

Pacific Northwest Conference Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, November 4, 2025

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

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

Excused: Talaalemotu “ Leilani” Alaelau; Dawn Koloï, Vice-Moderator (Sabbatical); Tevita_Fakasiieike; Edwin Galeai; Demontrice Bigham; Indigo Brown, Past-Moderator.

Heartfelt sympathy to Dawn on the passing of her mother in Samoa. Dawn is with family tonight in Samoa.

Sandy called us to order, and Amy opened the meeting with a devotional. Amy introduced us to Kiwi, her new rescue pup. She reminded us of how challenging things are in our world; especially concerning justice issues. She shared a video of the song: “This Joy That I Have” which enlivened the opening of our meeting and brought joy to our gathering. She invited us to share things that the world cannot take away from us.

Sandy called for the approval of the minutes of September (Moved, Seconded, Passed) and the October retreat minutes, which had been a Board meeting. (Moved, Seconded, Passed)

Andy offered financial updates and a review of the reports which he had shared in Basecamp. Pilgrim Firs and N-Sid-Sen are doing better than budget and Conference ministries worse. This is mainly because the new Registrar/Administrator began sooner than expected. He particularly noted the forecast for the coming months. Conference Ministries will be about \$40,000 worse than budget. Digitalization has been a drag on budget. Both camps exceed expectations. His full report is in Basecamp for Board review. He took questions. He noted that \$25,000 is the expected cost of the digitalization of our records.

In response to a question, Andy replied that some recent benevolent gifts were not designated. At present, they are held apart from the operating budget, but the Board can decide to cover other items with these funds, if necessary. The Broadview gift, for example, was not designated. The annual increase in UCC health premiums will be posted soon. The N-Sid-Sen numbers are a pleasant surprise.

Camp Report

Mark posted several reports in Basecamp.

Mark reported a variety of positive items from our churches and their involvement with the camps. The pastor at Pullman (Mike Bass) has energized his congregation to get involved at N-Sid-Sen. Mark reported on new and returning business at N-Sid-Sen. A new 'queer camp' is beginning. Lady of the Lake—a Dance group that has been a key partner at N-Sid-Sen, is transitioning to a new group that will be sponsoring additional events at N-Sid-Sen. Bookings are returning to pre-covid levels! Pilgrim Firs is having work done on their cooler and they also replaced one piece of refrigeration equipment. Mark highlighted some other maintenance issues and updated staffing changes. Mark and Zac will be attending a national event for Camp Directors soon.

Designated Conference Minister Report

Phil celebrated the members of his staff and their work during the 20 months he has been with us. He thanked them and offered examples of their outstanding work and the presence of the Holy among them and then thanked God for the many ways they have served and are serving. He is pleased with Beth and her service and the way she is fitting in. Arlene continues to gift us with her faithfulness. He urged us to find ways to thank our staff.

He directed us to his written report. We have only one church in active search and have welcomed three new pastors. We are getting candidates. His calendar is full! He is having a great time, especially with our congregations on the east side. He offered a gentle reminder that we can come with him on any of his visits to local congregations. He is excited about his visit to Horizon House and invited us to join him to be an active presence as a Board. He will be helping lead the Men's retreat. What is the role of men in the church today? He asked us to suggest churches for him to visit.

He is also thinking about our proposed Constitution and by-laws, which is now in their 10th edition. These by-laws and the Constitution tell a story of our call to faithfulness. He celebrated the effort which shown. He thanked Cameron and the others involved.

He offered a report on his time in Washington DC with the Council of Conference Ministers. He thanked us for the time away and celebrated what he experienced. Congressional staff people welcomed the postcards and words of encouragement the CMs' brought with them. The CMs' experienced people who appreciated our ministry. Phil spoke of a moving experience of prayer with a member of the House of Representatives. He urged us to keep praying and stay focused. He reminded us of our call to keep the stories coming. What is at the heart of advocacy work? Relationships and the stories of real people. We understand the power of story. Listen to stories and encourage others to share. Translate them into postcards and letters. Our voices matter. We can change the world. This is our story.

He talked about the possibility of having interns from William Barber's program. He will bring us more information on this media justice possibility.

We now have the 10th draft of the proposed Constitution and By-laws that is currently being reviewed by the UCC General Counsel. It is for us to plan the best way to share this draft with the Conference.

He concluded by noting that our staff is doing well and that we as a Board are doing good work. He thanked us and he is excited to see what comes next. He welcomed our questions.

Diana reported on an ICE arrest and justice response by pastors in Issaquah, including pastor Jen from the Issaquah congregation, who, in response, organized with other community leaders and took action with the City Council to help defend local residents. She will post the information and with Phil will connect to the PNC news to share, hoping that other congregations will find ways to engage.

Liaison Reports

Morag reported on the Global Ministries Committee on a Westminster visit from two missionaries.

Ryan reported on Outdoor Ministries. They are working on plans for training Directors and assisting staff to prepare for next summer in the best possible way.

Leah checked on Justice and Witness Ministries. They have four chairs and those newly selected for the committee have not been engaged. The current co-chairs are announcing the dissolution of Justice and Witness ministries. Most have withdrawn. The committee is depopulated. Leah asked how we move forward. They have asked to meet with MRC. Leah will continue to stay in the loop. There are clearly different understandings of the Conference and what it is. Leah will meet with them again and attempt to find a way to find closure with them.

Credit Union Account

Andy asked to open a small account with the new UCC Credit Union, as a possible solution to our difficulty in opening accounts for the day-to-day business of the Conference. It was (Moved, Seconded, Passed) to establish an account in the amount of \$50,000. Diana will work on the best way to establish the bank accounts necessary for the work of the Conference.

We began a discussion about the best way to introduce the new Constitution and Bylaws.

Sandy reported on a gathering for clergy in northern area of the Conference. Morag volunteered to work on an eastside introduction.

At this point we are not asking for editorial input, but rather reactions and concerns people might have.

We began to share ideas:

As you see how the Conference will order itself, how do you see yourself in this document?

If we are going to have a series of meetings, we need a similar format. A series of talking points. We talked about an outline.

Leah noted that we need to have some talking points as we present the new bylaws. We need to talk about it in the correct way.

What are the talking points. Phil asked Sandy how she had done it.

A focus group. A goal statement for what we hope to accomplish? We need to speak with one mind.

Why did the bylaws need revision?

What items have significantly changed and why?

Why are the standing committees fewer than in the present bylaws?

How do these bylaws both empower us and create healthy boundaries?

What are our goals with these bylaws?

We can be out front of General Counsel review.

We can do it in the first week of December. So much we need to do is story telling. Phil will invite people, noting that the clergy of color who had advocated for some of the changes, can help tell this story. The quotas in the new bylaws are aspirational.

Bylaw meetings

Put the bylaws and cover letter out on November 14th Friday in the weekly news. Follow this up with a dedicated email focused on the bylaws.

Board Members need to be familiar with these as well.

We will make this happen. **Sandy** will prepare a letter. **Leah** will prepare talking points.

We will send out the 10th edition. Then invite people to one of three zoom presentations:

Wednesday, December 3 at 1:00 pm and 6:30 pm. Ron can attend these.

Monday December 15th at 6:30 pm Kendrick can attend this one.

Board members should attend all three if possible!

After the staff, except for Andy, were dismissed, it was (moved, seconded, passed) to enter an **Executive Session of the Board**

The first purpose of the Executive session was to review some options for the budget for the coming year, which Andy and Diana had been asked to prepare.

A second purpose was to continue to review the performance review of the Intentional Conference Minister. This was led by Ryan, the chairperson of the Personnel Committee.

It was (Moved, seconded, passed) to leave Executive session.

It was agreed to gather the Board for an Executive Session on Monday, November 17, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. Ryan promised the Board a fuller review of data by the coming Monday, given some of the questions that had been raised. In addition, Ryan will review the surveys with Phil as soon as possible. All Board members are urged to attend this special meeting.

Amy led us in prayer after a very long meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Paterson, Scribe

Special Executive Session Board Meeting, Monday November 17 @ 6:30 PM

Next Regular Board Meeting, Tuesday, December 2 @ 6:30 PM