

## **Board Minutes 05\_05\_26**

### **Pacific Northwest Conference Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, May 5, 2026**

**Board Members Present:** Sandy Wisecarver, Moderator; Dawn Koloi, Vice-Moderator; Diana Kutas, Treasurer; Morag Stewart; Ron Patterson, Scribe; Leah Atkinson Bilinski; Amy Johnson; Ryan Lambert; Tevita\_Fakasiieike; Demontrice Bigham; Edwin Galeai; Melanie Childers.

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

**Guest:** Cindy Bauleke, Chair COM West; Jenn Hagedorn, Nominating Committee

**Absent:**

**Excused:**

Sandy, our Moderator, called us to order and invited Phil to lead devotions. He invited us into a place of peacefulness as he recalled his time among us. His efforts have been aimed at faithfulness, and he celebrates the positive movement in the Conference. Connections and conversations are happening. Relationships are being strengthened. There has been a lot of showing up for one another. This matters! We are spread out in so many ways, not just geographically! We must put relationships first. He is thankful for each conversation and every moment and mile of our shared journey. Together, we have been involved in holy work. He urged us, going forward, not to listen to the loudest voices, but to listen to the whole family—all the churches, visible and invisible. Our task is to respond to what is being asked of us now and in the months ahead. This will require courage to hear and imagination. It will require discipline. Be idealistic and practical—the gospel is always both: vision and systems, belonging and budgets! We need to nurture staff and offer support to the Conference that makes belonging real. He invited us to embrace a simple invitation. As we act as a Board, listen and let what we hear shape what we do. Be faithful! And let the Spirit of God continue to speak through all our congregations. He thanked us for the shared journey and for our partnership. He then led us in prayer, thanking God for the Spirit's movement.

**Sandy called on Jenn, chair of the Nominating Committee.** She comes seeking Board guidance about the changes mandated by the new Bylaws.

She asked three questions:

1. What is the status of the groups that were formerly Committees and are now Intentional Committees and Task Forces? (Article 6, line 429f)
2. How should we transition from two-year terms to the new three-year terms. The old Bylaws mandated up to three two-year terms with a different term for officers. The new Bylaws provide a maximum of two three-year terms. Officers can serve a longer term. (Article 8)
3. How should the Nominating Committee interpret the 'aspirational goal' (Article 10) that at least one third of the Board and officers of the Conference will be comprised of members from the BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ community and Disability communities What is the metric and how should the realization that not all diversities are visible?

Jenn noted that the Bylaws contain the stipulation that if the committee/Board does not meet the goal—the places will remain empty? Does this mean that we should hold open positions and should Nominating Committee invite people to step back if they are not inclusive?

### **Question One**

Several Board members engaged with this question, noting that the Board had left this part of the Bylaws vague. The understanding was that Conference members would be encouraged to organize around areas of interest and vitality.

After discussion, a consensus emerged to ask the Nominating Committee to identify and staff the existing and emerging Intentional Committees and Taskforces. The Board needs to provide oversight and appoint a liaison. The Board needs to know what is happening. These intentional committees should strive toward the inclusiveness mandated for the Standing Committees.

It was suggested that a document with guidelines for intentional committees and taskforces could be prepared.

We marked this for discussion at our up-coming retreat. Oversight is part of our fiduciary duty.

**Question 2** Jenn has suggestions about transitioning our terms and Morag has met with a member of Jenn's committee to review a proposal. This too will be reviewed at our upcoming retreat.

**Question 3** will also be reviewed at the upcoming retreat.

Jenn left the meeting with the Board's thanks.

**The Moderator asked us to review and approve the minutes of the April 7, 2026, meeting. (Moved, Seconded, Passed)**

### **Financial Reports**

Sandy called on Conference Accountant, Andy Warren, to review our financial reports. He called the Board's attention to the summaries posted in Basecamp, noting that a more complete summary will be posted in the next few days. He invited our questions.

Fiscal Year to Date **Conference Ministries** income was \$446,354, expenses were \$510,735 for a FYTD deficit of \$44,381 which is less than the projected deficit.

Fiscal Year to Date **N-Sid-Sen** income was \$442,092, expenses were \$356,343 for a FYTD profit of \$85,749. This is ahead of projection.

Fiscal Year to Date **Pilgrim Firs** income was \$941,705 expenses were \$786,131 for a FYTD profit of \$155,574. This is ahead of projection.

He applied some of the draw from our Endowment funds this month with more to be applied in the coming month. He had delayed this because of market conditions. Complete financial records appear in base camp. The gift received at N-Sid-Sen continues to be applied toward the repairs of Forester Lodge.

### **Camp Reports**

The Moderator called on Mark Boyd, Executive Director for Outdoor Ministries. Mark noted that his written reports were available in Basecamp.

They are interviewing for seasonal staff. Right now, he is working toward hiring a staff person in the maintenance area. The camp is so busy that there are few extended times to complete necessary maintenance.

He reported on the success of the 'give back' work camps and commended several congregations.

He spent time recently at N-Sid-Sen to cover for our amazing volunteers, Randy and Linda Crowe. He reported on the continuing progress of rebuilding our client base at N-Sid-Sen.

A significant relationship is evolving with members of the Coeur d'Alene tribe. Mary Stamp helped Mark get in touch with the tribe. They are committed to the stewardship of the land and have met with Mark to get acquainted. Mark has learned that it might be possible that N-Sid-Sen as a name means: "the place where I lay my head and wake inspired" in the Coeur d'Alene language. This relationship with the tribe has the potential to generate many possibilities. For example: Signs in the Coeur d'Alene

language and cooperation around land stewardship might develop. The possibility of language classes was mentioned.

Cindy Bauleke, guest, and Chair of the COM west, commended Mark on the post-Easter clergy retreats!

Mark reported that conversations are taking place around the new laws in Idaho about restrooms and gender. The Board needs to discuss this bathroom law and perhaps engage the state in some way. **We need to discuss this at the retreat.**

Phil pointed out that laws like these are very broadly written and that they have limited impact in cases where the restrooms are not open to the public. Issues were raised about religious freedom and the free exercise of that freedom and that the laws might provide an avenue for witness to our values and living into our welcome. Through our CM we have access to the UCC General Counsel who is a good source of information on these questions.

### **DCM Report**

His last trip as our DCM is coming up. He will be in Pullman for Mike Bass's installation, preaching in Wallace, and spending some time in Spokane. He will have one more visit to N-Sid-Sen. He will also attend the special on-line meeting of the General Synod next Saturday, called to elect the Associate General Minister. His time with us has been a blast! He will share some reflections later in the meeting.

### **Liaison Check-In**

Edwin reported on the Committee on Local Church (COLC). They are updating their website information. They appreciate learning the fund request process. At present they are working with two Samoan churches (One in Seattle and one in Tacoma) interested in joining the Conference.

Phil noted that this committee needs to become a direct source of information for congregations in the Conference. He reminded the Board that the new Manual on Local Church needs to be approved by the Conference in an Annual Meeting. It might be possible for the COCL to lead a series of introductions to the Manual in the coming months.

Question: Have we ever had sponsor churches for those congregations newly joining? Dawn noted that in her time on the committee, when a new church joined, they partner up. This has not always happened, but the committee is currently doing this.

## **Acting Conference Minister Election**

Acting on the unanimous recommendation of the Executive Committee, the Board, gathered for an interview with a potential candidate on April 21, 2026. After the interview, the Board reached a consensus on the candidate but delayed formal action until the regular meeting date.

**After discussion, it was moved, seconded, and passed** to hire the agreed upon candidate. Since the staff were present and since the candidate had requested anonymity pending notification of their current employer, the individual's name was not disclosed at this time.

The Personnel Committee will complete a simple contract and negotiate the terms of the call.

The ACM will begin work on June 1 and will be able to be present for the Board retreat on June 5 and 6 at Fauntleroy Church. We will share dinner on Friday night at a local restaurant and then work Saturday beginning at 9:00 am. Board members should arrange their own transportation and room reservations using the hotel where we met for the Conference Annual Meeting. (Hilton Doubletree 16500 Southcenter Parkway, Seattle) Local Board members will provide rides. There is a budget for Board expenses to cover travel and hospitality.

**The Board agreed that we will still have our regular meeting on Tuesday, June 2, 2026.**

## **CM Search Committee Replacement**

After discussion, we agreed to ask the Rev. Warren Johnson from Forks to fill the vacancy on the CM search committee. Ron will call him. It was moved, seconded, passed to invite the Rev. Johnson to become a member of the search committee.

## **Pilgrim Firs Council of Stewards**

Mark presented an idea for a council of Stewards for Pilgrim Firs. This council will include some of our partners, a Board member, and other interested persons. He noted that a similar council will be suggested for N-Sid-Sen when their new director is hired.

The following is the document Mark presented to the Board:

### **Pilgrim Firs Council of Stewards**

When camps were single focused, they opened for the summer and ran summer camp for denominational youth, it made sense for sites to receive guidance only from a board of directors and a conference minister. Today sites have a year-round multi-faceted ministry. They

collaborate with other faiths and non-profits, and steward sacred ground for future generations. The Council of Stewards would exist to reflect an invitational model of wider engagement.

As a first step, Pilgrim Firs will “grow” its own Council of Stewards and include not only conference folk but also major partners, as well as local folk with expertise in the community.

### **Council make up**

- Executive Director of Outdoor Ministry
- Pilgrim Firs Site Manager
- PNCUCC Board Member
- Local Church member(s)
- Leader(s) from major Partner group(s)
- Construction tradesperson
- Outdoor Ministry representative
- Youth representative
- PNC UCC Stewardship committee member.
- Conference Minister is invited to attend

### **Meetings**

- At least 1x yearly on site
- Monthly via zoom (excluding July & August)
- Following the PNCUCC Constitution and Bylaws, members would serve up to two consecutive three-year terms

### **The Role of the Council**

- The role is to work directly with the Executive Director and the Pilgrim Firs Site Manager.
- Providing input and oversight on the operations at the camp, by asking the tough question of “why?” with experience and expertise.
- Clearly articulate the mission of the camp, keeping it in the forefront of the work.
- Review and advise recommendations coming from the Executive Director

- Explore new streams of revenue that align with the PNCUCC values.
- Report to the PNCUCC Board of Directors through the BOD representative.
- Support the ongoing work of the camp within the community it resides in.
- Respond quickly and appropriately to future needs that may arise.
- Seek out paths to sustainability to ensure the camps are viable into the future.

Mark noted that this is a draft proposal for a group to advise on the running of the camp. He believes this is a way for our camps to continue to thrive and to engage a broader group of people in helping that to happen. Board oversight will continue and our fiduciary role will continue as well. This will be a group making recommendations on the care and the guidance of the properties.

The Board noted that the CM will be an ex-officio member of this group. This proposal will be revised and presented again next month. Mark invited Board members to comment.

### **Staff Proposal**

Phil reported that things are going well with Beth. He is proposing that we extend her hours to full-time beginning in 2027. Her shared work with the Central Pacific Conference will end at that point. This has been negotiated with them, and they agree with this possibility. This will result in some budget consequences. After discussion, the Board agreed to review this at the next meeting with the understanding that the CM has the authority to do this hiring within the budget. Phil will provide a proposal for our consideration.

### **Columbia Lakewood Church**

Some months ago (February 18, 2026), Phil reported on a contact he had received from Howard Ullery, an executive leader of the Church of the Brethren area judicatory, concerning what had been the Columbia Lakewood Church in Seattle, a joint UCC/CoB congregation. This congregation had decided to close sometime before this contact and the CoB regional group undertook the sale of the property. Their polity, unlike UCC polity, keeps building ownership with the denomination.

This contact led to lengthy communication with them and with our Board. Phil acted on our behalf to seek legal advice from UCC General Counsel, Heather Kimmel and from a local land attorney who had represented us in the past.

When this CoB/UCC congregation was formed, a CoB congregation united with a UCC congregation. The UCC congregation sold its building and brought the proceeds of that sale into the life of the merged congregation. The CoB building became the merged congregation's home. Based on the appraised value of the Brethren building at that time and the money from the sale of the UCC congregation building, the by-laws of the merged congregation specified that if the congregation ever dissolved, 3/8 of the net proceeds would go to the CoB judicatory and 5/8 of the net proceeds would be given to the Pacific Northwest Conference of the UCC.

In the months since this first contact, many questions have been asked by Board members. Answers were sometimes slow in coming, but when we were contacted in February, the sale of the property to another church was almost an accomplished fact, something the CoB had the right to do.

### **Exhibit #1 A letter from the Brethren Executives**

April 10, 2026

Dear Colleagues of the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Church of Christ,

As the District Executive Team of the Pacific Northwest District Church of the Brethren, we (Debbie Roberts, Howard Ullery and Lani Wright) are writing partly to inform you of the recent sale of the Columbia Lakewood Community Church property, a dually aligned UCC/CoB congregation, and partly to invite a discussion regarding the proceeds of the sale of that property.

Howard has been in touch with Conference Minister Phil Hodson regarding the formal dissolution of the congregation after membership dwindled due to death and illness. We had conflict with the congregation who had been renting the building and who later assumed ownership because the keys were given to them by the last remaining attender of the Columbia Lakewood congregation. He was willing to sign the Columbia Lakewood congregation's bank account over to the renting congregation as well. The Pacific Northwest District Church of the Brethren became involved when the son of Columbia Lakewood's former treasurer, Bev Denton, expressed his concern in a call to us (as well as to PNWCUCC, he said). Our district leadership had a number of conversations with him, Mark Denton, and for the past year and a half, our CoB district (PNWD) has had several meetings with the renting congregation, Spiritual Blessings, clarifying that their congregation, who assumed ownership without legal basis to do so,

indeed did not have legal ownership of the building and property. We continually emphasized that since the congregation is neither UCC nor CoB affiliated, they could not assume that because they were handed the keys, this indicated ownership. The history of our PNWD relationship to PNWCUCC in the past 10-15 years, specifically regarding our mutual relationship with the Columbia Lakewood congregation, has been a bit unsteady.

When UCC Pastor Jeff Barker was asked to resign from the Columbia Lakewood congregation around 2012, he was devastated and felt he needed support from district and regional leadership. CoB Area Minister, Carol Mason, stepped in to offer counsel from a Church of the Brethren perspective. Later she was joined by then PNWD District Executive, Colleen Michael, to invite UCC input in the process for a pastoral search. Carol's notes show that the PNWCUCC then Conference Minister, Mike Denton, did not return phone calls regarding a collaborative effort in the search. She twice spoke with an office administrator who passed along Mike's response that PNWD should simply "go ahead with whatever they want to do." Carol was especially interested in UCC policy regarding lay leadership. Carol and DE Colleen Michael subsequently organized regular pulpit supply. When lay leaders Tony Easterly and following him, Richard McPherson, became lay pastors, Carol again reached out to PNWCUCC to inquire about UCC protocol for licensing. Those attempted encounters have summed up PNWD's effort to involve PNWCUCC in collaboration with the Columbia Lakewood congregation during the final juncture of Jeff Barker's pastorate from 2012 and beyond. In 1993, when the Lakewood Community Church of the Brethren congregation merged with the Columbia Congregational Church UCC congregation, the new dually aligned church decided to use the building housing the CoB, and sell the UCC building, with the proceeds to benefit the new UCC/CoB congregation. At that time it was also agreed between the two bodies that if the church were ever to dissolve, assets would be split with 5/8 going to the PNWCUCC and 3/8 going to the PNWD CoB. We have come to that moment when the congregation has been dissolved and the property sold (to the very congregation who for years was renting the space and later assumed ownership of it simply because they were given the keys). We are profoundly relieved and grateful that this time-consuming and often stressful situation has come to a close. We understand that ecclesial and denominational relationships sometimes shift over time; that has certainly occurred in our relationship with PNWCUCC specifically regarding the Columbia Lakewood Community Church after Jeff Barker left as their pastor. We want to note that in other instances with congregations, PNWD and PNWCUCC have remained in close contact regarding denominational church polity, expectations, and celebration (the recent credentialing of Paster Dane Breslin of the Sunnyslope congregation in Wenatchee is an example). But in this particular case with the selling of the Columbia Lakewood CoB/UCC property, we find ourselves with some questions about the splitting of the assets given the amount of time and energy PNWD has

exerted alone since 2012. So we invite your input as to what that means for the proceeds of the property sale. We trust in your prayerful discernment as to what is appropriate. If you feel you are owed the 5/8 according to the 1993 agreement, we will honor that. If you discern that a 50/50 or other split merits consideration, we would welcome conversation around that. We also want to note that, in retrospect, we could have reached out to PNWCUCC earlier in our discussions and struggles with Spiritual Blessings as they wrongfully assumed ownership. We were, perhaps mistakenly, recalling past lack of communication with former PNWCUCC conference minister and board and, after initially hearing that the son of the former secretary reached out to both denominations' leadership, simply proceeded alone until Howard's call to PNWCUCC regarding the dissolution of the congregation. We are happy to supply you with an itemized accounting of the expenses incurred by the Pacific Northwest District Church of the Brethren in preparing for and completing the sale of the CLCC property. This includes both standard expenses of real estate sales such as agent fees, as well as items like back taxes that needed to be paid and repairs to the building before it could be listed, as well as the expenses of time and travel for the various meetings with Spiritual Blessings, with members of the preschool board that uses the building, with attending to various repairs, and with meetings with attorneys and realtors as we prepared to sell the property . After these expenses, the net revenue of the property sale was an amount of approximately \$1,100,000.

Our question to the PNWCUCC remains: what percentage of these net proceeds do you feel is the appropriate amount to be distributed to your Conference? We trust that your discernment will lead to a fair and just decision. Again, we are happy to provide an itemized accounting of our expenses. If we can help provide any additional information, or if you would like to arrange for conversations between our leaderships, we are more than happy to accommodate you. We trust this post Easter season is bringing you the delight of Spring as well as the peace of the risen Christ, and we thank you for your consideration of this letter.

Debbie Roberts, Howard Ullery, Lani Wright PNWD Church of the Brethren District Executive Team/ 32116 Highway 97/Tonasket, WA 98855

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**Exhibit #2 A letter from our attorney:**



April 21, 2026

Via Email Only (phil@pncucc.org)

Phil Hodson

Pacific Northwest  
Conference of the  
United Church of Christ

325 N. 125th Street

Seattle, WA 98133

**Re: Distribution of Proceeds from Sale of the Columbia Lakewood Property**

Dear Phil,

Ahead of tonight's board meeting, we wanted to provide a brief overview of the fiduciary framework that should guide the board's deliberations on the distribution of proceeds from the sale of the Columbia Lakewood property, along with a suggested process for working through that question.

### **The Board's Fiduciary Duties**

As directors of a Washington nonprofit corporation, board members owe the church three core fiduciary duties:

- Duty of Care. Each board member must act in good faith, in a manner they reasonably believe to be in the best interests of the organization, and with the care that a person in a like position would exercise under similar circumstances. Board members should be informed, ask questions, and engage in genuine deliberation before making decisions.
- Duty of Loyalty. Board members must act in the interest of the church, not their own personal interests or those of any outside party. When making decisions about organizational assets, each director should set aside outside considerations and focus on what is best for the church.

- Duty of Obedience. Board members must act in accordance with the church's governing documents and in furtherance of its stated mission and purposes, including honoring the terms of any agreements by which the church holds its interests and advancing the church's broader organizational goals, including its commitment to fostering amicable relationships with other congregations.

These duties work in concert. A board that takes each of them seriously will arrive at decisions that are both procedurally sound and substantively defensible.

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Phil Hodson

April 21, 2026

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### **Proposed Process for Evaluating Distribution of Proceeds from the Sale**

With the above duties in mind, we would suggest the following framework as a way for the board to work through the proceeds question. We offer this as a roadmap, not a recommendation as to what outcome the board should reach—that determination is the board's to make.

1. Present and Deliberate at Tonight's Meeting. The board should treat tonight's meeting as an opportunity to fully air the question, allowing all members to raise questions, share perspectives, and identify missing information. Detailed minutes should be kept of this and all subsequent discussions, as thorough documentation of the deliberative process evidences the board's fulfillment of its fiduciary obligations.
2. Review Property-Related Expenses. The board should review documents provided by PNWD Church of the Brethren



### Exhibit #3 Final Accounting of the Sale of the Columbia Lakewood Property from the Brethren

#### Columbia-Lakewood Community Church property sale expenses and net revenue

SALE REVENUE		
	Sale price	\$1,300,000.00
	Credit for oil in tank	\$3,817.43
	Gross sale revenue	\$1,303,817.43
SETTLEMENT DEDUCTIONS		
	Prorated county taxes	\$3,604.14
	Prorated rent	\$139.35
	Real Estate broker compensation	\$65,000.00
	50% of Escrow closing fee	\$1,000.48
	Standard title insurance	\$2,990.38
	Washington Excise Tax	\$22,200.00
	Mobile Notary Fee	\$250.00
	Seattle City Lights estimate	\$1,000.00
	Seattle Public Utilities estimate	\$350.00
EXPENSES PREPARING BUILDING FOR SALE		
King County (2024, 2025 taxes owed)	12/30/25	\$35,505.46
Weston Security (lock replacement)	1/5/26	\$627.87
	12/15/25	\$2,200.50
Blossom Solar (electrical contractor)	2/11/26	\$19,840.44
Materials for window repair	1/2/26	\$150.12
Weston Security (lock replacement)	1/5/26	\$627.87
	7/24/25	\$1,000.00
Ellis, Li, McKinstry Law (legal consulting on property rights and resolving property dispute)	9/30/25	\$3,252.00



**Next Meeting, June 2, 2026, 6:30 pm**

Respectfully Submitted,

Ron Patterson, Scribe