes Fund”** (See page 58 in the 2019 Business Book)
- 13 A. Board Chair Nelda Clarke introduced the proposal and gave the attendees time to discuss
- 14 around the tables.
- 15 B. **Action Item: The Policy Board recommends to the District Conference the proposal for**
- 16 **use of the Paradise Church of the Brethren insurance settlement funds to create the**
- 17 **“Growth from the Ashes Fund.” passed.**
- 18 **XIX. Reports From Annual Conference Agencies** (See pages 32-42 in the 2019 Business Book)
- 19 A. President Nevin Dulabaum highlighted information from the Brethren Benefit Trust report on
- 20 pages 32-33 and presented a video.
- 21 B. Sara Haldeman-Scarr brought the report from On Earth Peace on pages 34-35 and shared
- 22 a video.
- 23 **XX. Standing Committee Report** (See page 15 in the 2019 Business Book)
- 24 Don Shankster (Papago Buttes) is the PSWD Standing Committee delegate. He shared that many
- 25 folks want answers to what is going to happen to the denomination. Don challenged persons to
- 26 nominate individuals for the Annual Conference Ballot: Program and Arrangements, BBT Board,
- 27 and Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Committee.
- 28 **XXI. Business Item: C. Policy Board Budget Recommendations** (See Exhibit C: pages 53-56 in the
- 29 2019 Business Book)
- 30 A. The 2020 Operating Budget and the 2020 Church Planting Support Budget was presented.
- 31 **Action Item: The Policy Board recommends to the District Conference the adoption of**
- 32 **the 2020 Operating Budget and the 2020 Church Planting Support Budget as presented.**
- 33 **Passed.**
- 34 B. 2021 Operating Expense Maximum. The recommendation for 2021 of \$475,000 is a \$13,000
- 35 increase over 2020 budget. This level will require the Policy Board to make strategic choices
- 36 in budget planning next year. This level of expense holds us right in the area of anticipated
- 37 deficit very near the working deficit level identified by the Policy Board in their prior work.
- 38 **Action Item: The Policy Board recommends to the District Conference that the expense**
- 39 **maximum for the 2021 Operating Budget be \$475,000. Passed.**

1 **XXII. District Executive Minister Report:** (See pages 11-14 in the Business Book)
 2 Russ Matteson began with thanks to his staff, Nohemi Flores, Joe Vecchio and Gilbert Romero, for
 3 their hard work on behalf of the district. He recognized Pastor Robert Aguirre as the new Pastor
 4 for the Glendale congregation and thanked all the District Ministers for their service. A standing
 5 ovation was given to Russ Matteson for his exemplary service and a standing ovation also to Joe
 6 Vecchio for his tireless service.

7 **Table Talk:**

8 The group was encouraged to share the following questions around their tables.
 9 1. What would you take back to your church to share from the time at District Conference?
 10 2. What ministries, decisions or opportunities will you want your church to be aware of?

11 **XXIII. Passing the Gavel**

12 Moderator Bob Morris expressed his appreciation to the conference for their support of him, their
 13 willingness to share and interact with each other and their expressions of unity. His leadership was
 14 greatly appreciated. He passed the gavel to Moderator-Elect Mary Kay Ogden who thanked him
 15 for his service. The delegates expressed their appreciation with a standing ovation.

16 **Announcements:** Mary Kay Ogden announced that worship at 7:00 p.m. would be held at Altar Ramada
 17 with the message brought by Dan Ulrich.

18 **XXIV. Adjournment**

19 The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

20 _____
 21 Minutes recorded by Karen Cosner, clerk

22 _____

23 In January 2020 the draft copy of the minutes was examined and given preliminary approval by the
 24 committee: Mariza Naylor (La Verne), Felton Daniels (Modesto), Stephanie Doser (Papago Buttes).