Minutes of the Board of the
Pacific Northwest District, Church of the Brethren
Meeting October 7, 2026

In attendance: Patrick Fiegenbaum, Debbie Roberts, Liz Ullery Swenson, Howard Ullery, Lani Wright, Gretchen Zience

Gathering

Liz called us to order at 6:03 p.m. with a prayer from A Rhythm of Prayer by Sarah Bessie, a collection of meditations for renewal.

Review & Approve Meeting Minutes

The final revised minutes of the September Board meeting were approved as distributed October 7, 2026.

District Conference Follow-up

Patrick reported that the District Conference minutes were not yet finished, as Daniel Klayton was going to send him a link to the livestream. There was generally positive feedback from the presentation and discussion from Rev. Doug Avilesbernal from the American Baptists about the Evergreen Way and how it has been a useful model for them to conduct their business and affairs.

Gretchen expressed her gratitude to Lani for presenting about the consensus model of meeting, and that the process is reviewed at each conference. Howard felt there was a good spirit present at the conference, and made it one of the best district conferences he has attended. Lani, Howard and Debbie Roberts all got together to attend worship at Sunnyslope on Sunday. For Debbie Roberts, the presentation by Everence was a conference highlight. She was glad for Church of the Brethren presence at Sunnyslope, and Dane Breslin expressed his appreciation for the presence of District officers.

Lani noted that Eventbrite, the online registration interface, apparently did not pass along the special dietary requests to the Koinonia hosts, and folks with special requests were left to fend for themselves. Howard enjoyed the Friday night activities, which prepared the way for a good conference. Liz was glad to see some unfamiliar faces at conference.

Financial

Due to the early meeting date this month and Daniel Klayton's absence due to Covid, we did not have a financial report.

Request from Camp Koinonia

Kent Verbeck, Board President at Camp Koinonia, joined us to discuss the Camp's request for a bridge loan. He wrote the following:

"Camp Koinonia requests the Pacific Northwest District to make a bridge loan to Camp Koinonia of $50,000.00. This is to address a short term cash flow issue until 2027. Camp Koinonia will repay the loan in full on or before August 31, 2027. Camp Koinonia has taken action to reduce costs and will continue to do so as much as possible and still fulfill our mission. Also we are also working to increase our revenue. We are currently developing our 2027 budget and will include the repayment in it. With the expense saving actions and budgeting our income expectations even more conservatively, we feel confident in our financial situation for 2027. Our bookings for 2027 are robust with returning and new groups, plus new inquiries weekly.

"Camp had a great season in 2026 with groups very pleased and excited about their experience as shown in feedback we get from each group's leaders and the individuals in the groups.

"Kent Verbeck, Board President"

Kent reviewed the year past for Camp. Two of the revenue problems that have caught them off guard were cuts in state funding for school group and smaller group sizes. The Camp has inquired about loans from Everence and their bank, but because of the ownership structure of the Camp, lenders are reluctant to write a loan.

Howard asked what the Camp has done in the past when cash flow is tight. Kent said that they have cut middle management and Scott Webb has worked into the director position. The Camp is writing its budget for 2027 with lower projections for income, about 80% of expected revenue, and budgeting accordingly. The Camp has received uniformly good reviews from the user groups, and they are aggressively marketing to more groups. Kent, Ken Neher, Scott Webb, and their new BVSer are scheduled to meet to discuss ways to raise money from non-user groups who may have endowment money.

Howard asked about the nuts and bolts of drawing up a loan document. Kent reviewed the process the Camp just went through with the District for the renewal of the Camp lease, and felt that a loan document agreeable to the parties would be workable.

After Kent left the meeting, we discussed the history of the Camp, its finances and the user groups the Camp has hosted, as well as the relationship of the Camp to the District. Lani said it was up to the Board as well as the Camp to strengthen the connections between the two entities.

After discussion, we chose to support the request from Camp Koinonia and lend them $50,000, the terms of which have yet to be decided. We agreed to notify Kent and Scott Webb of our decision and request that the Camp furnish us with financial documentation. Liz will send that e-mail after Howard notifies Daniel Klayton and Enten Eller of the Board's decision and they have a chance to give their input. Liz said she would send an e-mail to Kent and Scott. Gretchen will also get in touch with Roger Edmark (who is on the Camp Board)

Updates

Mennonite Insurance: Howard met with Marcus Mahling of Mennonite Insurance after his visit to District Conference. Marcus offered to put together an informational presentation of insurance policies and products available to congregations.

DE/Board Positions: We have discussed moving to a paid District Executive position. Howard, Debbie, and Lani have met and suggested that effective January 1, 2027, the three of them could serve as Board Chair (Debbie), CODE contact (Howard), and liaison with Ministry Team (Lani). We will discuss this proposal further when Daniel and Enten are available, and if warranted, work out the details.

Closing Norm Underland will be installed this Sunday as pastor of the Olympic View Church, and Howard will be in attendance. We adjourned at 8:10 p.m. Next meeting November 12, 2026 at 6 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Fiegenbaum
Recording Secretary
Pacific Northwest District