

Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference

Mission Policy

PREAMBLE

God's great purpose for creation is to create people of grace and hope so they may bless all creation. The church is rooted in the history and destiny of the God who acts to create a new peoplehood, a new humanity and a new community that are created by the Spirit of Jesus, the Christ.

This community is a distinct people characterized by a spiritual conversion whose lives are re-oriented to a radical obedience to the teachings of Jesus. As a result of this conversion, we are committed to healing, reconciliation, and peacemaking in the non-violent way of the cross.

This new community stands witness to the transforming power of God working through the people of Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference (PSMC) who witness and serve in the fractured and violent communities in which they live by being agents of healing, reconciliation and re-creation.

The following section delineates the Mission Policy of PSMC.

The principal mission for PSMC is to mobilize Mennonites in the Pacific Southwest to fulfill God's purposes by: equipping leaders, building relationships, and by organizing for mission. We understand that the locus of missional activity is congregationally based and is supported by the Conference Mission Committee (CMC).

In our effort to accomplish our mission, the Conference recognizes that it exists in the midst of a global mission field, as well as being a launching pad for global mission, and is committed to developing partnerships among its member congregations and with various Mennonite church wide agencies and area conferences to expand the number of persons being sent into cross-cultural mission and service assignments, and into ministries of healing and reconciliation. PSMC also desires to expand the number of partnerships with immigrant and racial / ethnic groups in our effort to be faithful ambassadors of Jesus Christ.

The Mission Policy is developed by the Board of Directors in consultation with the Conference Minister and is implemented by the Mission Minister and/or other appropriate person(s).

The Mission Minister gives leadership to the Conference Mission Committee.

Conference Mission Committee

The CMC partners with the Mission Minister to discern, implement, network and resource emerging ideas. The Conference Mission Committee (CMC) assists in the ministry of the conference by working with congregational initiatives and Conference mission projects. The CMC works within the confines of a PSMC vision and the PSMC budget.

The Mission Minister will represent the Conference in conversations with member churches and other mission organizations, particularly, but not limited to Mennonite Mission Network (MMN) and the West Coast Mennonite Central Committee (WC MCC).

The Mission Minister will provide leadership and direction to the CMC and will:

- A. Facilitate the CMC meetings by scheduling and announcing meeting dates, soliciting items for the agenda.
- B. Coordinate implementation of mission initiatives.
- C. Network with agencies of the Mennonite Church USA, Mennonite Mission Network, Mennonite Central Committee and other appropriate agencies.
- D. Disseminate information and communicate the missional vision of Conference through PSMC media resources: the Panorama, the weekly e-Update, and at the Conference's assemblies.
- E. Meet with the CMC at least three times a year.
- F. Report to the Conference Minister and to the PSMC Board.

Composition of the Conference Mission Committee: The CMC will have five members. These will be the Mission Minister, a PSMC Board Member, and three other persons. Effort will be made to have representation from all regions of the Conference. The Conference Minister is an ex-officio member of the CMC. In addition, we invite mission agency representatives (currently representatives from West Coast MCC and Mennonite Mission Network) to be full and active ex-officio members of the CMC. A secretary will be appointed from among the members of the CMC who will be responsible for creating and distributing minutes of the CMC. Members of the CMC are appointed by the Mission Minister in consultation with the Conference Minister.

Church Planting

We desire to empower congregations and leaders to plant new churches primarily within the regional boundaries of the Conference, but are open to partnering with other Anabaptist groups in other places that seem good to us and to the Holy Spirit.

In order to be effective stewards of the generosity of God, and in recognition of the limited human and financial resources available to the Conference, we shall work in the following ways:

- A. The Mission Minister will create a culture for church planting within the Conference by:
 - Encouraging a passion for church planting throughout the Conference
 - Offering educational events to advance church planting opportunities
 - Develop alliances between PSMC member congregations and other Anabaptist groups to join together in church planting opportunities
 - Participation in / with church planting networks
- B. Church planting initiatives that emerge from member congregations will receive encouragement and support from Conference.
- C. Congregations desiring Conference support with new church plant projects must coordinate with the Mission Minister or the designated representative identified by the Conference Minister.
- D. Proposals, when it seems appropriate to the parties involved, will follow the guidance that is provided in the document, "Guidelines for Church Planting," which is available upon request.
- E. The Mission Minister will review the assessment of all church planters and suggest appropriate training, coaching, and consulting resources.
- F. Each church planting project will complete a business/ministry plan which will be reviewed by the CMC and approved by the Mission Minister.

- G. PSMC may provide funding in the form of a one-time startup grant in the range of \$5,000 to \$10,000 contingent on availability of financial resources and demonstrated need.
- H. Some determining factors for grant requests:
- Are Conference funds available?
 - Does the granting request generally comply with the Conference’s “Guidelines for Church Planting?” For example, has a mission and vision statement, a business/ministry plan and a budget been provided? Is there a ministry support team in place? Is there significant support from a “sister” congregation?
 - Is the location of the proposed church plant in a region of interest to the Conference?
 - Is there evidence of strong commitment to an Anabaptist / Mennonite faith perspective?
 - Is there a procedure to ensure transparency and accountability for the use of grant monies?
 - Has the grant request been affirmed by the Mission Minister and Conference Minister?
 - Priority will be giving to church planting requests over missional outreach activities.
 - The protocol for applying for funds will be determined by the Mission Minister.

Missional Outreach Activities

(Healing, Reconciliation, and Peacemaking)

PSMC desires to encourage its member congregations to witness to the transforming power of God by their witness and service in the fractured and violent communities in which they live by being agents of healing, reconciliation and re-creation. To that end, and in order to be effective stewards of the generosity of God, and in recognition of the limited human and financial resources available to the Conference, we shall work in the following ways:

- A. Healing, reconciliation and peacemaking (HRP) initiatives which emerge from member congregations will receive encouragement and support from Conference.
- B. Congregations desiring Conference support with HRP projects must coordinate with the Mission Minister or the designated representative identified by the Conference Minister.
- C. The CMC will review the initiative to determine its merits for support and receive approval of the Minister of Mission.
- D. Each project will complete a business/ministry plan which will be reviewed by the CMC.
- E. PSMC may provide funding in the form of a one-time startup grant in the range of \$1,000 to \$5,000 contingent on availability of financial resources and demonstrated need.
- F. Some determining factors for granting requests:
- Are Conference funds available?
 - Is the location of the proposed HRP initiative in a region of interest to the Conference?
 - Is there evidence of strong support by the local Mennonite faith community?
 - Is there evidence of strong commitment to an Anabaptist / Mennonite faith perspective?
 - Is there a procedure to ensure transparency and accountability for the use of grant monies?
 - Has the grant request been affirmed by the Mission Minister and Conference Minister?
 - Priority will be giving to church planting requests over missional outreach activities. The protocol for applying for funds will be determined by the Mission Minister.