

Pacific Northwest Conference Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, September 2, 2025

Board Members Present: Sandy Wisecarver, Moderator; Diana Kutas, Treasurer; Morag Stewart; Demontrice Bigham; Ryan Lambert; Kendrick Richardson; Edwin Galeai; Indigo Brown, Past-Moderator; Ron Patterson, Scribe.

Staff: Designated Conference Minister Phil Hodson; Conference Accountant, Andy Warren; Mark Boyd, Camp Director, Pilgrim Firs.

Excused: Talaalemotu “Leilani” Alaelau; Dawn Koloi, Vice-Moderator (Sabbatical); Tevita_Fakasiieike; Leah Atkinson Bilinski; Amy Johnson.

Guests: Wendy Blight

Sandy called us to order, and Phil opened the meeting with a devotional about preaching and traveling around the Conference. His plan for this season is to focus on a particular verse. With Dawn, the Annual meeting planning committee has identified John 1:38: what are you looking for?; ‘where are you staying?’ as the theme scripture for the Annual Meeting. He is struggling with this verse and needs to preach this coming Sunday. He spoke of being led to another passage: Jeremiah 18:1-10, about Jeremiah’s encounter with a potter and God’s word to Jeremiah to watch the potter forming the clay. God is doing work among us in the Conference, leading us and forming us for important work. How will we use the gifts God has given us in the coming days? He led us in prayer

Sandy called us to approve the August minutes. (Moved, Seconded, Passed) It was noted that there is an addendum to the minutes concerning the Board’s approval electronically of those designated to have their signatures on our various accounts. This was also approved.

Financial Reports

Andy presented a summary of the reports found in the advanced materials with comments and answered a few questions. (See below)

Board of Directors Financial Highlights - Operating Results Aug 2025

Cost Center	F26 YTD Actuals	F26 YTD Budget	F25 YTD Actuals	Total Year FY26 Fcst	Total Year FY 26 Budget	Total Year FY 25 Actuals
Revenue						
Conference Min.	\$ 98,395	\$ 96,459	\$ 110,903	\$ 476,600	\$ 476,600	\$ 525,714
Pilgrim Firs	\$ 479,123	\$ 407,877	\$ 412,972	\$ 866,200	\$ 867,600	\$ 897,164
Camp N-Sid-Sen	\$ 210,692	\$ 301,788	\$ 270,168	\$ 389,660	\$ 389,660	\$ 378,328
Expenses						
Conference Min.	\$ 137,127	\$ 139,566	\$ 125,106	\$ 536,134	\$ 535,067	\$ 552,294
Pilgrim Firs	\$ 244,474	\$ 241,453	\$ 222,563	\$ 818,635	\$ 815,395	\$ 790,776
Camp N-Sid-Sen	\$ 185,673	\$ 219,017	\$ 217,994	\$ 522,730	\$ 522,730	\$ 477,642
Op. Profit						
Conference Min.	\$	(38,732) \$ (43,107) \$	(14,203) \$	(59,534) \$		(58,467) \$ (26,580)
Pilgrim Firs	\$ 234,649	\$ 166,424	\$ 190,409	\$ 47,565	\$ 52,205	\$ 106,388
Camp N-Sid-Sen	\$ 25,019	\$ 82,771	\$ 52,174		\$ (133,070) \$ (133,070) \$ (99,314)	

Board members are reminded that Andy is always open to receiving calls with our questions and is happy to provide an account review for any of us.

Camp Reports

Mark reported on the summer at **Pilgrim Firs**. The guitar camp was very successful. Several UCC groups had great events. They are still anticipating several repairs. Following a long tradition, on Labor Day, there were no bookings. The staff uses that weekend to bring their families to the camp for R and R. He reminded us that the “camp needs to breathe!”

Groups will be arriving through Fall, and some exciting events are planned for mid-winter.

N-Sid-Sen has been busy. While the numbers are down, some new groups have started. The Warrior Pathh group, who used N-Sid-Sen for the first time, are fine tuning their event. The Family Camp was about the same number as last year and Camp Together numbers were lower. Many leaders jumped in at the last minute. Some illnesses impacted the camp this summer. Upper Crust has ended its time with us and Mark believes a couple with a catering business who belong to the Pullman Church may be able to help us. He believes they might replace Upper Crust. The “90 for 90” celebration was well attended. He invited us, as Board members, to consider contributing.

He is looking for a staff person to become Associate Director at N-Sid-Sen. Randy and Linda have agreed to stay through December. He has been in conversation with them about continuing into next year.

We are in a process that needs to move slowly to make sure it’s done correctly. The Futuring Team, now at work, is looking in depth at who we are and where we are going. This is their task. They are visiting other camp sites.

Conversations continue with partner groups who had stopped using N-Sid-Sen because of various issues. This is an attempt to reestablish connections that were broken. This effort shows considerable signs of success.

DCM Report

Search and call is going well. Phil is about to be back on the road. The question: “Come and See”, from the theme scripture for the Annual meeting, is animating his return to full engagement. He is producing a series of three two-minute videos about what God has been doing in our congregations and in their ministries. These will be posted soon and will be fully shared at the annual meeting.

He invited us to consider the meaning of legacy and the future of our congregations. He spoke about the impact the people of Broadview Church have had. Their members have shared a \$600,000 legacy with the Conference, \$100,000 with the camps and a grant of \$10,000 for the continuing anti-racism work in the Conference. In addition, they gave grants to several other congregations, seeking to mold a vision of ongoing ministry as they ended their journey as a congregation. Phil urged us as a Board and as individuals to find a way to offer thanks for this example of faithfulness and service. He urges the Board to send a letter of appreciation. How we tell this story is important for our future. His full report is in Basecamp, including a copy of the mutual aid pact which has been proposed by the Council of Conference Ministers to the various Conferences. He invited us to review it and to consider affirming it, given the current political situation in our nation. It is included below:

Covenantal Resolution to Establish a Mutual Support Compact among United Church of Christ Conference Ministers in Defense of Ministerial Autonomy, Ecclesial Integrity, and Public Witness

Whereas, Conference Ministers serve as spiritual leaders, public theologians, and institutional stewards, entrusted with guiding the life and witness of the United Church of Christ in their respective regions;

Whereas recent and increasing political incursions, particularly those targeting LGBTQIA+ rights, reproductive justice, racial equity, immigrant communities, and academic freedom, threaten the spiritual, ethical, and public commitments of our congregations and ministries;

Whereas state and national efforts to curtail religious freedom and silence prophetic voices have included legal scrutiny, financial targeting, and legislative actions designed to intimidate or suppress faith-based advocacy;

Whereas the United Church of Christ affirms covenantal relationships rooted in mutual accountability, shared discernment, and collective response to injustice;

Therefore, be it resolved, that any infringement on a Conference's leadership or public ministry intended to intimidate or silence religious voices shall be understood as an infringement on all, calling us to shared witness and tangible support;

Therefore, be it resolved, that we, the undersigned Conference Ministers of the United Church of Christ, commit to establishing a Mutual Support Compact grounded in our shared covenant and common call to justice and compassion;

Therefore, be it resolved, that under this Compact, participating Conference Ministers shall commit appropriate resources—pastoral and communicative—to support any colleague facing political, legal, or public threats to their ministry or leadership;

Therefore, be it further resolved, this Compact shall include coordinated efforts such as: • Shared legal consultation and public response strategies • Pastoral and emotional support for

Conference staff under duress • Joint public witness and theological statements • Legislative and community advocacy in solidarity • Collective discernment and strategic planning when public witness involves risk

Therefore, be it finally resolved, participating Conference Ministers shall convene annually— or as needed—to review, reaffirm, and revise the terms of this Compact, and to remain vigilant in mutual care, strategic readiness, and covenantal solidarity in the face of rising threats to justice, inclusion, and truth in public life.

Signatories to the Mutual Support Compact The following United Church of Christ Conference Ministers have affirmed and accepted this Compact:

• Rev. Dr. Bonnie Bates, Conference Minister, Penn Northwest Conference • Rev. Lynn Bujnak, Conference Minister, Vermont Conference • Rev. Dr. Lorraine Cenicerros, Conference Minister, Kansas-Oklahoma Conference • Rev. Tyler Connoley, Conference Minister, Central Pacific Conference • Rev. Erin Gilmore, Conference Minister, Rocky Mountain Conference • Rev. Darrell Goodwin, Southern New England Conference • Rev. Dr. Marisa Laviola, Conference Minister, Maine Conference • Rev. Dr. David Long-Higgins, Conference Minister, Heartland Conference • Rev. Mary Nelson, Conference Minister, Missouri Mid-South Conference • Rev. Kim Wood, Conference Minister, Southwest Conference

After discussion, Sandy called for a motion to approve the compact. It was moved, seconded, and passed.

Liaison Reports

There were none.

Sandy asked for a volunteer to become the new liaison to the Outdoor Ministry Group. Ryan Lambert volunteered.

Fund Raising Request

Phil, with Indigo, described an upcoming Fund-raising event, “Faith in the Time of Monsters,” being held to support the work of the Center for Faith, Art and Justice, which is in a local United Methodist Congregation. The funds raised will support their work in non-violence education. Cornell West will be speaking.

After discussion it was, moved, seconded and passed to become a sponsor of this event with a gift of \$2,000.

Resolution Deadline for the Annual Meeting, 2026

After discussion, it was moved, seconded, passed to set January 11, 2026, as the deadline for receiving resolutions to be considered at the Annual Meeting in 2026. This will provide ample time for Board review. It is understood that the deadline may be extended for resolutions of a more immediate nature.

Annual Meeting 2026 Planning Update

Sandy and Phil reported on the progress toward planning the Annual Meeting. Michigan Conference Minister and author, Lillian Daniel will be our keynote speaker. The Theme, based on John 1:28 will be "Come and See". The committee is seeking a logo and hope to plan a youth service for Friday night. The committee is working hard, meeting every other Monday. Sandy invited other Board members to consider joining the planning team. The Annual Meeting will be held at the Double Tree Suites at South Center near SeaTac.

Board Retreat October 3-5, 2025, Pilgrim Firs

Sandy reminded us that Board members are expected to attend this retreat which will focus on community building, by-law review and planning.

DCM Evaluation Forms

Ryan Lambert reminded the Board that the evaluation forms for the DCM will be circulated in the next few days to those identified by the Personnel Committee.

St Paul's UCC, Ballard Anniversary

They are planning a special celebration of their 120th Anniversary as a congregation, 40 years of Recovery Ministry and 30 years being Open and Affirming on Sunday, October 5 at 5:15 pm. The Rev. Darrell Goodwin and the Rev. Dr. Courtney Stange-Tregear will be the speakers for the event. The Conference has purchased seats and Phil hopes several Board members might attend.

By-law Revision Discussion

This is a further discussion by the Board that will continue at our upcoming retreat. Once again, Board members are reminded that we need to review the draft provided. Some comments already received from Board members have been referred on to Cameron Sharp for his consideration.

Ron welcomed Wendy Blight, who with Ron, has been assisting Cameron Sharp. Cameron has taken the lead in writing a new Constitution and Bylaws for the Conference.

Wendy, Ron and Phil had reviewed the suggestions a few Board members had made and presented a summary of their thoughts.

1. Possible revisions proposed by Diana with input from Andy on the Finance and Stewardship Committee and the nature of how reports are generated.

Suggestion: That Diana and Andy tweak this section of the Bylaws and forward their revisions to Wendy and Ron citing line numbers.

2. Should we eliminate Areas and substitute a Board that is broadly representative of a variety of Conference congregations that are geographically diverse and inclusive in a manner that follows the National UCC Board of Directors?

Suggestion: There appeared to be consensus on the elimination of Areas with the understanding that small congregations be represented on the Board. There was some questions whether 50% of Board members be persons of color or LGBTQ+ or differently abled. This needs further discussion.

3. Should the taskforces and committees working on programmatic, missional and justice efforts on behalf of the Conference be included in an Appendix to the Bylaws? These groups carry the transformational ministries of the Conference as we seek to live into who we are called to be as the UCC. These groups perform work on behalf of the Conference and our local congregations and lead us to become more involved.

The current revised by-laws include the standing committees of the Conference which do the work of the Conference as an institution. This includes the Board, the Committee On Ministry, Nominating, Stewardship and Finance, Committee on Local Church (formerly Church Development) and Personnel (It was suggested that this group be called Human Resources.)

Suggestion: That the Board express their consensus on this proposal. Should some reference be added to **Article 6** referring to an appendix where missional committees and taskforces are listed? That the Personnel Committee (**Lines 395-401**) be renamed The Human Resources Committee. **That lines 402-406** be given a heading indicating that they refer to an annual leadership planning event.

4. That the revised By-laws should not designate the Nominating Committee as the Search Committee for a new CM. (**Line 379 seems to be contradicted by line 543**).

Suggestion: That the Board constitute a search committee made up of Board members and others they would appoint and that the search committee bring a candidate to the Board who would then present that candidate to a Conference meeting for election. There seemed to be consensus on this. This would necessitate a major revision of **lines 379-385** and an addition to **543 ff** concerning the Board's role in the Search for a CM.

5. Should the CM be a voting member of the Board?

Suggestion: After discussion, with Phil and the Board weighing in against this idea, there was consensus that the CM not be a voting member of the Board, but Ex officio with voice but not vote, on all committees of the Conference. Add "Ex Officio with voice but not vote" to **line 458**. There needs to be an addition to **Article 10** indicating that the CM has voice without voting on all committees/taskforces of the Conference.

6. There was some confusion about whether the proposed by-laws will empower the Board to remove the CM from the Board or other committees? (Scribe's note: I could not find the line in the proposed by-laws where this is referenced, help!) If it is there, it needs to be removed.

Board members were asked to review the suggestions above and to be prepared at the retreat for full work through the Constitution and By-laws.

It was moved, seconded passed to enter executive session.

The purpose of the Executive session was to continue to prepare for the review of the ICM.

It was moved, seconded, passed to leave executive session.

Sandy prayed us out.

Next scheduled meeting: Tuesday, October 7, 2025 at 6:30 pm This meeting will be subject to the call of the Moderator, since we will have been together for our retreat on the previous weekend.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Patterson, Scribe

