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# **WESTERN DISTRICT CONFERENCE MINUTES**

Of the One Hundred and Thirtieth  
Annual Session of the  
Western District Conference  
of  
Mennonite Church USA

July 30-August 1, 2021  
Hybrid (Onsite & Virtual)  
due to COVID-19 pandemic

**MINUTES**  
**Western District Conference Annual Assembly**  
**Zoom Delegate Session**  
**July 31, 2021, 8:30–10:30 a.m.**

Moderator Lois Barrett (Mennonite Church of the Servant/Wichita, Kan.) welcomed delegates on Zoom and guests on YouTube and called the delegate session to order. She gave instructions for the virtual meeting. One instruction, a decision made by Executive Board, was that each delegate would hold only one vote because of the voting mechanism on Zoom.

**Quorum.** Lois Barrett presented the following information and declared a quorum. Of the 52 churches and 2 active church plants in WDC and a membership of 6,820, based on registered delegates:

- 30 churches/church plants were represented at the 2021 Assembly, and
- 77 votes were represented (out of 250 eligible votes).

**Minutes.** Secretary June Krehbiel (Eden/Moundridge, Kan.) highlighted the minutes from the 2020 delegate sessions and moved to accept the minutes as amended with Dave Stevens's name replacing Cynthia Loganbill's as seconding a motion. Valerie Klaassen (Grace Hill/Whitewater, Kan.) seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**State of the Conference Report.** Conference Minister Heidi Regier Kreider reflected on the past year and thanked pastors and congregations during the uncertainties of COVID-19. She highlighted the ways that WDC is living into transition, living into what it means to be a diverse community of faith, and living into changing patterns of communication and meeting.

She noted WDC staff transitions: Lee Lever concluded his time as interim conference ministry liaison for Texas. Sandra Montes-Martinez began as associate conference minister (Texas-based). Violeta Ajquejay Suastegui began as an interim administrative assistant. Nancy Funk, retiring after 17 years as administrative assistant in North Newton, will be replaced at the end of August by Michelle Schrag.

Anglo, Hispanic, Native American, and Chin congregations make up WDC. Staff, executive board, and other leaders took the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) to lead WDC in right directions. Heidi also noted changing patterns of meeting with many virtual gatherings as well as a web-based model for communications.

**Commission Reports.**

**Ministerial Leadership:** Chair Rachel Epp Miller (Austin/Austin, Texas) reported on the credentialing process of pastors and chaplains, continuing education grants for pastors through the HOPE Fund, complaints of pastoral sexual misconduct, and improved policies, as well as IDI and antiracism training.

**Stewardship:** Chair Dick Koontz (Bethel College Church/North Newton, Kan.) reported that \$31,000 of the \$40,000 in the Hope Fund had been distributed, the government PPP loan was forgiven, new accounting software was purchased, and the commission was successful in securing tax-exempt status for the part of the North Newton building used by WDC.

**Church Planting:** Chair Tonya Ramer Wenger (First/Hutchinson, Kan.) reported on an April Zoom conversation on church planting/revitalization in WDC and noted the contributions of Associate Conference Minister Sandra Montes-Martinez. Current church plants are Iglesia Menonita Aposento Alto (Wichita, Kan.) and Iglesia Palabra Viva (Liberal, Kan.).

**Resource:** Chair Christina Litwiller (Salina/Salina, Kan.) reported on ways the commission helped churches through technological help, in the Resource Library and for the *Voices Together* hymnal.

**Camp Mennoscah Report.** Camp Director Olivia Bartel reported that 253 campers from 12 states attended summer camps, supported by 3 year-round staff, 9 summer staff, 11 board members, and 139 volunteers. COVID vaccinations and tests enabled campers and staff to attend.

**Financial Report.** WDC business manager Beth Yoder reviewed the fiscal year 2020 and reported that Knudson and Monroe had audited and affirmed the financial records. General fund expenses were \$424,693; total income was \$492,612; 66% of the income came from contributions from congregations and constituents.

**2022 Budget.** Beth Yoder presented the 2022 proposed budget of \$537,969, which the Executive Board had approved. **Pauline Buller (First/Hutchinson, Kan.) moved to accept the budget as presented. Zandra Sawatzky (Shalom/Newton, Kan.) seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.**

**Elected Leader Recognition.** Lois Barrett recognized those whose work on commissions had ended. Heidi Regier Kreider offered a prayer honoring their service:

Executive Board: Philip Schmidt, Kent Moore  
Church Planting: John Garland  
Ministerial Leadership: Peter Goerzen, Brad Roth  
Stewardship: Marlan Ratzlaff

**Ballot:** Gifts Discernment Committee chair Ardie Goering (Bethel College Church/North Newton, Kan.) presented the ballot. (See below.) **Tammy Wintermote (First/Hillsboro, Kan.) moved to accept the ballot as presented. Brad Kohlman (Bethel College Church/North Newton, Kan.) seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

#### **Congregational Transitions.**

1. **Goessel Mennonite Church.** Heidi Regier Kreider reported that WDC received a letter from the executive board of Goessel Mennonite Church in Goessel, Kan., stating that on May 16 the congregation voted to approve the motion “that the Goessel Mennonite Church withdraw from WDC and MC USA and the word ‘Mennonite’ be dropped (or removed) from the church name.” **Zandra Sawatzky (Shalom/Newton, Kan.) moved to release GMC from Western District Conference. Valerie Klaassen (Grace Hill/Whitewater, Kan.) seconded the motion.** During discussion, it was made clear that pastoral credentials would no longer be held by WDC. **Motion carried.** Heidi offered a prayer of lament, confession, and blessing for this congregation leaving WDC.
2. **Iglesia Cristiana Anabautista Casa de Paz (House of Peace Anabaptist Christian Church, Guatemala City, Guatemala.** Heidi introduced this congregation, which is seeking affiliation with WDC. Gilberto Flores is pastor. It began meeting in 2015. WDC Executive Board received a letter of intent from Casa de Paz to affiliate with WDC and may receive the congregation into WDC membership at the 2022 Delegate Assembly. Heidi and Lois responded to questions. The history of another church outside the U.S. as part of WDC – one in Mexico earlier – would be helpful for WDC to know as we process this request.

**Resolution of Thanks.** Delon Martens (First/Hutchinson, Kan.) presented:

*We, the delegates at the 2021 Western District Assembly express our thanks and gratitude to the following:*

- Faith Mennonite Church for hosting the Assembly and making all feel welcome.
- Michele Hershberger, who served as keynote speaker and invited us to step onto the dance floor.
- Kathy Neufeld Dunn, Sandra Montes-Martinez, Eric Buller, Ben Woodward-Breckbill, Weldon Martens, and Bill Zuercher, who served as the Assembly Planning Committee.
- Technicians who made this hybrid Assembly possible.
- Seminar leaders who challenged us and storytellers who entertained us.
- WDC staff and their tireless efforts in preparing for this Assembly.
- WDC board, commission, committee, and task force members who provided the foundation upon which WDC witnessed, dwelt, and connected in mission to others this past year.
- And, all who engaged in this Assembly as either a delegate or participant.



**James Griffin (Rainbow/Kansas City, Kan.) moved that we accept this resolution. Marlene Faul (Bethel College Church/North Newton, Kan.) seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

**Announcements.**

Next year's Assembly is scheduled for Camp Copass, Denton, Texas, July 29-31, 2022.

Executive Board will meet Saturday, Sept. 11.

Reference Council is scheduled for Sept. 25 with all Executive Board, Commission members, and Gifts Discernment members encouraged to attend.

Lois Barrett thanked all who made the Assembly possible. She declared the meeting adjourned and closed with prayer. Meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
June Krehbiel, secretary

**BALLOT**

**Executive Board**

Willmar Harder (Buhler/Buhler, Kan.)  
Ben Woodward-Breckbill (Shalom/Newton, Kan.)  
Dave Wiebe (First/Newton, Kan.)

**Gifts Discernment Committee**

Alberto Parchmont (Iglesia Menonita Casa del Alfarero/Pasadena, Tex.)  
Rachel Voth Schrag (Peace/Dallas, Texas)

**Church Planting Commission**

Caleb Yoder (Alexanderwohl/Goessel, Kan.)  
Simon Tlumang (Chin Emmanuel Baptist/Houston, Texas)

**Ministerial Leadership Commission**

Cynthia Neufeld Smith (Southern Hills/ Topeka, Kan.)  
Elizabeth Melendez (Houston/Houston, Texas)

**Resource Commission**

Melissa Atchison (Manhattan/Manhattan, Kan.)  
Derek King (Eden/Moundridge, Kan.)

**Stewardship**

Pauline Buller (First/Hutchinson, Kan.)  
Cleo Koop (Tabor/Newton, Kan.)  
Don Schmidt (First/Newton, Kan.)

END

# Western District Conference

## 2022 Budget

### Income

	Budget 2022	Budget 2021		Budget 2022	Budget 2021
1 Contributions	\$ 398,919	\$396,886	7 Restricted Funds - Staff Benefits	6,550	11,000
2 Church Plant contributions	36,000	24,000	8 Restricted Funds - Resource	4,000	4,000
3 Personnel Rebates	15,000	20,000	9 Seminary Scholarships	3,000	3,000
4 Rent income	-	2,100	10 Restricted Funds - Interest	1,000	1,000
5 Refunds	10,000	10,000	11 Income From Bequest Fund	58,500	51,000
6 Restricted Funds - Church Plants	-	20,000	12 Interest/Market Adjustment	5,000	5,000
<b>Total Income</b>				<b>\$ 537,969</b>	<b>\$547,986</b>

### Expenses

Executive Board			Resource Commission		
	2022	2021		2022	2021
1 Executive - Staff	\$ 46,800	\$ 45,500	1 Resource - Staff	\$ 87,000	\$ 84,550
2 Executive - Staff Travel	1,500	1,500	2 Resource - Staff Travel	1,500	1,500
3 Executive - Office Expense	3,500	3,500	3 Resource - Office Expense	7,000	7,000
4 Executive - Board Exp	1,000	1,000	4 Resource - Commission Exp	200	200
5 Executive - Sabbatical Fund	1,161	1,125	5 Resource - Sabbatical Fund	1,810	1,750
6 Executive - Building repair loan	604	604	6 Resource - Building repair loan	1,207	1,207
7 Executive - CLC Exp	1,000	1,000	7 Resource - Mennonite Archives	3,000	3,000
8 Executive - MC USA Delegates	2,500	2,500	8 Resource - Library	7,000	7,000
9 Executive - Reference Council	500	500	9 Resource - Music & Worship	250	250
<b>Executive Total</b>	<b>\$ 58,565</b>	<b>\$ 57,229</b>	10 Resource - Youth North	1,000	1,000
			11 Resource - Youth South	1,000	1,000
			<b>Resource Total</b>	<b>\$ 110,967</b>	<b>\$108,457</b>

### Ministerial Leadership Commission

1 Leader - Staff	\$ 151,000	\$160,900
2 Leader - Staff Travel	10,000	10,000
3 Leader - Office Expense	14,000	14,000
4 Leader - Commission Exp	750	750
5 Leader - Sabbatical Fund	4,405	4,600
6 Leader - Building repair loan	2,414	2,414
7 Leader - Ministerial Credential	800	800
8 Leader - Seminary Scholarships	3,000	4,000
9 Leader - Meetings & workshops	1,200	1,200
<b>Leadership Total</b>	<b>\$ 187,569</b>	<b>\$198,664</b>

### Stewardship Commission

1 Steward - Staff	\$ 37,200	\$ 36,250
2 Steward - Staff Travel	500	500
3 Steward - Office Expense	7,000	7,000
4 Steward - Commission Exp	400	400
5 Steward - Sabbatical Fund	387	375
6 Steward - Building repair loan	1,207	1,207
7 Steward - Communications	2,500	5,000
8 Steward - Insurance	12,000	13,000
9 Steward - Audit	7,900	7,500
<b>Stewardship Total</b>	<b>\$ 69,094</b>	<b>\$ 71,232</b>

### Church Planting Commission

1 Church Planting - Staff	\$ 61,850	\$ 74,200
2 Church Planting - Staff Travel	5,000	5,000
3 Church Planting - Office Expense	3,500	3,500
4 Church Planting - Commission Exp	500	500
5 Church Planting - Sabbatical Fund	1,820	2,100
6 Church Planting - Building repair loan	604	604
7 Church Planting - Planters' retreat	2,500	2,500
8 Church Planting - Plant Support	36,000	24,000
<b>Church Planting Total</b>	<b>\$ 111,774</b>	<b>\$112,404</b>

**Total Expenses** **\$ 537,969** **\$547,986**

# 2022 Budget Notes

## INCOME

#1 Contributions from congregations and individuals.

#2 Contributions from congregations and individuals designated for Church Planting. This amount was increased this year compared to last year to match the change in the *Plant Support* expense (see The Church Planting Commission explanation under “Other expense categories” below).

#3 Personnel Rebates – honorariums for our staff and payments from other organizations for work done by our staff. This has decreased due to the loss of South Central Mennonite Conference subsidy for library use.

#4 Rent – For consistency, all tenant income has been moved to the 2500 Place Fund. The 2021 budget reflected two rooms being rented within WDC office space, this rent has been moved to 2500 Place.

#5 Refunds – travel and insurance refunds and office equipment use by other organizations.

#6 Restricted Funds – Church Plants – There currently are not funds coming into this income account. The Church Planting Commission would move funds to this account if/when we have a church plant project in which there was a sister church partnership helping with the subsidy.

#7 Restricted Funds – Staff Benefits – Amounts is based on spouse/dependent health insurance coverage by WDC, therefore it has decreased from last year. This also includes funds to help pay for the HSA contributions.

#8 to #10 Restricted funds income – this income is from restricted accounts that have received contributions for a designated purpose that were not needed/used in the years that they were received. They are pulled into 2022 budget to cover expenses for their specific designation.

#12 Income from the Bequest Fund – all bequests over \$500 are deposited into the WDC Bequest Fund. 10% is transferred annually to the WDC income budget. Up to 20% can be transferred to cover expenses by approval of Executive Board.

#13 Interest earned and market adjustments made on WDC invested funds during the year.

## EXPENSES

The WDC Budget is divided into the Executive Board and 4 Commissions. The Board and each Commission share the cost of employing staff, staff travel and office supplies that provide essential services to carry out WDC’s mission. These three areas make up the first three accounts in each section of the expenses. The next expense account in each section is *Board/Commission expenses* which are used for travel and food for meetings. Following the *Board/Commission expenses* are the *Sabbatical Fund* and then repayment of a *Building repair loan*. The *Sabbatical Fund* will be used for expenses incurred for coverage when one of the conference ministers goes on Sabbatical. The *Building repair loan* represents repayment of the loan from the Revolving Fund in 2019 for roof replacement as well as additional larger maintenance and repair costs for 2500 Place.



The staff salaries and benefits, staff travel and office expenses are divided among the Board/Commissions as follows:

**Executive Board**

30% Conference Minister	30% Staff Travel
20% Administrative Assistant in Kansas	10% Office Expenses
10% Business Manager	

**Ministerial Leadership Commission**

40% Conference Minister	40% Staff Travel
50% Associate Conference Minister in Texas	40% Office Expenses
50% Associate Conference Minister in Kansas	
50% Administrative Assistant in Texas	
30% Administrative Assistant in Kansas	
10% Business Manager	
100% Youth Network Team Leader	

**Church Plant Commission**

10% Conference Minister	10% Other Staff Travel
50% Associate Conference Minister in Texas	10% Office Expenses
50% Administrative Assistant in Texas	
10% Administrative Assistant in Kansas	
5% Business Manager	

**Resource Commission**

10% Conference Minister	10% Staff Travel
50% Associate Conference Minister in Kansas	20% Office Expenses
100% Resource Library Director	
30% Administrative Assistant in Kansas	
15% Business Manager	

**Stewardship Commission**

10% Conference Minister	10% Staff Travel
10% Administrative Assistant in Kansas	20% Office Expenses
60% Business Manager	

**Other Expense categories**

**Executive Board** budget has funds to assist WDC delegates attend the MC USA biennial sessions, for Reference Council expenses, and for WDC representatives to attend MC USA Constituency Leaders Council.

**Ministerial Leadership Commission** budget includes funds for ministerial credentialing, meetings and workshops such as healthy boundaries training and other minister's resourcing events, and seminary scholarships to encourage MC USA seminary attendance.

**The Church Planting Commission** budget contains funds used to support new church plants. For 2022, the Commission made the decision to increase the *Plant Support* expense to \$36,000.

**Resource Commission** budget includes a subsidy for the Mennonite Library and Archives at Bethel College which houses WDC archives, funds for resources and maintenance of the Conference Resource Library, and funds for the youth ministry program.

**Stewardship Commission budget** contains funds for communications as well as for the annual audit and insurance premiums.

## 2021 ELECTION RESULTS

**Executive Board:** Willmar Harder, Ben Woodward-Breckbill, Dave Wiebe (to fill unexpired term)

**Church Planting Commission:** Caleb Yoder, Simon Tlumang

**Gifts Discernment Committee:** Alberto Parchmont, Rachel Voth Schrag

**Ministerial Leadership Commission:** Cynthia Neufeld Smith, Elizabeth Melendez

**Resource Commission:** Melissa Atchison, Derek King

**Stewardship Commission:** Pauline Buller, Cleo Koop, Don Schmidt (to fill unexpired term)

## CERTIFIED DELEGATES AT 2021 CONFERENCE & CHURCH ELIGIBLE VOTES

(Due to technology of online gathering, each delegate carried one vote.)

### KANSAS

1. **Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel:** Kris Schmucker, Marjorie Shoemaker, Brian Stucky, Nancy Stucky, Caleb Yoder (500 members, 17 votes)
2. **Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton:** Marlene Faul, Dawn Yoder Harms, Tim Hodge, Roger Juhnke, Arlo Kasper, Brad Kohlman, Dick Koontz, Jim Miniger, Austin Prouty, Elaine Prouty, Renee Reimer, Ada Schmidt-Tieszen, Dale Schrag, Elaine Schurr, Susie Swartley (471 members, 16 votes)
3. **Buhler Mennonite Church, Buhler:** No delegates present. (337 members, 12 votes)
4. **Calvary Mennonite Church, Liberal:** No delegates present. (8 members, 1 vote)
5. **Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge:** Derek King, June Krehbiel, Perry Krehbiel (317 members, 11 votes)
6. **Faith Mennonite Church, Newton:** Grace Bartel, Harlan Bartel, Darlene Powers (168 members, 6 votes)
7. **First Mennonite Church, Halstead:** Stephen Wilcox (233 members, 8 votes)
8. **First Mennonite Church, Hillsboro:** Tammy Wintermote (202 members, 7 votes)
9. **First Mennonite Church, Hutchinson:** Pauline Buller, Ken Neufeld, Tonya Ramer Wenger (140 members, 5 votes)
10. **First Mennonite Church, McPherson:** No delegates present. (134 members, 5 votes)
11. **First Mennonite Church, Newton:** Susan Jantzen, Donald L. Schmidt, Dave Wiebe (272 members, 10 votes)
12. **First Mennonite Church, Ransom:** No delegates present. (18 members, 1 vote)
13. **First Mennonite Church of Christian, Moundridge:** No delegates present. (129 members, 5 votes)
14. **Goessel Mennonite Church, Goessel:** No delegates present. (143 members, 5 votes)
15. **Gospel Fellowship, Montezuma:** No delegates present. (25 members, 1 vote)
16. **Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater:** Roberta Harms, Valerie Klaassen, Weldon Martens (213 members, 8 votes)
17. **Hanston Mennonite Church, Hanston:** No delegates present. (15 members, 1 vote)
18. **Hoffnungsaus Mennonite Church, Inman:** Orlin Martens, Randy Smith (184 members, 7 votes)
19. **Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita:** Dave Stevens (247 members, 9 votes)
20. **Iglesia Camino de Santidad, Liberal:** No delegates present. (60 members, 2 vote)
21. **(Church Plant) Iglesia Menonita Aposento Alto, Wichita:** Suhelen Cazares (21 members, 1 vote)
22. **Iglesia Menonita Casa Betania, Newton:** Graciela Tijerina (15 members, 1 vote)
23. **(Church Plant) Iglesia Palabra Viva, Liberal:** No delegates present. (42 members, 1 vote)
24. **Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita:** Christina Manero, Katie Mitchell-Koch (376 members, 13 votes)
25. **Manhattan Mennonite Church, Manhattan:** No delegates present. (120 members, 4 votes)
26. **Mennonite Church of the Servant, Wichita:** John Stoesz (25 members, 1 vote)
27. **New Creation Fellowship, Newton:** No delegates present (52 members, 2 votes)
28. **Peace Mennonite Church, Lawrence:** Joanna Harader (60 members, 2 votes)
29. **Rainbow Mennonite Church, Kansas City:** Peggy Coriell, Jimmy Griffin, Ruth Harder, Laura Schmidt, Natasha VanDyke (260 members, 9 votes)
30. **Salina Mennonite Church, Salina:** Christina Litwiller, Pete Smucker (60 members, 2 votes)



31. **Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton:** Ben Woodward-Breckbill, Zandra Sawatzky, Paul Unruh, Marv Zehr (216 members, 8 votes)
32. **Southern Hills Mennonite Church, Topeka:** Larry Dixon, Elvera Johnson, Vicki Penner (78 members, 3 votes)
33. **Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton:** Katherine Goerzen, Cleo Koop, Denise Nickel, Erica Stoltzfus, Luke Unruh (304 members, 11 votes)
34. **Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro:** No delegates present. (36 members, 2 votes)
35. **West Zion Mennonite Church, Moundridge:** No delegates present. (177 members, 6 votes)
36. **Zion Mennonite Church, Elbing:** Karen Andres, Mark Unruh (143 members, 5 votes)

#### **NEBRASKA**

1. **Beatrice Mennonite Church, Beatrice:** Tim Amor (130 members, 5 votes)
2. **First Mennonite Church, Beatrice:** Roger Neufeld Smith (225 members, 8 votes)

#### **OKLAHOMA**

1. **Greenfield Mennonite Church, Carnegie:** No delegates present. (6 members, 1 vote)
2. **Joy Mennonite Church, Oklahoma City:** Karen Mascho (21 members, 1 vote)
3. **Koinonia Mennonite Church, Clinton:** Susan Peak Hart (15 members, 1 vote)
4. **Turpin Mennonite Church, Turpin:** No delegates present. (76 members, 3 votes)

#### **TEXAS**

1. **Austin Mennonite Church, Austin:** Janice Friesen (50 members, 2 votes)
2. **Chin Emmanuel Church, Houston:** No delegates present. (100 members, 4 votes)
3. **Hope Fellowship, Waco:** No delegates present. (50 members, 2 vote)
4. **Houston Mennonite Church, Houston:** No delegates present. (58 members, 2 votes)
5. **Iglesia Cristiana Menonita Monte Horeb, Dallas:** No delegates present. (32 members, 2 votes)
6. **Iglesia Menonita Casa de Dios, Garland:** Isabel Hernandez (12 members, 1 vote)
7. **Iglesia Menonita Casa del Alfarero, Pasadena:** Alberto Parchmont, Aurora Parchmont (37 members, 2 votes)
8. **Iglesia Menonita Comunidad de Esperanza, Dallas:** No delegates present. (40 members, 2 votes)
9. **Iglesia Menonita Comunidad de Vida, San Antonio:** No delegates present. (8 members, 1 vote)
10. **Iglesia Menonita Luz del Evangelio, Dallas:** No delegates present. (90 members, 3 votes)
11. **Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas:** Kiley Mabry, Samuel Voth Schrag (35 members, 2 votes)
12. **San Antonio Mennonite Church, San Antonio:** No delegates present (34 members, 2 votes)

