

Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren

Business Book

Justice and Peace Kiss Each Other

La justicia y la paz se besaron

Psalm 85:9-13

**Justicia
Paz**

**Justice
Peace**



**Love
Faithfulness**

**Amor
Fidelidad**

Matthew 13:1-52 Galatians 5:22-23

PSWD District Conference 2024

61ST Annual District Conference

November 8-9, 2024

Business on Saturday, November 9

An In-Person & Virtual Conference
Held using internet formats like Zoom,
and meeting at Prince of Peace Church, Sacramento, CA
www.pswdcob.org/distconf

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Old Business Items: *None*

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Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren
2024 Annual Meeting — November 8-9, 2024
A Conference, held using internet formats like Zoom,
and meetings at Prince of Peace Church, Sacramento, CA.

Welcome to the 2024 Pacific Southwest District Conference

Welcome to District Conference!

I am delighted we are able to have District Conference in Sacramento this year. We owe a big thank you to the Prince of Peace leadership and congregation for stepping up to the task. The Conference will be available online because some people cannot attend in person due to health, transportation or scheduling issues. I hope you will choose to come and share in the fellowship and group dynamic that happens more deeply when we are in person rather than online.

Our giving emphasis this year is the South Sacramento Interfaith Partnership Food Closet which the Prince of Peace congregation helps support. An offering will be taken during Saturday worship to help support this important work.

The SERRV shop will again be at District Conference so come prepared to shop.

We will also enjoy the presence of our 2025 Annual Conference Moderator, Dava Hensley. Since we are not having breakout workshops this year, the best way to hear more from Dava is to stay over for the Sunday worship at Prince of Peace Church. Dava will be preaching at that service and we would love to have you share that time with her.

How can the church, as God's Kingdom on earth, help people to find good soil? How can we, each congregation, provide good soil? These questions will be the focus of Friday night worship, Saturday worship and in discussion with all of us together. Saturday's worship and discussion time will be led by Jennifer and Nathan Hosler, co-pastors of the Washington DC Church of the Brethren. Both of them are also on the denominational staff.

Come! Enjoy the fellowship of your brothers and sisters in Christ from around the district. Come also to learn ways to better serve others and to share the hope of Christ to the lost.

Paul Lovelace
2024 District Moderator

Moderator@pswdcob.org

2024 Pacific Southwest District Conference — Business Meeting Agenda

Saturday, November 9

1. Call to Order and Opening Prayer
2. Roll call and establishing of a quorum
3. Approval of 2024 Agenda and 2023 Minutes (p.[49](#))
 - A. Name a Committee to review the 2024 minutes
4. Business Items
 - A. Election of leadership (pp.[16-17](#) & pp.[53-56](#))
 - B. 2025 PSWD Operating Budget & Church Planting Budget Proposals (pp.[57-60](#))
 - C. 2026 PSWD Budget Parameter (pp.[57-60](#))
 - D. Action to Organize Iglesia del Salvador Viviente as a Fellowship (p.[61](#))
 - E. Action to Approve Dual Affiliation and DBA for the South Bay Congregation (p.[62](#))
5. Reports
 - A. Church of the Brethren, Inc. (pp.[42-48](#))
 - B. Annual Conference Agencies (pp.[34](#))
 1. Eder Financial (pp.[34](#))
 2. On Earth Peace (p.[36](#))
 3. Bethany Theological Seminary (pp.[38](#))
 - C. District Policy Board (pp.[19-28](#))
 - D. District Program Committee (p.[16](#))
 - E. Standing Committee Delegate (p.[14](#))
 - F. District Executive Minister (pp.[12-14](#))
6. Consecration of Moderator and other 2025 District Leadership
7. Adjournment

Friday, November 8th

8:30 a.m to 3:00 p.m. - Set up Exhibits

10:00 a.m to 5:00 p.m. - Ministers Ethics Workshop

3:00 p.m to 7:00 p.m. - Registration / Check in

5:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. - Dinner

7:00 p.m. - Worship

8:15 p.m. - Ice Cream Social - Sponsored by Eder Financial

Saturday, November 9th

8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. - Business Session #1

10:15 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. - Keynote Session #1 - Jenn and Nate Hosler
- Worship, Presentation, Conversations, Sharing

12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. - Lunch

1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. - Business Session #2

2:45 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. - Keynote Session #2 - Jenn and Nate Hosler
- Worship, Presentation, Conversations, Sharing

4:15 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. - Consecration of New Leadership

Sunday, November 10th *Not officially part of Conference, but all are welcome to attend*

10:00 a.m. - Worship at Prince of Peace
COB Annual Conference Moderator Dava Hensley preaching



2024 PSWD District Conference Theme



The 2024 PSWD District Conference theme uses Psalm 85:9-13 as a focus for what those outside the church should see as the defining characteristic of the Kingdom of God displayed by the Christian church.

The District Conference theme focuses on verse 10b 'righteousness and peace kiss each other'. The word 'tzedek' is translated as righteousness in most English translations while the word 'mizpah' is usually translated as justice. The two words are, or nearly are synonymous. The Complete Jewish Bible translates 'tzedek' as justice and most Spanish translations use the word 'justicia' for both. The District Conference Logo uses the word justice to be more consistent with the Spanish. 'Justice' will be used for the balance of this document.

As the focus for the theme, when 'justice and peace kiss each other' represents the outward sign of the Kingdom of God. When the outer world looks at the church and sees the fullness of justice and the fullness of peace embraced together by God's people they will see the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Heaven, on earth.

The use of Galatians 5:22-23 seems to walk the line of proof texting - taking verses out of context in order to make an argument inconsistent with their actual meaning - especially in relation to verses 19-21. To understand the relationship between these two sets of verses it is very helpful to read the whole letter in one sitting.

A rough outline of the letter to the Galatians would be:

Chapter 1 is a fairly typical opening for Paul's letters.

Chapter 2 lays out the reasons Paul has the authority to say what he is going to say.

Chapter 3 begins 'You foolish Galatians. Who has bewitched you?' followed by a lot of description that could be summed up by 'Why have you crawled back under the law instead of depending on Grace?' It also makes a clear statement that we are saved by grace, nor by the law.

Chapter 4 lays out arguments against this turning to the Law for their salvation but also gives the Galatians arguments to use against those who are pushing for the Galatian converts to be subject to Jewish law.

Chapter 5 returns to the reasons to depend on God's grace, through the sacrifice of Jesus the Christ for their salvation. Although Paul reminds them in verses 19-21 that we are to live lives focused on God, not on worldly pleasures, the apex is verses 22-23, the fruit of the Spirit. It is in the growth of these fruits that the Kingdom of God grows among God's people. This is the primary focus for people of Grace, to deal with each other in the Kingdom and the world outside by growing in the fruits of the Spirit.

Chapter 6 then, is the closing of the letter.

We are saved by God's grace. We are called to live in the Spirit of God. The Spirit calls us to deal with each other according to the fruits of the Spirit. God's Kingdom on earth flourishes when we practice 'love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness faithfulness, gentleness and self control' in our relationships with others.

Turning to Mathew 13, we see a whole chapter of parables of God's Kingdom on earth. The parables of the mustard seed and the yeast, (vs. 31-33) tell us that no matter how small we may be or feel, God and use us to make a great difference.

The parable of the weeds, (vs.24-30), shows the Kingdom to be a place filled with both wheat and weeds. The parable of the net, (vs.47-50) shows the Kingdom to be filled with fish of all kinds. In both parables, it is the angels who sort the wheat from the weeds, the good fish from the bad fish. We do not have the vision to see people as God sees them, so the angels will do the sorting. That means the Kingdom is a very messy place, filled with grain and weeds, filled with good fish and bad fish, and we cannot tell the difference.

Even with all this seeming chaos, the parables of the hidden treasure, (vs.44), and the parable of the pearl, (vs.45-46) the Kingdom is beyond price. We should gladly give everything to be in that kingdom.

District Conference is going to focus on the first parable, the parable of the sower. This parable can look very different in our modern society than it did in Jesus day because we have grown in our understanding of people and how the soil they are in can be changed. The crowds of Jesus' day would not have been able to understand a call to help people change their apparent nature. Indeed, it is only with the advent of psychology and counseling and especially 12 step programs and other group therapies that we have been able to see people have the strength to turn from many kinds of behavior and to seek wholeness. People can learn to seek good soil. How can the church, as God's Kingdom on earth, help people to find good soil? How can we, each congregation, provide good soil?

These questions will be the focus of Friday night worship, Saturday worship and in a workshop for all of us together. Saturday's worship and workshop time will be led by Jennifer and Nathan Hosler, co-pastors of the Washington DC Church of the Brethren. They are both also on the denominational staff.

Paul Lovelace, Moderator
Moderator@pswdcob.org

Delegates' Dedication

November 9, 2024

Moderator: We gather here today in person and online to conduct the business of the Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren. We are gathered to be the body of Christ.

Delegates: **We are here today representing the Church of the Brethren in Arizona, California, and Nevada. We are the body of Christ. The hands and feet, the eyes and ears, the heart and lungs - all parts of the whole.**

Moderator: Together we are a body that worships, a body that ministers, a body that works, a body that rejoices in the wonder of serving and loving God together.

Delegates: **We commit ourselves to work together to deal effectively with the business before us as we seek to minister to a world that needs Jesus.**

Moderator: As the body of Christ, let us lift up each other. Let us listen to each other with the heart and mind of Jesus.

Delegates: **We will gladly listen to each other and support our Sisters and Brothers as we seek to continue the work of Jesus.**

Moderator and Delegates: **Let us dedicate this day to being the body of Christ as we work together doing the work of Jesus.**

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La justicia y la paz se besaron

Psalm 85:9-13

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Paz**

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**Love
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Matthew 13:1-52 Galatians 5:22-23

PSWD District Conference 2024

Pacific Southwest District – Church of the Brethren – 2024

Officers of the District Conference

Moderator..... Paul Lovelace, Pomona Fellowship
Moderator-Elect..... Norma Sexton, Prince of Peace
Clerk..... Laura Miller, Papago Buttes
Board of Administration Chair (ex-officio)..... Jeremiah “Jay” Irizarry, Empire
District Executive Minister (ex-officio)..... Russ Matteson

Note for the Delegates

The District Conference is a mass meeting to which delegates and other interested persons from the member congregations come in business sessions and for purposes of worship, education and fellowship. The District Conference projects the program of the District, and approves new programs, constitutional changes and budget. Through its delegates, it interprets and promotes the decisions of the District Conference to the local congregations.

Participation of Non-delegates

Non-delegates are urged to attend District Conference, including the business meeting. Non-delegates may discuss the business and make motions; voting is restricted to the delegates and officers. Wide participation at the business session adds inspiration and encouragement to the moderator, delegates, Board of Administration and staff. Pacific Southwest District has been noted for excellent attendance at the business session.

What May Be Done with Queries

- (1) A query may be accepted and passed on to Annual Conference.
- (2) A query may be sent back to the originating church or District Board, which means one of several things: *not important to the larger church, Annual Conference has already answered it, not a proper query, etc.*
- (3) A query **may not** be changed by amendment.
- (4) A query may be added to, but care must be taken not to change the intent of the query. One way to add is to attach a similar query to the one being considered.

Rules of Order on District Conference Business

- (1) The moderator conducts business according to Robert’s Rules of order, which will be the standard for any point not covered in the Constitution and Bylaws.
- (2) The moderator appoints tellers and timekeeper.
- (3) Nominations from the floor must have the prior consent of the nominee (*see next page, bottom section*).
- (4) Length and number of speeches allowed are determined by the District Conference officers.
- (5) The election of officers is by ballot with a plurality vote, except the moderator-elect and the standing committee delegate(s), who are elected by a majority vote.
- (6) A quorum consists of fifty percent of the total elected delegates representing fifty percent of the churches of the District.

Pacific Southwest District – Church of the Brethren

Parliamentary Procedure at a Glance

(Based on Robert's Rules of Order Revised
And Rules Governing Annual Conference)

8. The Five Essential Steps Through Which a Motion Passes

- A. Presentation of the motion:
“I move that _____.”
- B. Seconding the motion:
“I second the motion,” or “I second it.”
- C. A written copy of the motion shall be given to the conference clerk.
Stating the question (by the moderator) and discussion of it:
“It has been moved and seconded that _____.”
- D. Putting the question to a vote:
“Are you ready for the question? All of those in favor of the motion which is _____
_____. say ‘Aye.’ Opposed, ‘No.’”
- E. Announcing the result of the vote:
“The motion is carried (lost) and you have voted to (not to) _____.”

9. Motions, Who Makes Them and How

- A. All attendees of the District Conference have the privilege of moving and discussing the business of the Conference.
- B. To make a motion, it is necessary to “obtain the floor” – that is, to rise after the floor has been yielded and address the presiding officer by his/her official title (Brother/Sister Moderator). Give your name and the name of the congregation you represent as soon as you are recognized by the moderator after addressing him/her.
- C. A motion is seconded without obtaining the floor or rising.

10. Some Rules of Debate

- A. All remarks must be addressed to the chair.
- B. All remarks must pertain to the immediately pending question before the District Conference.
- C. All remarks must be of an impersonal nature.
- D. Length and number of speeches are determined by District Conference officers.

11. Nominations and Voting

- A. Nominations may be made from the floor. However, one must have the person's permission to present his/her name in nomination, have all the same written information provided by the other candidates to present to the conference clerk, and have copies of the ballot information to distribute to the delegates (*see page 18*).
- B. No member can be compelled to vote. Those not voting are not counted in deciding whether it is a majority, two-thirds, or unanimous. All blank ballots are ignored and, thus, not counted.
- C. Most votes are taken first by voice or by show of hands, except in case of motions requiring a two-thirds vote, when a rising vote is taken first.

12. Motions Classified and in Ascending Order of Precedence

- A. Privileged and Incidental Motions:** motions that take precedence over any pending question although not related to that question. Not debatable.
1. **ADJOURN or RECESS**
Object: to dismiss a meeting or to provide for an intermission – “I move that we adjourn (recess) while (until) _____.”
 2. **RAISE A QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE**
Object: to get the attention of the moderator at once, to ask a question, or to attend to some matter that cannot wait – “I rise to a question of privilege” (state your question).
 3. **POINT OF ORDER**
“I rise to a point of order” (state your point).
- B. Subsidiary Motions:** motions that are applied to other motions for the purpose of most appropriately disposing of them.
1. **LAY ON THE TABLE – TAKE FROM THE TABLE** (second, not debatable, not amendable, simple majority)
Object: to lay aside business in such a manner that its consideration may be removed later – “I move that this matter be laid on the table.”
 2. **PREVIOUS QUESTION** (second, not debatable, not amendable, two-thirds majority)
Object: to stop debate and order an immediate vote – “I call for (or move) the previous question.”
 3. **POSTPONE TO A SET TIME** (second, debatable, amendable, simple majority).
 4. **COMMIT, REFER, or RE-COMMIT** (second, debatable, amendable, simple majority),
Object: to place the business in the hands of a few for later reporting to the Conference (for major changes) – “I move that this matter be referred to a committee of ____ to be named _____ with instruction.”
 5. **AMEND** (second, debatable, amendable, simple majority).
 - a. “I move to amend the motion by striking out _____.”
 - b. “I move to amend the motion by inserting _____ between _____ and _____.”
 - c. “I move to amend the motion by adding _____ between _____ and _____.”
 - d. “I move to amend the motion by striking out _____ and inserting _____.”
 - e. “I move to amend by striking out _____ and substituting this (read or state the substitution).”
 6. **POSTPONE INDEFINITELY** (second, debatable, and amendable, simple majority).
Object: to kill a motion – “I move to postpone this matter indefinitely.”
- C. Principal Motion:** a motion made to bring before the Conference, for its consideration, any particular subject.
- D. Main Motion:** (second, debatable, amendable, simple majority).
Object: to introduce business for consideration –
- a. “I move that _____.”
 - b. “I move the adoption (acceptance, approval) of this report.”

District Executive Minister's Report

Russ Matteson

As I look back over this past year in ministry for the Pacific Southwest District the theme that comes most quickly to mind is construction. There have been two major facility construction projects happening in our district: Circle of Peace's new worship center, and the remodeling of a wedding chapel into a church for Iglesia Cristian Elohim in Las Vegas. And, they are not the only churches that have been working at projects to enhance (or simply repair) their church buildings as a part of engaging with their community.

The work of construction in our churches is not only with steel and concrete, drywall and wood. The work of our pastors in providing spiritual care and leadership is vital work in building up the church for the work of ministry. Those leaders are surrounded and supported by lay leaders whose gifts of ministry are vital for the church to be all that God is calling it to be. As I visit our churches I give thanks for the ways in which people come together and share in the work of Jesus in their neighborhoods, together building up the body of Christ.

Spanish Language Ministry Training

At present we have six licensed ministers for whom the Educación para Ministerio Compartido (EPMC) provides their training and deepens their connection with the beliefs and practices of the Church of the Brethren. These students work weekly with Gilbert Romero in class and throughout the week put what they learn into practice in the churches where they serve in ministry. This year, in partnership with Brethren Press, we arranged for a Covenant Bible Study (on the book of Samuel) to be translated into Spanish. The students are currently leading members of their churches using this Brethren created resource. We have access to use the translation at no cost in all of our churches, and Brethren Press will be able to sell this to other Spanish speaking churches. We are exploring the possibility of translating another Covenant Bible Study yet this fall for use in 2025.

This partnership, Brethren Press printed resources and PSWD's financial resources and need, opens the possibility of helping to equip the district's churches and the broader denomination by making quality resources from a Brethren perspective available to more of our congregations.

Know 2 Grow 2

We are partnering with Jeff Glass and Yoryanis Iglesias to help congregations work at improving their social media presence as a part of reaching their community. In the first half of the year they partnered with three

congregations, developing resources for Facebook, Instagram, and Tik-Tok to support the local church's ministry and to connect with neighbors that might otherwise never interact with the church. Based on early responses of increased social media interactions we are rolling the opportunity out to other churches in the district. This effort is being supported through the Ministry & Improvement Fund Reserves.

Support for Ministry with Children/Families

Out of the survey work done by GDL Consulting around our district youth program, the strong sentiment was that our churches could use some help in building or strengthening their ministry with children and families. During the past year we have explored several possibilities to provide support and coaching as each congregation's situation is unique. In August we joined Practical Resources for Churches as a district which gives all of our congregations access to their resources and support. Key among those is a "Launchpad" consultation which includes three to four sessions of questions and coaching about the church's current situation and goals for ministry with children and families. We are hopeful that this will provide helpful support to congregations that are looking to build their ministry in this area.

International Guest

In July the district hosted Gedeon Terrero, a pastor and gifted musician from the Church of the Brethren in Spain. Gedeon spoke and led worship in four of our churches over the course of 3 days. It is a joy to connect the global church with PSWD congregations.

Pastoral/Congregational Transitions

Church of the Living Savior (McFarland, CA) - Pastor Phil Corr ended his service as pastor of the congregation in June of this year and relocated to Alhambra, CA. Phil continues to serve as a consulting pastor to the Spanish language congregation from a distance. The leadership is working together to chart the next steps in ministry for the congregation and Linda Davis and Tony Blanco are providing preaching leadership.

Circle of Peace (Peoria, AZ) - The new Worship Center construction is moving quickly and they anticipate being able to use the space this December. Costs on the project have held to budget, but the quick construction has resulted in the district providing additional loan funds as their time to raise funds has been shortened.

Cristiana Elohim (Las Vegas, NV) - The church moved into their new facility in June of this year and the building was dedicated in September. Plans are in place to continue to reach out to their new neighborhood with the invitation to become part of the work of Jesus there.

Cristo Genesis (Los Angeles, CA) - This congregation has two women who are licensed ministers and provide support to Pastor Nick Corral in leadership of the congregation. Additionally, they have several young people taking music lessons to provide worship leadership during services. These lessons are being supported by Ministry Partnership Funds - New Ministry Opportunity from the District.

Cristo Sion (Pomona, CA) - Pastors David and Rita Flores and their congregation are in ministry again in Pomona and in partnership with the Pacific Southwest District. They are renting space from another church in Pomona and working to build their ministry with children and families.

Glendora - Gilbert Romero is serving as the pastor. They are also working with new members of the church to operate a twice a month Food Pantry.

Journey South Bay (Redondo Beach, CA) - There is business on the conference agenda to approve their being a dually affiliated congregation and using the name they are known by in the community, a combination of the names of the two churches that have partnered together. The church is growing and has moved to having two services on Sunday mornings.

Modesto - The congregation invested significant time and energy into working with the city of Modesto to become a city operated tiny house site that would have provided short term support to families dealing with housing needs. Unfortunately the project was discontinued due to neighborhood opposition. The congregation continues to work with their partner, Family Promise, to find ways to use the church property to assist unhoused families in the community.

Papago Buttes - The congregation celebrated the ordination of Pastor Jon Chubb in the Church of the Brethren this year. They are working with GDL Consulting on vision and planning in the midst of the growth in participation they are experiencing. This work is receiving support from the district through Ministry Partnership Funds - Coaching/Training.

Pomona Fellowship - Julie Wheeler was called to serve as the pastor of the congregation in March. They continue to work at ways to connect their ministry with the people of Pomona. A team from the church attended a 2 day Fresh Expressions conference in Boise, ID, with support from the Ministry & Improvement Fund - Leadership Development. They also have received a Jesus in the Neighborhood grant to connect with their community with Taco Sundays, and are trying some new things with their music program with the support of Ministry Partnership Funds - New Ministry Opportunity from the District.

Prince of Peace (Sacramento, CA) - We are grateful to the church for their willingness to host the district conference this year. Interim Pastor Matt Real has let the church know that he will need to finish his service there by the end of 2024.

Príncipe de Paz (Santa Ana, CA) - Some water damage to the church building from storms this past spring served as the impetus to undertake some remodeling that the church had long dreamed of. After replacing the roof, they spent the summer worshipping in the church basement while the first floor sanctuary and foyer underwent remodeling and refurbishment. Having moved back into the sanctuary they are now starting projects in the church kitchen and for the children's classrooms. The district has supported this work with a Ministry & Improvement Fund - Facility Improvements grant and a loan.

Salvador Viviente (McFarland, CA) - There is business on the conference agenda to organize them as a fellowship. The group continues to strengthen their ministry in McFarland and the surrounding community.

San Diego - The congregation served as a project site for Brethren Volunteer Service (BVS) this year and new volunteer is in place through September 2025. The church continues to be in ministry with persons who are in the process of gaining asylum in the United States.

Pace e bene, Paz y bien, Peace and all good,

Russ Matteson

District Executive Minister

Deceased Ministers

No Deceased Ministers

Recognition of Ministers' Ordination Anniversaries

60 Years
Gerald L. Moore

45 Years
Jeffrey E. Glass
Tom Hostetler

40 Years
Dena Pence

35 Years
Jeanine Ewert

30 Years
Terry R. Mathis

25 Years
Linda E. Davis
Joe Surin

20 Years
Melvin L. Campbell
Reba Herder
Andrew Sampson

**Representing 365 years
of service.**

**MTC: Ministry Training Coordinator: SeBAH and
EPMC Report.....** Gilbert Romero
See also Ministry Commission report on page [21](#).

First, I would like to thank PSWD for the opportunity to serve over the years. Working with my students has been a blessing. We meet every Tuesday at 7:00 PM to go over the topics that we study. We read together and discuss what we read. We have fun being together because we are a family. At the end of each class we pray for each other and their needs. We are up to date and on schedule with our requirements. As the MTC coordinator, I am BLESSED to serve in the EPMC program!

Gilbert Romero, MTC
MTC@pswdcob.org

Report of Standing Committee Delegate

Standing Committee began its work on Sunday evening June 30th. We spent most of the evening in worship and getting to know each other ahead of beginning the tasks of developing recommendations for the delegate body. We also spent considerable and valuable time over the next 3 days meeting with the church agencies and with the district executives. For someone, like myself, who was new to Standing Committee this was especially helpful. We lamented the process of having to disorganize the district of Puerto Rico because all of the congregations have left the denomination. We drafted a letter of lament that was sent to the pastors. On a positive note, and with fantastic leadership from Madelyn Metzger, our

moderator, we were able to complete our tasks a few hours early on Wednesday July 3rd and enjoy a bit of rest ahead of conference.

Worship Wednesday evening included a heartfelt message of love, lament, and hope from sister Madelyn. I do not believe there was a dry eye in the room. It set the tone for one of the best conferences I've had the privilege to attend.

The following is a summary of the celebrations and actions of the 2024 Annual Conference.

Celebrations: Numerous international guests from Burundi, Venezuela, Spain, the Dominican Republic, Sudan, India, and Nigeria brought greetings and brief reports on the world missions. We also celebrated the

300th anniversary of the Germantown Church in PA and the 100th anniversaries of Camp LaVerne and Camp Harmony.

Unfinished Business

UB 1. Query- Standing with People of Color.

The written and oral interim reports were received as information for the delegates. The team also guided Standing Committee and the delegate body thru some of the process of self- examination and how to obtain resources. We were encouraged continue to implement the process and district meetings and to have each of our congregations become more engaged with the curriculum.

UB 2. Query- Breaking Down Barriers-Increasing Access to Denominational Events.

The written and oral interim reports were received as information. The team was also granted one more year to analyze the data and bring forth recommendations.

UB 3. Request for an Annual Conference Study on Calling Denominational Leadership.

The written and oral interim reports were received as information. On a related note Jeff Carter from Bethany Seminary said that very few of their students are individuals being called from congregations within the denomination. I encourage all of us to seek out and support individuals to consider leadership in the church. Bethany has remote learning and scholarship support that makes the education process reachable for all.

New Business:

NB 1. Mandate for the 2025-2027 Review and Evaluation Committee.

With the exception of one friendly amendment the recommendation to adopt was passed.

NB 2. Recommendation for a One-Time Change in Tenure for Review and Evaluation Committee.

The one time change in tenure was adopted. In simple language, with the anticipated structural changes anticipated at the denominational level giving this committee more time to make recommendations was deemed appropriate.

NB 3. Housing Equity Fund Recommendations.

This was adopted by the conference. It makes the housing fund set up for pastors a number of years ago more tax friendly.

NB 4. Query: A New Model for Denominational Structure.

This query was accepted and referred to Review and Evaluation Committee because it asked about structural change.

NB 5. Proposed Memorandum of Understanding Updating Polity for Bethany Theological Seminary.

This was adopted.

NB 6. Proposed Update of Polity Related to On Earth Peace.

This was also adopted.

Background on NB 5 and NB 6. The agencies are in the process of completing covenants with the Church of the Brethren. These items bridge the gap until that process is completed. Standing Committee and the Agencies are committed to have that process complete and Covenants ready by the end of 2024. The sub-committee was granted until 2025 to complete this process.

NB 7. Recommend Cost of Living to the Minimum Cash Salary Table for Pastors.

The cost of living adjustment of 3.3% was adopted.

Dava Cruise Hensley will be moderator next year and Don Fitzkee was called as moderator elect. History was made this year at the end of annual conference as the gavel was passed from one female moderator to another.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve our district. If you have any further questions regarding the work of Standing Committee or Annual Conference do not hesitate to contact me.

God's Blessings,
Shawn Carothers
Standing Committee Delegate
Pacific Southwest District

District Conference Program Committee Report

Committee Members:

Paul Lovelace, Moderator, Chair
Norma Sexton, Moderator-Elect
Karen Pierson
Cheryl Crane
Janice Shaw Morgan

Ex-Officio Members of the Committee:

District Executive Minister: Russ Matteson

Invited Guests:

Board Chair: Jeremiah Irizarry
Pastor of Prince of Peace Church: Matthew Real
Web-Registrar: Juliana Pitruzzello

The Program Committee began its planning by carefully reviewing the evaluations from the 2023 District Conference in order to identify both weaknesses and strengths that would help us to improve the 2024 conference. One of the biggest questions was how much of the conference should be hybrid.

Over time and after much deliberation it was decided to keep a hybrid format with working sessions on Zoom and by streaming worship. Russ and Paul are working with a technology committee to facilitate this. It is wonderful that we can have the conference in Sacramento this year. All of the conference activities will take place at the Prince of Peace Church in Sacramento. The designated offering on Saturday will be to support one of the community projects the Prince

of Peace Church supports, the South Sacramento Interfaith Partnership Food Closet.

At the first meeting Paul shared his vision and how it was represented in the conference logo. This sparked a lot of idea sharing which quickly developed into a consensus that instead of having insight sessions we would have two plenary sessions, (everyone together), to work at how we as congregations can engage in the kingdom of God as pictured in Jesus first parable in Matthew 13. This is the parable of the scattered seed falling on different types of soil. What can we as congregations do to help people find good soil? What kind of soil are we? How can we work to provide good soil to people with different needs? We are very pleased that Jennifer and Nathan Hosler, co-pastors of the Washington DC Church of the Brethren will be here to help guide us through this time of seeking, learning and worshipping together.

We are also happy that 2025 Annual Conference Moderator Dava Hensley will be with us. She will have some time to address us during the business meeting. She is going to be preaching at the Prince of Peace Church on Sunday morning, so we strongly encourage you to stay over to participate in that worship service.

Paul Lovelace,
2024 District Moderator
Moderator@pswdcob.org

Nominating Committee Report

Committee Members:

Norma Sexton, Chair & Moderator-Elect
Marye Martinez
Brenda Dickson
Jose Rudy Amaya

Ex-Officio Members with vote:

Clerk, Laura Miller
Moderator, Paul Lovelace
Board Chair, Jeremiah Irizarry

Ex-Officio Member without vote:

District Executive Minister: Russ Matteson

One of the tasks for the Moderator-elect is to chair the Nominating Committee. I feel this is the most important function of the Moderator-elect. The persons who have been asked and agreed to be on the ballot represent the entire membership of the district. The better they reflect the cultural, economic, geographic, ethnic and theological diversity of the district the better the district can serve all of its congregations.

It was my privilege to work with a dedicated committee who made many phone calls to ask people to consider the call to participate in PSWD leadership. Russ Matteson's knowledge of potential leaders in every congregation was of utmost importance to our ability to provide this year's ballot. Please take the time to consider who are current or potential leaders in your congregation that could help shape the future of our district and submit their names on the attached form so we can continue to have a district board and other committees that truly represent the entire PSWD. Please be in prayer for those on this year's ballot as well as the continuing members of the PSWD board and committees. I am looking forward to getting to know as well as serve with this group of leaders who have accepted the call to serve God through District leadership positions.

Your fellow servant
Norma Sexton, Moderator-elect

Please consider these suggestions:

Dear Nominating Committee, for District Conference Ballot:	
I, _____, suggest that you consider: <small>your name your telephone</small>	
Name:	Email:
Church:	Tele:
Position: <input type="checkbox"/> Moderator Elect <input type="checkbox"/> Nominating Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Program Committee <input type="checkbox"/> District Board <input type="checkbox"/> District Board Youth / Young Adult <input type="checkbox"/> Clerk <input type="checkbox"/> Standing Committee	

Please consider these suggestions:

Dear Nominating Committee, for District Conference Ballot:	
I, _____, suggest that you consider: <small>your name your telephone</small>	
Name:	Email:
Church:	Tele:
Position: <input type="checkbox"/> Moderator Elect <input type="checkbox"/> Nominating Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Program Committee <input type="checkbox"/> District Board <input type="checkbox"/> District Board Youth / Young Adult <input type="checkbox"/> Clerk <input type="checkbox"/> Standing Committee	

Please consider these suggestions:

Dear Nominating Committee, for District Conference Ballot:	
I, _____, suggest that you consider: <small>your name your telephone</small>	
Name:	Email:
Church:	Tele:
Position: <input type="checkbox"/> Moderator Elect <input type="checkbox"/> Nominating Committee <input type="checkbox"/> Program Committee <input type="checkbox"/> District Board <input type="checkbox"/> District Board Youth / Young Adult <input type="checkbox"/> Clerk <input type="checkbox"/> Standing Committee	

Nominations from the Floor at District Conference

I, _____, am willing to allow my name to be placed on the 2024 ballot
as a nominee for the following position of service: _____

Nominated by: 1st _____
2nd _____

Personal Information: *(make enough copies to be distributed to the delegates, about 100)*

Name:	Age <i>(optional)</i> :
Congregation:	
Vocation:	
Church Experience:	
Vision Statement:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Email:	

PSWD Board of Administration

= second 3 year term, x = appointed to fill an unexpired term ending



**Thanks to all for your gift of service to the district.
Special thanks to those who have completed
their term of service as listed by year below.**

Policy Board:

Chair: Jeremiah "Jay" Irizarry (Empire)
Vice-Chair: Gail Heisel (La Verne)
Recording Secretary: Clerk: Laura Miller (Papago Buttes)
#2024 Jonas Funderburk (Glendale)
2024 Gail Heisel (La Verne)
2024 Bill Himes (La Verne)
#2025 Jeremiah Irizarry (Empire)
x2025 Dean Sabo (Circle of Peace) Section Rep. AZ
#2024 Richard Keeling (Bakersfield) Section Rep. Cen.CA
#2026 Jim Lefever (Glendale) Section Rep. S.CA-W
2026 Michael Monson (Modesto) Section Rep. N.CA
2025 Fernanda Navarette (Conexión Pasadena)
2026 Jon Chubb (Papago Buttes)
2026 Arnoldo Mendoza (Centro Ágape en Acción)
2024 Julia Wheeler (Pomona Fellowship)
2024 Madison McMillin (Papago Buttes) Youth / Young Adult
x2025 Ruth Rivera (Príncipe de Paz) Section Rep. S, CA E
Ex-Officio with vote
2024 Moderator: Paul Lovelace (Pomona Fellowship)
2024 Moderator-Elect: Norma Sexton (Prince of Peace)
2024 Clerk: Laura Miller (Papago Buttes)
2025 Treasurer: Karin Heckman Nelson (La Verne)
Ex-Officio without vote
District Executive Minister: Russ Matteson
2026 Standing Committee Delegate: Shawn Carothers (Circle of Peace)
Invited to meetings without vote
Mission & Ministry Board members residing in PSWD (*By-Laws III.B.*)

Executive Board: (Members chosen each year by the Policy Board)

Board Chair: Jeremiah Irizarry (Empire)
Vice-Chair: Gail Heisel (La Verne)
Ministry Chair: Julia Wheeler (Pomona Fellowship)
Stewards Chair: Jonas Funderburk (Glendale)
Moderator: Paul Lovelace (Pomona Fellowship)
Moderator-Elect: Norma Sexton (Prince of Peace)
District Executive Minister (ex-officio without vote): Russ Matteson

Stewards Commission: (Members chosen each year by the Policy Board)

Stewards Chair: Jonas Funderburk (Glendale)

Vice Chair: Dean Sabo (Circle of Peace)

Secretary: Jim LeFever (Glendale)

Gail Heisel (La Verne)

ex-officio members: District Executive Minister, Moderator, Treasurer

Ministry Commission: (Members chosen each year by the Policy Board)

Ministry Chair: Julia Wheeler (Pomona Fellowship)

Vice Chair: Jon Chubb (Papago Buttes)

Secretary: Ruth Rivera (Príncipe de Paz)

Policy Board Member: Fernanda Navarrete (Pasadena)

Policy Board Member: Michael Monson (Modesto)

ex-officio members: District Executive Minister; Moderator

Congregational Vitality Task Group: (Members chosen each year by the Policy Board)

Chair: Richard Keeling (Bakersfield)

Policy Board member: Bill Himes (La Verne)

Policy Board member: Arnoldo Mendoza (Los Banos)

Policy Board member: Madison McMillen (Papago Buttes)

ex-officio members: District Executive Minister; Moderator

Invited guests: Board Chair

Board Appointments: Page [28](#)

Board of Administration Report

After 4 years of being on the Policy Board and serving as Vice-Chair the previous two, the board voted me in as Chair going into my fifth year. I consider it a privilege and an honor to be of service to the district in this role.

To start the year, our Policy Board met in-person in January. We introduced new members to the board, as well as welcoming back a returning member for one last year. For this meeting, we discussed the sections of designations of congregations. The Executive Board voted to move to 3 sections, which now consist of Central Valley California (Live Oak to Bakersfield) section, Southern California section, and Arizona-Nevada section.

Other items throughout the year that were discussed and voted on:

- Board appointments for 2024: Ethics Committee - Florecita Merlos; Margaret Carl Trust - Linda Davis; Arizona Ecumenical Rep -- no appointment yet and will wait until 2025; Brethren Disaster Ministries - Lois and Lindy Frantz (three-year term); Policy Board - Julie Wheeler as Chair of Ministry (one-year term). Cheryl Crane to the Program Committee (one-year term).
- Recommendation from CVTG to adjust the Mission Church levels to \$6,000/\$9,000/\$12,000.

These are funds to help congregations in lower-income areas with a portion of members living at the poverty level to supplement their offerings. These grants are renewable.

- Approve allocation of \$2500 from M&I Leadership Development to send Pomona Fellowship Group to Fresh Expressions "Gathered to Scatter" Conference in Boise, ID.
- Scholarship Approval. The following funds were approved for an Annual Conference scholarship: Erik Brummett, Pastor at Live Oak CoB, for \$1,000; Robert Aguirre, Pastor at Glendale CoB, \$1,000; the leaders of Iglesia Salvador Viviente, 4,000; Luz and Orlando Roman, \$1,000 each.
- Transfer of Funds (\$100,000) from M&I Fund - New Ministry to Church Planting.
- Know 2 Grow 2. The District is working with Jeff Glass and Yoryanis Iglesias, his spouse, on Know to Grow, Part 2 (K2G2). This was tried as a pilot program with three congregations. In K2G2 Jeff will be working with churches on how to develop and implement a social media strategy (websites, Facebook, Instagram, and more) to connect with their local community around what the church is doing and how it connects with needs and interests

District Board of Administration: continued

that the Percept reports identified. Approved up to \$40,000 over the next 12 months, with funds coming from M&I Fund - Reserves.

Items that were discussed and voted to bring to District Conference for final vote:

- Request from South Bay Congregation to Affiliate with Journey Covenant, part of the Evangelical Covenant Church. These are two congregations acting as one, requesting that the merger become official. Policy Board voted to make this a business item for District Conference.
- Policy Board also voted to organize Iglesia del Salvador Viviente as a Fellowship to present to District Conference as a business item.

The Executive and Policy Boards have also been in conversations in the following areas:

- Tuscon Funds use. The five-year hold has expired. Now what are our options? Executive Board approved capping the funds at \$914,000.

- Proposed Associate District Executive Minister internship. The Executive Board has been in conversations with Russ with the idea of creating an Internship as Associate DEM to help interested persons learn about the work and responsibilities of a District Executive Minister. This may also help to prepare for the future for when Russ decides to retire down the road. Conversations are still going.

I want to thank Centro Agape en Accion, Los Banos CoB and the pastors Rigo and Margie Berumen for hosting the August Policy Board meeting. A successful day with a good meeting, fellowship, and food.

This year of meetings I attended includes three policy board meetings (2 in-person, 1 zoom), monthly executive board, Stewards commission, Nominating committee, Program committee, and with one Tech team meeting for District Conference.

Jeremiah C. Irizarry, PSWD Board Chair

Ministry Commission Report

Ministry Commission:

Julia Wheeler, Chair
Jon Chubb, Vice-Chair
Ruth Rivera, Secretary
Fernanda Navarrete
Michael Monson

ex-officio: District Executive Minister; Moderator

It's been a privilege to serve this year as chair of the Ministry Commission. A great big "THANK YOU" is due to my commission members listed above. "The Ministry Commission gives counsel and guidance to all ministerial matters in the District" (from the District By-Laws, 2018 ed.) This encompasses the ordained, commissioned and licensed ministers in our District.



We have reinstated the Ministry Resiliency Grants offered to our ministers to engage a coach, spiritual director, or therapist for their personal growth or spiritual health. Please apply, ministers!

We continued the every-other-year format of the Pastor-Family Retreat this year, which was held at the beautiful Redwood Glen Retreat Center, Loma Mar, CA. Leadership was provided by Erin Matteson with the theme of Spiritual Renewal. Ministers and families bathed in the gorgeous sights and sounds of the forest and had time for exploration of the area, as well.

The Nurturing & Credentialing Committee (sub-committee) recommended Jon Chubb (Papago Buttes) for ordination. Florecita Merlos (Empire), Juan Pablo Plaza (Conexion Pasadena), Fernanda Navarrete (Conexion Pasadena) held their ordination services this year.

We currently have 10 persons licensed and engaged in training programs. I appreciate the service of the people on the Nurturing and Credentialing Committee (NACC) that perform the licensing and ordination interviews of applicants and annual reviews of licensed ministers. I want to recognize the service as chair of NACC by John Grindler Katonah and of Gilbert Romero as our Ministry Training Coordinator.

Julia Wheeler, Chair
PSWD Ministry Commission

District Board of Administration: continued

The Ministry Commission extends our gratitude to those appointed by our commission:

SeBAH and EPMC Report. Gilbert Romero
See Ministry Training Coordinator report on page [14](#).

NACC: Nurturing & Credentialing Committee:

#2024 John Grindler Katonah, Chair

#2025 Susan Boyer

2026 Gary Pierson

2027 Deb Merrifield

2028 Becky Zapata

Ex-Officio:

Ministry Commission Chair, District Moderator

Invited Guest: District Board Chair

ex-officio without vote on all district committees:

District Executive

NACC: Nurturing & Credentialing Committee

The NACC Committee is a sub committee of the District Ministry Commission. We provide guidance, support and encouragement in the licensing and ordination process for the Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren. Our committee of lay and ordained persons review and evaluate (following the District's mandate for licensing and ordination) progress as each individual advances toward ordination within the district's time period for completion.

We usually meet twice a year (fall and spring) to interview those entering licensing ministry which includes an annual review as they progress towards ordination. Since the writing of our last report we added two new licensed ministers (Roblero and Blanco, both at Salvador Viviente); we had two ministers move from licensed to ordained (Plaza and Navarrete, both at Conexion Pasadena); and one minister move from commissioned to ordained (Chubb at Papago Buttes).

At this time there are 10 licensed ministers, and 8 of those serving as pastors of congregations. About half of the licensed ministers should be ready to go for ordination in 2025.

We are also working with at least 5 potential candidates for licensing, but I don't think any will be ready to interview by our fall meeting. They are all in the calling affirmation process with their calling cohort.

As to members, no one new this year as we renewed Becky Zapata for an additional five years on the NACC.

As I conclude my second and final term as a member of NACC, I wish to acknowledge and thank Russ Matteson for his faithful shepherding abilities. He has been immensely helpful to this committee when updating us on the various candidate's interactions with their places of ministry and life challenges. Another key person who has guided and nurtured those in the licensing tract of hispanic ministry is Gilbert Romero. He brings an experienced and wise presence in encouraging those in the licensing path to sustain their desire to serve the Lord by expanding their education and knowledge of church history, scripture and spiritual care. Both of these individuals contribute to a strong, cross-cultural, welcoming and nurturing gateway into ministry within the Church of the Brethren's Pacific Southwest District.

Through my participation on NACC, I have come to greatly appreciate the sacrifices and commitment many in pursuit of ordained ministry go through while they care for their families, their health, their self-care and a deepening of their faith in God and God's people. I have gained much respect and a deeper understanding of those in this process so it has been an honor to serve on this committee.

John Grindler Katonah, NACC Chair

Stewards Commission Report

Stewards Commission:

Jonas Funderburk, Chair

Dean Sabo, Vice-Chair

Jim LeFever, Secretary

Gail Heisel

Ex-officio members: District Executive Minister,
Moderator, Treasurer

The property that was purchased in Las Vegas for use by Iglesia Cristiana Elohim has been remodeled and the congregation is able to utilize the building for worship services. The final cost of the remodeling was

about \$180,000 against the original \$110,000. Changes included: New sewer line and all new interior pipes - \$9500, total replacement of all drywall, electrical wiring, insulation - \$19,700, internal doors and windows - \$9730, asbestos abatement - \$3600.

There was a loan request from Principe de Paz for \$100,000. The work being done includes roof replacement, repairing concealed water damage and repairing one of the building exits. The contractor for the project has worked with the congregation previously. The estimated cost of the project is \$125,000.

There has been substantial growth in the district's

District Board of Administration: continued

investments this year. The commission authorized the withdrawal of some funds from the regular investment account to a safer money market account because disbursements were needed for Las Vegas, Príncipe de Paz, and Circle of Peace.

Bynum Mortuary is an entity that rents space at Los Banos. Due to delinquency in rent payments, a 3-day eviction notice was issued to the renter. In April, Bynum paid to within 1 month of becoming current. Through August they are up to date with rent.

Construction on the new worship center at Circle of Peace is going well. The loan agreement has been signed and the full \$1.4 million loan has been sent. The

congregation is making an increased effort to get contributions from the members to avoid having to accept additional loans from the district.

Ministry & improvement fund facility repairs were approved for Prince of Peace, Sacramento for fence and A/C repair and a new sign, and Bakersfield for new carpet in their coffee house. In 4-1/2 years 16 churches and both District camps have requested \$330,000 in funds for repairs and improvements. There is still money available for those churches who have not yet accessed the funds or used all funds available to them.

Jonas Funderburk, 2024 Stewards Chair

Congregational Vitality Task Group

<p>CVTG: Congregational Vitality Task Group</p>
--

<p>Richard Keeling, Chair</p>

<p>Bill Himes (La Verne)</p>

<p>Arnoldo Mendoza (Los Banos)</p>

<p>Madison McMillin (Papago Buttes)</p>

<p><u>Ex-officio</u> members: District Executive Minister, Moderator</p>
--

<p>Invited Guests: Board Chair</p>

The CVTG is responsible for the promotion and distribution of the Ministry Partnership Funds portion of the district budget. The Ministry Partnership Funds cover five different possibilities for local churches to receive funding support from the district. Funds are usually in partnership form to help encourage a congregation to enter into a ministry or experience that they might not do if they needed to fund the entire possibility. This also has the benefit of helping the district learn from what one church does to share with other congregations.

To this point in 2024 the Task Group has approved nine grants to congregations:

Jesus in the Neighborhood - (up to \$500 to support engagement by your congregation with the community around you) Pomona Fellowship \$500 for Taco Sundays, La Verne \$500 for Peace Camp scholarships

Coaching/Training - (up to \$2500 on a matching basis for coaching or training to help the congregation address needed skills) Papago Buttes \$2500 to work with GDL Consulting, Pomona Fellowship \$600 for Discipleship Coaching

Ministry Opportunity - (up to \$2500 on a matching basis to support a new effort by the congregation to engage in ministry) Iglesia Cristiana Elohim (Las Vegas) \$2500 for instruments and signage for new building, Pomona Fellowship \$768 Vocal training for Music Director, Cristo Genesis (Los Angeles) \$2500 for music lessons for members

Mission Congregation - (assistance for churches working with membership in areas of high poverty, amount based on size of congregation with amounts from \$3000 to \$12,000 in support) Cristo Sion (Pomona), Cristo Genesis (Los Angeles)

There are still funds available in the 2024 budget to support your congregation in a ministry idea that you might want to explore. We encourage you to talk with our District Executive or one of the committee members about your ideas. The application form is on the district website under the Resources tab.

**Pacific Southwest District – Church of the Brethren
Giving to the District by Congregations, Individuals and Groups
January 1 to December 31, 2023**

Church ID #	Name of Church	2023 Final	2024 YTD
32-010	Bakersfield	\$350	\$350
32-021	Centro Agape en Acción (Los Banos)	\$0	\$0
32-025	Church of the Living Savior (McFarland)	\$1,000	\$1,000
32-028	Circle of Peace (Peoria, AZ)	\$4,200	\$3,150
32-270	Cornerstone Community (Reedley)	\$0	\$0
32-040	Empire	\$300	\$500
32-070	Glendale	\$800	\$600
32-080	Glendora	\$0	\$0
32-082	Iglesia Cristiana Elohim (Las Vegas)	\$0	\$0
32-083	Iglesia de Cristo Genesis (Los Angeles)	\$100	\$200
32-037	Iglesia de Cristo Sion (Glendora)	\$0	\$0
32-150	Imperial Heights (Los Angeles)	\$0	\$0
32-330	Journey South Bay (Redondo Beach)	\$8,000	\$4,000
32-090	Laton	\$0	\$0
32-100	La Verne	\$5,000	\$2,917
32-120	Live Oak	\$750	\$0
32-190	Modesto	\$0	\$0
32-197	Nueva Visión La Hermosa (Waterford)	\$0	\$0
32-205	Papago Buttes (AZ)	\$400	\$400
32-035	Conexión Pasadena	\$0	\$0
32-290	Pomona Fellowship	\$800	\$400
32-290	Prince of Peace (Sacramento)	\$0	\$0
32-322	Príncipe de Paz (Santa Ana)	\$0	\$1,000
32-280	Restoration Los Angeles	\$0	\$0
32-300	San Diego First	\$500	\$0
Sub-Total		\$22,200	\$14,517

	Individual Giving	\$1,630	\$1,240
	Marion Nine Trust	\$450	\$450
Sub-Total		\$2,080	\$1,690

GRAND TOTAL	\$24,280	\$16,207
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September 5, 2024

**To the Board of Directors
Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren**

We have audited the financial statements of **Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren** for the year ended **December 31, 2023**, and have issued our report thereon dated **September 5, 2024**. Professional standards require that we provide you with information about our responsibilities under generally accepted auditing standards, as well as certain information related to the planned scope and timing of our audit. We have communicated such information in our letter to you dated **June 14, 2024**. Professional standards also require that we communicate to you the following information related to our audit.

Significant Audit Matters

Qualitative Aspects of Accounting Practices

Management is responsible for the selection and use of appropriate accounting policies. The significant accounting policies used by **Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren** are described in Note 2 to the financial statements. No new accounting policies were adopted, except as noted, and the application of existing policies was not changed during the year ended **December 31, 2023**. We noted no transactions entered into by the Organization during the year for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus. All significant transactions have been recognized in the financial statements in the proper period.

New accounting policy adopted January 1, 2023 for Credit Losses, ASC 326. The adoption of this accounting policy had no effect on the accounting since the Organization does not have any allowances on trade and note receivables.

Accounting estimates are an integral part of the financial statements prepared by management and are based on management's knowledge and experience about past and current events and assumptions about future events. Certain accounting estimates are particularly sensitive because of their significance to the financial statements and because of the possibility that future events affecting them may differ significantly from those expected. The most sensitive estimates affecting the financial statements was:

- 1) Depreciation for the fixed assets.

Certain financial statement disclosures are particularly sensitive because of their significance to financial statements users. The most sensitive disclosures affecting the financial statements are:

Note 8 discloses the concentration of credit risk.

Note 9 discloses the fair value of the significant assets of the organization.

Note 11 discloses financial assets available for general operations within the next calendar year.

District Board of Administration: continued

The financial statement disclosures are neutral, consistent, and clear.

Difficulties Encountered in Performing the Audit

We encountered no significant difficulties in dealing with management in performing and completing our audit.

Corrected and Uncorrected Misstatements

Professional standards require us to accumulate all misstatements identified during the audit, other than those that are clearly trivial, and communicate them to the appropriate level of management. Management has corrected all such misstatements. In addition, none of the misstatements detected as a result of audit procedures and corrected by management were material, either individually or in the aggregate, to the financial statements taken as a whole.

Proposed audit adjusting journal entries and reclassifying journal entries are attached to this letter for your review.

Disagreements with Management

For purposes of this letter, professional standards define a disagreement with management on a financial accounting, reporting, or auditing matter, whether or not resolved to our satisfaction, that could be significant to the financial statements or the auditor's report. We are pleased to report that no such disagreements arose during the course of our audit.

Management Representations

We have requested certain representations from management that are included in the management representation letter dated **September 5, 2024**.

Management Consultations with Other Independent Accountants

In some cases, management may decide to consult with other accountants about auditing and accounting matters, similar to obtaining a "second opinion" on certain situations. If a consultation involves application of an accounting principle to the Organization's financial statements or a determination of the type of auditor's opinion that may be expressed on those statements, our professional standards require the consulting accountant to check with us to determine that the consultant has all the relevant facts. To our knowledge, there were no such consultations with other accountants.

Other Audit Findings or Issues

We generally discuss a variety of matters, including the application of accounting principles and auditing standards, with management each year prior to retention as the Organization's auditors. However, these discussions occurred in the normal course of our professional relationship and our responses were not a condition to our retention.

Items that have been discussed with the Organization and should be considered:

- 1) For the statement of functional expenses, as in the past, a reclassification of the DEM's salary has been made to split the salary to 70% program expenses and 30% administrative expenses.

This information is intended solely for the use of the board of directors and management of **Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren**, and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than these specified parties.

Very truly yours,

Suchan & Associates

Suchan & Associates



Thank you !

The Policy Board thanks those who accepted appointments and task group assignments during the past year. Most appointments are for one year, longer appointments list the concluding year. The Executive Board aims at making appointments between District Conference and the end of the year so that appointees can begin their work in January. Please give us suggestions for next year with the forms on pages [18-17](#) above.

Financial Appointments

Treasurer: (authorized signatory) Karin Heckman Nelson (La Verne)

Other Authorized Signatory: (yearly appointment) Mary Kay Ogden (La Verne), Dot Hess (La Verne)

Historical Committee

District Bylaws, Article III.K.2.

Not functioning at this time

Ecumenical Council Representatives

Arizona Faith Network:

Judicatory Representative to all Ecumenical Councils: Russ Matteson, District Executive Minister

District Disaster Response Coordinator (BDM)

Network Co-Chairs: Lyndall & Lois Frantz (Empire)

Children's Disaster Services (CDS)

Network Co-Chairs: Kathy Davis (La Verne) & Mary Kay Ogden (La Verne)

Margaret Carl Trust Fund Advisory Committee

Applications for Bibles, tracts, etc. are available from the PSWD Office.

Administrator: Norma Morris, Trustee (Modesto)

Advisory Committee Members:

2026 Linda Davis (Living Savior, McFarland)

2025 Susan Price (Empire)

2024 Janelle Keeling (Bakersfield)

Ministerial Ethics Committee: (5-Year Term ending)

#2024 Bob Morris (Glendora)

#2025 Eric Bishop (La Verne)

2026 Shawn Carothers (Circle of Peace)

2027 Carrie Cesar (San Diego)

2028 Florecita Merlos (Nueva Vision la Hermosa)

Alternate for District Executive Minister:

#2024 Bob Morris (Glendora)

Ex-Officio: (with vote), *Ministry Chair*

Ex-Officio: (without vote), *District Executive*

Minister

HILLCREST

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MISSION STATEMENT

To serve and enrich the lives of older persons

VISION STATEMENT

To be the Premier Destination for Vibrant Community Living

CORE VALUES

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Stewardship
Teamwork

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Executive Committee: Dale Stanley, Chair; Kitty Garvey, Secretary; DeWayne McMullin, Treasurer; Jackie Doud, Vice Chair; Matthew Neeley, CEO; and, Jon Blickenstaff, Past Chair.

Directors: Thomas Allison, Shireen Fatemi, Dot Hess, Pat Joyce, Dan Lane, Donna Redman, Barbara Smythe, Tina Wang, Mike Welch, and Carroll Wheatley.

Ex-Officio with vote: Russ Matteson, District Executive Minister

SPARK OF LOVE AT HILLCREST



Hillcrest partnered with the City of La Verne Fire Department, ABC7, and Toys for Tots, to celebrate the 31st year of the Spark of Love Toy Drive! Last year and again this year Hillcrest hosted the toy distribution for children and families within the City of La Verne. Hillcrest residents organized and managed the event, receiving donations, sorting the donations by gender and age, and then matching the donated gifts to the children. In 2022 Hillcrest volunteers received and distributed donated gifts to 15 families. In 2023, Hillcrest volunteers were able to receive and distribute gifts to 33 families in need. Nine of those families (24 children) received gifts as a result of Hillcrest's outreach to La Verne churches and schools. The remaining families (93 children) also participated. In total 117 children received gifts. The fire department donated and

delivered 20 bikes. Helmets were purchased through a donation by Hillcrest's Auxiliary. Toys left over after distribution day were donated to local boys and girls homes who care for court-appointed children and youth and The House of Ruth, a non-profit organization that cares for battered women and children. In addition, many of Hillcrest's frontline associates at Hillcrest were able to bring home gifts for their small children.

SALES & MARKETING NEWS

- Hillcrest residents live days filled with accomplishments, fun-filled activities and community involvement. Listed are some of the highlights of this past year that have brought our mission and vision statements to life:
 - The net entrance fees for the last fiscal year was \$7,285,565
 - Hillcrest welcomed 37 new residents to the Hillcrest family.

PHILANTHROPY NEWS

- Total funds raised for the Good Samaritan & Benevolent Funds and Endowments in fiscal year ending June 30, 2024: \$460,919.
- Resident volunteer support at the Hillcrest Thrift Store and Gift Shop generated \$80,248 to the Good Samaritan Fund.
- Luck of the Draw Annual Fundraiser \$327,401.

HILLCREST WELCOMES NEW INTERFAITH CHAPLAIN

~ Jana Milhon-Martin ~



Hillcrest is pleased to introduce Jana Milhon-Martin as our new Interfaith Chaplain for Hillcrest. Jana has been acquainted with Hillcrest for three decades and has had grandparents and other family members live at Hillcrest over multiple generations. Jana joined the Hillcrest team November 27, 2023.

Chaplain Jana graduated from Azusa Pacific University in Social Work and then earned her Master of Divinity degree from the Claremont School of Theology. She pursued her Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) at PIH Health Good Samaritan Hospital, where she later served as Clinical Pastoral Education Supervisor. She served as Staff Chaplain at St. Mary Medical Center in Long Beach and most recently as Director of The Center for Lay Chaplaincy for the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles.

In Jana's own words:

"I grew up in La Verne and know well the vital and life-giving role Hillcrest plays within the local community and beyond. As a Board-Certified Chaplain and CPE supervisor, I have long admired the compassionate and inclusive manner with which Hillcrest approached cultivating a community of care."

"For the last eight years, my passion for chaplaincy work has been nurtured by providing spiritual wellness support to individuals facing various life challenges, across the continuum of care. I firmly believe that the role of a chaplain is crucial in fostering a sense of belonging, peace, and spiritual well-being among residents, their families, and staff."

A few key skills Chaplain Jana brings to this role include:

Interfaith Sensitivity: Skilled at working with individuals from various faith backgrounds and ideological perspectives and has strong experience conducting religious services, offering spiritual support, and ritual care tailored to residents' beliefs.

Community Building: Adept at organizing and facilitating group activities, workshops, and discussion sessions that promote spiritual growth, connection, and a sense of community.

Compassion and Empathy: An approach to care grounded in compassion and empathy. She is committed to treating every individual with respect and dignity, regardless of their background or circumstances.

Collaboration: Works closely with interdisciplinary teams and draws upon community resources to ensure residents receive holistic care.

Ethical Sensitivity: A strong sense of ethics and respect for diverse belief systems. She is skilled in addressing complex ethical dilemmas and providing guidance in alignment with patients' values and wishes.



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Camp Peaceful Pines

Camp Peaceful Pines is a summer camping site affiliated with the PSWD of the Church of the Brethren. It has been in operation for over 76 years in the central Sierra Nevada Mountains and the Carson Iceberg Wilderness. A variety of camps include: Junior / Jr High / Youth Camp, Discovery, Family Camp & Women's Retreat. New for 2024 is a young adult camp! We rent the camp to groups such as family reunions when time slots are available.

Camp Peaceful Pines is rustic and only open three months of the year due to severe weather in the winter and road closures. It is a cozy & inviting place, with a multitude of projects going on at any given time. 2024 saw continued work on metal roofs for Cabins 1, 3, 7, 9. Current projects include replacement of Cabin 11, tree planting and tree removal from bark beetle.



Family Camp



2024 Womens Retreat

Volunteer superintendents, leaders, directors, counselors, nurses, construction workers, day laborers, families and friends all contribute to making Camp Peaceful Pines a viable spot for enjoying the great outdoors, while taking time for reflection and spiritual growth in a Christian community setting. The churches and other groups who donate annually to the camp budget help to defray the ongoing costs of running camp. These costs include USFS fees, propane and fuel costs, garbage pickup, upkeep and maintenance of the facility, leadership stipends, upgrades to cabins and other amenities. Camp accepts donations and there is a link on the web site for donations



2024 Discovery Camp

More information about specific camps and dates can be found on the web at

www.CampPeacefulPines.org
or search for us on Facebook and Instagram



Camp Peaceful Pines

2301 Woodland Ave.
Modesto, CA 95358

Camp is located via Highway 108 adjacent to Sonora Pass at 6,200 feet

Camp Peaceful Pines is part of the 'Outdoor Ministries Association' and part of 29 camps across the US.

Garry Pearson, 2024 Board Chair

Camp La Verne



Celebrating 100 Years Of Outdoor Ministry And Experiences!

Since 1924 Camp La Verne has been providing Brethren Churches and Nature Loving Folks from all walks of life a place to enjoy the peace, quiet, and serenity of the forest and all that Mother Nature has to offer.

We are located at 6,700 feet in elevation in the beautiful San Bernardino Mountains, with Jenks Lake, the Santa Ana River, Big Bear and numerous hiking, biking, and running trails at our fingertips! San Gorgonio is the tallest peak in Southern California, and it's trail heads are just a short hike from our doorstep!

Come stay with us! Here at Camp La Verne with our rustic yet cozy summer and winterized cabins and our four season bathroom and kitchen, we can accommodate groups of up to 100 campers throughout most of the year. Onsite and nearby activities like horseshoes, volleyball, archery, canoeing and challenge courses are here waiting for you! We also have a beautiful outdoor chapel, perfect for weddings, reading a good book, journaling, or just listening to the birds.

In addition to our scheduled summer camps, our CLV facilities are available for outside rentals such as school groups, Boy & Girl scouts, family reunions, weddings, and all denominations of church groups...everyone is welcome here!

CLV Summer Camps...98% Volunteer! Thanks to our incredible Camp Directors, dedicated CLV Board Members, fantastic Kitchen Staff, and wonderful Work Camp Volunteers, Camp La Verne continues to provide to our own groups an extremely affordable 'Camp Experience' every summer for Middle, Junior, Senior High, College, and even Adult campers! (Registration for these is open to all)

If you or someone you know would like to volunteer at CLV, or serve on the CLV Board, we would love to have you! Please call us or send us an email.

CLV can be contacted at: 909-794-2931 or E-mail us at campmanager@camplaverne.org

You can also find us on the web at www.camplaverne.org and you can email us general questions at campmanager@camplaverne.org

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

In the past two years, with private donations and the generosity of a grant from the Pacific Southwest District, we were able to update power lines, re-roof our kitchen and wash house, and obtain materials and start work on the resurrection of Blue Bird Hill...which hasn't been used in 20 years! While there is still so much more to do, we are making every great and small donation go a very, very long way! (If you are able to help CLV in our quest for all of our 21st century upgrades, and want to support us, you may send your donation to Camp La Verne, PO Box 355, La Verne CA 91750-0355 or find our PayPal and Zelle links on our website.)

Thanks to all and have a wonderful year!

Camp La Verne is under a Special Use Permit from the San Bernardino National Forest. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, Camp La Verne is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.



Eder Financial

BOLD. BALANCED. TRUSTED.

Eder Financial District Conference Report 2024

Greetings!

Did you know Eder Financial can make a positive impact on your life, directly or indirectly, whether you qualify to use our services or not?

That's because we serve congregations and their staff so they can better perform their ministries for their members.

Eder provides a fantastic retirement plan and employee-based insurances for pastors, congregational, district, and camp employees. We can also manage special funds, like ministry funds, memorial funds, cemetery funds, and building funds for congregations and other church-related organizations.

We also provide several free workshops that help congregations learn how to grow their endowments, encourage people to include the congregation in their end-of-life financial decision-making, how to run the church as a business with good governance, and more. Ask the Eder representative attending your conference how we can bring a workshop to your congregation.

Can we serve you and your congregation if we aren't already? Give us a chance. You'll be glad you did. Ask us if your congregation, district, and camp are using our services. We welcome the conversation.

Eder Financial is now in its third year with its new name, having changed from Church of the Brethren Benefit Trust in May 2022. The transition has been well received in the denomination because of our core business model –

- We seek to serve congregations and organizations as partners, making choices and decisions surrounding participation in a retirement plan as easy as possible. It is important that we make it easy for all who can enroll to enroll, as many Americans are on track to have insufficient savings in retirement. We work to help ensure that our members are not faced with that problem, by helping them enroll early in their careers, saving to the plan consistently, and using an asset allocation model to help grow their funds. Not sure how to do that? We can help.
- We provide a concierge service model with our insurance products, answering questions and addressing all concerns proactively and satisfactorily. Our ancillary insurances of life, vision, dental, short- and long-term disability have held premium rate increases virtually flat over the past five years, which means eligible employees can protect themselves with various insurances while not suffering high premium rate increases year after year.
- Part-time employees can participate in both the Eder Retirement and Insurance plans. Ask us if you or someone you know qualifies.
- We manage funds of organizations in a manner that allows easy access, several tools for managing investments, and reports and resources that assist in the management of the funds. We would be glad to set up a demonstration for you and your organization of our fantastic customer web portal.
- And we provide education to give people information and to help them know what questions they should be asking so that they can be successful, whether helping to grow their congregations' financial base or to manage their own retirement plan or insurance offerings.



Eder Financial

BOLD. BALANCED. TRUSTED.

We also help tenured pastors and congregational, district, and camp staff who have extraordinary financial needs, if they meet certain guidelines. In 2023, the Church Workers' Assistance Plan that Eder manages granted \$282,865 to 40 people who found themselves in financial distress with nowhere else to turn.

Most of the funds under our management conform to Eder Values Investing, which means you can utilize our services and know that your resources are being managed in accordance with the values in the Church of the Brethren tradition.

Serving others who have common bonds and convictions

Committed to serving as a Church of the Brethren Annual Conference agency, Eder also serves people and organizations of faith that profess a like-mindedness with Eder Financial's values as an organization grounded in Christian faith. Program strength, product options, and lower costs come from a strong volume of business. Therefore, Eder will grow stronger in the long term by offering its ministries to others who seek competitive products backed by concierge service. If you know of a congregation, nonprofit, or other faith-based organization that would benefit from Eder's services, please let us know.

EDER FINANCIAL BOARD and staff

The 12-person Eder Financial Board consists of people who have knowledge and experience in accounting, finance, investments, law, employee benefits, human resources, actuarial science, or represent pastors, district executives, and organizations that are Brethren or have common bonds and convictions with our organization. If you or someone you know would like to serve on the Eder Financial Board, let us know. We are always looking for people who are dedicated to service, want to do meaningful volunteer work, and are committed to being an active member of a board.

We also have 30 people on our staff working in retirement, employee insurance, organizational investing, finance, investments, client relations, marketing, public relations, IT, data, special projects, and business development. We are a family friendly, faith-based organization that strives to provide concierge level service to our members and clients while also providing a fulfilling work environment in a permanent work-from-home setting. If you or someone you know is interested in an Eder Financial job, let us know.

CONCLUSION

Despite the expansion of its charter to bring in other members and clients of like mind from beyond the Church of the Brethren, Eder Financial remains committed to the denomination. Our organization was created by Annual Conference to serve pastors, employees, churches, and organizations. That commitment to service has not wavered. We are here to help our members and clients achieve their financial goals. If you and/or your congregation have not walked with us in the past, let us do so in the future. In other words, those who have not given Eder Financial a look for a few years, or ever, should do so. Together, Eder will help you reach your financial goals, which will help strengthen your ministry to the church.

Jan Fahs
Board Chair

Nevin Dulabaum
President



Dear District Delegates,

Since 1974, OEP has developed programs serving youth and young adults, congregations, and community groups, as we walk in partnership with Church of the Brethren congregations, camps, districts, and Annual Conference.

In 2024, we are celebrating our 50th anniversary as a ministry in the Church of the Brethren. As we reflect, we consider **legacy and hope**, which empower us to resist war, make peace, and pursue justice with faith and courage. Lamentations 3:21-23 says “But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.” We go with hope into the next fifty years, eager for the time when peace endures and justice prevails.

Our purpose as an agency of the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference is to help the Church of the Brethren become a relevant, vital, “living” peace and justice church equipped to create vital relationships and initiatives on contemporary issues of violence and injustice. Let us disarm ourselves of violence and re-equip ourselves with the tools of active nonviolence and conflict reconciliation. Let us prepare ourselves to become vibrant bearers of God’s love, vital, relevant, and ready to respond to the needs of our times.

GUN VIOLENCE. In 2023, On Earth Peace launched the **Church of the Brethren Gun Violence Prevention Action Team**, a group of more than ten leaders from across the country, working to galvanize the Church of the Brethren to be faithful as an effective force for reducing gun violence wherever it occurs. The Action Team planned a major public vigil and witness at Cincinnati City Hall as part of the 2023 Annual Conference, and spent the fall connecting with concerned Brethren yearning to reduce gun violence in their own communities and our country. In 2024, the committee began inviting individuals to volunteer as **Congregational Ambassadors for Gun Violence Prevention**. For more information, email COB-GVP@OnEarthPeace.org or visit <https://www.OnEarthPeace.org/gvp-cob>.

YOUTH GROUP SUPPORT. OEP supports youth groups and their efforts by offering **up to \$500 in grant funding to support a youth-initiated project for peace and justice in their community**. We accompany youth through webinars, coaching, and accompaniment as they connect with their neighborhoods. In 2023-2024, OEP offered grants to youth in Ohio and Nigeria.

AGAPE MAGAZINE: What is War, and How Do We Resist it? At On Earth Peace, we have a dream of a world with no oppression, no violence, and no war. The new Agape magazine series will introduce children to how they can resist war, make peace, and pursue justice. We look forward to exploring these ideas together as we work toward our dream. The paragraphs below are drawn from the first issue. From the first issue:

War is so big and happens in so many places. Simply put, war hurts people like you and me and separates families like yours and mine. It takes away important resources like having enough food, clean water, or a safe shelter. It also robs people of valuable opportunities like going to school, seeing/making friends, and playing outside. It can be hard to know how to respond and what can be done to stop war.

As long as there has been war, there have been people who resist war, who fight against the idea that violence is needed to solve conflicts, and who work to stop the things that lead to war. Saying no to war and actively working to stop the things that lead to war is courageous. People who refuse to participate in war are called conscientious objectors (COs). Many COs say no to war because of their faith, which reminds them that all people are created by God and that we need to care for our neighbors. This is true across different religious traditions. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. taught that "Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people." Read more here: <https://heyzine.com/flip-book/e9308caa69.html#page/1>

STANDING WITH PEOPLE OF COLOR. In 2022, On Earth Peace was delegated by the Annual Conference to join with the Southern Ohio and Kentucky District to lead a denominational study/action process, "Standing with People of Color." OEP staff continues providing leadership and support for that committee, along with staff from the Church of the Brethren, Inc. Through 2023, that committee launched the "7 Prompts" for Crucial Christian Conversation which is being used at many levels throughout the denomination. In summer 2024, the committee will introduce a new volunteer role, **Church of the Brethren Racial Justice Advocates.** More information available by writing SWPOC@OnEarthPeace.org and also online at www.OnEarthPeace.org/swpoc

2023 Highlights

- 40 web events hosted with 683 attendees.
- 97 people or families made three-year financial pledges to support On Earth Peace.
- 100+ people participated in the Gun Violence Prevention vigil in Cincinnati during the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference.
- 227 Brethren have been trained in Kingian Nonviolence as part of our 1000 Brethren Kingian Nonviolence Training Project goal.

Your individual and family financial support, and your congregation's financial support, make this work possible. We only exist today because of the vision and foresight of supporters and participants in the last fifty years, and we need your support to make the next fifty years possible. If you are moved by what you read on these pages, please join our faithful donors.

Sincerely,



Matt Guynn, Marie Benner-Rhoades, and Darlene Johnson, co-executive directors



If you would like to receive mailings directly from On Earth Peace, please use this code to sign up or visit www.OnEarthPeace.org/join.



OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR STUDENTS AND THE CHURCH



I am delighted to report that Bethany Theological Seminary continues to thrive! Our enrollment is growing, student debt is decreasing, professors are creating courses and programs to meet student needs, and a loyal group of alumni and friends is providing unprecedented financial support to the Seminary. Even as we expand our offerings and welcome students from diverse backgrounds and with varied interests, I want to emphasize that preparing students for pastoral ministry remains a core commitment at Bethany. The following article explores the complexity of preparing pastors for the contemporary church. I hope you will take a few minutes to read and reflect on how Bethany is helping students to answer the call to ministry and service.

Blessings,

Rev. Dr. Jeff Carter, President

Use this QR code
to read our 2024
Annual Conference
Written Report.



Where Do Pastors Come From?

BY JONATHAN GRAHAM

Are you preparing pastors? It's a question that Bethany representatives are asked wherever they go. Many congregations in the Church of the Brethren struggle to find pastoral leadership, and it is obvious that the patterns of developing clergy have changed over the last several decades. The Seminary has changed as well.

In the last 10 years, enrollment has doubled at Bethany, but the growth is due mostly to the introduction of new master's degree programs – the Master of Arts in Theopoetics and Writing and the Master of Arts in Spiritual and Social Transformation – which attract an increasingly ecumenical group of students. Despite these new ventures, the Master of Divinity remains a core offering with strong enrollment. But the paths students take to theological education and pastoral ministry seem more varied and complex than was true in the past.

Dr. Dan Poole, assistant professor of ministry formation, notes that many current MDiv students and recent alumni began serving as pastors prior to entering seminary. Often they are called to ministry within a church they attend, and then figure out how to attain theological education.



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"It is relatively rare to see students enter Bethany directly after college. Many individuals come to ministry as a second career, often as a way of giving back to a congregation that has nurtured them," notes Poole. While this approach often produces excellent results for both the pastor and congregation, it is a very different approach than the one that was common in 1950s-90s, which saw individuals earning the MDiv in their mid-to-late 20s and serving as pastors for 40 years or more.

"Congregations are needing to consider different models when it comes to hiring pastors," says Poole.

Recent graduates provide examples of how both congregations and would-be pastors benefit from an open-minded approach to pastoral leadership that goes beyond the models that worked in the past, but are not as effective today.

Phil Collins, MDiv 2023, is pastor of Living Peace Church, in Plymouth, Michigan. He took on this pastoral role a full year before he earned his degree. The church had been without a pastor for several years, and while volunteer leaders had managed to maintain weekly services, even during the Covid-19 pandemic, they were tired and needed new leadership.

Collins was seeking a small church with an interest in social justice concerns, and he has found Living Peace an excellent fit. Both he and

the congregation had to trust that they could make the arrangement work, even before Collins had completed his degree.

"I came to this job without much experience running a church week-to-week. They gave me the opportunity to figure that out, and I was able to give them a break from the burden of organizing everything. Now that we have spent time together, it is great to see them pursue some new outreach efforts that they have been wanting to do for some time."



PHIL COLLINS

Collins helped the congregation start a community garden, helped along from a fortuitous connection with a neighbor who had started a lot of plants in containers, and was looking for somewhere to plant them. The church, which is located in a suburb of Detroit, has also gotten involved

in helping refugees. These initiatives grew out of existing interests in the congregation, but Collins was delighted to provide leadership and help the congregation meet some ministry goals.

Other aspects of his ministry at Living Peace have provided new challenges that Collins has been excited to embrace. He says that while he was an undergraduate at Judson University (Elgin, Illinois), he assumed he would become a youth minister, but about half of his current congregation is older adults.

"There is a whole different set of pastoral care issues," says Collins. "I have appreciated the opportunity to develop new skills."

Collins answered the call from Living Peace in June 2022, while finishing his Bethany coursework. Over the last decade, it has become common for Bethany MDiv students to already be serving as pastors when they receive their degrees.

While this is quite different from the pattern of a few decades ago, some aspects of what is happening now track with the history of the Church of the Brethren.

"Our denomination has always called from within, but what we are seeing now is different than in the 1950s and 60s when professional training for pastors became the norm," notes Poole.

Individuals who become pastors later in life, as a way of giving back

to a specific congregation, often stay in pastorates longer than has been typical in the past. Those who enter ministry as a second career have families and ties to the communities where they live. Even those who serve more than one congregation in their careers land at churches close to where they are already living. For a congregation hoping to recruit a pastor to move to their community, this pattern presents challenges.

“Congregations are discovering that they need to approach things a little differently than they would have in the past,” says Poole, noting that Bethany’s approach to pastoral training has evolved to meet present needs.

The Seminary provides strong training in theology and the Bible, informed by an Anabaptist and Radical Pietist witness, but when it comes to ministry formation, Bethany is very attentive to current trends in the church, and the skills graduates will need to be successful.

“We talk about what good leadership looks like, and that includes fostering self awareness and solid spiritual practice in students. Pastors need to be able to take on organizational leadership, but they also need to be able to come alongside members of their congregations who are providing leadership and be prepared to support those efforts. This requires a lot of emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills.”

Poole acknowledges that declining membership means that pastors

face a different landscape than in previous times. And he is happy to seek Bethany alumni responding positively to change.

“ We talk about what good leadership looks like, and that includes fostering self awareness and solid spiritual practice in students.”

“There was a time when there was a lot of interest in church planting or building new ministries from scratch. Recently we have seen a renewed interest in established churches and the revitalization of congregations. I think there is an acknowledgment that we better restore the churches that are already here.

Collins notes that serving as a pastor also requires one to set reasonable goals with the congregation, and to set some limits on what any single individual can accomplish.

Like many current pastors, Collins’ contract is less than full-time. His schedule allows him to cook meals for, and spend additional time with his wife, Kayla Collins, who earned a Master of Arts with a concentration in theological studies from Bethany

in 2022, and is now an administrator at Henry Ford Community College. But working two-thirds time means that he needs to be thoughtful about sharing responsibilities with others.

“When I arrived here, this church had been without a pastor for several years, and they needed a break. I was able to make sure that some people who had been providing a lot of volunteer leadership had time to rest,” he says. “Now we need to work together to figure out what the future looks like.”

The congregation includes members with long family ties to the Church, but members live in several different towns across the region. The church doesn’t currently draw members from the town where it is located, which creates a great opportunity for outreach.

“We think there are a lot of people in our neighborhood who would love this church,” Collins says.

Many congregations find that the most productive place to search for future pastors is in their own pews. Audri Svay, MATW 2022, was a recent graduate of Manchester University when she began attending Eel River Community Church of the Brethren to support her husband, Jake Svay, who was choir director there.

Svay grew up in the denomination, and had received “a few nudges” toward pastoral ministry, but had earned an undergraduate degree in



AUDRI SVAY

secondary education and planned to seek a teaching job after her husband completed his education.

"I hadn't imagined serving as a pastor, but I knew I enjoyed preaching, so I volunteered to pulpit fill."

After guest preaching at the church, she was invited to apply for a part-time pastor position, and was hired in April 2019. She initially served alongside two semi-retired ministers who were also in part-time roles. The congregation supported her matriculation to Bethany, where she focused on theopoetics and writing courses, but also took courses in pastoral care and worship that have proven hugely beneficial.

"Bethany deepened my appreciation of the theology behind each part of a

worship service, and encouraged me to connect all my different passions — including the Bible, literature, and personal narratives," she says. "When I first became a pastor, I was anxious about the pastoral care part of the job, but my faculty and classmates at Bethany helped me to realize that oftentimes, being present and listening is what people need most."

In addition to her work as a pastor, Svay teaches writing courses at the University of St. Francis in Fort Wayne, Indiana, offering a course for first-year students that focuses on purpose and identity.

"I think my Master of Arts in Theopoetics and Writing influences the texts that I assign students, the writing assignments I give them, and the way I structure discussions," says Svay. "I consider my teaching a form of ministry, too."

Like many other Bethany graduates, Svay appreciates the opportunity to minister and serve in a variety of ways. She hopes to continue teaching, and as an ordained minister in the Church of the Brethren, she intends to continue to use her gifts as a preacher, and connect with faith communities in whatever professional roles she steps into.

Bethany remains committed to training pastors, even as it acknowledges that many students are interested in serving outside traditional church settings.

The Seminary's innovative and creative approach is responsive to the changing needs of the students it serves, and it continues to demonstrate that excellent theological education provides good preparation for those hope to minister, serve, and lead in a variety of contexts.

"Bethany deepened my appreciation of the theology behind each part of a worship service and encouraged me to connect all my different passions."

"Our alumni have so much to offer the organizations and communities they serve," says President Jeff Carter. "There are so many difficult issues in the world, but over and over, our alumni show the capacity to bring people together and to help make a positive difference for congregations, for other organizations, for neighborhoods, and for the world."

This article was originally published in the Fall/Winter 2024 issue of Wonder & Word.



Church of the Brethren

Dear Siblings in Christ in the Pacific Southwest District,

I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. My prayers are lifted for you as you prepare your hearts and minds for District Conference. As the community of God, may these special meetings and worship times honor our Lord and celebrate the many ways each of you and your congregations are carrying forth the message of the Good News of Jesus. Sharing Christ's love and the gospel is still our call and mission. May we together move forward with God's Spirit and guidance to share love with God and all our neighbors.

I am looking forward to our 238th recorded Church of the Brethren Annual Conference, scheduled for July 2-6, 2025, in Greensboro, North Carolina. There will be business sessions, bible studies, equipping session, worship, and many opportunities for fellowship and celebration as the Body of Christ gathers. Annual Conference exists to unite, strengthen, and equip the Church of the Brethren to follow Jesus.

One of the core values of the Annual Conference is to continue building loving relationships with one another, despite any differences we may have. Love seems to be having a hard time in our world and in the church. We are called to love and respect each other in the divisive times we find ourselves. At times, agape love, a love embodied by God's love for all humankind in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ seems impossible. Rabbi Harold S. Kushner theologian shares, "If we are brave enough to love, strong enough to forgive, generous enough to rejoice in another's happiness, and wise enough to know there is enough love to go around for us all, then we can achieve a fulfillment that no other living creature will ever know." I pray we embrace the words of 1 Corinthians 13 as our focus to love as Christ loves us. May we be able to say, "And now, faith, hope, and love abide, these three, and the greatest of these is love." 1 Corinthians 13: 13.

I look forward to seeing each of you in Greensboro as we gather as the wider church to continue the love and work of Jesus, peacefully, simply, together.

Blessings and love to you all,

Dava Hensley

2025 Annual Conference Moderator



Church of the Brethren

Dear Friends in Christ,

Greetings to you in the name of Christ our Savior!

I am filled with gratitude for the remarkable ministries and transformative work being carried out by the Church of the Brethren in your local congregations and through the work and ministries of denominational staff on your behalf. Your unwavering commitment to serving God and our communities has been an inspiration and a testament to the enduring power of faith and compassion.

You will find much about our denominational mission and ministries reflected in two printed resources available to you at your district conference and on the Church of the Brethren website (www.brethren.org). The *Church of the Brethren Annual Report* offers a glimpse of the ministries over the last year, and the *Advocating Generosity* booklet invites you to partner with us in our current ministries. You will also find these resources, together with our recent Church of the Brethren video report, at www.brethren.org/annualreport.

The Jesus in the Neighborhood vision calls us to “*develop a culture of calling and equipping disciples who are innovative, adaptable, and fearless.*” As we live into that vision, we are currently evaluating much of what we do, wanting to make certain that we are supporting the needs of our congregations and leaders as best we can. To that end, if you have questions or needs, please let us know.

The challenges that we face as a Church can be daunting at times, especially if we get distracted by all the noise around us. I continue to be drawn to the vibrant church reflected in Acts 4:32-35. That vibrancy was centered in Christ and in caring for one another and their community. It reflected a radical generosity that ensured that all the needs were met within the community. In the same way, our own communities need the grace and love that we have to offer. While the needs of each of our communities may look different, they need the same radical generosity that we have to offer as followers of Jesus. Let’s not overthink it, but simply do what Jesus did. God’s grace is and will be transformational for the community through our witness of Jesus’ love.

Again, I am grateful for the many ways your district and local congregations faithfully strive to live out the Gospel – to simply try to do what Jesus did. The vibrant ministries of our Church of the Brethren congregations – small to large – are at the heart of our Church. We should never diminish the essential role that each unique part of the body plays in our common ministry together.

Your servant in Christ,

David Steele
General Secretary

Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together.

1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, Illinois 60120 847-742-5100 800-323-8039 Fax: 847-742-6103



Reflections from a pastor, after their PTPFTC sponsored sabbatical:

"Being constantly, what the Jesuits call, 'a person for others' takes a lot out of a person, especially when it's hard to find time to just quietly be with God... Thank you for supporting this rich and fruitful, revivifying time."

PART-TIME PASTOR FULL-TIME CHURCH

Part Time Pastor Full Time Church exists as a ministry of the Church of the Brethren to engage and empower Multi-Vocational Pastors (MVPs) throughout our denomination, including in

Pacific Southwest!



THE THREE P'S:

PEERS

Peer relationships are vital to healthy ministries. We seek to build strong peer relationships.

PRACTICE

Healthy spiritual, emotional, and physical practices are crucial. We help Multi-vocational pastors (MVPs) engage in these practices.

PURPOSE

Through strong peer relationships and healthy practices, MVPs will find God's purpose for their ministry.

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

Here are some quick numbers that show the impact that PTPFTC has made so far and we can't wait to see those numbers grow!

17

TOTAL NUMBER OF COHORTS

This includes 121 pastoral individuals from 93 congregations.

53

TOTAL NUMBER OF EVENTS

This includes 620 pastoral individuals from 316 congregations.

Richard Wehrle | Program Director

rwehrle@brethren.org | 847-429-4365

Tabitha Hartman Rudy | Administrative Assistant

adminptpftc@brethren.org



Peers, Practice, Purpose; adapted from McNeil, J. D., Kate R. Davis, and Andrea Sielaff. "Resilience." Center for Transforming Engagement. <https://transformingengagement.org/resources/the-resilience-report/>



Church of the Brethren

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13 (NIV) Responding through volunteers and partners in the US and globally, Brethren Disaster Ministries relies on the power, strength, joy, and peace of God to bring hope and healing to brothers and sisters caught up in the chaos of both natural and human-caused disasters. In 2023, BDM supported relief and recovery from tornadoes, floods, wildfires, and a typhoon in the United States and its territories, and to natural disasters, war, and other humanitarian crises around the world, by walking side by side with survivors as they rebuilt their lives.

And yet, it is not only disaster survivors who are blessed when BDM responds to a need. Those who serve are also blessed—indeed, some are changed forever. One volunteer who served on a rebuilding site in Kentucky commented that “an unexpected experience was the overwhelming presence of the Spirit of God. I expected the experience to be faith based, but it was an amazing week for me.” Another declared, “I came home with my cup running over, what an experience, I am ready to go again.”

In 2023, Children’s Disaster Services (CDS) faced back to back challenges responding to disasters in the Pacific, both at the invitation of partner Red Cross. Typhoon Mawar caused destruction and displacement of people when it hit the US Territory of Guam in May. A team of six volunteers traveled to Guam, serving in shelters for three weeks and caring for 563 children. In August, when a devastating wildfire destroyed much of the town of Lahaina on Hawaii’s island of Maui, CDS volunteers were called there to care for children in assistance centers. Over a six-week period, three teams of volunteers made 457 child contacts. While the typical CDS volunteer serves for two weeks at a time, these two groups of volunteers served for three weeks each, due to the distance and other logistical concerns.

CDS responded to seven other disasters in 2023, including an apartment fire, a home explosion, and tornadoes. They also cared for children of asylum seekers. In October, a team of CDS Critical Response Childcare (CRC) volunteers, who are specially trained to support traumatized children and families after mass casualty events, traveled to Lewiston, Maine, following a mass shooting there. The need for peace and hope in all of these situations was great and CDS volunteers brought their calm and reassuring presence as a beacon to the children and their families. A total of 44 CDS volunteers engaged with 1,185 child contacts during the year.

The BDM Rebuilding Program project sites in 2023 were located in two areas of Kentucky. BDM partnered with Habitat for Humanity of the Pennyryle Region for the entire year to support the rebuilding of the town of Dawson Springs, which had suffered through deadly and destructive tornadoes in December 2021. As groups of BDM volunteers helped to build houses for first-time homeowners who had lost so much when their rental properties were destroyed, they wrote Bible verses and messages of support and hope on the lumber framing the structures and prayed for the families who would eventually live there. This project site is scheduled to continue until at least June 2024.

Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together.

Brethren Disaster Ministries, 601 Main Street, P.O. Box 188, New Windsor, Maryland 21776-0188
410-635-8731 800-451-4407 Fax: 410-635-8739

In partnership with the Eastern Kentucky Conference of the United Methodist Church Disaster Response, BDM volunteers spent a total of 12 weeks during 2023 in Eastern Kentucky rebuilding and repairing homes damaged during massive flooding that occurred in July and August of 2022. A total of 708 volunteers and project leaders served 52 families in 2023 on these two Kentucky sites.

The BDM Global Response supports relief and recovery for vulnerable people around the world facing war, violence, floods, earthquakes, and other disasters and humanitarian crises. In partnership with the Global Churches of the Brethren (CoB) and other international agencies, the challenge to respond is matched by the knowledge that Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) grants bring hope and joy where both may be hard to find. In 2023, these EDF grants equaled \$695,700. The majority of these grants were in response to conflicts in the countries and communities of the Global Church of the Brethren family. This includes the Democratic Republic of Congo (\$94,500), Haiti (\$60,200), South Sudan (\$40,000), and Nigeria (Nigeria Crisis Response, \$220,000). An additional \$220,000 was granted to three partners serving populations displaced by the Russia-Ukraine war.

The Nigeria Crisis Response continues as a partnership with Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, Church of the Brethren in Nigeria), which celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2023 and remains strong amidst continued violence in the country. The response program includes continued support for internally displaced people, food distributions, medical assistance, livelihood training centers for widows and orphans, distribution of seeds and fertilizer, new wells for drinking water, education assistance for orphan children, trauma workshops, and home repairs for the most vulnerable.

The total BDM programmatic expenses in 2023 were \$1,103,235. This includes the expenses from EDF allocations that support specific programs such as \$184,064 for U.S. responses (Rebuilding, CDS, etc.); \$237,447 for the Nigeria Crisis Response; \$305,424 for other Global CoB partners; and \$376,300 for all other global responses, including the Russia-Ukraine war and the Turkey-Syria Earthquake Response.

Brethren Disaster Ministries and all whom we serve are forever grateful for the steadfast and faithful support to these ministries, as well as the tireless and persistent work of the many volunteers without whom the event could not happen. Our ministry supporting hope and healing is but an extension of the compassion and love that comes from God and is demonstrated by each person who serves in God's name. It is the result of the body of Christ coming together to share God's blessings with survivors of disasters and with each other. We thank you for your part in this work!

It is our prayer that through our ministry, with your support, God's glory will be known.



Roy Winter, Executive Director for Service Ministries

On behalf of BDM staff: Jenn Dorsch-Messler, Sharon Franzén, Kim Gingerich, Carolyn Neher, and Michael Scalzi

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ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024 BRETHREN VOLUNTEER SERVICE

THREE-QUARTERS OF A CENTURY AND COUNTING

Marking a milestone: Events commemorate BVS' 75th anniversary

The past year was a year of celebration, as communities around the country held events to mark a milestone: The 75th anniversary of Brethren Volunteer Service.

Gatherings took place in California, Kansas, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and elsewhere during the year, bringing BVS alumni and friends together to share stories, enjoy fellowship, and lift up the ministry of BVS.

In addition, the 2023 Annual Conference included a special recognition of BVS' diamond jubilee during business, and a sellout BVS luncheon during the Conference added to the



festivities. A new book from author Jim Lehman and Brethren Press, *A Year of Living Differently*, also helped mark the occasion.

BVS director Chelsea Goss

Skillen said it was a chance to "honor the legacy of those who have dedicated their time, skills, and hearts to be the hands and feet of Jesus."

BVS BY THE NUMBERS

Volunteers currently serving:

26

*(19 in the US, 2 in Europe,
4 in Asia, 1 in Africa)*

Active BVS project sites:

About 55

Number of US states home to BVS
project sites:

16 (plus Washington D.C.)

Current BVS monthly stipend:

\$250

BVS goes remote

It was announced this spring that Brethren Volunteer Service would be going remote for the first time in its history, as director Chelsea Goss Skillen relocated to her home in Richmond, Va.

All other full-time staff in the department were already working remotely. BVS will continue to maintain a small office presence in Elgin, Ill., with some part-time work and occasional volunteers located there.

STAFF UPDATES

Virginia Rendler began in July 2023 as interim volun-



teer coordinator for BVS. Working remotely from N. Manchester, Ind., she connects

regularly with volunteers through the year and plays a key role in making orientation plans.

Marissa Witkovsky-Eldred had the "interim" removed from her title last fall as she continues to serve as coordinator for FaithX.

Units 333 and 334 join the chorus with orientations in 2023

Twenty-two volunteers completed orientation this past year, with Unit 333 taking place at Inspiration Hills in northern Ohio in late July and early August, and Unit 334 meeting at Camp Koinonia in Cle Elum, Wash., in the fall.

Members of those groups who were serving in the US gathered for a mid-year retreat at Camp Ithiel near Orlando, Fla., in March, and all volunteers do regular check-ins with BVS staff members.

The orientations typically include a variety of training sessions, sharing and conversations, games, a service project, worship, and cooking meals together.



ON THE SCHEDULE: UNITS 335 & 336

This year's **summer unit (Unit 335)** will hold orientation July 28-Aug. 5 at Camp Colorado, located near Sedalia, Colo., southwest of Denver. The **fall unit (Unit 336)** will gather Sept. 17-25 at Camp Brethren Heights in Rodney, Mich., north of Grand Rapids. Online pre-orientation meetings also take place before each group gathers.

Explore the BVS
Facebook group
and e-news!



FaithX: A 'beloved' message of service

A new older adult service trip highlighted the FaithX short-term service opportunities in 2024, with 15 people taking part in a February event at Camp Ithiel in Florida.



Another dozen trips were offered over the summer including experiences for youth and young adults, an adult trip to Ecuador, and the We Are Able trip for those with developmental disabilities. Domestic trips spanned nine states, from North Carolina to Indiana to Washington. More than 190 people registered.

The 2024 FaithX theme is "Beloved," drawn from 1 John 4:7. That also served as the theme for the denomination's Service Sunday in February.

DID YOU KNOW?

- BVS welcomed several new projects in the past year, including Lydia's House in Cincinnati, Christ House in Washington D.C., the San Diego Peace Campus, and the China Potato Project. Others are in the pipeline.
- BVS has recently done enhancements to its website, created a new purple promotional brochure, and developed an online project resource guide for volunteers. It also puts out a monthly e-newsletter with updates.
- The message of BVS hit the road frequently in recent months, with staff sharing at regional youth conferences, Young Adult Conference, college visits, and Annual Conference.

**Minutes of the
Sixtieth Annual District Conference
Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren**

November 11, 2023

University of La Verne, La Verne, CA

I. Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 1:50 p.m. with prayer offered by Judy Stout.
- Russ Matteson gave instructions to the delegates attending by Zoom.

II. Introduction of the University of La Verne President

Eric Bishop introduced Dr. Pardis Mahdavi, the new president of the University of La Verne. Dr. Mahdavi welcomed the conference attendees to the campus of the University of La Verne.

III. Establishment of Quorum: Laura Miller

54 delegates were present and 19 congregations were represented. A quorum was established.

IV. Dedication of Delegates: Judy Stout

Judy Stout led the delegates in the Dedication of Delegates on page 8 of the Business Book.

V. Introduction of Conference Leadership: Judy Stout

Judy Stout introduced Paul Lovelace, Moderator-elect; Russ Matteson, District Executive Minister; Laura Miller, Clerk; and Julia Wheeler, timekeeper. Russ Matteson explained the rules for speaking.

VI. Approval of Agenda and Minutes from the 2022 Conference: Judy Stout

The 2023 agenda and minutes from the 2022 conference were presented.

Erik Brummett (Live Oak) moved that Item 4D be removed from the agenda. Judy Stout read the item. Phil Corr (Church of the Living Savior) seconded the motion. Erik Brummett explained that there have been conversations that indicate a reconciliation may be possible.

The amendment to delete 4D from the agenda was approved.

The amended agenda and minutes from 2022 were approved.

VII. Assignment of Committee to Certify the Accuracy of the 2023 Minutes: Judy Stout

Gail Heisel, Janet Short, and Phil Corr were assigned as the committee to certify the minutes.

VIII. Table Conversation

The Table Talk items to be discussed were to introduce yourself to others, discuss your takeaway from the worship services at this conference, and answer whether the workshops were helpful for you in being the hands and feet of Jesus.

IX. Introduction of Ballot: Paul Lovelace

A. Paul Lovelace directed the delegates to page 53 in the Business Book. Paul corrected two items: the year at the top of pages 53 and 54 and that Kim Boardman was not the incumbent in the position of Standing Committee Alternate.

B. Paul Lovelace read the names of the nominees and their positions. There were no nominations from the floor.

Jacob Bruneli (San Diego First) moved and Susan Price (Empire) seconded that we approve the ballot by affirmation. Approved.

- C. The following people were elected to the PSWD 2024 positions:
1. Norma Sexton, Moderator-Elect
 2. Shawn Carothers, Standing Committee Representative
 3. Kim Boardman, Standing Committee Representative Alternate
 4. Jose Rudy Amaya, Nominating Committee
 5. Janice Shaw-Morgan, Program Committee
 6. Michael Monson, Northern California Policy Board Representative
 7. Jim Lefever, Southern California West Representative
 8. Jonathan Chubb, Policy Board at large member
 9. Arnaldo Mendoza, Policy Board at large member
 10. Madison McMillen, Youth and Young Adult Policy Board Representative

X. Report from Eder Financial: Nevin Dulabaum

Nevin Dulabaum gave a report on the services provided by Eder Financial. Nevin answered a question about the adoption of the name “Eder.”

XI. Report from Bethany Seminary: Lori Current

Lori Current gave a report on the services provided by Bethany Seminary and the Bethany BOLD program. Lori shared that the number of students at Bethany has increased.

XII. Welcoming Salvador Viviente: Russ Matteson.

- A. Russ invited Phil Corr, Henry Roblero and his wife Laura Roblero, and Iris Berumen (translator) to the podium.
- B. Phil Corr explained that the McFarland church had the need for a Spanish congregation. La Iglesia del Salvador Viviente met with Phil about working with the Church of the Living Savior congregation.
- C. The English congregation welcomed the Spanish congregation to their facility at a council meeting.
- D. Salvador Viviente has grown greatly. Pastor Henry shared greetings with the delegates.
- E. Gilbert Romero offered prayer for Pastor Henry and Laura.

XIII. Standing Committee Representative Report: Don Shankster

- A. Don Shankster directed participants to page 15 in the Business Book. He explained that Annual Conference 2023 met in July in Cincinnati and that the Standing Committee members shared things that were happening in their districts.
- B. Highlights of Don’s report include:
 1. A change in polity was made on nominations from the floor for the conference ballot.
 2. There are new guidelines for continuing education for pastors.
 3. A cost-of-living adjustment for pastors was approved.
 4. A Resolution to Lament the Doctrine of Discovery was adopted by the conference.
 5. Moderator Madelyn Metzger will lead the next conference.
 6. Nominating committee is already working on the next conference. Don asked for suggestions for the positions of Moderator elect, Mission and Ministry Board areas 4 and 5, Program Committee, Bethany Seminary, and On Earth Peace. Submit nominations to the Annual Conference office. Send email address and a reason for making your nomination.
 7. Standing Committee will meet on Zoom in December and January.
- C. Don thanked the District Conference for allowing him to serve the last six years as our representative.

- 1 **XIV. Church of the Brethren Inc. Report: David Steele**
2 A. David Steele, General Secretary, expressed appreciation for the ways we provide
3 ministries in our local congregations and communities.
4 B. There is a video report available on the website that can be shared with local
5 congregations.
6 C. Highlights of David Steele's report include a report on the visions and work of the Church
7 of the Brethren Inc., the many grants available, global missions and service ministries, and
8 the Part time Pastor/Full time Church program.
- 9 **XV. Policy Board Report: Erik Brummett**
10 A. Erik reported that Russ Matteson finally got to take his sabbatical this year.
11 B. Erik spoke about the District's Know to Grow Program, in which Jeff Glass can help
12 congregations learn about their neighborhoods.
13 C. Erik explained that the District's Youth Ministry Program was eliminated in 2022. Greg
14 Davidson Lazsakovitz was contracted to survey the district on youth issues this year. Greg
15 shared three recommendations:
16 1. We need to focus our District resources on equipping congregational leaders to build
17 their youth and children's ministries.
18 2. It is important to youth that there is one great youth event at a district conference, as
19 well as an event in each region.
20 3. We need to prioritize communication with the congregations.
- 21 **XVI. Ministry Commission Report: Norma Sexton**
22 A. There is a written report on Page 21 of the Business Book.
23 B. Since that report was written, the Nurturing and Credentialing Committee met in
24 September and held several ordination interviews, two licensing interviews, and one
25 commissioning interview.
26 C. Ordination anniversaries are listed on Page 14 of the Business Book. Certificates will be
27 presented to those celebrating anniversaries in 5-year increments. There is a total of 555
28 years of service represented by these ministers.
- 29 **XVII. Stewards Commission Report: Jonas Funderburk**
30 A. There is a written report on Page 22 of the Business Book.
31 B. Jonas thanked the other members of the Stewards Commission for their work.
32 C. The table for congregational giving is on page 23.
- 33 **XVIII. Business Item: Budget Report**
34 A. The conference attendees were directed to Page 58 – 61 of the Business Book.
35 B. Erik Brummett introduced the Operating Budget proposal and the Church Planting Support
36 Budget.
37 C. The recommendation for the Operating Budget is \$477,521.
38 D. The recommendation for the Church Planting Support Budget is \$89,250.
39 E. **There was a recommendation from the Policy Board to approve adoption of the**
40 **Operatintg Budget and Church Planting Support budget as presented. Approved,**
41 **unanimously.**
- 42 **XIX. Business Item: Recommendation for 2025 Operating Expense Maximum of \$495,000**
43 **There was a recommendation from the Policy Board to approve the adoption of the 2025**
44 **Operating Budget. Approved, unanimously.**
- 45 **XX. Program Committee Report: Judy Stout**

- 1 A. The attendees were directed to Page 16 of the Business Book.
2 B. Judy recognized members of the Program Committee who worked on this year's
3 conference and Julianna Pitruzzello for her work with registration.

4 **XXI. DE Report: Russ Matteson**

- 5 A. Russ directed the conference attendees to a written report on pages 12 and 13 in the
6 Business Book.
7 B. Russ thanked those who work behind the scenes: Carlos Padilla on sound, Joseph Guthrie
8 and Edward Cesar on Zoom and cameras, and Iris Berumen on translation.
9 C. He thanked those who worked on Policy Board and Executive Board.
10 D. Russ recognized the ministers who passed away this year.
11 E. The pastors in the room who are serving congregations were recognized with a standing
12 ovation.
13 F. Gilbert Romero was recognized for his work with the training programs.
14 G. Kimberly Rouse was recognized for her work as Administrative Assistant.
15 H. Russ pointed out some items in the conference packets that might be of interest to
16 attendees.
17 I. Russ explained that upcoming highlights for 2024 include working with Greg Davidson
18 Laszakovits's recommendations and using the Know to Grow program.
19 J. Russ invited everyone to pray for our District and the churches in our District.

20 **XXII. Moderator's Closing Thoughts: Judy Stout**

- 21 A. The 2024 District Conference will be November 8 and 9 in Sacramento at the Prince of
22 Peace Church.
23 B. Judy expressed her appreciation for the Administrative Assistant, the Policy Board, and
24 those who serve in leadership on the committees.
25 C. Judy enjoyed her visits to the congregations in our District.

26 **XXIII. Passing the Gavel**

- 27 A. Judy Stout passed the gavel to Paul Lovelace.
28 B. Paul Lovelace and Norma Sexton were consecrated as Moderator and Moderator-Elect.

29 **XXIV. Moderator's Remarks: Paul Lovelace**

- 30 A. Paul Lovelace spoke briefly about the different gifts we bring to the work of Christ and our
31 churches.
32 B. Paul shared his theme for next year: Justice and Peace Kiss Each Other, based on Psalm
33 85:9-13 and Galatians 5:22-23.

34 **XXV. Adjournment**

35 Judy Stout adjourned the meeting at 4:37 p.m.

36
37 _____
Minutes recorded by Laura Miller, clerk

38
39 _____
In April 2024, the draft copy of the minutes was examined and given preliminary approval by
40 committee member Gail Heisel (La Verne), Janet Short (Pomona Fellowship) and Phil Corr
41 (Church of the Living Savior).

Pacific Southwest District – Church of the Brethren

November 2024 – November 2025 Ballot

Candidates are listed alphabetically by last name.

CVCA=Central Valley California, SOCA=Southern California, AZ/NV= Arizona & Nevada

Incumbent=Nominee is finishing an elected term to the same position; Unexpired Term=finishing another person's term.

Moderator-Elect

Vote for 1 Two year term

	Don Shankster, Papago Buttes - AZ/NV

Clerk

Vote for 1 Three year term

	Laura Miller, Papago Buttes - AZ/NV

Program Committee

Vote for 1 Three year term

	Cheryl Crane, Prince of Peace - CVCA

District Board of Administration

At-Large Representatives

Vote for 5 Three year term

	Bill Himes, La Verne - SOCA
	Gail Heisel, La Verne - SOCA
	Marvin Ramos, Príncipe de Paz - SOCA
	John Keeling, Bakersfield - CVCA
	Carlos Padilla, Glendora - SOCA

Nominating Committee

Vote for 1 Three year term

	Barbara Brandt, Live Oak - CVCA

District Board of Administration Youth & Young Adult Representatives

Nominating Committee was unable to find Youth /
Young Adult representatives for this ballot.

Ballot Background Information, Exhibit B

Clerk (vote for 1) The three year term begins immediately. The Clerk serves on the Nominating Committee; records the minutes of the District Conference, and in cooperation with the District Executive Minister(s) prepares the minutes for publication and distribution to the local congregations; forwards to the Annual Conference secretary any queries passed to Annual Conference by the District Conference; assists in the interpretation of the minutes of the District Conference; serves as an ex-officio member of the Policy Board; and records the minutes of the Policy Board. The Clerk may be requested by the Executive Board to attend its meetings as the recorder.



Laura Miller:

Age: 66

*Congregation: Papago
Buttes*

*Vocation: I've worked as a
court reporter and as a
church secretary.*

of the Brethren for 40 years; past clerk for the
PSWD.

*Vision Statement: As Church, we are all
welcome to share our commitment as a community
of love and to care for all of God's creation. By
praying, reflecting, and listening to each other, we
can forge our bond as God's holy people, spreading
his love to the ends of the earth.*

Church Experience: A member of the Church

Pacific Southwest District - Church of the Brethren Background Information for the 2024 - 2025 Ballot

Candidates are listed by office, alphabetically by last name.

Descriptions of each office are condensed from the PSWD Constitution: www.pswdcob.org

Moderator-Elect (vote for 1): The two year term begins immediately. In addition to being an officer of District Conference, the Moderator-Elect serves on the District Board of Administration, the District Conference Program Committee, and chairs the Nominating Committee.



Don Shankster:

Age: 73

Congregation: Papago
Buttes

Vocation: Retired Pastor

Church Experience:
Pastor of Papago Buttes
Church, PSWD Nurturing

and Credentialing Committee, Arizona Faith Network (ecumenical council in Arizona), PSWD Stand-

ing Committee delegate which included serving on the Policy Board, Nominating Committee of Annual Conference, and the Standing Committee Covenant Writing Task Team.

Vision Statement:

My vision is for the members of the Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren to become so filled with the Holy Spirit that Jesus' love, compassion and humility radiate out through us in ways that build up the community of God.

Nominating Committee (vote for 1): The three year term begins immediately. Members may not serve successive terms. Nominating Committee presents to the District Conference a ballot for each vacancy.



Barbara Brandt:

Age: 79

Congregation:
Live Oak

Vocation:
Retired Teacher

Church Experience:

I have been actively involved in the Live Oak

congregation since our retirement here in 2000. I have served as a Deacon, currently as Deacon Chair, and am the church clerk. I also play the organ for our worship services. In the past I was also active as a Sunday School teacher and youth leader.

Vision Statement:

My vision for the District is that we continue to spread God's love to all and encourage acceptance of a diverse community.

Program Committee, District Conference (vote for 1): The three year term begins immediately.

The Committee is responsible for planning the District Conference program, obtaining leadership, and making all necessary arrangements for the conference, in cooperation with on-site representatives.



Cheryl Crane:

Age: 63

Congregation:
Prince of Peace

Vocation: Retired Elementary School Teacher

Church Experience:

In local congregation I have been Sunday School teacher, Chair of Education Committee, Deacon, worship leader, Board Chair, and Treasurer., I currently play piano, lead songs during worship, and provide occasional children's messages. At the

district level, I have served on the policy board for 4 terms at different times and been moderator. This year I have been working with the program committee to help plan district conference which will take place at my church.

Vision Statement:

Just as we are called to be in fellowship and worship in congregations, the district provides a larger fellowship body to help support and encourage local congregations. Churches in the district have opportunities to work together to make a bigger impact serving God than in just one church.

PSWD Board of Administration: The term begins immediately. The purpose of the Board is to manage and administer the religious and business activities of the District, as authorized by the District Conference.

PSWD Board of Administration: At-Large Representatives..... Vote for 5 (three year term)
Board members must be a member of a Church of the Brethren congregation within the district for at least one year prior to election and must have demonstrated leadership ability.



Gail Heisel:

Age: 64

Congregation:
La Verne

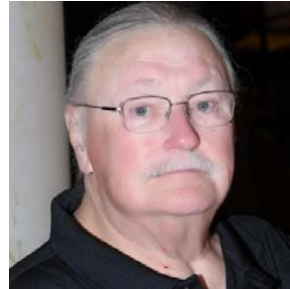
Vocation:
Retired School Counselor

Church Experience:
La Verne Church of the

Brethren: Peace & Justice Commission, District Conference delegate (24-25), Annual Conference delegate (22-23), SWPOC Facilitator; PSWD: Board Vice-Chair, Policy Board, Executive Committee, Ministry and Stewards Commissions. Denomination: Program & Arrangements Committee, Gun Violence Prevention Action Team.

Vision Statement:

My vision for the PSWD is that we continue the work of Jesus, peacefully, simply and together, offering unconditional acceptance to all of God's children. "Together" does not mean that we will always be in agreement, but we must strive to treat each other with respect regardless of differing theological perspectives.



Bill Himes:

Age: 72

Congregation:
La Verne

Vocation:
I am currently a retired classroom Science teacher. I taught for almost 40

years in mostly a Title 1, predominantly Hispanic Junior High School.

Church Experience:

I have been active with many service orientated activities in La Verne CoB. I was a member and chairperson of the Peace and Justice Commission for several years allowing me board member status. I have been active in racial justice, including immigrant rights, and gun violence efforts of the CoB. I am a current member of the Vitality Commission for the PSWD policy board.

Vision Statement:

I see the District's function is to further the vision of Jesus by supporting nurturing programs to enable the churches in the district to spread the Word, especially through their good works as is the Brethren tradition.

Ballot Background Information, Exhibit B



John Keeling:

Age: 72

Congregation:
Bakersfield

Vocation:
Retired clinical laboratory
scientist

Church Experience:

I am the church treasurer and have served as moderator and leadership team chair.

Vision Statement:

I see the District's main purpose as enabling the local congregation by providing needed resources.



Carlos Padilla:

Age: 62

Congregation:
Glendora

Vocation:
Retired.

Church Experience:

I am the head financial officer for my church, run audio visual for church services, set up sound system for annual conference in La Verne.

Vision Statement:

To bring as many people to Christ and to fulfill God's will for me.



Marvin Ramos:

Age: 25

Congregation:
Príncipe de Paz

Vocation:
Desiring to become a
Pastor in the future.

Church Experience:

Current church youth leader.

Vision Statement:

I'm here to serve however I can and be a representative for my local church.

PSWD Board of Administration: Youth & Young Adult Representative. Vote for 1 (one year term)

Youth members must be at least 15 years old and less than 24 years old as of December 31 of the year elected.

Nominating Committee was unable to find Youth / Young Adult representatives for this ballot.

Pacific Southwest District 2025 Operating Budget and Church Planting Support Budget, and 2026 Operating Expense Maximum

In the pages that follow you will find the proposed 2025 PSWD Operating Budget, the 2025 Church Planting Support Budget, and the recommended 2026 Operating Expense Maximum from the Policy Board.

2025 PSWD Operating Budget

In the spreadsheets that follow is the proposed 2025 District Operating Budget. The Policy Board is recommending a budget expense of **\$484,667**. This is an increase of \$7,000 from the 2024 District Operating Budget, and lower than the 2025 Operating Expense Maximum set at last year's District Conference.

Some significant notes regarding the proposed budget:

- Most areas are flat or slightly down, reflecting our experience over the years since things were disrupted by the pandemic.
- Property and liability insurance costs are up by \$5000 annually.
- Staff compensation is where the largest increase in the budget is found. This reflects a 5% increase for non salary scale employees, and the COLA of 3.3% and an experience step for the District Executive. It also includes anticipated increases to health insurance.

The anticipated deficit for 2025 is **\$251,367**. This is the lowest projected deficit in the last 10 years, and would be close to the actual deficit we experienced when things shut down in 2020 with the pandemic. It is also below the operating deficit target of \$300,000 that the Policy Board established in 2016 and has reaffirmed over the years.

The change that leads to this result is an increase in interest received based on loans to congregations. We are providing significant loan support to Circle of Peace for their new building, loan support for church facilities in Los Banos and Las Vegas, and we also have new loans in the \$100,000 to \$150,000 range with several congregations. Having our money in helping churches grow is where it should be. The loans represent investment in repairs, remodeling, expansions that will allow churches to grow their reach into their neighborhoods. It also means we have significantly reduced our amount invested with Eder Financial, and the needed return on the remaining investments needs to be close to 10% to cover the anticipated deficit.

2025 District Operating Budget Notes

Commitments

Ministry Partnership Funds - Key in this area are funds to support vital ministry in communities whose mission is with those who are on the economic margins. This is where the highest portion of this budget is expended. \$45,000 is marked for this work in 2025.

Ministry Training and Minister Support - Our work with providing training for those called into ministry continues to grow, and as some students finish their work other students are just beginning. It is a vital partnership - the district support of ministry training - that seeks to ensure we have strong pastoral leaders for the years to come. \$33,200 is allocated for this in 2025.

Congregational Mission and Transition Support - The work of our District staff represented in the Operating Ministry portion of the budget plays key roles in helping congregations in connecting to resources, supporting Boards and pastors, and working with congregations in pastoral transitions or evaluating future steps in ministry. \$262,032 is allocated for this support in 2025.

2025 Church Planting Support Budget

There are currently five active Church Plants in the district (Las Vegas, Los Banos, McFarland, Pasadena, and Waterford). **The budget for church planting in 2025 is \$92,500.** This is an increase of \$3,250 over 2024. These funds are used in a variety of ways depending on the needs of the various projects including church resourcing, utilities and facility cost assistance, and tax support.

The funds for this come from the proceeds of sales of former district properties (primarily New Harvest Lindsay and Koreatown).

Action Item: The Policy Board recommends to the District Conference the adoption of the 2025 Operating Budget and the 2025 Church Planting Support Budget as presented.

2026 Operating Expense Maximum

The recommendation for 2026 of \$495,000 is a \$10,000 increase over the 2025 budget. The Board will work hard to keep focused on priorities and to bring back a strong plan that prioritizes needs and works to be fiscally responsible. The Board has previously indicated that \$500,000 in operating expenses feels like a maximum outlay, and so we will need to evaluate that number and how we are using resources as we move forward beyond 2026.

Action Item: The Policy Board recommends to the District Conference that the expense maximum for the 2026 Operating Budget be \$495,000.

Pacific Southwest District Church of the Brethren Income & Expense Summary - Proposed 2025 Budget

		2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	2025 Proposed
Contributions Income	4100	29,527	26,317	23,875	24,375	32,300	30,300
Interest and Other Income	4200	89,690	91,905	64,923	64,377	108,100	191,800
Participation Income	4600	2,713	10,118	10,643	17,514	12,400	11,200
Total Operating Income		121,930	128,340	99,441	106,266	152,800	233,300
Congregational Development Ministry	5005	49,108	32,251	24,832	13,661	46,750	47,500
Pastoral Leadership & Support	5300	8,641	23,096	35,709	30,483	35,000	33,200
District Empowering Ministry	5500	19,366	10,802	21,128	35,793	36,200	34,850
Partnership & Property Ministry	5700	10,501	18,156	18,219	17,563	18,400	18,185
Service Ministries	6300	0	5,822	4,279	6,363	6,800	6,800
District Operating Ministry	6500	293,132	334,696	320,769	301,138	334,371	344,132
Total Operating Expenses		380,748	424,823	424,936	405,001	477,521	484,667
Operating Deficit		-258,818	-296,483	-325,495	-298,735	-324,721	-251,367

Budget

Exhibit C

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST DISTRICT OF THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN										
2020-2025, District Budget Overview										
Power Church Report Levels				PC	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
1	2	3	4	Line #	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	Proposed
INCOME				4000						
MINISTRY INCOME				4010						
CONTRIBUTIONS INCOME				4100						
			Individuals	4110	2,790	2,077	750	2,075	2,000	2,000
			Congregations	4120	26,637	24,240	23,100	22,000	30,000	28,000
			Church Closure Contriubution	4125	0	0	0	0	0	0
			Groups	4126	0	0	0	0	0	0
			Subtotal Temp Restricted Income	4700	0	0	0	0	0	0
			CDS Children's Disaster Rapid Response	4135	100	0	25	300	300	300
			Other Income	4140	0	0	0	0	0	0
Subtotal Contributions Inc.				4100	29,527	26,317	23,875	24,375	32,300	30,300
INVESTMENT INCOME				4200						
			CHECKING/MONEY MKT INCOME	4210	25,162	6,336	5,687	4,292	3,000	1,000
			NOTES REC. INTEREST/FEES	4301	34,309	31,453	28,583	29,681	74,650	160,350
			Investment Property Income	4400	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
			MISC. INCOME	4550	220	24,116	654	404	450	450
Subtotal Investment Income				4200	89,690	91,905	64,923	64,377	108,100	191,800
PARTICIPATION INCOME				4600						
			DIST CONF INCOME	4610	1,850	6,075	6,554	9,207	8,000	7,600
			EVENTS INCOME	4630	863	4,043	4,089	8,307	4,400	3,600
Subtotal Participation Income				4600	2,713	10,118	10,643	17,514	12,400	11,200
TOTAL INCOME					121,930	128,340	99,441	106,266	152,800	233,300
EXPENSES				5000						
MINISTRY INVESTMENTS				5001						
CONGREGATIONAL DEV MIN				5005						
			WEB SITE DEVELOPMENT	5020	2,241	1,871	882	2,317	1,750	2,500
			Ministry Partnership Funds	5180	46,866	30,380	23,500	11,344	45,000	45,000
			Cong Minister Support Grants	5100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Subtotal Congregational Dev Min				5005	49,108	32,251	24,382	13,661	46,750	47,500
PAST'L. LDRSHP & SUPPORT				5300						
			TRIM (TRAINING IN MIN)	5310	245	477	232	1,000	1,000	1,000
			SEBAH & EPMC	5315	3,020	2,649	3,584	3,976	4,000	4,000
			BETHANY THEO. SEMINARY	5320	4,400	5,565	3,939	4,774	5,000	5,000
			PASTORS' RETREAT	5325	606	12,930	23,915	18,541	18,000	18,000
			MINISTER'S WORKSHOP	5330	0	1,225	3,240	2,042	2,500	2,500
			OTHER DISTRICT WORKSHOPS	5335	300	0	500	0	500	500
			MINISTER'S ETHICS TRAINING	5336	70	0	0	0	3,000	1,200
			PROF. GROWTH SUBSIDY	5338	0	250	300	150	1,000	1,000
			TEMP RESTRICTED EXPENSES	7943	0	0	0	0	0	0
Subtotal Past'l. Ldrshp & Support				5300	8,641	23,096	35,709	30,483	35,000	33,200
DISTRICT EMPOWERING MINISTRY				5500						
			DISTRICT CONFERENCE	5520	1,945	2,089	10,341	15,964	10,000	10,000
			MINISTRY COMMISSION	5540	546	458	2,851	331	2,750	2,000
			STEWARDS COMMISSION	5560	0	3,237	0	1,725	1,000	500
			BD OF ADM & WORK GROUPS	5600	2,589	1,271	5,911	8,572	9,500	9,600

Budget

Exhibit C

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST DISTRICT OF THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN											
2020-2025, District Budget Overview											
Power Church Report Levels					PC	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
1	2	3	4		Line #	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	Proposed
					<u>NURTURING/CREDENT.COMM</u>	5630	11,101	0	1,350	6,612	7,500
					<u>RESOURCE MATERIALS</u>	5650	185	274	675	89	750
					<u>INTER-CULTURAL MINISTRY</u>	5660	500	261	0	0	2,000
					<u>NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE</u>	5670	2,500	2,500	0	2,500	2,500
					<u>Youth Activity & Cabinet Expense</u>	5680/7	0	712	0	0	0
					Subtotal District Empowering Min	5500	19,366	10,802	21,128	35,793	34,850
					PARTNERSHIP & PROP. MIN	5700					
					<u>DENOMINATIONAL ASSESSMENT</u>	5710	1,430	1,280	1,264	1,251	1,300
					<u>STANDING COMMITTEE</u>	5720	306	306	2,860	2,536	3,400
					<u>UNIVERSITY OF LA VERNE</u>	5725	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
					<u>ECUMENICAL COUNCILS</u>	5730	250	250	250	0	500
					<u>COUNCIL OF DIST EXECS</u>	5740	385	360	0	405	585
					<u>PROPERTY & LEGAL</u>	5800	4,130	11,960	9,845	9,370	8,400
					Subtotal Partnership & Prop. Min	5700	10,501	18,156	18,219	17,563	18,185
					SERVICE MINISTRIES	6300					
					<u>DISASTER RESPONSE</u>	6310	0	5,822	4,256	5,032	6,500
					<u>CHILDREN'S DISASTER SERV</u>	6320	0	0	23	0	300
					<u>Other Dist Service Opportunity</u>	6350	0	0	0	1,331	0
					Subtotal Service Ministries	6300	0	5,822	4,279	6,363	6,800
					DIST. OPERATING MINISTRY	6500					
					<u>OFFICE SPACE & UTILITIES</u>	6520	17,357	20,907	20,604	19,687	19,700
					<u>EQUIPMENT & MAINTENANCE</u>	6600	650	6,038	3,489	426	2,000
					<u>SUPPLIES/PRNTG/PUBLICAT'N</u>	6650	4,937	5,188	5,292	2,304	2,600
					<u>POSTAGE AND MAILING</u>	6670	1,703	1,084	1,830	1,312	2,000
					<u>INSURANCE</u>	6680	15,750	16,280	17,830	17,830	23,000
					<u>AUDIT AND PROF. FEES</u>	6700	26,039	41,925	25,483	33,664	32,500
					<u>STAFF SALARIES</u>	7000	180,016	185,043	180,637	162,290	186,397
					<u>STAFF BENEFITS & RCWF</u>	7100	32,643	31,846	31,748	31,699	45,435
					<u>STAFF TRVL-PROF GROWTH</u>	7500	11,178	24,653	33,660	31,646	30,200
					<u>NEW LIFE/PUB ETC & Misc.</u>	7750	2,859	1,732	196	281	300
					Subtotal Dist. Operating Ministry	6500	293,132	334,696	320,769	301,138	344,132
					Subtotal Ministry Investments	5001	380,747	424,823	424,485	405,001	477,521
					TOTAL EXPENSES		380,747	424,823	424,485	405,001	477,521
					EXCESS INCOME\EXPENSES		(258,817)	(296,483)	(325,044)	(298,735)	(324,721)

Action to Organize Iglesia del Salvador Viviente as a Fellowship

In the spring of 2022, Pastor Henry Roblero, Associate Pastor Tony Blanco, and members of their families began to meet in a home for Bible Study and worship. The group had been part of another church in McFarland, but had chosen to leave that group. As the group grew in number they needed more space to gather and so Pastor Tony reached out to the Church of the Living Savior (he had attended there when he was a child) to see if there might be space available to rent.

In the summer of 2022 Iglesia del Salvador Viviente began to meet at the Church of the Brethren and the two churches (English and Spanish) began to talk about ways they could work together. Salvador Viviente moved from some classrooms to the fellowship hall and in summer of 2023 to shared use of the sanctuary.

During this time, through the invitation of the Church of the Living Savior, the Pacific Southwest District entered the conversations with leadership of the group regarding what it would mean for them to be a part of the Church of the Brethren. In the fall of 2023 they were recognized as a project and in December the pastors were licensed by the district. The project has a vital and growing ministry in McFarland and the surrounding community. They have a strong relationship and welcome to the Zapotec community in the area, and through partnership with the Living Savior congregation and the Margaret Carl Trust they were able to secure some Bible resources that have recently been translated into the Zapotec language.

Salvador Viviente has partnered with the county to serve as a food distribution ministry for their area and are serving 1000 people a month. Worship is a lively experience with a strong and multigenerational praise team and a vital prayer ministry and strong preaching.

The church family has continued to grow and develop and they are ready to be organized as a Fellowship by the District Conference as they continue to serve Christ in McFarland and the surrounding community.

Action Item: **The Policy Board recommends to the District Conference to organize Iglesia del Salvador Viviente (McFarland) as a fellowship.**

Action to Approve Dual Affiliation and DBA for the South Bay Congregation

About 16 years ago the South Bay Church of the Brethren began renting space to a church plant called Journey Evangelical Covenant Church. Soon the two groups began to worship together and then began to partner in ministry regularly. They worked out understandings of how they would operate in partnership, each church having its own board and most items needing to be voted on by both boards and both congregations in Council meetings. They have been one church operating with two structures for many years. The former pastors (both Brethren and Covenant) talked often about being one church with two denominational parents and heritages. With the arrival of a new lead pastor in 2023 conversation began in earnest in the local church and with the respective denominational districts about how to be one church with one structure and one membership. The Executive Board and Policy Board have received the request from the congregation to approve them as a dually affiliated church, with connection to both the Church of the Brethren and the Evangelical Covenant Church. Additionally, they have been operating using the name Journey South Bay Church, and are asking for our recognition of them using that DBA for their ministry.

Action Item: The Policy Board recommends to the District Conference to authorize the South Bay congregation in its affiliation with Journey Evangelical Covenant Church to operate under the dba “Journey South Bay Church” as a dually affiliated congregation.

Pacific Southwest District – Church of the Brethren

Locations / Dates / Moderators of District Conferences

1964.	La Verne.	August 28-30.	R. Truman Northup
1965.	Modesto.	October 15-17.	Marvin Belcher
1966.	Forest Home.	October 14-16.	Leland A. Nelson
1967.	Fresno.	October 13-15.	Lowell K. Brubaker
1968.	Long Beach.	October 11-13.	R. Truman Northup
1969.	Bakersfield.	October 10-12.	Edward K. Ziegler
1970.	Phoenix First.	October 9-11.	Jerry Davis
1971.	Modesto.	October 15-17.	Harold D. Fasnacht
1972.	La Verne.	October 13-15.	Duane Wyles
1973.	Fresno.	October 11-13.	Paul E. Miller
1974.	Pasadena.	October 11-13.	John W. Hunter
1975.	Empire.	October 10-12.	Ida S. Howell
1976.	Long Beach.	October 15-17.	Marvin A. Belcher
1977.	McFarland.	October 7-9.	D. Eugene Lichty
1978.	University of La Verne.	October 13-15.	Norman N. Glick
1979.	Modesto.	November 9-11.	Arthur M. Baldwin
1980.	Phoenix First.	October 24-26.	LaVon Rupel
1981.	Fresno.	October 16-18.	C. Wayne Zunkel
1982.	Pomona Fellowship.	October 15-17.	Barbara Enberg
1983.	Empire.	October 14-16.	Irven Stern
1984.	South Bay.	November 9-11.	Galen Snell
1985.	McFarland.	November 8-10.	Dwayne Brubaker
1986.	Imperial Heights.	October 17-19.	Robert E. Keim
1987.	Prince of Peace, Sacramento.	October 16-18.	Jerry Davis
1988.	Long Beach.	October 7-9.	W. Donald Clague
1989.	Modesto.	November 3-5.	Richard L. Landrum
1990.	Phoenix First.	October 12-14.	Sherlo Shively
1991.	Glendale (CA).	October 11-13.	Harold J. Forney
1992.	Waterford.	November 13-15.	Donald E. Fancher
1993.	La Verne.	October 8-10.	Myrna L. Wheeler
1994.	Fresno.	November 11-13.	Pat Royer
1995.	County of San Diego.	October 6-8.	Lowell Brubaker
1996.	Modesto.	October 11-13.	Milton H. Ewert
1997.	Pomona Fellowship.	October 10-12.	Peggy Redman
1998.	South Bay / Imperial Heights.	September 18-20.	Jerry Davis
1999.	Phoenix First.	October 8-10.	Karen Walters
2000.	Sacramento / Live Oak.	October 13-15.	Belita Mitchell
2001.	Bakersfield.	October 5-7.	Sherlo Shively
2002.	La Verne.	October 4-6.	George Sparks
2003.	Community Brethren, Fresno.	September 19-21.	Bill Wagoner, Honorary; Myrna Wheeler, Acting
2004.	Pomona.	October 29-31.	David Hurlbut
2005.	Modesto.	October 7-9.	R. Jan Thompson
2006.	Papago Buttes.	October 27-29.	Joe Schechter
2007.	La Verne.	October 12-14.	Mary Kay Ogden
2008.	Community Brethren, Fresno.	November 7-9.	John Price
2009.	Sacramento.	November 6-8.	Jim Martinez
2010.	Hillcrest, La Verne.	November 12-14.	Felton Daniels
2011.	Hillcrest, La Verne.	November 11-13.	Karen Walters
2012.	Hillcrest, La Verne.	November 9-11.	Jack Storne
2013.	Scottsdale, AZ.	November 8-10.	Jim LeFever
2014.	Hillcrest, La Verne.	November 7-9.	Erin Matteson
2015.	Hillcrest, La Verne.	November 13-15.	Eric Bishop
2016.	Modesto.	November 11-13.	John Price
2017.	Hillcrest, La Verne.	November 10-12.	Sara Haldeman-Scarr
2018.	Hillcrest, La Verne.	November 9-11.	Karen Pierson
2019.	Scottsdale, AZ.	November 8-10.	Bob Morris
2020.	Virtual on the web.	November 9-15.	Mary Kay Ogden
2021.	Virtual on the web.	November 7-14.	Al Clark
2022.	University of La Verne.	November 11-12.	Cheryl Crane
2023.	University of La Verne.	November 10-11.	Judy Minnich Stout
2024.	Prince of Peace, Sacramento.	November 8-9.	Paul Lovelace

Pacific Southwest District – Church of the Brethren

PSWD Board of Administration Chairs District Executive Ministers

	Board Chair	Executive Minister
1964 – 1965.	Jacob T. Dick.	Glen H. Bowlby
1966 – 1967.	Arthur M. Baldwin.	Glen H. Bowlby
1968.	Herbert W. Hogan.	Glen H. Bowlby
1969 – 1971.	Herbert W. Hogan.	R. Truman Northup
1972 – 1973.	Forrest V. Groff.	R. Truman Northup
1974 – 1977.	J. Calvin Keeling.	R. Truman Northup
1978 – 1981.	W. Donald Clague.	R. Truman Northup
1982 – 1983.	S. Loren Bowman.	R. Truman Northup
1984 – 1985.	Marlin Heckman.	Irven & Pattie Stern
1986 – 1989.	James Walters.	Irven & Pattie Stern
1990.	Janice Fralin.	Irven & Pattie Stern
1991.	Roger Richer.	Irven & Pattie Stern
1992.	Todd Hammond.	Irven & Pattie Stern
1993.	Gregg Moser.	Irven & Pattie Stern
1994.	R. Jan Thompson.	Glenn Stanford (<i>interim</i>)
1995.	R. Jan Thompson.	Gene Hipskind
1996.	Tom Bryant.	Gene Hipskind
1997 – 1999.	Jonathan Shively.	Gene Hipskind
2000 – 2001.	Ernest Snyder.	Gene Hipskind
2002.	Sara Haldeman-Scarr.	Gene Hipskind
		Richard Hart (<i>interim</i>)
2003.	Sara Haldeman-Scarr.	Richard Hart (<i>interim</i>)
		Dean Kieffaber (<i>interim</i>)
		Bryan Boyer
2004 – 2006.	Paul Lovelace.	Bryan Boyer
2007.	Jim Davis.	Bryan Boyer
2008.	Bill Johnson.	Bryan Boyer
		Richard Hart (<i>interim</i>)
		Mary Kay Ogden (<i>interim</i>)
		Randy Yoder (<i>interim</i>)
		Don Booz (<i>December</i>)
2009.	Myrna Wheeler / Thomas Dowdy.	Don Booz
2010.	Thomas Dowdy / Don Fancher.	Don Booz
2011 – 2013.	Don Fancher.	Don Booz
2014.	Marye Martinez.	Joe Detrick (<i>interim</i>)
2015 – 2016.	Marye Martinez.	Russ Matteson
2017 – 2021.	Nelda Rhoades Clarke.	Russ Matteson
2022 – 2023.	Erik Brummett.	Russ Matteson
2024.	Jeremiah Irizarry.	Russ Matteson

Prince of Peace Church

7501 Franklin Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95823-3699



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