

Pacific Northwest Conference Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, February 3, 2026

Board Members Present: Sandy Wisecarver, Moderator; Dawn Koloj, Vice-Moderator; Diana Kutas, Treasurer; Morag Stewart; Ron Patterson, Scribe; Leah Atkinson Bilinski; Amy Johnson; Ryan Lambert.

Staff: Designated Conference Minister Phil Hodson; Conference Accountant, Andy Warren; Mark Boyd, Executive Director, PNC Outdoor Ministries.

Absent: Talaalemotu “ Leilani” Alaelau; Demontrice Bigham; Edwin Galea’i; Indigo Brown, Past-Moderator; Kendrick Richardson; Tevita_Fakasiieike.

Excused:

Sandy called us to order, and Dawn opened the meeting with a brief embodied meditation. She said that when we feel negative things welling up in our bodies, we need to deal with them in creative ways. She led us in relaxation exercises. She reminded us that when the righteous cry for help, the Lord rescues and saves. She spoke with great power about overcoming the painful things she experienced during her sabbatical and since, including the loss of her beloved mother and the heart attack of her son and her need to suddenly become a caregiver for her grandchildren. The meditation continued as she shared the hymn “Kum by yah” as a litany of hope in the face of the losses she has experienced. She remembered that this hymn has its origin among the enslaved and its power to offer hope to all. This hope is powerful and as she sang, she called us to remember those separated from their loved ones by the actions of ICE against immigrants and those in detention here and around the nation. She offered thanks to all who traveled to Minnesota and to our leaders, particularly for our DCM, and for the people of our 85 congregations. She reminded us that we are part of a community of connection. She concluded with a prayer for our nation and offered thanks to the Board for their support in the last months.

Minutes

It was moved, seconded and passed to approve the minutes of January 6, 2026, including the two posted addendums to the meeting minutes that reflected electronic votes.

Financial Report

Andy called our attention to the extensive reports posted in Basecamp, including the Board highlight summary report for December 2025. He invited questions and then

summarized the financial picture for our three main cost centers: Conference Ministries, Pilgrim Firs and N-Sid-Sen.

Conference Ministries revenue is \$267,467 vs. expenses YTD of \$399,962 or a deficit of (\$72,495).

Pilgrim Firs revenue is \$702,611 vs. expenses YTD of \$514,435 or a profit of \$188,176.

N-Sid-Sen revenue is \$387,957 vs. expenses YTD of \$271,292 or a profit of \$116,665.

January reports will be posted soon.

Undesignated funds have all had gains this year. He noted that he will draw some of these dollars in the coming months.

When asked about reduced revenue for OCWM, he responded that giving from local congregations was down, Giving Tuesday income was weaker, and Friends of the Conference was not supported as well as it had been in the past.

With gratitude for his good work, the Board acknowledged Andy's recent surgery and offered thanks for his presence. He is glad to be here.

Camps Report

Mark called out attention to the extensive written reports he had placed in base camp, inviting Board members to read them and then, he summarized:

N-Sid-Sen

Given the recent storm and the damage done, N-Sid-Sen has been a whirlwind of activity. Volunteers have been present almost continually. A major gift from a single family (\$50,000) has enabled the repair of the damaged roof on Forester. This is an anonymous gift, but Mark will send a letter of thanks. Spirit lodge is back to normal.

Pilgrim Firs

Very busy! There has been a staff change, but they have picked up the pieces and are moving forward. They will be doing some hiring. A busy stretch is coming. The Men's retreat welcomed 61 men from 21 difference congregations with 3 guests from CPC. University Congregational had just under a hundred for their Woman's retreat. He is thankful for the way people are connecting.

In his role as Executive Director, Mark reported on several projects. He will be working closely with Randy and partner groups who use N-Sid-Sen to strengthen and reestablish relationships. He has been working with a few mental health professionals connected to the Conference to work on ways to be more proactive with campers who have special needs.

He has posted the site manager job at N-Sid-Sen. He will keep the Board updated on this process.

Mark noted that it is always important to offer words of thanks to those who, like Randy and Linda Crowe, give so much to our camps. We discussed this concern and reminded ourselves that giving thanks is something we all need to do. Mark invited us to keep him in the loop when we offer words of thanks

Designated Conference Minister Report

Inviting us to read his full written report in basecamp, Phil reported that we now have a Conference YouTube channel which has all the Come and See videos.

We no longer have any congregations in Search and Call!

We have five congregations with committees in formation.

His schedule is booked through April, with several installations coming. He reviewed his travel. He celebrated the vitality of the Men's retreat group.

He reported on CDC's event at Fautleroy.

There is energy around people coming together.

He invited us to help support and invite support for scholarships to bring youth from Alaska. We need to make this happen. As Board members we are called to ask for gifts as Ambassador's on behalf of the Conference. Don't forget to register!

What is he dwelling on? He was notified late last night that ICE has shown up in one of our church's parking lot. Call him right away if this happens to our congregation. What do we do about it?

Leah noted that she is unaware of members who register for Conference events as participants. How can local churches get this feedback?

She noted that the Annual meeting registration process, particularly for the housing, made it hard for youth leaders to conform to the safe church policy. She found a work-around, but Phil emailed Beth to make sure the hotel would facilitate this.

He noted that the deadline for registration is February 8.

Mark reported that we currently have 147 registered. (15 online)

Asked about only staying away for one night, Phil noted that it had saved money and that since we are near Seattle, many pastors will return home to preach. Those delegates staying the second night will be invited to visit local congregations for worship.

Liaison Reports

Morag has been in touch with Ron Green, Global Ministries DOC co-chair, who has asked that the UCC designate a UCC cochair so this committee can gather. Morag will report this need to the nominating committee.

Leah reported on JWM. Given the lack of interest currently shown, we will await further information after the Conference meeting.

MRC needs a liaison. Dawn volunteered to be liaison for MRC! Thank you, Dawn! Sandy will notify MRC

Outdoor ministries—Ryan reported that they are working on camp reservations and Director training, which begins on Feb. 21. The three-hour training will be recorded so those not present can participate.

By-Law Revision

We have had six listening sessions which offered the opportunity to offer possible edits and additions and comments about the proposed Constitution and By-laws. The information gathered has been collected and shared with Cameron as he prepared two additional editions of the document. The thirteenth edition will be the one circulated to delegates for their consideration at the Annual meeting.

Ron and Morag, with help from Cameron Sharp and Wendy Blight are preparing a document which reviews the lengthy process through which the proposed Constitution and Bylaws have gone. This document needs to be circulated with advance materials. It contains a brief history and a list of those who offered comments and suggestions during the six hearings. We need a hearing at the Annual meeting. Cameron will be there and Dawn volunteered to attend as well.

Minnesota Trip:

Leah and Amy shared some of their experiences during this intense time of pilgrimage and engagement. People were defiantly hopeful, standing up together and creating their own reality. People were so generous. They realized that there is so much we can do for one another. An amazing diversity of people were involved. People put ego aside and worked together. This is about ICE—but also about how we are called to be community together. So often we have failed to show up well for one another. We need to come together with defiant hope. This will help our spirits and knit us together to face what will come our way here. They shared possible practical applications and urged us all to receive training. One organization they mentioned was “States at the Core” and posted a link.

Everyone has a job. Baking cookies—providing comfort. Finding ways to feed the spirit during the trials. Things are happening here. They urged us to do Ice Watch training and communicate on secure networks. Board needs to do this training. Eleven PNC clergy answered the call within 48 hours. They prepared final letters. Bob Feeney shared his with Westminster. It is also helpful to do deescalation training. One important message that was shared: “Be a we, not an I”. Get to know your neighbors!

Search Committee Update

After the withdrawal of one of the selected members, we reviewed those who had responded positively and considered other potential people. After discussion, Lauralee Sorenson was suggested and we agreed. She was contacted during our meeting and she agreed to serve.

Here is the Committee: (Revised Feb 5, 2026)

The Rev. Cameron Sharp, chair

The Rev. Bianca Davis-Lovelace

Iva Galea'I , was unable to serve. May Alaelua was asked and agreed to serve

The Rev. Ann-Marie Illsley

Tyler Torres'

The Rev. Dee Eisenhauer

Lauralee Sorenson

Kendrick has agreed to be the Board liaison for the Search committee.

Annual Meeting Board Gathering

We agreed to meet directly following the annual meeting at 5:00 pm on March 14, 2026. We will meet in dining area of the Hotel for dinner together. We will set dates for the Spring and Fall Board retreats. All Board members need to be present for this gathering.

Annual Meeting 2027

After discussion, we set tentative times for the 2027 Annual Meeting: March 12-13, 2027. It was agreed to make an initial investigation and contact with the venue of the 2026 gathering. It may be possible to save considerable costs by agreeing to a longer contract with a particular venue. This possibility will be investigated by Phil.

Miscellaneous:

Discussion ensued concerning the terms of Board members. It was noted that Leilani's term is ending and that she needs to be replaced. It is possible that some Board members may end their term to allow for greater diversity on the Board or that other Board members who have been unable to participate might end their terms. Various options were discussed including the importance of having full participation.

We need to tell people about the times when we are meeting before they are asked. How do we meet our aspirational goals around inclusiveness? Do we need to change the time of our meetings?

How do we implement a new set of by-laws if they pass? We need to have people ready to go whether the new by-laws pass or not.

It was noted that we did work on Board job descriptions which are in basecamp.

What is the role of the Board of Directors? Governance, not operational. This lives in our polity. We need to boil that down to a few sentences.

A suggestion was made to work on a behavioral covenant for the Conference.

Ron closed the meeting with prayer.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 3, 2026 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Patterson, Scribe.

Addendum

On February 18, the Board received a lengthy communication from Phil on Basecamp concerning the decision by members of the Columbia Lakewood congregation, a UCC-Brethren congregation concerning their closure and their decision to return the property to the two denominations for sale. Their constitution states that in the event of dissolution, the proceeds will be split 50/50 between the two denominational judicatory bodies.

There appears to be a potential buyer and the Brethren executive, with authority from the members of the congregation, has taken leadership on this. Phil asked how we wished to proceed? After discussion in Basecamp and clarification it **was moved, seconded and passed** to empower Phil to proceed. If the sale proceeds, this may yield \$600,000. If the deal does not go through, there may be more possibilities, and further action may be needed.

