

Central Plains Mennonite Conference
Annual Meeting
June 18-20, 2021
Hosted by the Twin Cities Mennonite Churches
via ZOOM platform

Attendees: 111 registered from 33 congregations
3 youth (ages 15-18)
12 young adults (ages 19-30)
At least 101 devices connected on the two
ZOOM business sessions

MORNING BUSINESS SESSION

1. Welcome and Introductions

Moderator John Murray (Third Way Church, St. Paul, MN) opened the meeting welcoming the delegates and guests. He thanked the Twin Cities Host committee lead by Chair, Chris Becker (Emmanuel, St. Paul, MN) for all the work they did to prepare for this meeting. John did a land acknowledgement noting that the land the Twin Cities was built on as belonging to the Dakota people. John recognized that we have been living in a time of strife, uncertainty and tension. Now is a time when we can deepen relationships and reconnect after a time of isolation.

Guests were recognized: Besides our speaker, David Fitch, we welcome other guests joining us from: Mennonite Mission Network – Joe Sawatzky and Kate Widmer (serving in France), the House Church of Freeman – Jill Hofer and Michelle Hofer, Simon Bludo (Ghana, student at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, and guest of Outreach & Service Committee).

This meeting will all be done on Zoom. Therefore, tech questions are to be directed to Amanda Bleichy and it was noted that all documents for the meeting are on the CPMC website. Two practice polls were done since all voting will be done in the poll format.

John Murray made a motion that voting for the 2021 Annual Meeting be done by poll. There was a second by Paul Balzer (Salem Mennonite, Freeman).

The poll read: "Affirm the use of polling for voting." Passed unanimously.

2. Secretary Report

Marilyn Brockmueller, Executive Committee Secretary (Salem Mennonite, Freeman) highlighted several items from the 2020 Annual Meeting minutes and Year-End Report of Conference Board Meetings 2020-21. A call for corrections was made. Norm Yoder, Executive Committee Treasurer (Bethesda Mennonite, Henderson) noted in the February 19, 2021 Board report that the PPP dollars were used for salaries and that other funds were used for the Covid Relief Fund. Via chat Maryann Harder noted a misspelling of her name on p. 35, #10. John Murray asked that a poll be introduced to affirm and accept the amended documents.

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John Murray noted that it is with heavy hearts that we say farewell to Julesburg (Colorado) Mennonite Church and Manson (Iowa) Mennonite Church. Neither wish to remain a part of our conference or denomination. A litany of lament was led by John Murray, Susan Janzen (Conference Minister for Ministerial Leadership) and Nathan Luitjens, (Executive Conference Minister).

4. House Church of Freeman

John Murray and Susan Janzen read the first part of a litany titled Covenant of Membership Receiving the House Church of Freeman. Jill Hofer and Michelle Hofer along with members of the House Church of Freeman joined us. Jill read a statement about their church. The house church model is an alternative to the traditional church model. They wish to seek membership with CPMC, so they are not in isolation. They meet on Sunday morning to worship and study. Weekly they share a meal together. They studied the Mennonite Confession of Faith, are faithful to the Anabaptist perspective, believe in God, Christ and the Holy Spirit, study the scriptures, strive to live in the way to honor God, and minister to the greater community with the gift of listening.

John Murray then asked their congregation to answer the following questions which they affirmed: 1) Do you desire to join CPMC and MCUSA as a member congregation, 2) Do you affirm the teaching of the Mennonite church and will you follow the CPMC bylaws, and 3) Will you join in discernment, mission and sharing gifts as well as receiving counsel? John explained that some Conference Board members met with the leaders after which the Conference Board voted to recommend that the House Church of Freeman be presented to the delegate body for approval as a new member congregation. At this time, it was requested that we vote by poll.

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(Being ahead of schedule, the Agenda changed from the printed version in the Workbook)

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Norm Yoder, Board Treasurer and Ted Widmer (Pleasant View Mennonite, Mt. Pleasant, IA) Financial Officer noted the video that was sent out prior to the meeting which explained the proposed Blueprint very well. In addition, the Blueprint was given as a computer document prior to this meeting. They noted the major increase this upcoming year is with salaries due to finally having 3 full-time staff for the whole fiscal year.

There were 3 questions/comments:

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9. Faith, Life and Procedures (FLP) Task Group Introduction

Introductory information was sent as a digital copy to all delegates prior to this meeting. It included a cover letter explaining why this task group is being considered for reinstatement as well as a document outlining the purpose, objectives and timeline. Bylaws 5.1.g outlines the purpose of this task group. The discussion today is not about theological differences, but about the procedure of processing issues. So far only the chair has been named and that is Sharon Waltner (Salem Mennonite, Freeman, SD). It is hoped that after today's discussion, potential task group members will be proposed by the delegates to add to a potential list of candidates. If anyone has interest in serving on this or know of someone who would be good on this committee, please email John (john.murray951@gmail.com).

AFTERNOON BUSINESS SESSION

1. Peace Mug Presentation

(Due to technical problems this was delayed)

2. Vote on 2021-22 Blueprint

- The amount for MCUSA delegate sessions will be increased to account for 2 meetings next year so line 5510 will be \$1200, with the total for Section 5500 increased to \$2400. The total budget increased accordingly to equal \$424,614.51.
- Kelsey Guckenberger (Christ Community Church, Des Moines, IA) asked if printing costs could be decreased by doing more digital communications. Amanda Bleichty answered that we are an older constituency so usually paper communications are preferred.

Norm Yoder (Bethesda Mennonite, NE) made a motion to accept the amended proposed Blueprint with an increase on line 5510 to \$1200 and then the total budget would also be increased by \$1200.

A second was made by Dylan Keller (Zion Mennonite, Donnellson, IA).

The poll stated: "I approve the revised spending blueprint for 2021-22 from the Stewardship Task Group as approved by the Conference Board". It passed unanimously.

Norm Yoder said on behalf of the Conference, they wish to thank everyone for the support received during the Covid crisis. The financial support was greatly appreciated.

3. Breakout Session to discuss Strategic Plan and FLP Task Group

John Murray addressed a written question from Marilyn Brockmueller (Salem Mennonite – Freeman) about changing the terminology of "strategic plan" since that implies a long-term plan. Nathan Luitjens replied that is more of a short-term plan mostly a 1-year plan and will be revised after visiting the congregations. Later a longer-term strategic plan will be written.

John explained more about why the FLP is being re-instituted. The Board felt that it was important to be proactive instead of reactive before dealing with the MCUSA vote next spring at the extra in-person delegate session dealing with retiring Conference membership guidelines. Currently there are 3 membership guidelines. Two are listed in the bylaws and therefore repetitive. The third is about human sexuality and marriage which doesn't fit in with the other guidelines. This task group will help provide guidance for delegates and congregations as they work through this issue. The proposal can be seen at <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/news/resolution-membership-guidelines/>. Again, if anyone has interest in serving on this new task group or know of someone who would be good in this role, please email John Murray john.murray951@gmail.com.

Delegates and guests returned to their breakout group to discuss these two issues. It was requested that each group appoint a recorder.

4. Large Group Feedback/Questions about Strategic Plan and FLP Task Group

Feedback summaries from each group should be sent to Nathan Luitjens nathanluitjens@centralplainsmc.org. The responses will be compiled and then distributed. Time was given for comments.

Strategic Plan Comments:

- Bethany Yoder (Sermon on the Mount Mennonite, Sioux Falls, SD) noted that the plan listed calling for pastors, but not all churches are looking for pastors so how will support be given to those using lay leadership. Nathan responded that is something they need to work on since there are small churches and house churches.
- Randall Koehler (Hutterthal, Freeman, SD) affirmed that the plan includes visiting all the churches but encourages them to visit not only on Sunday morning, but that churches should invite the conference ministers to rural festivals or special events that happen at other times.
- Phil Stoltzfus (Faith Mennonite, Minneapolis, MN) questioned writing the plan before the conference ministers completed their listening tour. Nathan said it is a short-term plan of 2 years so there is a lot they don't know, but that Susan has visited with all the pastors at least by Zoom so she knows where they are at. Some parts of the plan will change after 1 year.
- John Tyson (Des Moines Mennonite, Des Moines, IA) wanted to acknowledge that today is Juneteenth, and that anti-racism work doesn't appear much in the plan. Don Kempf (Salem Mennonite, Shickley, NE) also brought up that he didn't see a strong plan for anti-racism. Nathan responded that the conference is still in process of administering the IDI and is just in the first year. It is a 3-year plan. After we have completed the IDI work, then anti-racism work can start. Amanda and Nathan are taking anti-racism classes.
- It was questioned how to pronounce *Imaginemos*. Fernando Ramos (Casa de Oracion Emanuel, Davenport, IA) wrote in the sidebar "Ee mah he nah mos".
- Kelsey Guckenberger (Christ Community Church, Des Moines, IA) asked why physical and intellectual disabilities were not mentioned. Nathan responded that is being addressed by the Anabaptist Disability Network.

FLP Task Group Comments:

- Dylan Keller (Zion Mennonite, Donnellson, IA) asked about the larger group's demographic makeup, how will they fill those positions and wondering if they will include those who left the conference.? John answered that they will try to get a balance of gender, age, roles served in the church, geographic, ethnic, theological differences. It is an interesting thought to include folks who left. We don't want to be in a trap of partisan divides, but as a church in Christ to respond differently.
- Vernetta Waltner (Salem Mennonite, Freeman, SD) commented on the sidebar that the goals should be refined. Trying to accomplish too much with too few people or an adequate timeline is not doable. John Murray responded that he and Sharon Waltner are working to define objectives to make it manageable.
- John Murray thanked the participants for grace and prayer that will be needed as we as a church follow the important call to witness to the world desperately in need both at the conference and local church levels. Send any further comments direct to Nathan Luitjens. nathanluitjens@centralplainsmc.org

5. Recognition and Installation of CPMC Officers

John Murray offered a prayer of thanks asking for wisdom, strength and energy as the officers perform their duties. He thanked the officers who have been working under difficult circumstances for the past 1 ½ years as well as those being willing to serve in the upcoming year. We as a church have the important call to witness to the world desperately in need. Request prayers in the year ahead.

6. Closing of Delegate Session

Corey Miller (Salem-Zion Mennonite, Freeman, SD) extended an invitation to come to the 2022 Annual Meeting in Freeman, South Dakota to be held June 16-19.

Marilyn Brockmueller gave the closing resolution:

On behalf of the Conference Board, I'd like to express gratitude to all who contributed to this ZOOM format annual meeting:

--to the Annual Meeting Task Group: Joel Beachy (chair), Nathan Luitjens (Executive Conference Minister), Galen Kauffman (Workshops coordinator), John Murray (Moderator), Chris Becker (Local Host Committee Chair), and Amanda Bleichy (Conference Minister for Christian Formation) for all the work they did in preparation to meeting in the Twin Cities and then ultimately deciding to change to a digital format in this time of the ongoing pandemic,

-to our speaker David Fitch as he challenged us to relook at church and how we do it in these challenging times,

-to our worship leaders and musicians from the Twin Cities area coordinated by Chris Becker,

-to our workshop leaders Marcus Miller, Jonah Yang and Jessica Schrock-Ringenberg,

-to Amanda Bleichty and Chance Beachy who made the technology and Zoom format possible as well as providing the virtual format for all CPMC congregations to worship together on Sunday morning,

--to the Central Plains staff (Nathan Luitjens, Amanda Bleichty and Susan Janzen), to our moderator John Murray, and assistant moderator Pam Gerig Unruh for making sure all aspects of the Annual Meeting are covered,

--thanks to Monica Clem for her behind the scenes work in putting together all the paperwork, registration packets and all the other work she does in preparing for this Annual Meeting,

--to all of you for your participation and prayers as we prepared and then gathered to worship and work together to further God's kingdom on earth,

And most of all, thanks be to God's presence and work among us in this unusual time of the pandemic and increasing divisiveness. May we be open to God's truth and new ways of doing church as we move forward. May God's peace go with you.

John gave closing remarks and reminders about David Fitch's next presentation followed by workshops. However, this concluded the delegate session of the 2021 Annual Meeting.

Randall Koehler (Hutterthal Mennonite, Freeman, SD) made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by David Huesinkveld (Eicher Emmanuel Mennonite, Wayland, IA). The poll passed unanimously.

7. Presentation of Peace Mug

A video was shown. Janelle Ortman (Salem-Zion Mennonite, Freeman) presented Dennis Lehmann (Sermon on the Mount Mennonite, Sioux Falls) with the Peace Mug. He has had a lifelong passion for peace and justice starting with preparing to resist the draft during Vietnam war time, serving with PAX in the Congo, volunteer work at Pine Ridge Reservation with MDS, joining in 4 or 5 protests against military establishments which included being arrested, joining the Dakota Access Oil Pipeline protest at Standing Rock Reservation resulting in arrest where he chose court time so he could witness as to why he was protesting, and being part of Freeman Network for Peace and Justice where he has been instrumental in having Vince Two Eagles write a monthly column in *The Courier* (Freeman, SD).

Dennis accepted the Peace Mug and challenged everyone to become active peacemakers. Specifically, he encouraged us to find out what tribal land we are living on and find a native voice to learn from those whose voices have been silenced for so long.

Submitted by:

Marilyn Brockmueller, Secretary

August 6, 2021

Year-End Report of Conference Board Meetings 2021-2022

Meeting Dates:

August 12, 2021	Email decision
August 20, 2021	ZOOM meeting
November 13, 2021	ZOOM meeting
November 16, 2021	Email decision
December 8, 2021	ZOOM meeting
March 8, 2022	ZOOM meeting
April 29, 2022	ZOOM meeting

August 12, 2021 (Email Decision)

Discussion:

Nathan Luitjens sent out two New Ministry grant applications that needed immediate response before the scheduled Quarter 1 meeting.

Action:

John Murray made the motion to approve the two New Ministries grants, to Iglesia Menonita Jesus el Buen Pastor for \$1600 to secure their own worship space and to the CPMC - Ministerial Leadership for \$2000 for the "Following Christ in a Partisan World Seminar" for CPMC pastors. There was a second from Norm Yoder. It was approved by an email vote August 13-19.

August 20, 2021 (1st Quarter Board meeting by ZOOM)

Discussion:

Minutes approved; open positions discussed; finance report reviewed; discussion of New Ministry Grant procedures; reviewed Conference Minister reports and evaluation of Annual Meeting in the virtual format; discussed upcoming Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) delegates and agenda; set date and decided on Zoom format for upcoming Council of Committees meeting; update on formation of Faith, Life and Procedures Task group.

Action:

Pam Gerig Unruh made the motion to have the 2021 Council of Committee meetings be done in the virtual format. Gregg Waltner seconded that. It was approved by a show of hands.

November 13, 2021 (ZOOM meeting following Council of Committee meetings)

Discussion:

Information to prepare for Quarter 2 Board meeting.

Actions:

No action. Information only.

November 16, 2021 (Email decision)

Discussion:

To review year-end fund appeal letter, and to review a Covid Relief Fund request.

Actions:

1.A motion was made by John Murray to authorize the year-end fund appeal developed by the Stewardship Task Group. There was second by Anita Breckbill. It was unanimously approved by email November 16-17.

2.A motion was made by John Murray to approve the requested \$400 Covid Relief Funds requested by Centro Cristiano of Washington, Iowa and recommended by the Stewardship Task Group. There was a second by Pam Gerig Unruh. It was unanimously approved by email November 16-17.

December 8, 2021 (2nd Quarter Board meeting by ZOOM)**Discussion:**

Approved minutes; reviewed financial reports; Gifts Discernment Committee reported there are currently 2 open positions; New Ministry grant application reviewed and approved; discussed follow-up with grant applicants; review of work being done by Conference ministers; update from Annual Meeting Task Group; reviewed Council of Committee date change, meeting format, and agenda; heard update from Faith, Life and Procedures Task group

Actions:

1.Norm Yoder moved to approve a \$600 grant to Michelle Hofer and Jill Hofer for partial tuition for the "STAR Training for Leadership of Holding Your Story ministry" from the New Ministries Fund. John Tyson seconded it and it was approved by majority vote.

March 8, 2022 (3rd Quarter Board meeting by ZOOM)**Discussion:**

Minutes were approved; financial reports reviewed; two grant applications were reviewed for the cost of the speaker at the Annual Leader's Retreat and for a 2-year trial of the Employee Assistance Plan; the fiscal year-end letter topic was highlighted; the Gifts Discernment committee has been finding nominations, but still need several people for key positions; reviewed the Conference Minister's reports, the Annual Meeting Task group gave an update and is excited to hold an in-person meeting this year in Freeman; CPMC is eligible to send 6 delegates (+ 1 alternative) to the MCUSA special meetings in Kansas City and 5 are confirmed; the Faith, Life and Procedure Task group gave an update; reviewed proposal for "Continuing Ed Proposal for Executive Director".

Actions:

1.Norm Yoder moved to approve the \$2900 grant application for the speaker's costs relating to the Annual Leaders Retreat to be held in May. Seconded by Pam Gerig Unruh. Approved by a show of hands.

2.John Tyson moved to approve the \$2500 grant for the Employee Assistance Plan for CPMC staff. Seconded by Anita Breckbill. Approved by a show of hands.

April 29, 2022 (4th Quarter Board meeting by ZOOM)**Discussion:**

Minutes approved; financial update from Ted Widmer including Covid relief fund distributions; 2022-23 Blueprint reviewed and approved; discussion on New Ministry Grant procedures; Gifts Discernment Committee reported noting that it has been more difficult making nominations when little networking can be done due to meeting virtually; partially filled Slate was reviewed with more nominations to come

before Annual Meeting; approved appointment of Sid Burkey as PLC Chair after Martha Yoder resigned due to health reasons; Nathan Luitjens referred us to the Conference Minister's written report; much time devoted to the upcoming in-person Annual Meeting – format, agenda, doing things differently in a time of reconnection and reimagining after being apart for 2 years due to Covid, considering alternate weekends for June 2023 Annual Meeting; Faith, Life and Procedures work nearly done with a hearty thanks for the work they have done; approving 6 Conference delegates to the Kansas City Special Delegate Sessions.

Actions:

1. John Murray made the motion to count the donations of \$3000 that came in this week as a result of our year-end appeal letter to be included in this fiscal year and be distributed to our international partners. There was a second by Anita Breckbill. It was approved by a show of hands.

2. Norm Yoder made a motion to accept the proposed 2022-23 Blueprint with the last minute addition of \$120 for the increased Ministerial Data Base costs. Gregg Waltner gave the second. The motion passed.

3. Pam Gerig Unruh made a motion to appoint Sid Burkey as interim chair of the PLC until the Annual Meeting when he is up for election. John Tyson seconded it. It was approved by a show of hands.

4. John Murray made a motion to approve the Conference delegates representing CPMC as proposed: Amanda Bleichy, Susan Janzen, Nathan Luitjens, Pam Gerig Unruh, Ramiro Hernandez and Michelle Hofer. There was a second from Norm Yoder. Motion passed.

Submitted by:

Marilyn Brockmueller

Executive Committee Secretary

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9. Faith, Life and Procedures (FLP) Task Group Introduction

Introductory information was sent as a digital copy to all delegates prior to this meeting. It included a cover letter explaining why this task group is being considered for reinstatement as well as a document outlining the purpose, objectives and timeline. Bylaws 5.1.g outlines the purpose of this task group. The discussion today is not about theological differences, but about the procedure of processing issues. So far only the chair has been named and that is Sharon Waltner (Salem Mennonite, Freeman, SD). It is hoped that after today's discussion, potential task group members will be proposed by the delegates to add to a potential list of candidates. If anyone has interest in serving on this or know of someone who would be good on this committee, please email John (john.murray951@gmail.com).

AFTERNOON BUSINESS SESSION

1. Peace Mug Presentation

(Due to technical problems this was delayed)

2. Vote on 2021-22 Blueprint

- The amount for MCUSA delegate sessions will be increased to account for 2 meetings next year so line 5510 will be \$1200, with the total for Section 5500 increased to \$2400. The total budget increased accordingly to equal \$424,614.51.
- Kelsey Guckenberger (Christ Community Church, Des Moines, IA) asked if printing costs could be decreased by doing more digital communications. Amanda Bleichty answered that we are an older constituency so usually paper communications are preferred.

Norm Yoder (Bethesda Mennonite, NE) made a motion to accept the amended proposed Blueprint with an increase on line 5510 to \$1200 and then the total budget would also be increased by \$1200.

A second was made by Dylan Keller (Zion Mennonite, Donnellson, IA).

The poll stated: "I approve the revised spending blueprint for 2021-22 from the Stewardship Task Group as approved by the Conference Board". It passed unanimously.

Norm Yoder said on behalf of the Conference, they wish to thank everyone for the support received during the Covid crisis. The financial support was greatly appreciated.

3. Breakout Session to discuss Strategic Plan and FLP Task Group

John Murray addressed a written question from Marilyn Brockmueller (Salem Mennonite – Freeman) about changing the terminology of "strategic plan" since that implies a long-term plan. Nathan Luitjens replied that is more of a short-term plan mostly a 1-year plan and will be revised after visiting the congregations. Later a longer-term strategic plan will be written.

John explained more about why the FLP is being re-instituted. The Board felt that it was important to be proactive instead of reactive before dealing with the MCUSA vote next spring at the extra in-person delegate session dealing with retiring Conference membership guidelines. Currently there are 3 membership guidelines. Two are listed in the bylaws and therefore repetitive. The third is about human sexuality and marriage which doesn't fit in with the other guidelines. This task group will help provide guidance for delegates and congregations as they work through this issue. The proposal can be seen at <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/news/resolution-membership-guidelines/>. Again, if anyone has interest in serving on this new task group or know of someone who would be good in this role, please email John Murray john.murray951@gmail.com.

Delegates and guests returned to their breakout group to discuss these two issues. It was requested that each group appoint a recorder.

4. Large Group Feedback/Questions about Strategic Plan and FLP Task Group

Feedback summaries from each group should be sent to Nathan Luitjens nathanluitjens@centralplainsmc.org. The responses will be compiled and then distributed. Time was given for comments.

Strategic Plan Comments:

- Bethany Yoder (Sermon on the Mount Mennonite, Sioux Falls, SD) noted that the plan listed calling for pastors, but not all churches are looking for pastors so how will support be given to those using lay leadership. Nathan responded that is something they need to work on since there are small churches and house churches.
- Randall Koehler (Hutterthal, Freeman, SD) affirmed that the plan includes visiting all the churches but encourages them to visit not only on Sunday morning, but that churches should invite the conference ministers to rural festivals or special events that happen at other times.
- Phil Stoltzfus (Faith Mennonite, Minneapolis, MN) questioned writing the plan before the conference ministers completed their listening tour. Nathan said it is a short-term plan of 2 years so there is a lot they don't know, but that Susan has visited with all the pastors at least by Zoom so she knows where they are at. Some parts of the plan will change after 1 year.
- John Tyson (Des Moines Mennonite, Des Moines, IA) wanted to acknowledge that today is Juneteenth, and that anti-racism work doesn't appear much in the plan. Don Kempf (Salem Mennonite, Shickley, NE) also brought up that he didn't see a strong plan for anti-racism. Nathan responded that the conference is still in process of administering the IDI and is just in the first year. It is a 3-year plan. After we have completed the IDI work, then anti-racism work can start. Amanda and Nathan are taking anti-racism classes.
- It was questioned how to pronounce *Imaginemos*. Fernando Ramos (Casa de Oracion Emanuel, Davenport, IA) wrote in the sidebar "Ee mah he nah mos".
- Kelsey Guckenberger (Christ Community Church, Des Moines, IA) asked why physical and intellectual disabilities were not mentioned. Nathan responded that is being addressed by the Anabaptist Disability Network.

FLP Task Group Comments:

- Dylan Keller (Zion Mennonite, Donnellson, IA) asked about the larger group's demographic makeup, how will they fill those positions and wondering if they will include those who left the conference.? John answered that they will try to get a balance of gender, age, roles served in the church, geographic, ethnic, theological differences. It is an interesting thought to include folks who left. We don't want to be in a trap of partisan divides, but as a church in Christ to respond differently.
- Vernetta Waltner (Salem Mennonite, Freeman, SD) commented on the sidebar that the goals should be refined. Trying to accomplish too much with too few people or an adequate timeline is not doable. John Murray responded that he and Sharon Waltner are working to define objectives to make it manageable.
- John Murray thanked the participants for grace and prayer that will be needed as we as a church follow the important call to witness to the world desperately in need both at the conference and local church levels. Send any further comments direct to Nathan Luitjens. nathanluitjens@centralplainsmc.org

5. Recognition and Installation of CPMC Officers

John Murray offered a prayer of thanks asking for wisdom, strength and energy as the officers perform their duties. He thanked the officers who have been working under difficult circumstances for the past 1 ½ years as well as those being willing to serve in the upcoming year. We as a church have the important call to witness to the world desperately in need. Request prayers in the year ahead.

6. Closing of Delegate Session

Corey Miller (Salem-Zion Mennonite, Freeman, SD) extended an invitation to come to the 2022 Annual Meeting in Freeman, South Dakota to be held June 16-19.

Marilyn Brockmueller gave the closing resolution:

On behalf of the Conference Board, I'd like to express gratitude to all who contributed to this ZOOM format annual meeting:

--to the Annual Meeting Task Group: Joel Beachy (chair), Nathan Luitjens (Executive Conference Minister), Galen Kauffman (Workshops coordinator), John Murray (Moderator), Chris Becker (Local Host Committee Chair), and Amanda Bleichty (Conference Minister for Christian Formation) for all the work they did in preparation to meeting in the Twin Cities and then ultimately deciding to change to a digital format in this time of the ongoing pandemic,

-to our speaker David Fitch as he challenged us to relook at church and how we do it in these challenging times,

-to our worship leaders and musicians from the Twin Cities area coordinated by Chris Becker,

-to our workshop leaders Marcus Miller, Jonah Yang and Jessica Schrock-Ringenberg,

-to Amanda Bleichty and Chance Beachy who made the technology and Zoom format possible as well as providing the virtual format for all CPMC congregations to worship together on Sunday morning,

--to the Central Plains staff (Nathan Luitjens, Amanda Bleichty and Susan Janzen), to our moderator John Murray, and assistant moderator Pam Gerig Unruh for making sure all aspects of the Annual Meeting are covered,

--thanks to Monica Clem for her behind the scenes work in putting together all the paperwork, registration packets and all the other work she does in preparing for this Annual Meeting,

--to all of you for your participation and prayers as we prepared and then gathered to worship and work together to further God's kingdom on earth,

And most of all, thanks be to God's presence and work among us in this unusual time of the pandemic and increasing divisiveness. May we be open to God's truth and new ways of doing church as we move forward. May God's peace go with you.

John gave closing remarks and reminders about David Fitch's next presentation followed by workshops. However, this concluded the delegate session of the 2021 Annual Meeting.

Randall Koehler (Hutterthal Mennonite, Freeman, SD) made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by David Huesinkveld (Eicher Emmanuel Mennonite, Wayland, IA). The poll passed unanimously.

7. Presentation of Peace Mug

A video was shown. Janelle Ortman (Salem-Zion Mennonite, Freeman) presented Dennis Lehmann (Sermon on the Mount Mennonite, Sioux Falls) with the Peace Mug. He has had a lifelong passion for peace and justice starting with preparing to resist the draft during Vietnam war time, serving with PAX in the Congo, volunteer work at Pine Ridge Reservation with MDS, joining in 4 or 5 protests against military establishments which included being arrested, joining the Dakota Access Oil Pipeline protest at Standing Rock Reservation resulting in arrest where he chose court time so he could witness as to why he was protesting, and being part of Freeman Network for Peace and Justice where he has been instrumental in having Vince Two Eagles write a monthly column in *The Courier* (Freeman, SD).

Dennis accepted the Peace Mug and challenged everyone to become active peacemakers. Specifically, he encouraged us to find out what tribal land we are living on and find a native voice to learn from those whose voices have been silenced for so long.

Submitted by:

Marilyn Brockmueller, Secretary

August 6, 2021

Year-End Report of Conference Board Meetings 2021-2022

Meeting Dates:

August 12, 2021	Email decision
August 20, 2021	ZOOM meeting
November 13, 2021	ZOOM meeting
November 16, 2021	Email decision
December 8, 2021	ZOOM meeting
March 8, 2022	ZOOM meeting
April 29, 2022	ZOOM meeting

August 12, 2021 (Email Decision)

Discussion:

Nathan Luitjens sent out two New Ministry grant applications that needed immediate response before the scheduled Quarter 1 meeting.

Action:

John Murray made the motion to approve the two New Ministries grants, to Iglesia Menonita Jesus el Buen Pastor for \$1600 to secure their own worship space and to the CPMC - Ministerial Leadership for \$2000 for the "Following Christ in a Partisan World Seminar" for CPMC pastors. There was a second from Norm Yoder. It was approved by an email vote August 13-19.

August 20, 2021 (1st Quarter Board meeting by ZOOM)

Discussion:

Minutes approved; open positions discussed; finance report reviewed; discussion of New Ministry Grant procedures; reviewed Conference Minister reports and evaluation of Annual Meeting in the virtual format; discussed upcoming Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) delegates and agenda; set date and decided on Zoom format for upcoming Council of Committees meeting; update on formation of Faith, Life and Procedures Task group.

Action:

Pam Gerig Unruh made the motion to have the 2021 Council of Committee meetings be done in the virtual format. Gregg Waltner seconded that. It was approved by a show of hands.

November 13, 2021 (ZOOM meeting following Council of Committee meetings)

Discussion:

Information to prepare for Quarter 2 Board meeting.

Actions:

No action. Information only.

November 16, 2021 (Email decision)

Discussion:

To review year-end fund appeal letter, and to review a Covid Relief Fund request.

Actions:

1.A motion was made by John Murray to authorize the year-end fund appeal developed by the Stewardship Task Group. There was second by Anita Breckbill. It was unanimously approved by email November 16-17.

2.A motion was made by John Murray to approve the requested \$400 Covid Relief Funds requested by Centro Cristiano of Washington, Iowa and recommended by the Stewardship Task Group. There was a second by Pam Gerig Unruh. It was unanimously approved by email November 16-17.

December 8, 2021 (2nd Quarter Board meeting by ZOOM)**Discussion:**

Approved minutes; reviewed financial reports; Gifts Discernment Committee reported there are currently 2 open positions; New Ministry grant application reviewed and approved; discussed follow-up with grant applicants; review of work being done by Conference ministers; update from Annual Meeting Task Group; reviewed Council of Committee date change, meeting format, and agenda; heard update from Faith, Life and Procedures Task group

Actions:

1.Norm Yoder moved to approve a \$600 grant to Michelle Hofer and Jill Hofer for partial tuition for the "STAR Training for Leadership of Holding Your Story ministry" from the New Ministries Fund. John Tyson seconded it and it was approved by majority vote.

March 8, 2022 (3rd Quarter Board meeting by ZOOM)**Discussion:**

Minutes were approved; financial reports reviewed; two grant applications were reviewed for the cost of the speaker at the Annual Leader's Retreat and for a 2-year trial of the Employee Assistance Plan; the fiscal year-end letter topic was highlighted; the Gifts Discernment committee has been finding nominations, but still need several people for key positions; reviewed the Conference Minister's reports, the Annual Meeting Task group gave an update and is excited to hold an in-person meeting this year in Freeman; CPMC is eligible to send 6 delegates (+ 1 alternative) to the MCUSA special meetings in Kansas City and 5 are confirmed; the Faith, Life and Procedure Task group gave an update; reviewed proposal for "Continuing Ed Proposal for Executive Director".

Actions:

1.Norm Yoder moved to approve the \$2900 grant application for the speaker's costs relating to the Annual Leaders Retreat to be held in May. Seconded by Pam Gerig Unruh. Approved by a show of hands.

2.John Tyson moved to approve the \$2500 grant for the Employee Assistance Plan for CPMC staff. Seconded by Anita Breckbill. Approved by a show of hands.

April 29, 2022 (4th Quarter Board meeting by ZOOM)**Discussion:**

Minutes approved; financial update from Ted Widmer including Covid relief fund distributions; 2022-23 Blueprint reviewed and approved; discussion on New Ministry Grant procedures; Gifts Discernment Committee reported noting that it has been more difficult making nominations when little networking can be done due to meeting virtually; partially filled Slate was reviewed with more nominations to come

before Annual Meeting; approved appointment of Sid Burkey as PLC Chair after Martha Yoder resigned due to health reasons; Nathan Luitjens referred us to the Conference Minister's written report; much time devoted to the upcoming in-person Annual Meeting – format, agenda, doing things differently in a time of reconnection and reimagining after being apart for 2 years due to Covid, considering alternate weekends for June 2023 Annual Meeting; Faith, Life and Procedures work nearly done with a hearty thanks for the work they have done; approving 6 Conference delegates to the Kansas City Special Delegate Sessions.

Actions:

1. John Murray made the motion to count the donations of \$3000 that came in this week as a result of our year-end appeal letter to be included in this fiscal year and be distributed to our international partners. There was a second by Anita Breckbill. It was approved by a show of hands.

2. Norm Yoder made a motion to accept the proposed 2022-23 Blueprint with the last minute addition of \$120 for the increased Ministerial Data Base costs. Gregg Waltner gave the second. The motion passed.

3. Pam Gerig Unruh made a motion to appoint Sid Burkey as interim chair of the PLC until the Annual Meeting when he is up for election. John Tyson seconded it. It was approved by a show of hands.

4. John Murray made a motion to approve the Conference delegates representing CPMC as proposed: Amanda Bleichy, Susan Janzen, Nathan Luitjens, Pam Gerig Unruh, Ramiro Hernandez and Michelle Hofer. There was a second from Norm Yoder. Motion passed.

Submitted by:

Marilyn Brockmueller

Executive Committee Secretary