

Annual Report, July 2022.
Sandra Montes-Martinez
WDC Associate Conference Minister (Texas-based)

I am thankful for the opportunity to work with pastors and congregations, supporting them to fulfill the call that God has given them in their communities and ministries. It is a blessing to be able to be part of the Church Planting Commission and support team, join what God is already doing in our midst to see new communities of faith emerging until they become established congregations, and help established congregation and pastors to thrive in ministry.

I work alongside Violeta Ajuquejay Suastegui as Administrative Assistant and the support of all WDC staff in the following areas

Church Planting:

- ✓ As staff liaison for WDC Church Planting Commission, I meet with the CPC monthly or as often as needed to provide leadership and resources for church planting initiatives.
- ✓ I have had multiple conversations with potential prospect for CP, using the CPC Essential Procedures to guide it through the process of assessment, and developing a new church plant. (See CPC report) This work has brought forth fruit as the new Church Plant House of Restoration in Houston TX.
- ✓ During the fall of 2021 the commission and I work diligently to create a Strategic Plan that will guide the work of the church plant in WDC for the next 3 years. This plan was affirmed by executive Board.
- ✓ To implement the CPC Strategic Plant, we create the Church Planting Support Group to focus and establish new congregations to explore initiatives that energizing, promoting the mission and vision of the conference for new church plants.
- ✓ I maintain communication with church planters to connect, provide resources and practical tools for their work as church planters.
- ✓ I work with the CPC, WDC staff and Bill Zuercher and we have submitted a grant application to the Showalter Foundation in March 2022 to help implement the CPC Strategic Plan over the next 3 years. We are grateful that the full grant was awarded.
- ✓ Since august 2021 we work with church plant Apocento Alto in Wichita KS, to prepare the structure of the congregation and documentation to apply for full membership as a established congregation to WDC in the 2022 Annual Assembly.

Supporting Pastors and congregations.

- ✓ Assisting congregation with pastoral transitions: during the past year I worked with leadership and pastors of HMC and AMC in pastoral transition. This work continuing, walking alongside the congregation, and transitional/interim pastors to identifying areas that need attention, church visioning and other matters. We are grateful for the work of our former pastors and we prepare for this new season and leadership for those congregations.
- ✓ I lead Pastor's peer group meetings for TX Bilingual Pastor Peer group (every other week for the most part of the year), Hispanic Ministry pastors (monthly), and I attended Transitional Pastors and Pastor Review Advisory group (monthly).
- ✓ I visited 17 congregations/church plants on 39 visits, 2 Texas WDC Churches Join virtual worship. Officiate 2 pastor farewell blessings and 4 pastoral transitional/interim installation, multiple congregation leadership meetings, conducted over 33 one on one pastor meetings. (Some of these visits/ meetings were virtual).
- ✓ As staff liaison, I worked with Casa de Paz in Guatemala to bring the recommendation to Executive Board and prepare the documentation to apply for full membership as a established congregation to WDC in the 2022 Annual Assembly.

Connect Pastors and Congregations with WDC and MC USA resources and mission

- ✓ Facilitate Annual Study Week for First Mennonite Church and Summit Mennonite in Beatrice Nebraska in person on March 27 and virtually on April 3rd.
- ✓ lead 2 Virtual Forums providing resources for WDC congregations in discipleship, evangelism, mission, and outreach in the form of webinars and Facebook Live.
- ✓ Weekly meetings with CM Heidi Regier Kreider for Updates and consultation.
- ✓ Monthly WDC Conference Minister meetings for and MC USA Conference Ministers gathering.
- ✓ Attended WDC annual staff retreat on March 25.
- ✓ Participating in an AMBS Pastors & Leaders Advisory Committee.
- ✓ Mennonite Disaster Service, supporting the formation of the Texas Unit.
- ✓ Write a monthly article to be published on our website
- ✓ Served as WDC delegate in MC USA 2021 convention and special assembly in KC on May 2022.
- ✓ Participating on the WDC Anti-Racism Audit Team.
- ✓ Attended Immigration task force networking meetings.
- ✓ Oversees the work of the Administrative Assistant for WDC Texas, and the CPC support person: Nita Nikkels.

Administrative Assistant highlights

- ✓ Maintaining regular communication with WDC pastors and congregational leaders in Texas via text, emails, and phone calls. This has been the effective way to connect and resource the congregations we serve.
- ✓ Translation for commission and EB meeting's material, minutes, articles, announcements, documents, surveys and resources for training and publications of WDC.
- ✓ Verbal Interpretation for board commission members.
- ✓ Coordinating Interpretation for annual assembly.
- ✓ Following up on pastor's annual accountability forms, HB training and other technical requirements for pastors and congregations.

Personal/ Professional growth:

- ✓ Continuing online at SeBAH a MEA program of MC USA.
- ✓ Attend the AMBS pastors and leader's week 2022.
- ✓ Continuing education course "Advancing Towards Transformation as a Church" August 14 to September 18, 2021.

Institutional relationships

I serve as: Director of the Anabaptist Missional Leadership Academy (ALMA) a program of the Hispanic Mennonite Church/ MC USA, board member in the Leadership discernment committee (LDC) of MC USA, and Everence National Chapter Grant board.

I'm grateful for the Church Planting Commission, CP Support Team, and WDC's staff for their partnership to be able to serve the conference.

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Associate Conference Minister