



# **WESTERN DISTRICT CONFERENCE MINUTES**

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

**August 2-4, 2024  
Hybrid (Onsite & Virtual Options)**

## **2024 Western District Conference Delegate Assembly Minutes**

**August 3, 2024: 9:00 am - 12:00 pm, 1:30 - 2:30 pm First Mennonite Church, Beatrice, Nebraska**

\* Related materials posted at <https://mennowdc.org/2024-assembly-delegate-information/>

**Call to order:** Delon Martens, moderator, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and welcomed the delegates to the 116<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Western District Conference. The last time WDC met in Beatrice was in 1993. Beatrice has hosted 11 times in the history of WDC delegate sessions. Delon reminded the delegates of the mission of WDC and led in prayer.

**Approve agenda:** Larry Dixon, Shalom Mennonite, moved to approve the agenda. Second by Marlene Faul, Bethel College Mennonite. Motion carried.

**Credentials Committee report:** Violeta Ajquajay Suastegui reported there are currently 50 WDC churches and 3 church plants. A quorum is a majority. Today, 37 churches and church plants are represented in person or virtually. In 2024 there are 6,062 members in WDC with 220 eligible votes. A total of 93 delegates are present in person or virtually representing 188 votes.

**Introduction of congregations applying for membership in WDC\*:** Delon reported all three of the churches joining today are former members of South Central Conference. Delon explained the process for churches to become members in WDC.

**Vote on recommendation to approve membership for New Life Christian Center, San Benito, TX:** Associate Conference Minister Sandra Montes-Martinez expressed how joyful she was to add more members to the community. She provided history of the congregation, originally in Brownsville, TX in 1994. The congregation grew and moved into a new building in 1999 in San Benito. She described the many ways the congregation has engaged with the community over the years not only in their own community but also across the border in Mexico. The current community is fewer than prior to Covid, and they currently are grieving the recent death of their pastor. On June 20, the Executive Board approved bringing the recommendation to the delegates to receive the congregation into WDC.

**Motion to approve New Life Christian Center by Ken Neufeld, First Mennonite Hutchinson, and second by George Leary, Bethel College Mennonite. Motion approved.**

Ana Hinojosa, daughter of the former pastor Eduardo “Lalo” Hinojosa, thanked WDC and said that he said prior to his passing that this is God’s timing. God’s light and the Holy Spirit is part of the church and all of us. She asked the delegates to pray for them.

**Vote on recommendation to approve membership for Crystal Springs Mennonite Church, Harper, KS.** Wendy Funk Schrag provided information about the congregation which dates back to 1904 and was associated with Amish Mennonites prior to moving from McPherson County to outside Harper, KS and eventually affiliating with South Central Conference. The congregation is a small group that continues to see its mission to serve their community and each other. It has no paid staff. The members divide the responsibilities. Video technology is used for sermons and music accompaniment. Wendy described a very close-knit and vibrant community when she and Conference Minister Heidi Regier Kreider visited there in March.

**Motion by Todd Schlosser, Tabor Mennonite, to approve membership for Crystal Springs Mennonite Church. Second by Em Kerbs, Shalom Mennonite. Motion approved.**

Martha Ediger provided more history of the congregation and how they came to make the decision to join WDC. Heidi Regier Kreider offered a prayer of blessing.

**Vote on recommendation to approve membership for Hesston Mennonite Church, Hesston, KS.**

Heidi Regier Kreider provided background on the congregation and reasons why the congregation wants to join WDC including the resources it has to offer and deepening relationships with other congregations, especially those nearby. The church was organized in 1910 on the campus of Hesston Academy. A new building was built in 1956 where it is today, along with an addition. It has over 340 members. Post-Covid attendance is less, but online attendance is important to them. It shares a special relationship with Schowalter Villa. The church has a history of members from both former Mennonite Church and General Conference Mennonite Church.

**Motion by Randy Stucky, First Mennonite Church of Christian, to approve membership for Hesston Mennonite Church. Second by Dale Schrag, Bethel College Mennonite Church. Motion approved.**

Jon Friesen, congregational chair, offered comments. He thanked the delegates for their gift of membership and provided ways the congregation will serve WDC. Heidi Regier Kreider offered a prayer of blessing.

**Sharing around tables:** Delegates introduced themselves to each other at the tables, and shared responses to the question: "What is your earliest memory of church?"

**Roll call of WDC congregations:** Heidi Regier Kreider and Delon Martens read the names of all the WDC congregations as well as new pastors, accompanied by slides with maps showing where each of the WDC congregations is located.

**Approval of Minutes of 2023 WDC Delegate Assembly\*:** Business Manager Shari Scheffler provided a correction to the minutes on the date of sale of the 2500 Main building being sold in July and not May 31 as was presented in the minutes. **Motion by Eric Buller, Hoffnungsau Mennonite, and Rose Marie Zook Barber, Faith Mennonite, to accept the minutes as presented with the one correction. Motion approved.**

**State of the Conference report:** Heidi Regier Kreider's full report is on the website. She highlighted areas of her report. She expressed gratitude and focused on the topic of transformation. Her first topic focused on the differences between WDC congregations. She highlighted ways WDC congregations are different and unique and carry different perspectives and priorities. At the same time, many similarities are shared. God does transformative work through our unique differences and our shared common experiences. Transformation involves healing past injustices and practicing curiosity with respect, humility and compassion. The second dimension of transformation is how we experience giving and receiving between congregations and the conference as a whole. She reflected on how WDC helps congregations and highlighted WDC's brochures on the tables. She specifically highlighted WDC's resource library as a unique resource that not all conferences have. WDC does not exist apart from congregations but through the participation of congregations. It relies on the support of all our WDC congregations joining resources, mutual support and accountability to do what we can't do by ourselves. She provided a story to illustrate this from the recent storm in Houston and how churches and WDC banded together to help, including WDC providing a Hope Fund grant to buy a generator for one of the Houston churches.

**Welcome to Institutional Partners:** Delon noted the names of the institutional partners on a slide.



**Greetings from Mennonite Church USA:** Michael Danner, MC USA Executive Director for Church Vitality, provided greetings from the Mennonite Church USA moderator, director, staff and other conferences. There are over 50,000 members of Mennonite Church USA. He thanked WDC for the work the conference does, including welcoming new congregations. He invited delegates to attend the Mennonite Church USA convention which will be held July 8-12, 2025 in Greensboro, North Carolina. The theme is "Follow Jesus." He also invited delegates to sign up for the communication pieces MC USA has available. Subscriptions are available on their website. He challenged delegates to continue to proclaim Christ boldly and with gentleness and respect.

Break ---

**Commission reports:** Detailed reports were provided online for the delegates and copies are on each table. Brief highlights were provided by the Commission chairs as follows.

**Resource Commission:** Chair Melissa Atchison, via Zoom, reported the mission of the Resource Commission to provide resources for faith formation and Mustard Seed grants. One grant provided is the summer meal and pool pass program at First Mennonite in Hillsboro, KS. She invited delegates to look at information online about the Mustard Seed grants. The Commission has been spending more time visioning for the future at their meetings. She asked delegates to go to the Resource Commission table at the Assembly and let the members know what the churches need.

**Ministerial Leadership Commission:** Chair Cynthia Neufeld Smith introduced the Commission members. The focus of the Commission is on supporting pastors by overseeing the credentialing process, supporting pastors financially in their ongoing ministry with help for seminary, continuing education, and counseling services, and providing an English language pastor's retreat in April and a Spanish language pastor's retreat that will be held in September. All credentialed ministers are required to submit annual accountability plans and the Commission provides healthy boundary education and practices. They are working with the Executive Board on how to repent for excluding people who are LGBTQ from being credentialed in the past. Current practice is to credential all eligible candidates who are LGBTQ.

**Church Planting Commission:** Staff liaison Sandra Montes-Martinez said the mission is to provide leadership, companionship, and support for new communities of faith and their leaders. She introduced the Commission members. Liberal, KS, Houston, TX and Guatemala are the locations of the current three church plants. She explained the process of church planting including regular and frequent conversations with the churches to create Anabaptist, peace-focused churches. 35 new students in the Arca de Salvación church plant are participating in IBA (Instituto Biblico Anabautista) in collaborations with Mennonite Education Agency and SEMILLA seminary. She asked for support through prayers and financial gifts. She thanked the WDC staff who support the church planting efforts.

**Stewardship Commission:** Chair Cleo Koop's report will occur during the budget conversation.

**Vote on recommendation to release West Zion Mennonite Church, Moundridge, KS\***

Delon provided background on the West Zion Mennonite Church's decision to withdraw from WDC. Last year, Delon, Heidi Regier Kreider and Associate Conference Minister Kathy Neufeld Dunn met with the West Zion Mennonite Church deacons, and their church council later sent a letter communicating the congregation's decision to withdraw from WDC. The Executive Board sent a letter to the church, acknowledging their prayerful and deliberate process, and offering gratitude for the church's many years of witness. Delon stated a 2/3 majority is required to release a congregation. **David Wiebe, First Mennonite Newton, moved to release the congregation. Second by Tom Claassen, Salina**

**Mennonite.** Steve Becker, Buhler Mennonite, asked where West Zion is located. Delon responded it is in Moundridge, KS. **Motion carried.** Geneva Wedel, member of West Zion, presented comments. She said the church had been in discussion for several years and the discussion was not taken lightly. She thanked WDC for a respectful release and will miss the relationships formed within WDC.

Kathy Neufeld Dunn offered a prayer of release and blessing for West Zion Mennonite Church.

Em Kerbs, Shalom Mennonite, offered a brief comment that we can still be friends even though we may not be all part of the same conference anymore.

**Recognition of closure of Hanston Mennonite Church:** Delon Martens stated that WDC recently learned that the church members were no longer meeting. He provided some history on the church, going back prior to 1888 started by immigrants from Ukraine. He named some of their important ministries over the years. Prior to the pandemic, about 10 members were attending. Now, the church has decided to close. Heidi Regier Kreider offered a prayer of blessing and thanks for the way the church ministered to many over the generations.

**Listening Process update** Wendy Funk Schrag provided an update on the listening tour visits. Twenty-two churches have received visits or have a visit confirmed: 15 in Kansas, 2 in Nebraska, 1 in Oklahoma and 4 in Texas. There is a need for more bilingual volunteers. She reminded the delegates of the purpose of the visits and future plans for evaluating themes from the visits and upcoming WDC sponsored conversational zoom meetings on those themes.

**Dismantling Racism Action Team update:** Ben Woodward-Breckbill provided an update on ways a new Dismantling Racism Action Team has been formed to find ways to act on the prior anti-racism audit's recommendations. The team has 5 members. They are focusing on continuing conversations, providing more resources on anti-racism through the weekly WDC newsletter, celebrating cultures within WDC, and telling stories of BIPOC involvement in the history of WDC. He reminded the delegates the audit report is available on the WDC website. They have consulted with Sue Park-Hur, Director of Racial/Ethnic Engagement for MC USA. They are offering a workshop of stories this afternoon.

**Financial Reports: Fiscal year starting Feb 1, 2023\* and Fiscal year starting Feb 1, 2024 to date\***

Cleo Koop, Stewardship Commission chair, reminded the delegates of the Commission's mission and role. He encouraged delegates to read a document the Commission put forth responding to concerns made at last year's delegate meeting about the WDC budget creation. He thanked Business Manager Shari Scheffler and Fund Development Coordinator Mike Lamb for their help with the current budget even though they were both new to WDC. The Commission responded to three challenges: 1) budget is approved 6 months before the budget takes effect. This afternoon, the delegates will vote on changing the fiscal year to begin October 1. (2) the current budget structure is confusing. A new structure will be provided at this meeting. (3) We don't have a good strategy for how we account for new initiatives and projects that occur after the budget has been adopted. Cleo asked the delegates, "Does our vision match our capacity to fund the vision?" How do we respond to opportunities? He read the Message version of Proverbs 29:18: "If people can't see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves. But when they attend to what God reveals, they are most blessed." He reflected what our speaker, Adrien Roberson had asked, "Should there be an expectancy?" He said, yes, there is an expectancy.

**Presentation of 2025 Budget recommendation\*, discussion and vote:** Shari Scheffler, WDC Business Manager, expressed thanks for the many people she works with in her role. She presented the 2025 budget with a goal of "demystifying" it. She highlighted reports available on the delegate tables. WDC



has 5 funds: general, 2500 place, revolving, restricted and general plant funds. She presented the 2024 report from the auditor to illustrate the funds. She navigated the delegates through the 2025 proposed budget beginning with a broad overview and then focusing on the specifics illustrating where money is used from the 5 funds. The overall net worth of WDC is over \$2.5 million. In fiscal year ending January 31, 2024, WDC ended the year below budget but with more expenses than income. She provided comparison of the budgets from 2022, and 2023. Income was higher in 2023 than 2022. Restricted funds help with a higher percentage of the budget in 2023 because contributions stayed about the same while expenses went up.

**2024 Quarter 1 report:** WDC's executive board approved collecting an administrative fee on some restricted funds which provides some income to close the gap between income and expenses. WDC also moved most of its funds from traditional CDs to investments at Everence to provide a higher rate of return for the funds. Because of these changes, we are much less in the negative than a year ago.

**2025 budget presentation:** The proposed 2025 budget is \$721,812 total expenses. She highlighted the main differences between the 2024 and 2025 budget.

**Motion by Cleo Koop, Tabor Mennonite, to accept the 2025 budget, second by Bonnie Brewer, Zion Mennonite.** Discussion was held as follows. Shari made some additional comments about how the budget income for the 2025 budget compares to prior years due to changes in how the budget is now structured and prior changes made by the Executive Board. Delon acknowledged last year's delegate concerns for closing the gap between expenses and income and steps taken. A question was asked about where the money from the sale of the building went. Shari responded it is in a restricted fund. Part is subsidizing rent over 5 years and some is funding the Fund Development Coordinator position, and the increase in the Business Manager hours. The remaining fund is invested with Everence. John Regier, First Mennonite Beatrice, asked for clarification on how the rent is paid. Shari explained how money is being transferred in a little less each year. Vicki Penner, Southern Hills Mennonite, asked for an example of administrative fees. Shari provided explanation of administrative fees on restricted funds. WDC is charging this fee on its own restrictive funds to help with the costs of managing the funds. Heidi Regier Kreider responded that the restrictive funds are also being invested by Everence in a better matter that reflect the values of WDC. Roger Neufeld Smith, Bethel College Mennonite Church, asked what change is WDC hoping to have in giving from congregations? Shari explained the restructuring of the budget is to help congregations understand it, to increase the income to the budget by the methods taken now on restructuring the restricted funds, and then encourage continued contributions from congregations. Mike Lamb also has secured estate gifts for the future. Cleo Koop referred the delegates to the 2025 target amount for contributions from WDC churches and individuals. Samuel Voth Schrag, Peace Mennonite, asked for a reporting of where the WDC assets have been over the past 5 or so years. He also acknowledged staff rates increasing due to inflation and that hopefully that will not occur every year. Shari also acknowledged an increase in insurance rates. She said she can do research and send out information on the asset question.

**Motion carried.**

Lunch break (12:00-1:30 pm)

**Report from Camp Mennoscah:** Tammy Duvanel Unruh, development director, reported over 400 kids were at camp this summer, up from the two previous years. Thirteen states were represented, and 57 different towns. She encouraged everyone to be a part of camp's ministry through their time, talents and finances. There are major building maintenance projects that need to be funded. The next goal for camp is to raise \$750,000 for Camp's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The kids from the Buhler Community VBS (led by Buhler

Mennonite and Hoffnungsau Mennonite Churches) just raised \$800 for camp from their VBS offerings. She challenged the delegates to provide funds this weekend to match that amount. On Sunday morning, Tammy announced that the challenge had been met and even exceeded.

#### **Bylaw Amendments\***

Consider motion to suspend requirement for 60-day notice for bylaw amendments, for this delegate meeting only, in order to act on 2 proposed bylaw amendments posted previously Recommendation to amend WDC Bylaw 1, Delegate Assembly, Section E., Conference Year, to change the fiscal year to Oct 1 - Sept 30.

**Moved by Sarah McKinnon, Buhler Mennonite, to suspend the requirement for 60-day notice for bylaw amendments for this delegate meeting only. John Klaassen, Grace Hill Mennonite, seconded. Motion carried.**

Recommendation to amend WDC Bylaw 1, Delegate Assembly, Section E., Conference Year, to change the fiscal year to Oct 1 - Sept 30.

Heidi Regier Kreider and Shari Scheffler provided rationale for the change. **Motion by Jay Goering, Eden Mennonite, to amend WDC Bylaw 1, Delegate Assembly, Section E., Conference Year, to change the fiscal year to Oct 1 - Sept 30 effective October 1, 2025. Second by Eric Buller, Hoffnungsau Mennonite.** Roger Neufeld Smith, Bethel College Mennonite, asked if there is any concern about year-end giving when churches have their budgets on a calendar year. Shari states there was discussion about that, but churches have a variety of giving patterns. Historical giving seemed to be the biggest factor in predicting what churches give year after year. **Motion carried.**

Recommendation to amend Bylaw 2, Conference Leadership and Structure, Section B., Executive Board, 1. Duties to add "n. Between Delegate Assemblies, be responsible for approving any necessary deviations from the delegate-approved budget, with input and consideration from appropriate WDC staff, commission, committees, or task forces."

**Motion by Em Kerbs, Shalom Mennonite, that the Executive Board, between Delegate Assemblies, be responsible for approving any necessary deviations from the delegate-approved budget, with input and consideration from appropriate WDC staff, commission, committees, or task forces." Second by Janet Dixon, Shalom Mennonite.** Delon provided rationale for the change, providing examples of things that may arise unexpectedly in between budgets being set by the delegates that need to be addressed by the Executive Board. Mark Stucky, Zion Mennonite, asked whether the Executive Board would notify congregations if a change was made. Shari Scheffler replied that these would be most likely things like insurance premiums, utility increases, etc. would be the things addressed. If there is a significant change, then a notification could be provided. Steve Becker, Buhler Mennonite, talked about how broad the grant of the authority is with this amendment. Shari replied it is broad but the Executive Board is to be responsible and leadership will need to be trusted. Vicki Penner, Southern Hills Mennonite, asked how often this has happened in the past. Shari replied that while she's not aware of the past, last year things came up such as increased business manager hours. David Wiebe, First Mennonite Newton is a member of the Executive Board, said the amendment legitimizes what is already happening in some cases currently. **Motion carried.**

**Thanksgiving for elected leaders completing service:** Delon listed those who are completing terms of service with WDC and thanked them for their service.



**Gifts Discernment Committee Report:** Committee member Linda Goering presented the ballot for open positions to be filled. She expressed appreciation for those willing to serve. There are still three openings for the Gifts Discernment Committee that the Executive Board will work to fill. Linda called attention to a form on the website for submitting ideas for consideration.

**Election of new leaders (see ballot)\*:** Linda reviewed the ballot of nominees. Delon opened the floor for more nominations. None were presented.

**Moved by Em Kerbs, Shalom Mennonite, to accept the ballot as presented. Second by Carolee Neufeld, First Mennonite Hutchinson. Motion carried.**

Delon provided a prayer of dedication for those serving on WDC commissions.

**Open mic time:**

Ruth Harder, Pastor at Rainbow Mennonite, presented greetings via Zoom and said they are completing a three-year project writing the church's history. The book is called *The Church by the Playground* by Dorothy Nickel Friesen. It's available at Faith & Life Bookstore in Newton, KS. An author conversation will occur on August 15, 2-3 pm at Kidron Bethel Village in North Newton, KS.

**Announcement of 2025 Annual Assembly:** The 2025 Annual Assembly will be held in Kansas with the venue and date to be determined.

**Report from Resolutions Committee:** Eric Buller, moderator-elect, offered a resolution of thanks to First Mennonite Beatrice Mennonite and Summit Street Mennonite Church for the use of their facilities as follows:

Thanks to

- 1) the congregations and staff of First Mennonite Church and Summit Street Mennonite Church for the use of their facilities and the gracious hosting of the 2024 Annual Assembly;
- 2) the tech team in their diligent work to make this a successful virtual hybrid assembly;
- 3) the staff of WDC and planners of this assembly for their careful, energetic, and creative leadership;
- 4) those who provided intergenerational opportunities during this gathering;
- 5) the WDC Executive Board, commissions, committees, and task force members who faithfully tend to the working parts of WDC and help us Witness, Dwell, and Connect with God's activity and mission;
- 6) and those who maintain air conditioner units to keep us comfortable.

**Stan Smucker, Shalom Mennonite, moved to accept the resolution of thanks. Second by Darlene Powers, Faith Mennonite. Motion approved.**

**Moderator transition** – Delon Martens is finishing his term as moderator. Eric Buller will be the new moderator. Heidi Regier Kreider offered a gift of thanks to Delon for serving since 2020 and keeping us focused on WDC's mission. Heidi presented Delon with a WDC mug and a gift certificate for Faith & Life Bookstore. Delon presented Eric with a calendar (to schedule meetings), chocolate, a Spanish/English dictionary, and some coffee. Eric thanked the delegates for entrusting him with the leadership of WDC. He also recognized the history of First Mennonite Beatrice hosting pastoral interns as Eric had spent time here for an internship. He welcomed Katherine Goerzen as moderator-elect and everyone who has volunteered their time. He thanked the delegates for investing their time, relationships and finances for WDC. Eric provided a prayer.



**Adjournment:**

**Motion by Rose Marie Zook Barber, Faith Mennonite, to adjourn. Second by Peter Emery, First Mennonite Church of Christian.**

Kathy Neufeld Dunn provided some announcements.

**Motion carried.** Delon Martens closed the meeting in prayer. The delegate meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Wendy Funk Schrag, secretary

**BALLOT**

**Executive Board**

Moderator Elect - Katherine Goerzen (Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, KS)

Secretary - Wendy Funk Schrag (First Mennonite Church, Newton, KS)

Gabriel Pennington (Southern Hills Mennonite Church, Topeka, KS)

Dan Kunzman (First Mennonite Church, Beatrice, NE)

**Gifts Discernment Committee**

To be determined...

**Church Planting Commission**

Adela Gutiérrez (Iglesia Luz del Evangelio, Dallas, TX)

Larry Dixon (Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton, KS)

**Ministerial Leadership Commission**

Cynthia Neufeld Smith (Southern Hills Mennonite Church, Topeka, KS)

Linda Ewert (First Mennonite Church, Newton, KS)

**Resource Commission**

Adam Robb (Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, KS)

Megan Turley (Houston Mennonite Church, Houston, TX)

Kris Balzer (Buhler Mennonite Church, Buhler, KS)

**Stewardship Commission**

Cleo Koop (Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, KS)

Vern Jantzen (First Mennonite Church, Beatrice, NE)

**END**

Western District Conference  
**2025 Budget**

**Income**

	<b>Budget 2025</b>	<b>Budget 2024</b>		<b>Budget 2025</b>	<b>Budget 2024</b>
1 Contributions	\$336,000	\$ 458,173	9 Restricted - Income from Bequest Fund	\$ 100,200	\$ 55,600
2 Honorariums/Reimbursements	15,000	20,000	10 Restricted - Transitional Min. Hispanic (EB 1)	60,000	-
3 Administrative fees	91,800	-	11 Restricted - Staff Benefits (EB 1)	-	7,500
4 Interest/Market Adjustment	10,000	5,000	12 Restricted - Subsidy for FDC staff (EB 1)	22,687	15,000
5 <b>SUBTOTAL UNDESIGNATED INCOME</b>	<b>\$452,800</b>	<b>\$ 483,173</b>	13 Restricted - Subsidy for rent (SC 2)	15,659	22,032
			14 Restricted - Translation & Interpretation (SC)	2,220	1,050
6 Resource Library Contributions (RC)	500	500	15 Restricted - Resource Commission (RC 2, SC)	25,258	4,000
7 Church Plant Contributions (CP)	5,000	36,000	16 Restricted - Pauls' Bequest (CP 1-6)	36,258	1,000
8 <b>SUBTOTAL DESIGNATED INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 5,500</b>	<b>\$ 36,500</b>	17 Restricted - Church Planting Fund (CP 2)	-	-
			18 Restricted - CPC Strategic Plan Fund (CP 3)	1,230	-
			19 Restricted - Church Plant Retreat/Events (CP)	-	-
			20 Restricted - Seminary Scholarships (ML 2)	-	-
			21 Restricted - Other	-	-
			22 <b>SUBTOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS transferred</b>	<b>\$ 263,512</b>	<b>\$106,182</b>
			23 <b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 721,812</b>	<b>\$625,855</b>

**Expenses**

<b>Executive Board (EB)</b>			<b>Stewardship Commission (SC)</b>		
	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>		<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
1 EB - Staff Salaries & Benefits #* (I 10,11)	\$537,450	\$ 446,803	1 SC - Office Expenses #	\$ 35,000	\$ 40,500
2 EB - Staff Travel, Food, Gas #	19,000	18,500	2 SC - Office Rent #* (I 13)	31,317	30,552
3 EB - Conf. Minister Sabbatical Fund#***	500	1,000	3 SC - Translation/Interpretation** (I 14)	2,500	2,500
4 EB - CLC Expenses	1,500	2,000	4 SC - Conf. Car Expenses (ins, regis, maint)	6,700	-
5 EB - MC USA Delegates***	2,500	2,500	5 SC - Insurance (liability, property, etc)	10,745	12,000
6 EB - Dismantling Racism	2,500	-	6 SC - Financial Audit	11,000	8,200
7 EB - Reference Council	500	500	7 SC - Commission Expenses	-	400
8 EB - Board Expenses	1,500	1,000	8 <b>Stewardship Total</b>	<b>\$ 97,262</b>	<b>\$ 94,152</b>
9 <b>Executive Total</b>	<b>\$565,450</b>	<b>\$ 472,303</b>			

  

<b>Resource Commission (RC)</b>			<b>Church Planting Commission (CP)</b>		
	<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>		<b>2025</b>	<b>2024</b>
1 RC - Mennonite Archives	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	1 CP - Church Plant Support** (I 16)	\$ 36,000	\$ 24,000
2 RC - Library**, * (I 6,15)	7,000	7,000	2 CP - Auxiliary support person* (I 17)	-	6,000
3 RC - Music & Worship	100	100	3 CP - Retreat & Special events* (I 18,19)	2,500	6,500
4 RC - Youth North	500	750	4 CP - Resource Development* (I 18)	1,000	5,000
5 RC - Youth South	500	750	5 CP - Special Projects	\$ 2,000	-
6 RC - Israel Palestine, Mennonite Action	200	-	6 CP - Commission Expenses	500	500
7 RC - Commission Expenses	300	100	7 <b>Church Planting Total</b>	<b>\$ 42,000</b>	<b>\$ 42,000</b>
8 <b>Resource Total</b>	<b>\$ 11,600</b>	<b>\$ 11,700</b>			

<b>Ministerial Leadership Commission (ML)</b>		
		<b>2024</b>
1 ML - Ministerial Credential	\$ 700	\$ 700
2 ML - Seminary Scholarships** (I 20)	3,000	3,000
3 ML - Meetings & workshops	1,500	1,500
4 ML - Commission Expenses	300	500
5 <b>Ministerial Leadership Total</b>	<b>\$ 5,500</b>	<b>\$ 5,700</b>

**Notations**

# Not previously solely under this group.

\* WDC-designated funds help with this expense

\*\* Donor-designated funds exist for helping with this expense

\*\*\* Goes to building up restricted funds

**Total Expenses**    **\$ 721,812**    **\$625,855**



# 2025 Budget Notes – Western District Conference

## INCOME:

The budgeted income for the General Fund of WDC is divided into three categories: undesignated income (subtotaled in line I 5), designated income (subtotaled in line I 8), and “income” of money transferred into the General Fund from the Restricted Fund (subtotaled in line I 22).

### Undesignated income.

- I 1. Contributions from congregations and individuals.
- I 2. Honorariums/Reimbursements. This includes staff honorariums, library income from book sales, payments from other organizations for work done by WDC staff, and office equipment used by other organizations.
- I 3. Administrative fees. The Executive Board, upon recommendation by the Stewardship Commission, voted for the General Fund to begin collecting an annual administrative fee of 5% (paid on a quarterly basis) on the balances of the Revolving Fund and all restricted funds except where prohibited by foundational documents of the donor-designated funds.
- I 4. Interest/Market Adjustment. Income earned and market adjustments made on investments and interest-bearing accounts of the General Fund.

**Designated income.** Occasional designated contributions received during the year from congregations and individuals specific for the library or church planting.

- I 6. Contributions which must be used to offset library expenses.
- I 7. Contributions which must be used to offset expenses related to church planting.

**Income transferred into the General Fund from the Restricted Fund.** This is from accounts that have received contributions or grants for a designated purpose. These funds are pulled into the budget to cover expenses for their specific designation.

I 9. Restricted – Income from Bequest Fund. All undesignated estate gifts over \$500 are deposited into the WDC Bequest Fund. 10% is transferred annually to the WDC General Fund income budget. Up to 20% can be transferred to cover expenses with the approval of the Executive Board. This budget reflects an estimated 20% being used in 2025.

I 10. Restricted – Transitional Min. Hispanic. Designated money from a Schowalter Grant and special fundraising that is transferred into the budget to help pay for salary and expenses to employ Spanish-speaking personnel to resource our Hispanic congregations for pastoral transitions. These salary expenses are included in line EB 1.

I 11. Restricted – Staff Benefits. Surplus money previously set aside to help with the expense of providing staff health insurance coverage and HSA contributions. This fund will be depleted in 2024.

I 12. Restricted – Subsidy for FDC staff. Money transferred in from the restricted fund, Proceeds from Sale of 2500 Place, to cover the salary of the Funds Development Coordinator for three years beginning Sept. 2023. These salary expenses are included in line EB 1.

- I 13. Restricted – Subsidy for rent. Money transferred in from the restricted fund, Proceeds from Sale of 2500 Place, to partially subsidize the cost of office rent at a decreasing rate over the course of five years beginning August 2023. Rent expenses are included in line SC 2.
- I 14. Restricted – Translation & Interpretation. Grant money and WDC-designated funds transferred in from accounts of the restricted fund to help with translation & interpretation costs shown in line SC 3.
- I 15. Restricted – Resource Commission. Money transferred in from the Resource Commission Investment Fund created with a gift from the Selma Schilling Trust in 1995. These funds help cover expenses related to the Conference Library (line RC 2), including a portion of the rent (included in line SC 2) and salary of the library director (included in line EB 1).
- I 16. Restricted – Pauls’ Bequest. Money transferred in from the restricted Pauls’ Bequest fund created with gifts from the three Pauls sisters’ estate trusts in 2000 to help cover expenses related to church planting and outreach of churches within the Western District Conference. Most of these expenses are reflected in lines CP 1-6.
- I 17. Restricted – Church Planting Fund. A WDC-designated fund created from surplus funds and special offerings. Money from this fund is being used to support the 2024 budget but is expected to be depleted prior to 2025.
- I 18. Restricted – CPC Strategic Plan Fund. Money from a Schowalter Grant which may be transferred into the budget to cover expenses related to church planting events, church plant support and resource development included in lines CP 1-6.
- I 19. Restricted – Church Plant Retreat/Events. Money from the Church Plant Development Grant which will be depleted in 2024. Money from this fund is being used to support the 2024 budget but is expected to be depleted prior to 2025.
- I 20. Restricted – Seminary Scholarships. Seminary scholarship funds have been depleted, other than the Western District Women in Mission Scholarship Permanent Endowment of which only interest may be used.

#### **EXPENSES:**

All budgeted expenses benefit the entirety of WDC and assist in carrying out the mission and ministry of the conference. The expenses are divided between the Executive Board and four Commissions based upon which group is primarily responsible for managing the expense category.

#### **Executive Board (EB)**

**EB 1.** Staff Salaries & Benefits is by far the largest operating expense. WDC follows MC USA salary guidelines and has a Staff Relations Committee for advising on staff-related policies and budgeting. WDC added a 0.25 FTE Fund Development Coordinator position in September 2023 and increased the Business Manager position from 0.5 to 0.75 FTE in Feb 2024. The 2025 budget also includes estimated salary for hiring 1.0 FTE personnel to resource Hispanic congregations for pastoral transitions.

**EB 2.** Staff Travel, Food, Gas includes any expenses related to meetings and tasks which take place outside of the office.



**EB 3.** Conference Minister Sabbatical Funds. This line item is used to set aside funds (transferred to and held in the Restricted Fund) for paying expenses related to providing coverage when the Conference Minister or an Associate Conference Minister is on sabbatical.

**EB 4.** CLC expenses. Assists WDC representatives to attend the MC USA Constituency Leaders Council.

**EB 5.** MC USA Delegates. This line item is used to set aside funds (transferred to and held in the Restricted Fund) to assist WDC delegates to attend the MC USA biennial sessions (MennoCon).

**EB 6.** Dismantling Racism. Used to support the work of the Dismantling Racism Action Team to follow up on the recommendations of the anti-racism audit.

**EB 7.** Reference Council. Pays for any WDC Reference Council expenses.

**EB 8.** Board Expenses. This is used to pay meeting expenses and other discretionary expenses.

### **Stewardship Commission (SC)**

Includes office expenses, rent, translation and interpretation costs, conference car insurance and maintenance, and the annual financial audit.

### **Resource Commission (RC)**

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, for music and worship resources, and for conference youth ministry activities.

**RC 6.** Israel Palestine, Mennonite Action. The WDC Israel Palestine Task Force priorities include support for Mennonite Action in their coordination and gathering of people for local and national justice responses.

### **Church Planting Commission (CP)**

The CP budget supports church plants and church planting resources. In 2023, the Commission added line items to implement their new strategic plan which has five focus areas: (1) Plant churches, (2) Empower Anabaptist church planters, (3) Strengthen communication and partnerships with WDC congregations around the CPC mission/vision, (4) Encourage all WDC congregations to be alert to opportunities and assets supporting potential church planting projects in their own church or community, and (5) Make connections with communities and individuals who would feel at home in Anabaptism.

**CP 1.** Church Plant Support expense line is for supporting three church plants with \$1000/month.

**CP 5.** Special Projects. Funds initiatives to equip leaders with essential skills providing vital resources to encourage a strong foundation for the growth and impact of new congregations.

### **Ministerial Leadership Commission (ML)**

The ML budget pays for maintaining ministerial and credential records in the MC USA database, ministers' resourcing events, and provides seminary scholarships to encourage MC USA seminary attendance.

**2024 ELECTION RESULTS**  
(+ Filling Unexpired Term)

**Executive Board:** Katherine Goerzen, Wendy Funk Schrag, Gabriel Pennington, Dan Kunzman  
**Church Planting Commission:** Adela Gutiérrez, Larry Dixon  
**Gifts Discernment Committee:** To be determined...  
**Ministerial Leadership Commission:** Cynthia Neufeld Smith, Linda Ewert  
**Resource Commission:** +Adam Robb, Megan Turley, Kris Balzer  
**Stewardship Commission:** Cleo Koop, Vern Jantzen

**CERTIFIED DELEGATES AT 2024 CONFERENCE & CHURCH ELIGIBLE VOTES**  
(Both in-person and virtual delegates could carry more than one vote)

**KANSAS**

1. **Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel:** Luann Yutzy, Robert Yutzy (477 members, 16 votes)
2. **Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton:** Marlene Faul, Dick Koontz, Jeanette Stucky, George Leary, Dale Schrag, Roger Neufeld Smith (448 members, 15 votes)
3. **Buhler Mennonite Church, Buhler:** Steve Becker, Sarah McKinnon, Jerald Stucky, Eileen Stucky, Sharon Stucky, Willmar Harder (334 members, 12 votes)
4. **Calvary Mennonite Church, Liberal:** No delegates present. (6 members, 1 vote)
5. **Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge:** Linda Goering, Jay Goering (230 members, 8 votes)
6. **Faith Mennonite Church, Newton:** Joel Schroeder, Rose Marie Zook Barber, Darlene Powers (114 members, 4 votes)
7. **First Mennonite Church, Halstead:** Kent Dick, Steve Wilcox (220 members, 8 votes)
8. **First Mennonite Church, Hillsboro:** Kristine Regehr, Norma Duerksen (60 members, 2 votes)
9. **First Mennonite Church, Hutchinson:** Ken Neufeld, Carolee Neufeld, Joretta Martens, Delon Martens, Carol Moore (140 members, 5 votes)
10. **First Mennonite Church, McPherson:** No delegates present. (117 members, 4 votes)
11. **First Mennonite Church, Newton:** Dave Wiebe, Elena Wiebe, Wendy Funk Schrag, Morris Ewert, Linda Ewert, Linda Shelly (152 members, 6 votes)
12. **First Mennonite Church, Ransom:** No delegates present. (35 members, 2 vote)
13. **First Mennonite Church of Christian, Moundridge:** Peter Emery, Randy Stucky (111 members, 4 votes)
14. **Gospel Fellowship, Montezuma:** No delegates present. (25 members, 1 vote)
15. **Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater:** Valerie Klaassen, John Klaassen (208 members, 7 votes)
16. **Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman:** Eric Buller (175 members, 6 votes)
17. **Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita:** Kendal Warkentine (246 members, 9 votes)
18. **Iglesia Camino de Santidad, Liberal:** Josue Romero, Moises Romero (52 members, 2 vote)
19. **Iglesia Menonita Aposento Alto, Wichita:** Jaime Cazares (33 members, 2 votes)
20. **Iglesia Menonita Casa Betania, Newton:** No delegates present. (15 members, 1 vote)
21. **(Church Plant) Iglesia Palabra Viva, Liberal:** No delegates present. (42 members, 1 vote)
22. **Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita:** Christina Manero, Michelle Armster (359 members, 12 votes)
23. **Manhattan Mennonite Church, Manhattan:** Merv Bitikofer, Melissa Atchison (57 members, 2 votes)
24. **Mennonite Church of the Servant, Wichita:** Pat Cameron (24 members, 1 vote)
25. **New Creation Fellowship, Newton:** Shana Green (44 members, 2 votes)
26. **Peace Mennonite Church, Lawrence:** No delegates present. (62 members, 3 votes)



27. **Rainbow Mennonite Church, Kansas City:** Rosi Penner Kaufman, Ruth Harder, Carmen Shelly (289 members, 10 votes)
28. **Salina Mennonite Church, Salina:** Tom Claassen, Lori Schmidt (44 members, 2 votes)
29. **Shalom Mennonite Church, Newton:** Larry Dixon, Janet Dixon, George Dyck, Emily Kerbs, Marlene Smucker, Stand Smucker, Jerrell Williams (226 members, 8 votes)
30. **Southern Hills Mennonite Church, Topeka:** Phil Esau, Vicki Penner, Cynthia Neufeld Smith (78 members, 3 votes)
31. **Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton:** Katherine Goerzen, Peter Goerzen, Cleo Koop, Todd Schlosser, Jeff Wintermote, Tammy Wintermote (282 members, 10 votes)
32. **West Zion Mennonite Church, Moundridge:** No delegates present. (176 members, 6 votes)
33. **Zion Mennonite Church, Elbing:** Mark Unruh, Bonnie Brewer, Wes Brewer, Margaret Brewer (137 members, 5 votes)

#### NEBRASKA

1. **First Mennonite Church, Beatrice:** Mike Goossen, John Regier, Jerome Reimer, Dorothy Zimmerman, Daniel Kunzman, Jim Ensz, Josh Janzen (204 members, 7 votes)
2. **Summit Street Church, Beatrice:** Nelson Dungan, Mimi Kelle (70 members, 3 votes)

#### OKLAHOMA

1. **Greenfield Mennonite Church, Carnegie:** No delegates present. (6 members, 1 vote)
2. **Joy Mennonite Church, Oklahoma City:** No delegates present. (25 members, 1 vote)
3. **Koinonia Indian Mennonite Church, Clinton:** No delegates present. (22 members, 1 vote)

#### TEXAS

1. **Austin Mennonite Church, Austin:** Kim Becker (55 members, 2 vote)
2. **Chin Emmanuel Church, Houston:** No delegates present. (100 members, 4 votes)
3. **Hope Fellowship, Waco:** No delegates present. (34 members, 2 vote)
4. **Houston Mennonite Church, Houston:** Bill Cork (30 members, 1 vote)
5. **Iglesia Cristiana Menonita Monte Horeb, Dallas:** No delegates present. (30 members, 1 vote)
6. **Iglesia Menonita Casa de Dios, Garland:** No delegates present. (6 members, 1 vote)
7. (Church Plant) **Iglesia Menonita Casa de Restauración, Houston:** Aurora Parchmont (7 members, 1 vote)
8. **Iglesia Menonita Casa del Alfarero, Pasadena:** Alberto Parchmont (39 members, 2 vote)
9. **Iglesia Menonita Comunidad de Esperanza, Dallas:** Damian Rodriguez (17 members, 1 vote)
10. **Iglesia Menonita Comunidad de Vida, San Antonio:** No delegates present. (5 members, 1 vote)
11. **Iglesia Menonita Luz del Evangelio, Dallas:** Adela Gutierrez (150 members, 5 votes)
12. **Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas:** Samuel Voth Schrag (35 members, 2 votes)
13. **San Antonio Mennonite Church, San Antonio:** Marlene McKitrick (39 members, 2 votes)

#### GUATEMALA

1. (Church Plant) **Iglesia Arca de Salvacion Uspantan, Guatemala:** Juan Toc (150 members, 1 vote)
2. **Iglesia Cristiana Anabautista Casa de Paz, Guatemala City, Guatemala:** Gilberto Flores (20 members, 1 vote)

#### New Churches Accepted into Membership:

1. **Hesston Mennonite Church, Hesston, KS:** Lamar Bender, Jess Engle, Jon Friesen, Vicki Hoffman, Bruce Krase, Denise Krase, Mike Lamb, Susan Lamb, Kay Schroeder, Jim Yoder, Marla Schmidt (340 members, 12 votes)
2. **Crystal Springs Mennonite Church, Harper, KS:** Martha Ediger (17 members, 1 vote)
3. **New Life Christian Center, San Benito, TX:** Ana Hinojosa, Graciela Tijerina (35 members, 2 votes)

