

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

4 **November 14, 2020**
5 **Virtual on the web Zoom Conference**

6 **I. Call to Order**

- 7 ● Opening song: “Blest Be The Tie That Binds.”
8 ● The 2020 Pacific Southwest District Conference was called to order and led in prayer by
9 Moderator Mary Kay Ogden at 9:35a.m.

10 **II. Introduction of Leadership**

11 Moderator Mary Kay introduced the leadership, Al Clark, Moderator Elect; Karen Cosner, Clerk;
12 Paul Lovelace, Parliamentarian; Sharon Maldonado, Time Keeper.

13 **III. Roll Call and Establishing of Quorum**

14 The roll was called with 62 delegates from 20 congregations in attendance establishing a quorum
15 so that we can conduct the business of the Pacific Southwest District at this the 57th District
16 Conference.

17 **IV. Dedication of the Delegates**

18 Mary Kay invited the delegates to join her in reciting the Delegates’ Dedication on page 6 of the
19 Business Book. She ended the dedication with prayer.

20 **V. Approval of Agenda**

21 **Approval of the Agenda, page 3 in the 2020 Business Book, was moved by Norma Sexton**
22 **(Prince of Peace)/Cady Laycook (South Bay), passed.**

23 **VI. Approval of the Minutes**

- 24 A. **Approval of the minutes of the 2019 meeting, pages 45-49 in the 2020 Business Book,**
25 **as found to be accurate by the review committee, was moved by Maren McCourt**
26 **(Modesto)/Janet Short (Pomona Fellowship), passed.**
27 B. The following persons volunteered to certify the accuracy of the 2020 Minutes. Norma
28 Morris (Glendora), Tim Brayton (La Verne), Linda Davis (Church of the Living Savior,
29 McFarland).

30 **VII. Recognition of Projects and Welcome to Pasadena Project**

- 31 A. Iglesia Cristiana Elohim in Las Vegas whose pastor is Luz Roman.
32 B. The Waterford project has taken the name Nueva Vision la Hermosa (Beautiful New Vision).
33 Florecita Merlos is the pastor.
34 C. In Los Banos at Centro Agape en Acción, Rigo and Margie Berumen are the pastors.
35 D. New work is beginning in Pasadena to begin a Spanish speaking community. Pasadena
36 pastor Elizabeth Rowan introduced Juan Pablo Plaza and Adriana Rios who have been
37 licensed, are students at Fuller Seminary, and have an interest in starting a ministry. Fernanda
38 Navarrete, another Fuller student is also licensed and working with them. They greeted the
39 audience and thanked the District for our support.

- 1 **VIII. Business Item: Exhibit A. Presentation of Ballot** (See pages 51-55 in the 2020 Business Book)
- 2 A. Al Clark, Nominating Committee Chair, introduced the Ballot while pictures were shown on
- 3 the screen.
- 4 B. The moderator asked for nominations from the floor. There were none.
- 5 C. Motion to approve the ballot as a slate, Barbara Der Boghossian (Glendale)/Christi Bowman
- 6 (Living Savior), passed.
- 7 D. The following persons were elected to the PSWD 2021 positions:
- 8 1. Moderator-Elect: Cheryl Crane, Prince of Peace
- 9 2. Standing Committee Delegate: Don Shankster, Papago Buttes
- 10 3. Standing Committee Alternate: Sara Haldeman-Scarr, San Diego
- 11 4. Nominating Committee: Joanne Wagoner, La Verne
- 12 5. Program Committee, District Conference: Annali Topf, Pasadena
- 13 6. Program Committee, District Conference: Cady Laycook, South Bay
- 14 7. District Board of Administration:
- 15 a. Norma Sexton, Prince of Peace, Northern California Representative
- 16 b. Jim Lefever, Glendale, Southern California West Representative
- 17 c. Mario Cabrera, Principe de Paz, At-Large Representative
- 18 d. David Flores, Cristo Sion, At-Large Representative
- 19 e. Bob Morris, Glendora, At-Large Representative
- 20 f. Julia Wheeler, La Verne, At-Large Representative
- 21 g. Trinity Hong, Glendale, Youth & Young Adult Representative
- 22 h. Deborah Oseguera, Centro Agape en Acci3n, Youth & Young Adult
- 23 Representative
- 24 i. Elena Yoder, Circle of Peace, Youth & Young Adult Representative
- 25 **IX. Policy Board Report** (See pages 18-25 in the 2020 Business Book)
- 26 A. Ministry Commission, Norma Sexton chair (See pages 20-21 in the 2020 Business Book)
- 27 1. The NACC (Nurturing and Credentialing Committee) met several times since the
- 28 Ministry Commission report was submitted for this conference. They conducted six
- 29 licencing interviews, two ordination interviews and one commissioning interview, all of
- 30 the licencing celebrations have taken place.
- 31 2. For the future NACC plans to have interview sessions more frequently due to the use of
- 32 virtual interviews.
- 33 3. In the past we have commemorated ministers' ordination anniversaries at 25 years. This
- 34 year with Board approval we will begin to commemorate anniversaries beginning at 5
- 35 years.
- 36 B. Stewards Commission, Board Chair Nelda Clarke, in Joel Price's absence. (See pages 21-24
- 37 in the 2020 Business Book)
- 38 1. The Commission dispersed \$35,000 in COVID-19 support funds.
- 39 2. They deferred loan payments with four of our five church loans and have offered
- 40 Interest free loans to our churches.
- 41 3. Los Banos is getting ready to renovate their facility and hope to worship in the space by
- 42 February 2021.
- 43 4. We are working on plans to sell the lots where the former Paradise COB stood.
- 44 5. The 2019 Audit is completed. (See pages. 20-23 in the 2020 Business Book.)
- 45 C. Congregational Vitality Task Group, Cheryl Crane chair.
- 46 1. \$45,000 was allocated to all mission projects and projects that improved outreach.
- 47 D. Policy Board Report, (See page 19 in the 2020 Business Book)
- 48 The Policy Board experienced two deaths this year, Cindy Slaughter and Larry Woodruff.

- 1 **X. Ministry Anniversaries** (See page 12 in the 2020 Business Book)
2 The ministers were recognized by Norma Sexton while pictures were shown on the screen. Norma
3 led us in prayer for the ministry anniversaries.
- 4 **XI. Standing Committee Report** (See page 14 in the 2020 Business Book) Don Shankster (Papago
5 Buttes) shared the report:
6 A. There will be an Annual Conference June 30 to July 4, 2021 in Greensboro, NC.
7 B. The Nominating Committee is working on having ballots in Spanish.
8 C. There are several positions open and nominations are due by the end of December.
9 D. There was a question with concern for On Earth Peace and their direction. Don shared that
10 the Standing Committee is discussing how to proceed in working with On Earth Peace. The
11 Annual Conference Officers have issued a statement with regard to recent action by On Earth
12 Peace.
13 E. On January 6th and January 16th at 10:00am, there will be a zoom session with David
14 Sollenberger and Jim Beckwith concerning the state of the denomination.
15 F. All items that were on the agenda for the 2020 Conference will be on the 2021 agenda.
16 G. Questions:
17 1. There was a question about the tensions within the denomination. Several churches have
18 decided to withdraw from the denomination.
19 2. Is there any more information about On Earth Peace (OEP)?
20 3. How is OEP related to the denomination. They need to follow the guidelines.
- 21 **XII. Program Committee Report** (See page 15 in the 2020 Business Book)
22 Mary Kay Ogden (La Verne) was able to have one in-person meeting in Glendora this year. The
23 committee decided to go to a virtual Conference in May due to concerns around the pandemic.
24 She concluded her report by reading the last paragraph of her report. "As you read this report and
25 experience district Conference, we hope our expectations as a committee and your expectations as
26 delegates, participants, and attendees have been met. I want to thank all of the Program
27 Committee members and staff for their commitment in planning a quality conference amid these
28 challenging times. *Blest Be The Tie That Binds.*"
- 29 **XIII. Business Item: Exhibit C. Policy Board Budget Recommendations** (See pages 56-59 in the
30 2020 Business Book) Board Chair Nelda Clarke presented the budget related business items:
31 A. The 2021 Operating Budget and the 2021 Church Planting Support Budget were presented.
32 1. Increases were primarily in a small salary increase and health insurance.
33 2. Question: How does the income from investments cover expenses? Why is there not a
34 line item that explains this? Investments do not always cover the expenses, we use
35 earned income to balance the budget.
36 3. The Policy Board recommends a budget of \$84,180 across the four church plants that
37 are in operation.
38 **Action Item: The Policy Board recommends to the District Conference the adoption of**
39 **the 2021 Operating Budget and the 2021 Church Planting Support Budget as presented.**
40 **Passed.**
41 B. 2022 Operating Expense Maximum. The recommendation for 2022, (See page 57 in the 2020
42 Business Book), of \$475,000 is a \$8,271 increase over the 2021 budget. This level will
43 require the Policy Board to make strategic choices in budget planning next year. This level of
44 expense holds us right in the area of an anticipated deficit very near the working deficit level
45 identified by the Policy Board in their prior work.
46 **Action Item: The Policy Board recommends to the District Conference that the expense**
47 **maximum for the 2022 Operating Budget be \$475,000. Passed.**

1 **XIV. Reports From Annual Conference Agencies** (See pages 32-44 in the 2020 Business Book)

2 A. Bethany Seminary:

3 1. In a recorded video message President Jeff Carter shared that they had 13 students who
4 received graduate degrees this year. This fall in person classes were replaced with video
5 conferencing. They hope to reopen face to face in the fall. Students will also be able to
6 join virtually. One of their key programs is “Pillars and Pathways” which reduces debt
7 to the students. He thanked the District for its students, its financial support and its
8 prayers.

9 2. Gail Connery, Executive Director gave an update: Bethany has 86 students this fall: 30
10 for the first time, 34 Master of Divinity, 14 Master of Arts, 10 Master of Arts
11 Theopoetics and Writing, and 28 in the certificate program. 15 students are living in the
12 neighborhood. She offered her thanks to the District for our support.

13 B. CoB Inc:

14 1. Shannon McNeil, Mission Advancement staff for the Church of the Brethren, showed
15 the video “Living Letters” for her report. She was asked if Volunteers for BVS were
16 still having virtual orientation for the summer and fall and the answer was yes.

17 **XV. Table Talk:**

18 The group was encouraged to share the following questions within their group.

- 19 1. What will you take back to the congregation from conference?
20 2. Was there any thing learned in the church during covid19 that has kept relationships strong?

21 **XVI. District Executive Minister Report:** (See pages 10-13 in the 2020 Business Book)

22 Russ Matteson shared that it is good to be with all of you. It has been exciting. On page 12 are the
23 anniversaries of the ministers and the list of five ordained ministers who died this year: Michael
24 Fletcher, Gene Hipskind, Gene Palsgrove, Karl Pohlhaus and William Wash. He offered his
25 thanks to pastors for their creativity, resourcefulness, and compassion in this difficult time.
26 Elizabeth Rowan offered her thanks to Russ for his support. It has been a challenging time as the
27 virus surges ahead. There have been many conversations about how to be faithful as a
28 congregation at this time.

29 **XVII. Passing the Gavel**

30 Moderator Mary Kay Ogden thanked the conference for their attendance, attention and support.
31 She symbolically passed the gavel to Al Clark. Russ Matteson performed Consecration of
32 Moderator, Al Clark and Moderator Elect, Cheryl Crane. Al thanked Mary Kay for being a
33 wonderful mentor. She has led us into a wonderful conference. Thanks to Russ Matteson and Joe
34 Vecchio for their support and help. Theme for next year is “Together/Juntos” and will feature an
35 illuminated manuscript of Pentecost

36 **XVIII. Adjournment**

37 The meeting was adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

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39 Minutes recorded by Karen Cosner, clerk

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41 *In February 2021 the draft copy of the minutes was examined and given preliminary approval by the*
42 *committee: Norma Morris (Glendora), Tim Brayton (La Verne), Linda Davis (Church of the Living*
43 *Savior, McFarland).*