

Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren

Business Book



63rd Annual District Conference

November 13-14, 2026

Business on Saturday, November 14

An In-Person & Virtual Conference
Held using internet formats like Zoom,
and meeting at Journey South Bay Church, Redondo Beach, CA
www.pswdcob.org/distconf

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**Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren
2026 Annual Meeting — November 13-14, 2026
A Conference, held using internet formats like Zoom,
and meeting at Journey South Bay Church, Redondo Beach, CA.**

Welcome to the 2026 Pacific Southwest District Conference

May the God of Hope
Fill you with all joy and peace in believing
That you may abound in Hope
By the Power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13)

It is a privilege and a grace to gather as members of PSWD to celebrate our God of Hope in worship, praise, and deliberation of business. Greeting beloved ones in the name of our risen Lord fills us with joy and peace, belonging, support, encouragement and challenge such as the world around us only faintly recognizes as something to be desired. The worship team of Journey South Bay will lead our opening worship on Friday evening after a meal together followed by some form of ice cream to enhance our fellowship between believers of Jesus Christ.

We are a diverse gathering that includes members from Nigeria, Peru, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, and different regions of the United States. With this wonderful plurality, we are excited to have Founa Badet, director of Intercultural Ministries for the Church of the Brethren, as our plenary speaker and workshop leader on Saturday, sharing from her work in bridging cultures and assisting beloved siblings in Christ with the challenges of loss, deportation, and faded hopes and dreams.

Also coming this year is Dennis Beckner, pastor of the Columbia City Church of the Brethren in Indiana and Annual Conference moderator of the denomination. He will lead our Saturday morning devotions and lead a session on "Faith Building – One Seed at a Time." New for this year were three webinars led by Nate Polzin, Director of Discipleship and Leadership Formation for the Church of the Brethren. The webinars focused on our theme of Hope: our God of Hope, joy and peace in believing, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Other workshops being offered include Artificial Intelligence and Faith with Daniel Topf; Making Connections on websites and social media with Jeff Glass, Yoryanis Iglesias and Jay Irizarry; Church Health and Growth with David Fasold, pastor of Journey South Bay, and more.

We are filled with joy to have you here, praying that you may be inspired by the Holy Spirit, celebrating our togetherness in fellowship, food, and praise while being challenged to become the Hope for your community. We continue to offer worship, business and main sessions live streamed for those unable to attend in person.

I pray that you Abound in Hope,
Don Shankster, Moderator

2026 Pacific Southwest District Conference — Business Meeting Agenda

Saturday, November 14

1. Call to Order and Opening Prayer
2. Roll call and establishing of a quorum
3. Approval of 2026 Agenda and 2025 Minutes (p.[56](#))
 - A. Naming a Committee to review the 2026 minutes
4. Business Items
 - A. Election of leadership (pp.[17-18](#) & pp.[60-65](#))
 - B. PSWD 2027 Operating Budget & Church Planting Budget (pp.[66-69](#))
 - C. 2028 Operating Budget Expense Maximim (pp.[66-69](#))
 - D. Proposed Amendments to Bylaws related to process of calling District leadership(p.[70](#))
 - E. Approval of dba for San Diego First congregation
5. Reports
 - A. Church of the Brethren, Inc. (pp.[46-55](#))
 - B. Annual Conference Agencies (pp.[38](#))
 1. Eder Financial (pp.[38](#))
 2. On Earth Peace (p.[40](#))
 3. Bethany Theological Seminary (pp.[41](#))
 - C. District Policy Board (pp.[20](#))
 - D. District Program Committee (p.[16](#))
 - E. Standing Committee Delegate (p.[15](#))
 - F. District Executive Minister (pp.[11](#))
6. Consecration of 2027 Moderator and other District Leadership
7. Adjournment

*This agenda represents the business to be completed, not the order in which it will take place. An intended plan for working through the business will be available at the District Conference.

2026 Pacific Southwest District Conference Schedule
Journey South Bay Church
2761 190th Street, Redondo Beach CA 90278-5401

Friday, November 13th

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. - Ministers & Leaders Professional Growth Event

4:00 p.m. - Registration and Exhibits open

5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. - Dinner (ticket purchase needed)

7:00 p.m. - Worship in the Sanctuary

8:15 - 9:00 p.m. - Ice Cream Social - Sponsored by Eder Financial

Saturday, November 14th

8:30 a.m. - Opening worship

9:00 a.m. - Business

10:30 a.m. - Keynote with Founa Badet

11:30 a.m. - Songs and Prayer

12:00 p.m. - Lunch

1:00 p.m. - Workshops

2:15 p.m. - Business

4:30 p.m. - Consecration of New Leadership

5:00 p.m. - Appetizer Social - Sponsored by Mennonite Insurance Agency





In a time when chaos reigned, when hate and the degradation of people became commonplace, when frustrations turned violent, when vengeance became the mode of operation for our government, when mistrust of institutions led to the destruction of that which protected people and laborers from the greed of corporations and big business, I needed a large dose of hope. My spirit went back to the scriptures for relief. I read from Psalms to find solace and hope. In my devotions, I came across Romans 15:13 which seemed to jump out at me. It was a compact text that exploded with hope.

May the God of hope / fill you with all joy and peace in believing / that you may abound in hope / in the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13)

God is a God of hope. By believing in the life, ministry, love, death and resurrection of Jesus, we begin to hope. Our hope increases and abounds with joy and peace in believing. Then, we become the hope for our neighbors, our families, our communities, our world. Hope is not to be kept for oneself, but shared fully, abundantly, powerfully in the strength of the Holy Spirit.

Working with the Spanish and English words of the text, playing with different images of hope, of esperanza, the idea of forming a cross with the word in two languages gave me hope for creating a logo for the 2026 district conference. Our hope is in Christ Jesus, who fills us with joy and peace so that we radiate out to the world the hope that is abundant in us. After weeks and months of work, an image formed. Eric Davis was instrumental in bringing balance to my image with the tongues of the Holy Spirit flaming up around the cross. It is the power of the Holy Spirit that enables this hope in us and through us.

The yellow represents the light that is Christ, the light of hope that shines in a dark world.

The blue signifies hope and healing.

The orange refers to the Holy Spirit who provides strength of spirit and courage to live our hope and to be the hope for the world.

The cross is overtaken by God's resurrection power, giving us abundance of hope.

The circle stands for the never-ending circle of life filled with the presence of God's Holy Spirit.

We worship a God of Hope. May you Abound in Hope throughout the coming year.

Don Shankster, Moderator
moderator@pswdcob.org

Delegates' Dedication

November 14, 2026

Moderator: We gather here today in person, online and in spirit to conduct the business of the Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren. We gather together in a spirit of peace.

Delegates: **We are here today representing the Church of the Brethren in Arizona, California, and Nevada. We are God's people. We are here to do the work of Jesus, peacefully, simply, together.**

Moderator: Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. (Col. 3:15a)

Delegates: **We commit ourselves to work together to deal effectively with the business before us as we seek to minister to a world that needs Jesus.**

Moderator: As the body of Christ, let us lift up each other. Let us listen to each other with the heart and mind of Jesus.

Delegates: **Since we have been justified through faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.** (Rom 5:1)

Moderator: Let us dedicate this day to strive for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up. (Rom14:19) Please join with me in praying the Prayer of St. Francis:

All: **Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.
O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.**



Pacific Southwest District – Church of the Brethren – 2026

Officers of the District Conference

Moderator..... Don Shankster, Papago Buttes
Moderator-Elect..... Cady Laycook, Journey South Bay
Clerk..... Laura Miller, Papago Buttes
Board of Administration Chair (ex-officio)..... Gail Heisel, La Verne
District Executive Minister (ex-officio)..... Russ Matteson

Note for the Delegates

The District Conference is a mass meeting to which delegates and other interested persons from the member congregations come in business sessions and for purposes of worship, education and fellowship. The District Conference projects the program of the District, and approves new programs, constitutional changes and budget. Through its delegates, it interprets and promotes the decisions of the District Conference to the local congregations.

Participation of Non-delegates

Non-delegates are urged to attend District Conference, including the business meeting. Non-delegates may discuss the business and make motions; voting is restricted to the delegates and officers. Wide participation at the business session adds inspiration and encouragement to the moderator, delegates, Board of Administration and staff. Pacific Southwest District has been noted for excellent attendance at the business session.

What May Be Done with Queries

- (1) A query may be accepted and passed on to Annual Conference.
- (2) A query may be sent back to the originating church or District Board, which means one of several things: *not important to the larger church, Annual Conference has already answered it, not a proper query, etc.*
- (3) A query **may not** be changed by amendment.
- (4) A query may be added to, but care must be taken not to change the intent of the query. One way to add is to attach a similar query to the one being considered.

Rules of Order on District Conference Business

- (1) The moderator conducts business according to Robert's Rules of Order, which will be the standard for any point not covered in the Constitution and Bylaws.
- (2) The moderator appoints tellers and timekeeper.
- (3) Nominations from the floor must have the prior consent of the nominee (*see next page, bottom section*).
- (4) Length and number of speeches allowed are determined by the District Conference officers.
- (5) The election of officers is by ballot with a plurality vote, except the moderator-elect and the standing committee delegate(s), who are elected by a majority vote.
- (6) A quorum consists of fifty percent of the total elected delegates representing fifty percent of the churches of the District.

Pacific Southwest District – Church of the Brethren

Parliamentary Procedure at a Glance

(Based on Robert's Rules of Order Revised
And Rules Governing Annual Conference)

The Five Essential Steps Through Which a Motion Passes

- A. Presentation of the motion:
“I move that _____.”
- B. Seconding the motion:
“I second the motion,” or “I second it.”
- C. A written copy of the motion shall be given to the conference clerk.
Stating the question (by the moderator) and discussion of it:
“It has been moved and seconded that _____.”
- D. Putting the question to a vote:
“Are you ready for the question? All of those in favor of the motion which is _____
_____. say ‘Aye.’ Opposed, ‘No.’”
- E. Announcing the result of the vote:
“The motion is carried (lost) and you have voted to (not to) _____.”

Motions, Who Makes Them and How

- A. All attendees of the District Conference have the privilege of moving and discussing the business of the Conference.
- B. To make a motion, it is necessary to “obtain the floor” – that is, to rise after the floor has been yielded and address the presiding officer by his/her official title (Brother/Sister Moderator). Give your name and the name of the congregation you represent as soon as you are recognized by the moderator after addressing him/her.
- C. A motion is seconded without obtaining the floor or rising.

Some Rules of Debate

- A. All remarks must be addressed to the chair.
- B. All remarks must pertain to the immediately pending question before the District Conference.
- C. All remarks must be of an impersonal nature.
- D. Length and number of speeches are determined by District Conference officers.

Nominations and Voting

- A. Nominations may be made from the floor. However, one must have the person's permission to present his/her name in nomination, have all the same written information provided by the other candidates to present to the conference clerk, and have copies of the ballot information to distribute to the delegates (*see page 19*).
- B. No member can be compelled to vote. Those not voting are not counted in deciding whether it is a majority, two-thirds, or unanimous. All blank ballots are ignored and, thus, not counted.
- C. Most votes are taken first by voice or by show of hands, except in case of motions requiring a two-thirds vote, when a rising vote is taken first.

Motions Classified and in Ascending Order of Precedence

I Privileged and Incidental Motions: motions that take precedence over any pending question although not related to that question. Not debatable.

1 ADJOURN or RECESS

Object: to dismiss a meeting or to provide for an intermission – “I move that we adjourn (recess) while (until) _____.”

2 RAISE A QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE

Object: to get the attention of the moderator at once, to ask a question, or to attend to some matter that cannot wait – “I rise to a question of privilege” (state your question).

3 POINT OF ORDER

“I rise to a point of order” (state your point).

II Subsidiary Motions: motions that are applied to other motions for the purpose of most appropriately disposing of them.

1 LAY ON THE TABLE – TAKE FROM THE TABLE (second, not debatable, not amendable, simple majority)

Object: to lay aside business in such a manner that its consideration may be removed later – “I move that this matter be laid on the table.”

2 PREVIOUS QUESTION (second, not debatable, not amendable, two-thirds majority)

Object: to stop debate and order an immediate vote – “I call for (or move) the previous question.”

3 POSTPONE TO A SET TIME (second, debatable, amendable, simple majority).

4 COMMIT, REFER, or RE-COMMIT (second, debatable, amendable, simple majority),

Object: to place the business in the hands of a few for later reporting to the Conference (for major changes) – “I move that this matter be referred to a committee of ____ to be named _____ with instruction.”

5 AMEND (second, debatable, amendable, simple majority).

a. “I move to amend the motion by striking out _____.”

b. “I move to amend the motion by inserting _____ between _____ and _____.”

c. “I move to amend the motion by adding _____ between _____ and _____.”

d. “I move to amend the motion by striking out _____ and inserting _____.”

e. “I move to amend by striking out _____ and substituting this (read or state the substitution).”

6 POSTPONE INDEFINITELY (second, debatable, and amendable, simple majority).

Object: to kill a motion – “I move to postpone this matter indefinitely.”

III Principal Motion: a motion made to bring before the Conference, for its consideration, any particular subject.

IV Main Motion: (second, debatable, amendable, simple majority).

Object: to introduce business for consideration –

1 “I move that _____.”

2 “I move the adoption (acceptance, approval) of this report.”

District Executive Minister's Report

Russ Matteson

Incarnational Innovation

This year as part of Leadership Development we had 9 churches participate in this initiative led by Mitch Marcello, a trainer with Fresh Expressions. The work began in February with an in-person launch hosted at the Bakersfield congregation. More than 60 pastors and leaders from 9 churches came together, and then gathered in Zoom twice each month from March through June to learn how to apply design thinking processes to the work that God is inviting their church to be part of. Participating churches included Bakersfield, Centro Agape en Accion, Conexion Pasadena, Cristiana Elohim, Cristo Sion, Empire, Nueva Vision la Hermosa, Pomona Fellowship, and San Diego.

Recently the group gathered for a Zoom check in and heard updates on what each church has been planning, testing, trying, and adjusting based on how they engaged the community they call home. Examples of ministries include several efforts to listen to youth or young families and see how the church can encourage and support them. Efforts have resulted in new worship services or gatherings that are there to meet the expressed needs and hopes of those the church is trying to be in relationship with.

As I visit with the pastoral leaders of these churches I regularly hear how the process has helped the church listen better, have empathy and compassion for those they meet, and open up to explore and try new possibilities for ministry. The process their team learned to use around one initial hope or community is able to be used again and again to address other possibilities that arise.

Deportation Concerns and Responses

The situation for our immigrant faith communities remains challenging this year, just as it was in 2025. As sweeps looking for those without legal papers to be in the USA increase, attendance at church in those locations falls off from fear of being detained. In the midst of this our pastors and leaders continue to serve faithfully, providing care and support to their members and their communities. Several churches are working as allies to provide support to immigrants in their communities, even if their own congregation is safe from detention.

At a denominational level our district and four others continue to provide primary financial support for the staffing of the Deportation Defense Response initiative which is working to support the pastors who are serving immigrant churches and to encourage the whole of the church to show care and compassion for the stranger in our midst. A part of the initiative is the Legal & Mutual Aid Fund which has raised more than \$350,000 in a year to provide grants of up to \$2500 to help those members of Church of the Brethren congregations who are trying to get their paperwork in order or to provide support to family members who have been left behind as a result of other family members having been deported.

The recent termination of TPS for over 300,000 Haitians who are in the USA is impacting 9 congregations in the Atlantic Southeast District who have between 500 and 700 members whose legal standing and ability to work has ended overnight. Support for these individuals, and support for communities where incomes have simply disappeared overnight is critical in this time. As we work to respond and to care for those who are suffering we find ourselves with Jesus in meaningful ministry.

Connection Project / Proyecto Conexion

Our team of three has been working with 8 churches, helping them to reach out to their neighbors using social media networks and improving or creating a website for the congregation. It is exciting to see snips of sermons given by pastors, invitations to worship and other events that connect to the values of following Jesus, and to see the short inspirational pieces that the team has created and are often shared through more than one congregation's feed. To learn more about this District sponsored opportunity for local churches, you can visit the section of the district website about it and complete the interest form and the team will be in touch with you. There is also a workshop planned at District Conference to share more about how the team can come alongside your church to provide support and training to grow this part of your ministry of community outreach and connection.

Legal Issues

In the process of doing district work and in the work of supporting local churches, we often find that we need to reach out to legal counsel for advice and support as we make decisions or need to take action that does require legal representation. The District has worked for the last fifteen years with Ken Heisz of Gorman Miller on a variety of issues. Work this year has included trying to resolve issues with renters who refuse to honor their leases so we need to move through the process that leads to eviction, supporting a congregation that has been named as a possible defendant in one of the Boy Scouts of America abuse cases, assisting with property sales and other contracts and leases that churches enter, and clarity for items like the bylaws change that is an item of business at this conference. If your congregation is faced with a situation where there are legal issues or concerns involved, please contact us at the district office and we will work to provide support so that we are following informed paths as we respond to issues that need to be addressed.

Pastoral/Congregational Transitions

Church of the Living Savior (McFarland, CA) - Tony Blanco has been called to serve as the pastor of the congregation. He had been sharing this role with Linda Davis prior to her death in 2025. He has retired from his work as a correctional officer and has started ministry training through the Training in Ministry (TRIM) program of the Brethren Academy.

Circle of Peace (Peoria, AZ) - As of 4th quarter 2025 the congregation has been worshipping in their new space and reaching out to the community. They average about 10 visiting households per week. The congregation is growing into their building and into this new phase of ministry.

Conexión Pasadena - From the aftermath of the Eaton Fire which claimed the parsonage home of pastors Juan Pablo Plaza and Adriana Rios, the Plaza Rios family returned to their home country of Colombia in December 2025 for a time of rest and renewal seeking to restore both of their health and strength. Their home city was one that faced significant impact from the major earthquake this August. They are fine, but it is a reminder of the trauma from the fire. Fernanda Navarrete, the other member of the pastoral team, served this year but in August life changed and she and her fiancé moved up their wedding as a job relocation for him called

them out of the area. At this time, in consultation with the small group that made up the congregation, we have suspended work in Pasadena and are prayerfully discerning next steps or possibilities for ministry there.

The Pasadena church space is being used as the host site for Mennonite Disaster Services as they help rebuild Altadena and Pasadena. The work is just really getting started now and is anticipated to continue for at least 2 to 3 years. One of the projects they plan to complete is the rebuilding of the church parsonage. Funds for the materials should come from the claim we are making to the Southern California Edison Wildfire Recovery Fund. In addition, PSWD will work at this site as our disaster response work for the next few years.

Glendale - Robert Aguirre ended his service as pastor in April, having served for almost seven years. Robert has moved to San Diego and is completing Clinical Pastoral Education units as training for work as a chaplain. He is doing this work with the Veterans Administration. Alma Zamudio Maciel is serving as the interim pastor. Alma is ordained in the Evangelical Covenant denomination and did a three month interim with Conexión Pasadena earlier this year. The congregation has entered into the search process to find their next settled pastor.

Journey South Bay - The congregation has settled new bylaws as a dually affiliated congregation and we recently completed the conveyance of the property deed from the District to the church. In September they moved to three services on Sunday morning to accommodate the growth they are experiencing in the worshipping community.

Modesto - The congregation hosted the Spring 2026 meeting of the denomination's Mission & Ministry Board. As part of the Board being in PSWD they worshipped with local congregations on Sunday morning. These included groups going to Centro Agape en Acción (Los Banos), Empire, Modesto, Nueva Visión la Hermosa (Waterford), and Prince of Peace (Sacramento). The Board expressed appreciation for the hosting of Modesto and the welcome and warmth they experienced in all of the churches that they visited.

Pomona Fellowship - Rudy Amaya has joined the church staff as its Children & Youth Ministry

Coordinator, working to help them connect with a younger generation.

Prince of Peace (Sacramento, CA) - Erik Brummett is serving as interim pastor for the congregation since early 2025.

Príncipe de Paz (Santa Ana, CA) - Becky Zapata serves as the lead pastor with a team of lay people working alongside her. Becky and the congregation are still grieving the death of Richard Zapata in 2025. Two members of the lay team have started ministry training through the Educacion para Ministerio Compartido (EPMC) program of the Brethren Academy and coordinated by Gilbert Romero for PSWD. The church hosted the August meeting of the PSWD Policy Board.

San Diego - There is a business item on our agenda requesting approval for the congregation to operate as the San Diego Peace Church. They have been

about the work of using this name in connecting with the community and have changed signage to the new name. They are experiencing good response from those they meet who are looking for a church that lifts up peace as a core teaching of Jesus. Three members of the congregation were licensed to the ministry this year. The two Spanish speaking licensees have started courses in the SeBAH program from the Brethren Academy, and the English speaking licensee will pursue studies at Bethany Theological Seminary as a distance student.

Pace e bene, Paz y bien, Peace and all good,

Russ Matteson

District Executive Minister

Deceased Ministers

Willard D. Ressler - 9-13-1932 - 10/19/2025

Melvin Campbell - 6-27-1939 - 11/14/2025

Elvis C. Cayford - 5/6/1932 - 3/15/2026

Recognition of Ministers' Ordination Anniversaries

55 Years

Glenn J. Frazier
John Grindler Katonah

45 Years

Don Booz

40 Years

Ron Faus
Carol Wise

20 Years

Jeremy Ashworth

10 Years

Robert Aguirre
Erik Brummett

5 Years

David Flores Sr.
Rebecca Zapata

**Representing 175 years
of ordained service.**

MTC: Ministry Training Coordinator: SeBAH and EPMC Report..... Gilbert Romero

See also Ministry Commission report on page [23](#).

In my role as MTC (Ministry Training Coordinator) for the district I find that through the many challenges, our current team makes everything work! I have a wonderful job centered on putting people that have been called to ministry in the Church of the Brethren into the training programs EPMC: Educación para Ministerio Compartido, and SeBAH: Seminario Biblico Anabautista Hispano. Then I follow-up with calls and emails encouraging the licensed ministers as they move through the training, meeting twice a week with EPMC students as they read the books for some academy units, and keeping them connected to resources. Amen.

I praise God for our EPMC students: Clara Rubalcalva and Maria Garcia of Cristo Genesis in Los Angeles, Pastor Henry Roblero of Iglesia de Salvador Viviente in McFarland, Diego Gomez and Juan Gonzalez of Principe de Paz in Santa Ana.

Pastor Luz Roman of Iglesia Cristiana Elohim in Las Vegas, and Pastor Rigo Berumen of Centro Agape en Acción fellowship in Los Banos are ready for the ordination track.

The EFSM students and I function as the support Cohort. The students have all finished two units this year: a New Testament Survey and unit on Church leadership and polity.

Ulises Coronel and Gloria Diaz of the San Diego congregation began their studies this year in SeBAH.

Thank you for letting me work with these students. Be blessed.

Gilbert Romero,

MTC@pswdcob.org

Gilbert Romero, MTC

MTC@pswdcob.org

Associate District Executive Minister:

José Rudy Amaya

To the Executive Board and the Pacific Southwest District family of the Church of the Brethren:

With a heart full of gratitude, I wish to express my deep appreciation for the opportunity God and the Pacific Southwest District gave me to serve over these past 18 months. It has been a truly significant period in my life and ministry, filled with lessons, experiences, challenges, and—above all—many

blessings.

During this time, I had the privilege of working alongside leaders, pastors, congregations, and fellow believers who share the desire to serve God and strengthen the mission of the Church. Each experience contributed to my personal, spiritual, and ministerial growth.

I would like to express my special gratitude to my boss and supervisor, Russ Matteson, for the trust he placed in me, and for his guidance, patience, support, and willingness to teach me.

The opportunity to serve on committees such as CODE—a member of the new leadership cohort and DDR (Deportation Defense Response) roundtable.

In the latter, I worked on the approval of financial aid for our brothers and sisters who had suffered due to the deportations.

I also want to sincerely thank the Pacific Southwest District Executive Board, the district leaders, the pastors, and every person with whom I had the opportunity to work. Thank you for welcoming me, for trusting me, and for allowing me to be part of the work God is doing in our district.

These past 18 months taught me that ministry is not just about responsibilities and tasks, but about people, relationships, service, collaboration, and faithfulness to God's call. I was able to see up close the needs of our congregations, the challenges we face as a church, and also the many ways God continues to work in our midst.

I leave this season with a grateful heart. I do not view these 18 months merely as a period of work, but as an experience of growth and service that God used to continue preparing my life and my ministry.

To all of you, thank you for the trust, the opportunities, the prayers, the camaraderie, and everything we shared during this time.

My prayer is that God continues to bless the Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren, strengthening its congregations, pastors, and leaders, and guiding us to continue being a church that serves with love, faith, and commitment.

Con profundo agradecimiento y cariño,

José Rudy Amaya

18 meses de servicio al Distrito del Pacifico

Suroeste, Iglesias de los Brethren.

Report of Standing Committee Delegate

Standing committee was blessed this past year to have little business that required meeting between last year's annual meeting and this years. Two exceptions were a few emails related to work on the ballot and an online meeting on April 13, 2026, to consider business related to Eder Financial and Everence Financial. During the later part of 2025 Eder recognized that they were facing a situation where retired pastors were going to soon outnumber current pastors. This would be a financial situation that would not be sustainable moving into the future. The decision was made to move the Eder retirement plan and organizational investing services to Everence Financial. While the Standing Committee was saddened by this news it has several upsides including lower costs and expanded services to participants in the plan. Standing Committee voted unanimously to support this transition and soon after this meeting members began to be notified. The announcement was made as part of the Eder's report to the delegate body at Annual Conference.

Eder will spend the next several months completing the transfer and organizing what they hope will become a benevolent foundation with assets after the transfer in the 15-20-million-dollar range. They currently hope to continue to be an agency of the Church of the Brethren, but with a different scope of work which will require a modification of their current covenant. While around 30 employees will lose their jobs, Everence will need to add 5 positions to manage the number of new members they are adding and have told Eder employees to apply for those and any other open positions. Generous severance packages are also in the works. We are fortunate that Everence has the capacity to do the financial work for many small Anabaptist denominations and has core value investment strategies that are in line with the Church of the Brethren. Everence is not seeking to become an agency of the church.

Standing Committee began its work for this year's Annual Conference on Thursday evening June 25. Because of delays in returning to the United States from a vacation abroad I was unable to make it for this initial gathering. Standing committee spent most of the evening in worship, fellowship, getting to know each other, reporting the joys, concerns and challenges for each of their districts and some

time working on the theme *Imagine*.

New Business:

NB 1. Resolution on Weapons Transfer

During a pre-conference Standing Committee a few editorial errors were noticed and corrected before the item was recommended to the delegate body to adopt. The delegate body adopted the resolution. This resolution came from Mission and Ministry and was ready a year ago, but with a large amount of business last year it was decided to wait to consider it until this year. The scriptural basis for the resolution comes from Matthew 5:44b - 45. The resolution reaffirms the Church of the Brethren's commitment to peace as God's will and the call of Christ and states the church's opposition to the U.S. manufacturing and sale of weapons and urges the U.S. government to halt the sale of arms to other countries.

NB 2. Recommendations for Adjustments to the 2014 Ministerial Leadership Papers

Two adjustments to the 2014 Ministry Leadership paper that governs credentialing of ministerial leaders in the Church of the Brethren were approved by Standing Committee and the delegate body. One adjustment defines licensing as a "provisional credential". The other adjustment simplifies the process for a commissioned minister to seek ordination.

NB 3. Resolution- Walking together: Immigration, Peacemaking, Conscience, and Supporting Our Neighbors. The Standing Committee voted to recommend adoption of this resolution and the delegate body voted by strong majority to adopt it as well. The resolution has its origins in a query from the First Haitian Church in Miami, FL and the Southeast District. Because of current circumstances in the U.S. related to immigration a quick answer to the query was deemed necessary and waiting an extra year to send the query to Annual Conference, form a committee and wait for an answer was not seen as efficient. Mission and Ministry Board took up the query and produced the resolution which also includes a landing page of resources to help individuals, and congregations to study and use the resolution.

www.brethren.org/walking-together.

NB 4. Recommend Cost of Living to the Minimum Cash Salary Table for Pastors.

The cost-of-living adjustment of 4.2% was adopted.

Report from Review and Evaluation Committee
The committee updated the Standing Committee and the delegate body on its progress and will use feedback from table talk questions given to the delegates as it continues its work this next year. The only recommendation they had at this point was for the calling church leadership process to not have any changes. Recently implemented changes have not been used long enough to determine their effectiveness.

Celebrations

Iglesia Cristiana Elohim from the Pacific Southwest District was welcomed as a new fellowship and "The Sanctuary" was welcomed as a

new church plant in rural Northern Indiana.

Dennis Beckner will be moderator next year and Amy Gall Ritchie was called as moderator-elect. Both are from Indiana. Dennis announced the theme next year will focus on our youth and young adults as "Our youth are calling out to us to help their faith to grow".

Thank you for the opportunity to serve our district. If you have any further questions regarding the work of Standing Committee or Annual Conference do not hesitate to contact me. God's Blessings,

Shawn Carothers
Standing Committee Delegate
Pacific Southwest District

District Conference Program Committee Report

Committee Members:

Don Shankster, Moderator, Chair
Cady Laycook, Moderator-Elect
Janice Shaw Morgan
Cheryl Crane
Jonathan Roblero

Ex-Officio Members of the Committee:

District Executive Minister: Russ Matteson

Invited Guests:

Board Chair: Gail Heisel

Web-Registrar: Juliana Pitruzzello

Little is accomplished in a vacuum and good things happen when godly people work together as a team. Working with the Program team for a couple of years has been a blessing in putting together the many elements of creating a good district conference. What is it that inspires, that motivates, that draws people to worship, learn, and conduct business in a spirit of hope, joy, and encouragement. Such were some of our discussions this past year in preparing for this year's conference at Journey South Bay. This is the third consecutive year that we have been hosted by one of our district's local churches.

The Program Committee was instrumental in thinking about: how music adds to the overall experience together; arranging for personal accommodations like finding a place to hang your hat for the night; what to serve for meals; who might share

their gifts in teaching, music, hospitality . . . Securing a location and meeting onsite early in the year assisted us in thinking about ways to better utilize the gifts we have in this district. And what is a conference without well-qualified technicians to manage audio, translation, streaming, and if necessary, zoom. What a team!

From the nitty-gritty to over-arching theme of "Abound in Hope", this year we offered another way to prepare for the conference throughout the year with webinars on the theme. Nate Polzin, Director of Discipleship and Leadership Formation for the Church of the Brethren, led three webinars: Hope from God and in the scriptures; Believing in Jesus gives us Hope; The Holy Spirit empowers our Hope. Having Founa Badet, Director of Intercultural Ministries, as our plenary speaker and workshop leader along with other workshop options like Artificial Intelligence and Faith, Website and social media connections, . . . leads us to be excited about our time together in Christ at Journey South Bay.

My deep gratitude to the Program Committee for their generous offering of time and talent. My prayer is that your participation in this year's conference inspires you to be the hope for your neighborhood.

Don Shankster,
2026 District Moderator
Moderator@pswdcob.org

Nominating Committee Report

Committee Members:

Cady Laycook, Chair & Moderator-Elect

José Rudy Amaya

Barbara Brandt

Robert Morris

Ex-Officio Members with vote:

Clerk, Laura Miller

Moderator, Don Shankster

Board Chair, Gail Heisel

Ex-Officio Member without vote:

District Executive Minister: Russ Matteson

Our district is blessed with its growing diversity to have many people who are gifted, equipped and willing to serve us as representatives on the various boards and commissions that support the work and mission of PSWD. We are so thankful for every person who thoughtfully and prayerfully considered our committee's invitation to serve. They took these invitations seriously and whether they accepted or declined to serve at this time we know that each one's commitment to the church is exemplary. The growing diversity of our district is definitely reflected in the nominees on this year's ballot. We believe this diversity will ensure that our district's needs for guidance and Spirit directed vision will be well supported.

The members of our committee worked diligently to engage with the search process and the invitations we extended to potential nominees. The expertise and knowledge of Russ Matteson about persons from the congregations of the districts was very helpful in our consideration of nominees. We would greatly appreciate your assistance in discerning and recommending persons from your congregation for future consideration by the committee in calling as potential future leaders in PSWD. We know there are many others gifted for service in this way beyond our immediate realm of knowledge. Please consider completing one or more of the forms attached with names of persons you would suggest for positions of service in PSWD.

In addition to the work of finding suitable nominees for this year's ballot, the committee took up the task of evaluating the possible benefit of moving from a ballot for the yearly election of officers to a slate. This task was undertaken in light of the lengthy history of having only one nominee for each position on the ballot elected by the District Conference delegate body. The committee agreed that such a proposal for change would be appropriate at this time.

With guidance from Russ Matteson and the attorney contracted with PSWD, we evaluated a number of options for a slate and learned about how some other Brethren districts have moved to the use of a slate. The proposal to move from a ballot to a slate was then sent to the Policy Board. In addition to this proposal one of the options for a slate was selected as the most preferred and shared with the Policy Board. All of the options were presented to the Board with the details of each to enable them to decide whether they would recommend moving to a slate and if so which type of slate they would recommend to the District Conference delegates for approval. Because this change would require a change in PSWD ByLaws the Board is seeking legal guidance for the wording of such a change. It is expected that the Policy Board's recommendations will be a matter of new business at this year's District Conference. As you consider this year's ballot and the anticipated decisions regarding changes in process, please be in prayer that the Spirit of Wisdom may guide us as we seek together God's will for the future of our district.

I am most grateful for the valuable service of the members of this committee. In the year ahead I ask for your prayers for strength and wisdom as I serve with the leaders of the district as we work together for God's glory and for the good of the body of believers that is Pacific Southwest District.

In Christ's service,
Cady Laycook, Moderator-elect

Please consider these suggestions:

Dear Nominating Committee, for District Conference Ballot:	
I, _____, _____, suggest that you consider: your name your telephone	
Name:	Email:
Church:	Tele:
Position: ☐ Moderator Elect ☐ District Board ☐ Clerk ☐ Nominating Committee ☐ District Board Youth / Young Adult ☐ Standing Committee ☐ Program Committee	

Please consider these suggestions:

Dear Nominating Committee, for District Conference Ballot:

I, _____, suggest that you consider:
your nameyour telephone

Name:	Email:
Church:	Tele:

Position: ☐ Moderator Elect ☐ Nominating Committee ☐ Program Committee
☐ District Board ☐ District Board Youth / Young Adult
☐ Clerk ☐ Standing Committee

Please consider these suggestions:

Dear Nominating Committee, for District Conference Ballot:	
I, _____, suggest that you consider:	
your name	your telephone
Name:	Email:
Church:	Tele:
Position: ☐ Moderator Elect ☐ Nominating Committee ☐ Program Committee ☐ District Board ☐ District Board Youth / Young Adult ☐ Clerk ☐ Standing Committee	

Nominations from the Floor at District Conference

I, _____, am willing to allow my name to be placed on the 2026 ballot as a nominee for the following position of service: _____

Nominated by:	1 st _____
	2 nd _____

Personal Information: *(make enough copies to be distributed to the delegates, about 100)*

Name:	Age (optional):
Congregation:	
Vocation:	
Church Experience:	
Vision Statement:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
Email:	

2026 PSWD Board of Administration

= second 3 year term, x = appointed to fill an unexpired term ending



**Thanks to all for your gift of service to the district.
Special thanks to those who have completed
their term of service as listed by year below.**

Policy Board:

Chair: Gail Heisel (La Verne)
Vice-Chair: Ruth Rivera (Príncipe de Paz)
Recording Secretary: Clerk: Laura Miller (Papago Buttes)
2026 Jon Chubb (Papago Buttes)
2027 Gail Heisel (La Verne)
2027 Bill Himes (La Verne)
2027 John Keeling (Bakersfield)
#2026 Jim Lefever (Glendale) Section Rep. SOCA
2028 Jack Meek (La Verne)
2026 Arnoldo Mendoza (Centro Ágape en Acción)
2026 Michael Monson (Modesto) Section Rep. CVCA
2027 Marvin Ramos (Príncipe de Paz)
2028 Ruth Rivera (Príncipe de Paz)
2028 Orlando Roman (Iglesia Cristiana Elohim)
2028 Dean Sabo (Circle of Peace) Section Rep. AZ/NV
Ex-Officio with vote
2026 Moderator: Don Shankster (Papago Buttes)
2026 Moderator-Elect: Cady Laycook (Journey South Bay)
#2027 Clerk: Laura Miller (Papago Buttes)
2027 Treasurer: Karin Heckman Nelson (La Verne)
Ex-Officio without vote
District Executive Minister: Russ Matteson
2026 Standing Committee Delegate: Shawn Carothers (Circle of Peace)
Invited to meetings without vote
Mission & Ministry Board members residing in PSWD (By-Laws III.B.)

Executive Board: (Members chosen each year by the Policy Board)

Board Chair: Gail Heisel (La Verne)
Vice-Chair: Ruth Rivera (Príncipe de Paz)
Ministry Chair: Jon Chubb (Papago Buttes)
Stewards Chair: Dean Sabo (Circle of Peace)
Moderator: Don Shankster (Papago Buttes)
Moderator-Elect: Cady Laycook (Journey South Bay)
District Executive Minister (ex-officio without vote): Russ Matteson

Stewards Commission: (Members chosen each year by the Policy Board)

Stewards Chair: Dean Sabo (Circle of Peace)
Vice Chair: John Keeling (Bakersfield)
Jim LeFever (Glendale)
Jack Meek (La Verne)
ex-officio members: District Executive Minister, Moderator, Treasurer
Invited Guests: Board Chair

Ministry Commission: (Members chosen each year by the Policy Board)

Ministry Chair: Jon Chubb (Papago Buttes)

Vice Chair: Marvin Ramos (Príncipe de Paz)

Secretary: Michael Monson (Modesto)

Policy Board Member: Orlando Roman (Iglesia Cristiana Elohim)

ex-officio members: District Executive Minister; Moderator

Invited Guests: Board Chair

Congregational Vitality Task Group: (Members chosen each year by the Policy Board)

Chair: Bill Himes (La Verne)

Policy Board member: Arnolando Mendoza (Los Banos)

ex-officio members: District Executive Minister; Moderator

Invited Guests: Board Chair



PSWD Policy Board meeting at Príncipe de Paz Church

Board of Administration Report

This was my first year as Board Chair and 5th year on the Policy Board. As I was finishing the last year of my three-year term on the denominational Program & Arrangements Committee, I did not get to as many commission meetings as I would have liked to, but I kept up to date through the monthly Executive Board Meetings with reports from all of our commissions and committees. It was a very full year of business, with many exciting projects and a few frustrations thrown in!

New Board Appointments for 2026 included:

Treasurer - Karin Heckman Nelson; Ministerial Ethics Committee - Karen Pierson (2030); Margaret Carl Trust Advisory Committee - Susan Price (2028) continues along with Jeanette Hernandez (2026) who is filling the unexpired term of Linda Davis; Arizona Ecumenical Representative - Doug Dozer; and check signers - Karin Heckman Nelson, Dot Hess and Mary Kay Ogden.

Having been hired in the Summer of 2025, Jose Rudy Amaya continued this year as our Associate District Executive Minister Intern. Over the year, he has continued to develop relationships with and to assist our Spanish-speaking congregations through visits and preaching. At a denominational level, he has supported the Deportation Defense Response Team which has been standing alongside those families and individuals in our congregations affected by the immigration crisis. He currently sits on the Deportation Defense Response Grant Approval Committee.

Major business items of the year have included:

- In January, the Policy Board approved a program to provide grants to Spanish-Speaking congregations to assist them in compensating their pastors. So far, three congregations are participating in the program. Funding is through the Ministry & Improvement Fund - New Ministries.
- Executive Board approved five Annual Conference Scholarships of \$1,000 each from Ministry Partnership Fund - Leadership Development.
- Executive Board approved contributing \$1,500 from Ministry & Improvement Fund - Leadership Development to the New Table Conversation process of the denomination.

- Executive Board approved numerous Ministry & Improvement Fund - New Ministries requests and two Minister's Loans.
- Eight churches are working with the Connection Project to improve their social media and website presence.
- Nine churches (approximately 60 people) participated in the Incarnational Innovation process led by Mitch Marcello at the Bakersfield church. This program invited congregations to send teams which were then equipped with a process to help them overcome obstacles in their ministries. The group continued in Zoom coaching with Mitch for an additional four months. Funding came from the Ministry & Improvement Fund - Leadership Development.
- After much discussion by the Executive Board and the Policy Board, the Policy Board approved a recommendation to District Conference that we move to a "Slate by Acclamation, with Objection" process for calling District leadership.
- Executive Board approved allocation of \$25,000 from the Ministry & Improvement Fund - Reserve to support the Deportation Defense Initiative program staffing.
- Web Hosting Migration Project was completed.

In-person meetings I attended this year included a District Conference Program Committee meeting in January at Journey South Bay and Policy Board meetings at the Glendora and Príncipe de Paz churches. All other meetings were by Zoom. I am grateful for the work of our committees and commissions. These groups serve important functions in the life of the District. We are also blessed to be under the capable leadership of our District Executive Minister, Russ Matteson, with assistance from our Associate Executive Minister Intern, José Rudy Amaya, Ministry Training Coordinator, Gilbert Romero, Administrative Assistant, Kimberly Rouse, and other support staff. It has been my pleasure to serve as the board chair this past year and to work with the many individuals who so graciously volunteer their time and talents. May our efforts in 2027 be blessed for the glory of God and our neighbor's good!

Gail M. Heisel, 2026 PSWD Policy Board Chair

Ministry Commission Report

Ministry Commission:

Jon Chubb, Chair

Marvin Ramos, Vice-Chair

Michael Monson, Secretary

Orlando Roman

ex-officio: District Executive Minister; Moderator



Pastors and Family at the 2026 Retreat

This has been my third year on the Ministry Commission, with it being my second time as chair. I appreciate all past and current members for helping do the work of the Ministry Commission as outlined in our by-laws - “gives counsel and guidance to all ministerial matters in the District”.

Essentially we help to oversee different aspects in supporting churches and pastors. We continue to meet every other month, as well as at the quarterly Policy

Board meetings. One big yearly event that we help to plan out is the Pastor/Spouse Retreat. Every other year we open it up to families as well and in early June we had 31 people gather for a week at Camp La Verne! This number includes those helping with childcare, interpretation and spiritual leading.

Nine individual churches were present and on a personal note, I was thankful to experience this camp for the first time and my kids had a blast exploring nature.

We continue to help oversee the Ordination renewal process and we’re just about all caught up on all the names. I was also thankful to be part of the interview process as a member on NACC, working with several folks pursuing licensing and ordination.

We are so grateful for all the work and support that Russ provides us all, as well as Kimberly for regularly sending out emails and other logistical help. It’s been great to be joined by Rudy, as well as our Moderator Don Shankster - thank you both for your input and wisdom! I’ve deeply appreciated getting to know everyone on the Policy Board, as well as the chance to visit several of our churches in person over these past 3 years in this role.

Jon Chubb, Chair
PSWD Ministry Commission

SeBAH and EPMC Report. Gilbert Romero
See Ministry Training Coordinator report on page [14](#).

NACC: Nurturing & Credentialing Committee:

2027 Deb Merrifield Carothers

2026 Gary Pierson

2028 Becky Zapata

2029 Eric Bishop

2030 Jon Chubb

Ex-Officio:

Ministry Commission Chair, District Moderator

Invited Guest: District Board Chair

ex-officio without vote on all district committees:

District Executive

NACC: Nurturing & Credentialing Committee

The Nurturing and Credentialing Committee (NACC) is the interviewing and oversight team for the district as it relates to licensing, commissioning, and ordaining people to the set apart ministry in the Church of the Brethren. The committee is a representative group from the district with ministers and lay people as members from across our district. Called members serve 5 year terms (maximum of 2 terms) and often are present for both the licensing and ordination interviews of candidates. More diversity is added with the presence of the moderator, Board chair, and Ministry Commission chair.

The committee met in San Diego in April and had interviews with three candidates for licensing. They were approved by the NACC which recommended them to the Ministry Commission for approval. Following that there was a final vote of affirmation by the local congregation. In August, Russ Matteson joined San Diego in worship and Jacob Brunelli, Ulises Coronel, and Gloria Diaz were all consecrated as licensed ministers.

At our Fall meeting in late October the committee will review the work that our licensed ministers have been doing in preparation for ordination and make a recommendation to renew those licenses. That group of continuing licensed ministers includes Tony Blanco,

Maria Garcia, Sandra Millard, Adriana Rios, Henry Roblero, and Clara Rubalcava.

This fall the committee will also hold ordination interviews for Luz Roman and Rigo Berumen who have both completed their EPMC course work.

We invite you to hold these licensed ministers in your prayers as they continue their training and preparation. Many of them are working, pastoring, and being a student at the same time. And they feel the call of God to serve Christ's church through as ministers of the gospel.

Deb Merrifield Carothers, NACC Chair

Stewards Commission Report

Stewards Commission:

Dean Sabo, Chair
John Keeling, Vice-Chair
Jim LeFever
Jack Meek

Ex-officio members: District Executive Minister,
Board Chair, Moderator, Treasurer

Financial Status: Total Operating Expenses for 2025 came in at \$4778,999. The 2026 budget approved at District Conference last year was for \$491,746. The 2027 Operating Expense Maximum approved last year is \$500,000. Our staff is getting a 4.2% salary increase and the proposed budget for 2027 comes in at \$500,061 and is for your approval at the District Conference.

Fire recovery: Southern California Edison Wildlife Recovery Compensation Program has been applied for in behalf of the Pasadena Parsonage through Gorman Miller, attorney. The Pasadena Parsonage was burned in the Eaton Fire, but due to a laps in insurance payments, it was uninsured. The pastor that was staying there has returned to Colombia on family leave. Mennonite disaster relief aided in the clean-up of the church. And Mennonite Insurance Agency is now covering the Pasadena and Glendora Congregations which could not get insurance anymore through the previous insurers. The Stewards Commission initiated an "inclusion letter" that was mailed to all churches having loans with the Pacific Southwest District to ensure that we are included as a co-Insured in their insurance policies, to help avoid any future lapses in coverage.

Year to date spending is slightly over budget, but the

market is performing well year to date, yielding a decent return on investments that more than covers our YTD deficit. We are currently changing our Investments from Eder Financial to Everence Financial, as Eder is shutting down their Investment Operations. Everence is very similar to Eder with Socially Responsible Investment Opportunities. Everence is much larger (approximately 9 billion in assets) and the transition is going smoothly.

Loans:

Circle of Peace. First service in their new Worship Center was on 10/12/25 with a soft launch. The grand opening was 12/7/25. They paid off their first loan from 2014, and have paid down a portion of the second loan with the sale of a donated lot next to the church.

We have 3 Minister Loans for \$3872, \$2725, and \$10,000 We sent \$25,000 to Deportation Defense Response to support our Immigrant Congregations in aid toward members needing assistance.

We set aside \$160,000 from the Tucson Funds to start the new Connection Project Account to aid our fellowships in getting connected to the Internet and greater exposure to their neighborhoods.

M&I Fund - Facility and Improvement Grants:

- 10/25 Cristiana Elohim, Landscaping \$5000.
- 12/25 Pomona Fellowship, Live Streaming \$2300.
- 3/26 Pomona Fellowship, Tech upgrades and mobile cart \$4162.
- 4/26 Centro Agape, Plumbing \$7855.06.
- 5/26 Pomona Fellowship, Audio and PA Systems \$6976.
- 8/26 Pomona Fellowship, Audio & PA Systems

\$2,336.

Other items include:

- Glendale lost a tenant. And they stopped payment on loans for six months or until they get a new tenant, and they have now resumed payments.
- Bynum's Mortuary continues to be in default on rent at Los Banos and we have filed

for judgment.

- Imperial Heights Parsonage tenant is still delinquent over 2 years, and we are assisting them in filing for eviction.

Dean Sabo, 2026 Stewards Chair

Congregational Vitality Task Group

CVTG: Congregational Vitality Task Group

Bill Himes, Chair

Arnoldo Mendoza (Los Banos)

<i>Ex-officio</i> members: District Executive Minister, Moderator
--

Invited Guests: Board Chair

The Congregational Vitality Task Group has oversight for the Ministry Partnership Funds portion of the district budget whose programs include the Jesus in the Neighborhood grants, Ministry Partnership Funds, and Youth Ministry requests from the Ministry and Improvement Fund. The committee meets monthly to approve requests that have come in from congregations. The following is a summary of requests approved in 2026:

Jesus in the Neighborhood (up to \$500 to support engagement by your congregation with your community, up to 2 per year per congregation) - Centro Agape en Accion, community taco night; Nueva Visión la Hermosa, Festival de Otoño; Cristiana Elohim, 2nd anniversary community celebration.

Coaching/Training (up to \$2500 on a matching basis to help the congregation address needed skills) - Circle of Peace, \$312 for Strategic Leadership Team development training

Mission Congregation (up to \$12,000 based on church size for churches working in areas with high poverty) - Cristo Sion, Cristo Genesis, Imperial Heights

Youth - Principe de Paz and San Diego providing support for youth and advisors to attend the 2026 COB National Youth Conference; Modesto to support sending a young adult to the COB National Young Adult Conference.

There are still funds available in the 2026 budget, and funds are set aside as part of the 2027 budget. If you have an idea that you want to explore please reach out to one of the committee members or the District Executive Minister. Application forms are on the district website under the resources tab.

Bill Himes, 2026 CVTG Chair

Pacific Southwest District – Church of the Brethren
Giving to the District by Congregations, Individuals and Groups
January 1 to December 31, 2025

Church ID #	Name of Church	2025 Final	2026 YTD
32-010	Bakersfield	\$350	\$350
32-021	Centro Agape en Acción (Los Banos)	\$0	\$0
32-025	Church of the Living Savior (McFarland)	\$1,000	\$0
32-028	Circle of Peace (Peoria, AZ)	\$3,150	\$1,050
32-270	Cornerstone Community (Reedley)	\$0	\$0
32-040	Empire	\$500	\$650
32-070	Glendale	\$550	\$400
32-080	Glendora	\$0	\$0
32-082	Iglesia Cristiana Elohim (Las Vegas)	\$0	\$0
32-083	Iglesia de Cristo Genesis (Los Angeles)	\$0	\$250
32-037	Iglesia de Cristo Sion (Glendora)	\$0	\$0
32-150	Imperial Heights (Los Angeles)	\$0	\$0
32-330	Journey South Bay (Redondo Beach)	\$4,000	\$4,000
32-090	Laton	\$0	\$0
32-100	La Verne	\$3,333	\$2,916.69
32-120	Live Oak	\$1,000	\$0
32-190	Modesto	\$0	\$0
32-197	Nueva Visión La Hermosa (Waterford)	\$0	\$0
32-205	Papago Buttes (AZ)	\$0	\$0
32-035	Pasadena Conexión	\$0	\$0
32-290	Pomona Fellowship	\$400	\$800
32-290	Prince of Peace (Sacramento)	\$0	\$0
32-322	Príncipe de Paz (Santa Ana)	\$0	\$1,500
32-280	Restoration Los Angeles	\$0	\$0
32-300	San Diego First	\$1,000	\$500
Sub-Total		\$15,283	\$9,503

	Individual Giving	\$1,240	\$700
	Marion Nine Trust	\$450	\$133
Sub-Total		\$1,690	\$833

GRAND TOTAL	\$16,973	\$10,336
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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

**To the Board of Directors
Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren**

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of **Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren**, a nonprofit organization, which comprise the statements of financial position as of **December 31, 2025**, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses and cash flows for the year then ended and the related notes to the financial statements.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren as of December 31, 2025, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are required to be independent of Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren and to meet our ethical responsibilities in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements relating to our audit. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Responsibilities of Management for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is required to evaluate whether there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren's ability to continue as a going concern within one year after the date that the financial statements are available to be issued.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not absolute assurance and therefore is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing

standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud, may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentation, or the override of internal control. Misstatements are considered material if there is a substantial likelihood that, individually or in the aggregate, they would influence the judgment made by a reasonable user based on the financial statements.

In performing an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, we:

- Exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit.
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, and design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks. Such procedures include examining, on a test basis, evidence regarding the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren's internal control. Accordingly, no such opinion is expressed.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluate the overall presentation of the financial statements.
- Conclude whether, in our judgment, there are conditions or events, considered in the aggregate, that raise substantial doubt about Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren's ability to continue as a going concern for a reasonable period of time.

We are required to communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit, significant audit findings, and certain internal control related matters that we identified during the audit.

Suchan & Associates

Suchan & Associates
An Accountancy Corporation

Rancho Cucamonga, California
September 2, 2026

University of La Verne

Executive Summary

The 2025–26 academic year marked a year of transition, reflection, and strategic advancement for the University of La Verne. Guided by its core values of Ethical Reasoning, Diversity and Inclusivity, Lifelong Learning, and Civic and Community Engagement, the university continued to strengthen its commitment to student success, academic excellence, and community impact while navigating leadership transitions and an evolving higher education landscape.

Throughout the year, the university invested in initiatives designed to support the whole student through enhanced well-being services, expanded civic and community engagement opportunities, strengthened Title IX practices, and the launch of a more integrated approach to mission-centered student support. These efforts reflect La Verne's commitment to creating a learning environment where students can thrive academically, personally, and professionally.

As a federally designated Hispanic-Serving Institution and Minority-Serving Institution, the University of La Verne remains focused on expanding educational opportunity, fostering belonging, and preparing graduates to lead lives of service, purpose, and positive social impact. The university continues to build upon its historic Church of the Brethren heritage while positioning itself to meet the opportunities and challenges of the future.

Transitions

The university experienced several significant leadership transitions during the 2025–26 academic year.

Following nearly twenty-five years of service, University Chaplain Rev. Zandra Wagoner concluded her tenure at La Verne to accept a position at Loyola Marymount University. Through her leadership, the university strengthened its commitment to spiritual life, interfaith engagement, and service while deepening its connection to its Church of the Brethren roots.

The university also experienced changes within academic leadership following the departure of Provost Ken O'Donnell. University leadership remains focused on ensuring continuity and advancing strategic priorities during this period of transition.

In addition, the university welcomed new leaders across several areas of campus, continuing efforts to strengthen institutional effectiveness, student success, and mission alignment.

Key Highlights

- Continued implementation of the university's strategic priorities focused on student success, belonging, well-being, and institutional sustainability.
- Recognition as an Opportunity University through the 2025 Carnegie Classifications.
- Continued growth and development of the College of Health and Community Well-Being.
- Expansion of student well-being initiatives and collaborative support services.
- Strengthened civic and community engagement opportunities for students.
- Continued investment in Title IX education, prevention, and response efforts.
- Expansion of regional campus engagement and community partnerships.
- Launch of shared-governance workgroup

- Advancement of mission-centered programming supporting leadership, service, and dialogue across difference.

Launch of Inclusive Excellence and Mission Integration

One of the most significant developments during the year was the launch of the Division of Inclusive Excellence and Mission Integration. Established to strengthen alignment between the university's mission, values, and student experience, the division brings together Spiritual Life, Civic and Community Engagement, Multicultural Services, Student Well-Being, and Title IX under a unified vision.

The division has focused on creating a more coordinated and holistic approach to student development, belonging, wellness, and engagement. Through campus-wide partnerships, the division expanded opportunities for leadership development, community dialogue, interfaith engagement, civic participation, and personal well-being.

Programs such as What Matters to Me and Why, community conversations, service initiatives, and values-centered learning experiences continue to foster meaningful engagement among students, faculty, and staff while supporting the university's commitment to educating the whole person.

Student Access and Success

The University of La Verne continues to demonstrate its commitment to educational opportunity and student success. The university's designation as an Opportunity University by the Carnegie Foundation recognizes its success in expanding access while supporting positive student outcomes and economic mobility.

As a Hispanic-Serving Institution and Minority-Serving Institution, the university remains committed to serving first-generation students and students from historically underrepresented backgrounds. Through academic support services, student engagement initiatives, financial aid resources, and holistic student support, La Verne continues to create pathways for student achievement and degree completion.

Academic Innovation and Growth

The university continued to invest in innovative academic programs designed to meet workforce and community needs.

The College of Health and Community Well-Being continued to expand opportunities for students pursuing careers in healthcare, behavioral health, psychology, social services, and related professions. These programs play a critical role in preparing graduates to address some of society's most pressing health and well-being challenges.

The LaFetra College of Education joined the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED), positioning the university among a distinguished network of institutions committed to preparing equity-minded educational leaders capable of leading transformational change in schools and communities.

Furthermore, the College of Arts and Sciences worked through its restructure, ensuring continuity of academic rigor and efficiencies across its leadership, course offerings, and sustainability planning that prioritizes the continued benefits of a liberal arts education and experiential learning opportunities that include key campus and community stakeholders.

Across all colleges, faculty and staff remain committed to providing high-quality, student-centered learning experiences that prepare graduates for professional success and lifelong learning.

Impact

The University of La Verne continues to make a meaningful impact through its commitment to student success, community engagement, and mission-driven education.

Students engaged in service, leadership development, community partnerships, and civic learning experiences that connected classroom learning to real-world challenges. Efforts to strengthen student well-being, foster belonging, and support holistic development contributed to a campus culture rooted in care, respect, and inclusion.

These efforts continue to reflect the university's longstanding belief that higher education should prepare graduates not only for careers, but also for lives of purpose, service, and ethical leadership.

Looking Ahead

As the university looks ahead, priorities include strengthening student success initiatives, expanding community engagement opportunities, enhancing student well-being efforts, advancing institutional effectiveness, and continuing to integrate mission and values throughout the student experience.

The university remains committed to preparing graduates who lead with compassion, integrity, and a commitment to the common good while responding thoughtfully to the changing needs of students and society.

Gratitude

The University of La Verne extends its sincere appreciation to the Pacific Southwest District for its continued partnership and support. The District's annual support of Spiritual Life programming helps sustain opportunities for faith formation, service, leadership development, and community building for our students.

As a university founded by members of the Church of the Brethren, La Verne remains grateful for the values-based foundation that continues to shape our mission and work today. We look forward to continuing our shared commitment to education, service, faith, and community in the years ahead.

www.laverne.edu

HILLCREST

2705 Mountain View Drive, La Verne, California 91750-4313
(909) 392-4000



MISSION STATEMENT

To serve and enrich the lives of older persons

VISION STATEMENT

To be the Premier Destination for Vibrant Community Living

CORE VALUES

Integrity
Respect
Service
Stewardship
Teamwork

2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS AS OF JUNE 30, 2026

Executive Committee: Jack Meek, Chair; Karen Weed, Vice Chair; Shireen Fatemi, Secretary; David Nelson, Treasurer; Matthew Neeley, CEO; and, Dale Stanley, Past Chair.

Directors: Pauline Abbott, David Brandt, Alfred Clark, Dan Lane, Kevin Marshall, Margie McEnery, Joseph Pritchard, and Stan Stringfellow

Ex-Officio with vote: Russ Matteson, District Executive Minister

SALES & MARKETING NEWS

- Hillcrest residents live days filled with accomplishments, fun-filled activities, and community involvement. Listed below are highlights from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026, which have brought our mission and vision statements to life:
 - The net entrance fees for the last fiscal year was \$10,711,583.
 - Hillcrest welcomed 54 new residents into 44 homes and apartments.

PHILANTHROPY NEWS

Total funds raised in fiscal year ending June 30, 2026: \$744,089, highlights include:

- Total funds raised for the Good Samaritan & Benevolent Funds and Endowments: \$437,704.
- Resident volunteer support at the Hillcrest Thrift Store and Gift Shop generated \$68,673 for the Good Samaritan Fund and Benevolent Funds
- Luck of the Draw Annual Fundraiser netted \$400,824.



DSS Certificate of Authority #69

DSS: #191501662

DHS #950000005

Hillcrest's Dr. Debra Manuel-Smith Nominated for the 2026 Women's Leadership Award.



Hillcrest is proud to announce that **Dr. Debra Manuel-Smith, Head of Human Resources**, is an honored nominee in the Executive of the Year category for the *Los Angeles Business Journal's* 2026 Women's Leadership Symposium and Awards.

This annual award recognizes outstanding women leaders who are making meaningful contributions to their organizations, industries, and communities they serve. Dr. Manuel-Smith was nominated for her exceptional leadership, commitment to employee engagement, and dedication to strengthening the workplace that supports exceptional care for older adults and community involvement.

As Head of Human Resources at Hillcrest, she oversees workforce strategy, employee experience, organizational culture, and talent development. Although she joined Hillcrest less than one year ago, she brings extensive human resources experience, helping organizations build a strong workplace culture that supports employee growth.

Dr. Manuel-Smith understands that exceptional care begins with exceptional people," said Matthew Neeley, President and CEO of Hillcrest. "Her thoughtful leadership has

strengthened our culture, supported our employees, and reinforced Hillcrest's mission of providing compassionate, person-centered care. We are thrilled to see her recognized with this well-deserved nomination."

As an accomplished human resources executive, Dr. Manuel-Smith has built her career around creating people-centered workplaces, where employees feel valued and empowered while fostering cultures rooted in accountability, integrity, and compassion. Her leadership has helped organizations strengthen employee engagement and operational effectiveness and ensure that people remain at the heart of every decision.

Her leadership philosophy reflects the belief that people are an organization's greatest asset, and that exceptional employee experiences create exceptional resident experiences. Her approach and genuine care for people reflect Hillcrest's longstanding commitment to creating an environment where employees, residents, and families can thrive.

Her commitment to service extends beyond public office. Every Sunday, she prepares and serves home-cooked meals to individuals experiencing homelessness. Dr. Manuel-Smith believes leadership is about serving others with purpose, creating opportunities for people to succeed, and making a difference in our workplaces and our communities.

The Women's Leadership Symposium & Awards celebrates women who are shaping the future of business through innovation, leadership, and community impact. Dr. Manuel-Smith's nomination highlights the increasingly important role that human resources leaders play in building resilient organizations and advancing excellence in senior living.

Hillcrest congratulates Dr. Manuel-Smith on this well-deserved recognition.

Social Activities Committee at Hillcrest

The Social Activities Committee is a standing committee under the bylaws and guidance of the Hillcrest Residents' Association. It was formed and began holding initial meetings in the Fall of 2025.

The Social Activities Committee is dedicated to fostering a vibrant sense of community and strengthening relationships at Hillcrest. Its mission is to create opportunities for connection and belonging through thoughtfully planned social programs and events. Working with the Resident Life & Wellness and the Sales & Marketing departments, the Committee helps design and coordinate activities that encourage friendship, engagement, and a welcoming atmosphere for all. Specifically, the three areas of focus during the beginning year have been to offer Excursions, Events, and Drop-In social opportunities.

- The Excursions sub-committee provides four excursion opportunities per year to Hillcrest residents.
- The Event sub-committee provides three to four social evenings per year with the specific purpose of providing weekend night opportunities on campus for Hillcrest residents. These events will usually provide plentiful appetizers, drinks, and live music where guests can "Mingle and Munch."
- The Drop-In sub-committee provides a place on campus where residents can either plan to meet others or simply drop by to enjoy a welcoming place outside their homes.

The Social Activities Committee is committed to providing opportunities and a place away from home where our residents can enjoy each other.



Into the Wilderness • Faith • Fellowship • Service

A Place to Connect with God, Nature & Community

Camp Peaceful Pines is a summer camping ministry affiliated with the **Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren**. For more than **78 years**, Camp Peaceful Pines has welcomed people to its rustic mountain setting in the central Sierra Nevada Mountains near the **Carson-Iceberg Wilderness**. Our camps provide opportunities to step away from the busyness of everyday life, enjoy the outdoors, build friendships, reflect on faith, and grow together in a Christian community.

2026: “INTO THE WILDERNESS”

Our 2026 camp theme, **“Into the Wilderness,”** followed the *Inside Out* curriculum and invited campers to explore faith, relationships, personal growth, and God’s presence in the wilderness. Throughout the summer, Camp Peaceful Pines offers a variety of programs, including: **Discovery Camp, Family Camp, Women’s Retreat, Love & Laughter**

When available, the camp is also rented to groups for **family reunions, retreats, and other gatherings**. Because of severe winter weather and seasonal road closures, Camp Peaceful Pines operates for approximately **three months each year**. While rustic, the camp is a cozy and inviting place—and there is always something happening!

In October 2025, Camp Peaceful Pines was blessed by the **CASP Disaster Team**, whose dedicated volunteers helped transform and improve many areas of the camp. Projects included **new roofs, renovation of cabins, carpeting in several cabins, and electrical improvements**

Recent improvements have included: **New Generator — \$27,000+ Donated**, Generous supporters provided more than \$27,000 toward a new generator, strengthening the camp’s ability to operate safely and reliably. I

BUILT BY VOLUNTEERS • SUSTAINED BY COMMUNITY

Camp Peaceful Pines exists because people care.

Volunteer **superintendents, directors, leaders, counselors, nurses, construction workers, day laborers, families, friends, and church members** give their time, skills, energy, and resources to make camp possible.

Churches and other organizations that contribute annually help offset the ongoing costs of operating and maintaining the camp, including: USFS fees, Propane and fuel, Garbage service, Facility maintenance and repairs, Leadership stipends, Cabin improvements

HELP KEEP THE PINES PEACEFUL

Camp Peaceful Pines welcomes donations to help maintain this special place and ensure that future generations can experience the outdoors, Christian fellowship, reflection, and spiritual growth.

Donate or learn more:

www.CampPeacefulPines.org

Follow us on **Facebook & Instagram**

Camp Peaceful Pines

Camp Peaceful Pines

PO Box 185

Riverbank, CA 95367

COME INTO THE WILDERNESS

Come for the mountains. Stay for the fellowship. Study Gods word

Leave with memories that last a lifetime.

Camp La Verne



Celebrating 102 Years Of Outdoor Ministry & Experiences!

Since 1924 Camp La Verne has been providing Brethren Churches and Nature Loving Folks from all walks of life a place to enjoy the peace, quiet, and serenity of the forest and all that Mother Nature has to offer. We are located at 6,700 feet in elevation in the beautiful San Bernardino Mountains, with Jenks Lake, the Santa Ana River, Big Bear and numerous hiking, biking, and running trails just outside our door! San Geronimo is the tallest peak in Southern California, and it's trail heads are just a short hike from our doorstep!

Come stay with us! Here at Camp La Verne with our rustic yet cozy summer and winterized cabins and our four season bathroom and kitchen, we can accommodate groups of up to 80+ campers throughout most of the year. Onsite and nearby activities like horseshoes, volleyball, archery, canoeing and challenge courses are here waiting for you! We also have a beautiful outdoor chapel, perfect for weddings, reading a good book, journaling, or just listening to the birds. In addition to our scheduled summer camps, our CLV facilities are available for outside rentals such as school groups, Boy & Girl scouts, family reunions, weddings, and all denominations of church groups... everyone is welcome here!

CLV Summer Camps...98% Volunteer! Thanks to our incredible Camp Directors, dedicated CLV Board Members, fantastic Kitchen Staff, and wonderful Work Camp Volunteers, Camp La Verne continues to provide to our own groups an extremely affordable 'Camp Experience' every summer for Elementary, Junior, Senior High, College, and even Adult campers! (Registration for these is open to all) If you or someone you know would like to volunteer at CLV, or serve on the CLV Board, we would love to have you! Please call us or send us an email. We can be contacted at: 909-794-2931 or E-mail us at: campmanager@camplaverne.org You can also find us on the web at www.camplaverne.org

2025 Was another Great Year!!!...Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

Our 101st Anniversary Year was a great success! Successful Fund Raising... Successful Rentals... Successful Summer Camps... Successful Work Camps... A successful Family Camp... And two new CLV Events were added... Star Camp, and our Fall Festival Apple Camp! Food, fun, lake paddle time, campfires, song, and prayer! Once again, our volunteers and your donations made this happen. While there is still so much more to do, we are making every great and small donation go a very, very long way! (If you are able to help CLV in our quest for all of our 21st century upgrades, and want to support us, you may send your donation to Camp La Verne, PO Box 355, La Verne CA 91750-0355 or find our PayPal and Zelle links on our website.) For more info on how to lend a hand to CLV, please reach out!

Thanks to all and have a wonderful year!

Camp La Verne is under a Special Use Permit from the San Bernardino National Forest. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, Camp La Verne is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

2026 Eder Financial Report

Eder Financial provides retirement and insurance services to pastors and church-related employees, asset management services to Brethren congregations and organizations, and deferred gift services to all Brethren members. It also manages benevolent funds that enable entities to provide financial assistance to individuals facing extraordinary hardship during times of crisis. At 83-years young, Eder Financial continues to care for those it serves, evident in 2025 by the many new one-time and ongoing initiatives it launched.

In 2025, Eder Financial issued one-time payments to annuitants as a result of the sale of Eder Retirement Plan annuities to Securian Financial in late 2024. These payments helped augment the retirement income members received. For at least one individual, these additional funds made it possible to remain in their residence rather than being forced to relocate late in life due to financial constraints. Eder's retirement planning specialists continue to help Eder Retirement Plan members prepare for and navigate retirement through one-on-one guidance.

Eder Financial partners with organizations and denominations — such as the Church of the Brethren — to manage benevolent funds with care and integrity. We help establish clear policies and efficient processes to ensure funds are distributed fairly, responsibly, and in a timely manner to those in need.

Eder Organizational Investing fully launched Nonprofit Toolkit, a wholistic resource designed for nonprofit organizations that offers tools, resources, and knowledge to actively and easily help institutions increase the gifts they receive from donors. Nonprofit Toolkit helps churches and nonprofits navigate how to solicit and manage funds to undergird their financial health.

The new initiatives were well received by members and clients, and the longstanding work Eder has carried out through its core ministries continues to be equally valued.

Investment Oversight

Distinct to Eder Financial is the intentional socially responsible investment (SRI) approach it takes to align investment fund offerings with Church of the Brethren values. Known as Eder Values Investing, this approach focuses on screening, positive investment, and shareholder activism to achieve long-term, competitive market returns while supporting ethical, faith-based principles. EVI is an integrated approach that filters companies that do not conform to Eder's investment guidelines while simultaneously providing competitive returns. Orchestrating EVI within our separately managed accounts is straight forward because managers are hired to construct portfolios exclusively based on Eder's investment guidelines. Mutual funds, which we utilize when we do not have sufficient

assets to meet balance requirements for a separately managed account, must meet Brethren values and ethical commitments so that Eder can assure members that the Eder Investing Platform is 100 percent compliant with Eder's social screens.

Eder Financial Board and Staff

The 12-person Eder Financial Board consists of people who have knowledge and experience in accounting, finance, investments, law, employee benefits, human resources, pastors, denominational executives, and organizations of like mind with Eder Financial.

Our team works in retirement, employee insurance, organizational investing, finance, investments, client relations, marketing, public relations, IT, data, special projects, and business development. We are a family friendly, faith-based organization that strives to provide concierge level service to our members and clients while also providing a fulfilling work environment in a permanent work-from-home setting.

Conclusion

The Board and staff also believe a strong organization is realistic about the challenges that it faces. Eder understands that tomorrow's church is different from yesterday's church. Given this, the firm must adapt boldly, and as Alexander Mack wrote, "without hesitation or fear." In 2026, Eder has a strong balance sheet, ample reserves, and a steady client base. But our data shows that Eder will face operational challenges in the future if it does not adapt today. Adapting from strength allows an organization to control its decision making and narrative; adapting from weakness means making decisions out of desperation. Eder's practice, no matter how difficult, is to make decisions out of strength. This is why in 2026 Eder entered into an agreement to transfer most of its products and services to Everence Financial, a financial services organization of Mennonite background that serves Anabaptist organizations, by the end of April 2027. Everence has a much larger scale than Eder so that it can offer more products at lower fees to employees, organizations, and all denominational members.

This step, while difficult to make, will ensure that Eder's members and clients will be well served for years to come.

Donna Rhodes

Eder Financial Board Chair

Nevin Dulabaum

Eder Financial President

A Future with Hope: On Earth Peace's Next 50 Years

"For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline." - 2 Timothy 1:7 (NRSVUE)



On Earth Peace's purpose as an **agency of the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference** is to help the Church of the Brethren become a relevant, vital, "living" peace and justice church equipped to create vital relationships and initiatives responding to contemporary issues of violence and injustice.

On Earth Peace's work as a ministry within the Church of the Brethren dates to 1974, when the organization was founded by 20th-century Church of the Brethren peace leader M.R. Zigler. In 2026, we call the church to courageous acts of peace witness. Kingian Nonviolence Principle 1 is "Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people." In our Agape Magazine (a quarterly resource from On Earth Peace for children ages 8-12) issue *Pursuing Justice*, the author considered the above verse from 2 Timothy. They wrote, "Sometimes we have to listen to our love for others and our compassion for those suffering more than we listen to our fears. Stop and ask, 'Is this an act of love or is it a response to fear?' ...**It's a courageous act of love that helps make someone else's world a more loving place.**" Today, we work to prevent gun violence, support immigrants, challenge political violence, and raise conscientious objectors to war as our faith calls us.

OEP is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit that has been an agency of the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference since 1998. While OEP is an agency of the denomination, no centralized denominational funding supports our work. All resources for our ministry come from individual and congregational donations or program income. **We are grateful to all individuals and congregations who remember us in their family or congregational giving. If you are unable to include us in your annual budget, please consider taking up a one-time special offering in 2026.**

2025 Highlights

- Partnership with Horizons Project to offer Harnessing Our Power to End Political Violence (HOPE-PV) workshops focused on immigrants, LGBTQ+, school board/local electeds, and community leaders.
- **4 issues of a children's resource, Agape Magazine**, covering topics included being neighbors, love in action, preventing gun violence, and finding hope.
- **105 trainings and events** including Kingian Nonviolence intros, book groups, and advanced trainings; gun violence and anti-authoritarianism organizing meet-ups; and more.
- **\$220,000 raised for the Deportation Defense Response Legal and Mutual Aid Fund** with **more than 90 grants** made to individuals and families.
- **14 interns** supported On Earth Peace's programs, fundraising, and communications work.
- **335 people reached toward our goal of 1000 Brethren in Kingian Nonviolence Conflict Reconciliation.** Will your congregation or district partner with us this year?

While On Earth Peace offers many programs for congregations, communities, and individuals of all ages, we want to draw your attention to two opportunities that have been centered this year.

Deportation Defense Response

The Deportation Defense Response (DDR) Team was initiated by four Church of the Brethren Districts (Atlantic Northeast, Atlantic Southeast, Virginia, and Pacific Southwest), working in partnership with On Earth Peace and the Church of the Brethren Office of Intercultural Ministries.

Church of the Brethren congregations have experienced firsthand the devastating injustices committed by Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Many members have been unjustly detained and deported, and many more are living in fear—afraid to attend church services, work, or necessary medical appointments. Throughout the country, we are witnessing beloved church members, neighbors, fathers, mothers, and children being torn from their homes, workplaces, schools, and neighborhoods.

The DDR Initiative has helped the church stand alongside our siblings in Christ and our neighbors affected by this crisis. We ask you to join us in providing for the needs of immigrants and refugees with your resources and time, raising awareness of this crisis, defending the rights of our brothers and sisters, and demanding that leaders act justly.

I Object! Now What? Conscientious Objection to War

OEP was founded in response to the Vietnam War in recognition that we need ongoing preparation toward conscientious objection and resistance to war. The Church of the Brethren believes that all war is sin, yet our preparedness for conscientious objection in times of war always seems to come a little too late. As armed conflict with many different countries seems to become a real possibility for American citizens, we must look to our churches and within ourselves to see what we believe about violence and war, and how we can muster the courage to walk a path of peace. At On Earth Peace, we are considering what resourcing for conscientious objection to war and preparing youth & young adults is needed at this time. This resourcing might include technical training (how to register or prepare to resist a draft), theological education, war resistance and resistance to the things that lead to war, including systemic oppression, legislative advocacy, and preparing adults and congregations to support conscientious objection. We look forward to working with partners who have long carried this work.

On Earth Peace Values: Jesus-Centered Spirituality; Positive Peace; Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression; Intergenerational Leadership; Beloved Community

Vision Statement: "We see a world in Beloved Community, free from oppression, violence, and war."

Mission Statement: "We develop and walk with leaders and communities who work for justice and peace."

In 2026, we anticipate working with many of you to respond to the increasing political violence affecting our neighbors and communities. We name our support and commitment to LGBTQ+ persons, to immigrants, to people of color, to those affected by gun violence, to those most directly harmed by state violence and war, and to all who yearn and work for a world free from oppression, violence, and war. We will continue to walk with followers of Jesus in the Church of the Brethren as we seek together a path to become a living peace church. Please include us in your prayers.

In Christ's peace,



Matt Guynn
Co-Director,
Organizing



Marie Benner-Rhoades
Co-Director,
Youth & Young Adults



Mandy Park
Co-Director,
Development



Sydney Goldsborough
Co-Director,
Administration & Communications



Bethany Basics ENROLLMENT

122

TOTAL
STUDENTS

71

FULL-TIME
EQUIVALENT



● LOCAL: 11%
● DISTANCE: 89%



● MALE: 44%
● FEMALE: 54%



Academic Programs

- Master of Divinity
- Master of Arts
- Master of Arts in Biblical Peacemaking
- Master of Arts in Spiritual and Social Transformation
- Master of Arts: Theopoetics and Writing
- Certificate/Postgraduate Diploma in Biblical Peacemaking (CBP/PDBP)
- Certificate of Achievement in Ministry Studies (CAMS)
- Certificate in Intercontextual Biblical Interpretation (CIBI)
- Certificate in Peacebuilding and Neighborhood Engagement (CPNE)
- Certificate in Peacemaking, Violence, and Power (CPVP)
- Certificate in Theopoetics and Theological Imagination (CTTI)
- Certificate for Expanded MA Studies (CEMAS)
- Certificate for Chaplaincy Preparation (CCP)



THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION WITHOUT DEBT

During the past two academic years, not a single Bethany student took out a student loan. This success was made possible by the combined efforts of generous donors, shifts in administrative policies and practices, and efforts of our students themselves. A decade ago, Bethany had many fewer students, and they collectively borrowed about \$300,000 in a year.



FLOURISH: A CAMPAIGN FOR BETHANY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Bethany recently completed an initiative to enhance the student experience, encourage faculty innovation and creativity, and bolster annual fundraising efforts. As of June 30, 2026 we have surpassed our goal and raised more than \$12 million.



NIGERIA CONNECTION

Bethany celebrated its first commencement in Jos, Nigeria in May 2024. The Seminary hopes to host ceremonies there every other year. Beginning in the fall, Nigerian students will be able to pursue the Master of Arts in Biblical Peacemaking in addition to the Postgraduate Diploma in Biblical Peacemaking.



615 National Road West, Richmond, IN 47374

■ bethanyseminary.edu

■ 765-983-1800

■ 800-287-8822

Preparing the Way

The Lilly Endowment Inc. has cast a remarkable vote of confidence in Bethany with a \$10 million grant — the largest in the Seminary's 120-year history. This new funding will support the Seminary's new partnership with undergraduate institutions and encourage students to pursue graduate theological education and careers in ministry. The grant marks the beginning of a new era for Brethren higher education, as it will strengthen the connection between the Seminary and the Brethren-related colleges and universities.

This generous philanthropy will establish the Brethren Higher Education Consortium and foster collaboration between Bethany and the six undergraduate colleges and universities that are affiliated with the Church of the Brethren: Bridgewater College, Elizabethtown College, Manchester University, McPherson College, Juniata College, and the University of LaVerne. Bethany has created a new program called UP@Bethany, which will allow juniors and seniors at those institutions to take Bethany courses prior to receiving their undergraduate degrees. The grant will also support continued collaboration

with Earlham School of Religion, a key partner of Bethany for the last 30 years. The Lilly Endowment grant will enable Bethany to create an endowed fund, helping to ensure the Seminary's long-term success.

“We are thrilled and humbled to receive this transformational grant from the Lilly Endowment.”

—REV. DR. JEFF CARTER
PRESIDENT OF BETHANY
SEMINARY

The new project funded by the Lilly Endowment is entitled, “Preparing the Way: Expanding Vocational Paths for Undergraduate Students.” It is being funded through Lilly Endowment's Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative. The grant to Bethany is one of 45 that were approved in a competitive round of the initiative to support theological schools as they lead large-scale collaborations with other seminaries, colleges and universities, and other church-related organizations.

The Lilly Endowment — a private foundation based in Indianapolis, Indiana — supports the causes of community development, education, and religion.

“We are thrilled and humbled to receive this transformational grant from the Lilly Endowment,” says Rev. Dr. Jeff Carter, president of Bethany Theological Seminary. “Thanks to Lilly's generous support, we will create new pathways to careers in ministry for exceptional students attending Brethren colleges and universities. The grant will also allow us to provide students at these institutions an introduction to graduate study and access to advanced courses in theology and Biblical studies that are not typically available to undergraduates.”

Bethany currently enrolls 122 students in five master's degree programs and nine graduate certificates, including those from across North America and a strong and growing contingent in Nigeria. Most Bethany students study at a distance, so all courses are accessible via Zoom using state-of-the-art classroom technology. This format ensures that undergraduates will enjoy robust educational experiences without leaving their undergraduate campuses.



In December, Bethany received a check for \$5 million in immediate funding to get the program up and running. These new funds will have an immediate positive impact on the Seminary's operating budget, and will help Seminary collaborate with the other Brethren colleges and universities to begin enrolling students as soon as possible.

Bethany will be required to raise \$2.5 million from other donors in order to receive \$5 million in matching funds from Lilly Endowment. The Seminary has begun conversations with a number of donors who are enthusiastic about supporting this new endeavor.

"A grant like this is a tremendous vote of confidence in our mission from one of the leading philanthropic supporters of education and religion

in the world," notes President Carter. "As I travel around the country speaking to friends of the Seminary, it is clear to me that this grant from Lilly has made even longtime supporters of Bethany think about us in a new way. We are imagining possibilities that none of us could have envisioned without Lilly's generous support."

The Seminary's fundraising will build upon the success of its ongoing comprehensive campaign — Flourish: A Campaign for Bethany Theological Seminary, which has already generated significant new funding to strengthen the student experience, bolster faculty creativity and innovation, and bolster annual fundraising.

It remains to be seen what long-term effects this grant will have

on the life of the Seminary. Early signs suggest that UP@Bethany will offer undergraduates at Brethren colleges and universities a new pathway to Bethany, a new range of options to engage with some of the most important questions facing humanities, and more ways to explore ministry and service in whatever communities they join.

"We believe that the impact of this new funding will reverberate long after the five-year lifespan of the grant," says Carter. "By establishing an endowed fund, and by inspiring the generosity of other donors, this moment holds the promise of transformation for Bethany and our partner institutions."

Measuring Bethany's **Impact**

AN ENTERING CLASS OF RECORD SIZE.

This fall, Bethany welcomed 38 entering students — the largest class at the Seminary in recent memory. This growth would not be possible without the generosity of donors like you.

THREE CONSECUTIVE SEMESTERS WITHOUT FEDERAL STUDENT LOANS.

Philanthropy has been key to our efforts to reduce student borrowing and create a pathway to graduate theological education without new debt.

A NEW MASTER OF ARTS IN BIBLICAL PEACEMAKING.

For several years, our Nigerian students have expressed interest in pursuing master's degrees at Bethany. Thanks to the leadership of our faculty and your faithful support, we launched this new degree this year.

AN ALUMNI AND FRIENDS TRIP TO GREECE.

Dr. Dan Ulrich led an education journey through Greece, focusing on places that feature prominently in Paul's letters. This trip was remarkably successful, thanks in large part to the 30-some alumni, friends, and students who participated.

A STEINWAY FOR NICARRY CHAPEL.

A fund provided by Professor Emerita Nancy Faus made it possible for Bethany to acquire a Steinway Grand B piano for Nicarry Chapel. We were happy to be able to celebrate the dedication of this instrument with many local donors and friends.

A BOLD EVENT, SPONSORED BY THE BAKER ENDOWMENT.

Bethany welcomed Dr. Heather DuBois of Boston College as the feature speaker at an event supported by the Jennie Calhoun Baker Endowment. We are grateful to all who support Bethany's ongoing commitment to peace studies.

A NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH BRETHREN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.

Many generous alumni and friends of the Seminary are also loyal supporters of Brethren colleges and universities. Building on the foundation of support that you have provided, we received a \$10 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., to create a new partnership with the goal of encouraging undergraduates to explore theological education and careers in ministry.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR THE BETHANY FUND.

Thanks to tremendous support from a growing group of alumni, friends, and local community leaders here in Wayne County, Indiana, it has been another successful year for the Bethany Fund. This annual fundraising effort provides money that goes into immediate use to support the day-to-day activities of the Seminary and the vital work that our employees do every day.





Church of the Brethren

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ of the Pacific Southwest District,

I am grateful to send you greetings as you prepare for your District Conference. Each year, we hear reports and process business of the work being undertaken by our local congregations, districts, agencies, and denomination. Sometimes that work seems routine. And yet, with each new year comes new opportunities to think creatively and pray that God will continue to renew our church and grow our ministries.

I am excited to welcome each of our sisters and brothers who will gather together for the 240th recorded Church of the Brethren Annual Conference in Daytona Beach, Florida, July 28 – August 1, 2027. We will return to our typical Wednesday-through-Sunday format, while meeting later in July than usual. Ocean Center in Daytona Beach lives up to its name, located only 400 feet from the Atlantic Ocean. But most importantly, we will experience the great cultural diversity present among our brothers and sisters in the Atlantic Southeast District.

The Hartford Institute for Religion Research reported in late April 2026 that, for the first time in two decades, Christian congregations were growing overall. If we look worldwide, we see many of our congregations in the Global Church of the Brethren and other denominations growing and thriving. What do we need to do in our North American Church of the Brethren congregations to see growth and renewal?

Much of my ministry over the past three decades has focused on the youth of the church. I have seen young children who listened intently to a Sunday School teacher become young adults who volunteered at their district summer camp teaching other children about Jesus. I have served alongside youth at Annual Conference senior high activities, Christian Citizenship Seminar, FaithX, and National Youth Conference who have gone on to become leaders in our denomination. This is where we see growing faith continue in our church.

May we be energized and encouraged as we anticipate gathering together next summer in Daytona Beach, continuing to support the growing faith of those in our congregations, districts, and denomination.

Your Brother in Christ,
Dennis Beckner
2027 Annual Conference Moderator

Church of the Brethren Annual Conference

1451 Dundee Avenue · Elgin, IL 60120

www.brethren.org/ac · annualconference@brethren.org

Annual Conference exists to unite, strengthen and equip the Church of the Brethren to follow Jesus.



Church of the Brethren

Together as the Church of the Brethren

Dear Friends in Christ,

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ. It is with a deep sense of gratitude that I bring greetings to you during your district conference—gratitude for your ongoing work as the hands and feet of Jesus in your local communities and for the work of denominational staff on your behalf. You will find information about denominational mission and ministries reflected in two resources available to you on the Church of the Brethren website (www.brethren.org). The *Church of the Brethren Annual Report* offers a glimpse of the ministries over the last year, and the *Advocating Generosity* booklet invites you to partner with us in our current ministries. Your conference may have these resources printed and available onsite as well.

We are living in times marked by uncertainty and strain. Across our communities and around the world, we witness conflict, division, economic pressure, and deep human suffering. Public discourse is often shaped more by outrage than understanding, and many feel isolated, overwhelmed, or weary. In such a time as this, the witness of the Church of the Brethren is both urgent and essential.

Bonded to Jesus Christ, we move together toward God's new creation. This shared journey grounds us when the world feels fractured. In our diversity, we celebrate our unity in the person and work of the Savior, praising the God who makes us one. We remember that we are not simply individuals navigating difficult times alone—we are the people of God, formed into one body through Christ.

In a culture that often elevates independence, self-interest, and going it alone, we choose a different way. We choose interdependence and community. The church is called to embody a life together that resists isolation and fear, offering instead belonging, mutual care, and shared purpose.

The early church in Acts 4 gives us a vision for faithful living in uncertain times. They devoted themselves to teaching, fellowship, prayer, and the breaking of bread. Their life together was marked by a radical generosity, gladness, and awe—and even amid uncertainty, God was at work, adding to their number and strengthening their witness. This was not a perfect community, but a faithful one, shaped by devotion to Christ and love for one another.

The Apostle Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians that the church is one body with many members, carefully arranged by God. Each part matters. Each person belongs. God's

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desire is that there be no division within the body, but that the members have the same care for one another. When one member suffers, all suffer together; when one is honored, all rejoice together. This shared life calls us to notice one another, to bear one another's burdens, and to celebrate one another's gifts.

Let us live out this calling together within the Church of the Brethren. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, may we seek to follow Jesus faithfully, trusting that every expression of the church—local and trans-local—has a role in God's reconciling and renewing work. May our faith legacy live on as we risk adventuresome acts of radical discipleship reflecting Christ's body at work in the world: united, compassionate, and alive with hope. Together, let us venture forth boldly serving others and bearing witness to the God who makes all things new.

With gratitude for our shared journey in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David A. Steele', with a stylized, cursive script.

David A. Steele
General Secretary

Resources located at www.brethren.org/annualreport for the *Church of the Brethren Annual Report* and www.brethren.org/greatthing for the *Advocating Generosity* booklet.



Pacific Southwest District Report
Part Time Pastor:Full Time Church
07/24/2026

“Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 1:3

On behalf of the roughly 80% of our Multi-Vocational Pastors within the Church of the Brethren, I bring you greetings from the Part Time Pastor: Full Time Church program. It has been about a year since I took over the Program Manager position from Richard Wehrle who left to become the Program Manager for the Rural and Small Town Initiative. I encourage you to check out both the Part Time Pastor: Full Time Church and the Rural and Small Town Initiative on the Church of the Brethren website.

What does the Part Time Pastor: Full Time Church program offer:

Our Part Time Pastor:Full Time Church program exists to provide our Multi-Vocational Pastors (those who have multiple jobs including pastoring a congregation, those who only work as a pastor part time, and those who don't get paid on scale) with what we call the 3 P's: Peers, Practice, and Purpose, which were adapted from McNeil, J. D., Kate R. Davis, and Andrea Sielaff. “Resilience.” Center for Transforming Engagement. <https://transformingengagement.org/resources/the-resilience-report>.

Peers: Peer relationships are vital to thriving ministers. Part-Time Pastor; Full-Time Church offers many ways to connect with other ministering persons, both locally and throughout the Church of the Brethren. These ways include things like Book Studies, webinars, workshops, etc..

Practice: Participation in healthy spiritual, emotional, and physical practices must be a priority for ministering persons. Part-Time Pastor; Full-Time Church offers a diverse array of opportunities for ministering persons to engage in these practices, so they are able to thrive in their ministry settings. We provide coaching, cohorts around Spiritual Practices, etc..

Purpose: Through peer connections and healthy practices, ministering persons are more equipped to be connected to God's purpose for their ministries; which enables pastors and congregations the opportunity to thrive in their neighborhood and beyond. We provide Circuit Riders to walk alongside MVP's.

What has the Part Time Pastor: Full Time Church program offered this past Spring?

How has the Part Time Pastor: Full Time Church program lived out the the 3P's in the past 6 months?

John Fillmore offered two Book Studies. First he offered a 7 Week session on the book "How to lead when you don't know where you are going: Leading in a Liminal Season" by Susan Beaumont. And then he followed that up with a 9 week session on the book "The Space Between Us: Conversations about Transforming Conflict" by Betty Pries.

Mayra Calix, our Circuit Rider who primarily connects with our Spanish speaking clergy offered a book study entitled, "¿Cómo sería mi iglesia si Jesús fuera el pastor?" by Pablo Marzilli.

I offered a four week Spiritual Practice cohort on the practice of Sabbath using the Practicing the Way: Sabbath Practice. I have also offered monthly coaching sessions to two MVP's.

We have also brought on Gaston Pierre-Louis as a Circuit Rider who will primarily connect with our Haitian Pastors in the Atlantic Southeast District. Gaston replaced Founa Badet- who resigned effective 7/31/26.

At Annual Conference in Fort Wayne we were involved in the conference in a number of different ways. We were able to sponsor the Minister's Pre-Conference on AI. We were able to offer an in-person listening session to hear the thoughts, ideas, and ways that the program can be supportive of Multi-Vocational Pastors. John Fillmore and I offered an equipping session entitled Betwixt and Between: Following Jesus in the midst of liminality.

In late summer and early fall the program along with Brethren Academy offered an 8 week course on Multi-Vocational Ministry taught by John Fillmore.

Also in September-October I offered a four week Spiritual Formation Cohort using the Practicing the Way: Scripture Practice. And currently I am in the midst of another 4 week Spiritual Formation Cohort using the Practicing the Way: Prayer Practice.

What will the Part Time Pastor: Full Time church program offer in the next 6 months?

I continue to offer monthly coaching to MVP's for free. If you are an MVP and are interested in exploring monthly coaching, please don't hesitate in reaching out.

If you haven't been able to attend a listening session (either at Annual Conference or online) and would like to attend or give your input and feedback, there are two options.

First, if you'd like to actually attend an online listening session, you can reach out to me and we can schedule either a one-on-one session or if you pull together a few Multi-Vocational Pastors we could put together a group listening session.

The second option is, if you want to share your thoughts, ideas, hopes and dreams and how this program can be helpful to you and your ministry, we also have a listening survey which can be found here: <https://forms.gle/bfaGW6xzU4aFTH5x8>

If the Part Time Pastor: Full Time Church program of the Church of the Brethren and/or I as the Program Manager can be of any help to you, your district, or your church, please don't hesitate in reaching out to me at the contact information below.

"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."- 2 Corinthians 13:14.

Ryan Braught

Program Manager- Part Time Pastor: Full Time Church

rbraught@brethren.org

717-572-5914



Church of the Brethren

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

... Serve one another humbly in love (Gal. 5:13 NIV)
... Love your neighbor as yourself... (Mark 12:31 NRSVUE)
Serve the Lord with Gladness.... (Psalm 100:2 NRSVUE)

These verses exemplify the love and service that flow from the volunteers, supporters, and partners of Brethren Disaster Ministries (BDM) as we bring hope and healing to survivors of disasters in the US and around the world. We are grateful for all who support our ministry in varied ways: leaving home to serve in a different community, providing practical support at home to enable others to travel, praying for our ministry and those who serve and are served, providing financial or in-kind donations, advocating for the work that we do—there are so many ways that your compassion and dedication are indispensable to our ministry.

The primary 2025 location for the BDM Rebuilding Program was in Eastern Kentucky helping families impacted by the 2022 flooding in the area. Volunteers repaired homes and built new homes on reclaimed mining land in higher ground communities. This work, with partner HOMES Inc., was completed in March 2026, ending BDM's three-year plus work in Kentucky in response to flooding and tornadoes. Two 2025 short-term responses served survivors of 2024's Hurricane Helene in North Carolina and Tennessee. Hurricane Helene recovery will be the main focus for the Rebuilding Program during 2026 and possibly longer. The need is still great, and recovery is expected to last for years.

In December 2025, a new Construction Assessment Team was formed after the initial team training was held in Allegany County, Md., in an area that experienced flooding in May 2025. This team of five is now equipped to deploy to disaster impacted areas where they can perform damage assessments on homes to determine the work and cost needed to complete repairs. The training also led to a partnership with the long-term recovery group, resulting in a one-week BDM response in April/May 2026.

Children's Disaster Services (CDS) responded to seven disasters in 2025, sending 61 volunteers to care for a total of 759 children. Critical Response Childcare Teams cared for children in January after a truck attack in New Orleans, La., and in July after catastrophic flooding in Texas. When wildfires devastated large areas of the Los Angeles, Calif., region in January, CDS sent three volunteer teams to serve in Multiagency Resource Centers (MARC) and one team to a Local Assistance Center (LAC). They cared for 515 children in five weeks. After multiple tornadoes passed through Missouri in April and May, CDS responded with four teams to three MARCs, a shelter, and a Disaster Assistance Center. In mid-September, a CDS team from La Verne, Calif., responded for one day to a LAC after a fire in Sonora. In December, after heavy rains caused flooding and evacuations in Washington, CDS responded with a local team, serving in two shelters for a total of four days.

BDM's international disaster response supports relief and recovery for global churches and partners following natural and human-caused disasters, including in conflict areas. In 2025, nearly

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16 percent of global Emergency Disaster Fund (EDF) grants (\$163,350) were in response to natural disasters, including flooding and storm damage in Venezuela and Uganda. When Hurricane Melissa brought extensive damage in the Caribbean in the fall, a unique opportunity emerged to support churches in Cuba with emergency relief through their relationship with the Church of the Brethren in Venezuela. An EDF grant also supported agricultural recovery programs of the Church of the Brethren in Haiti following the storm, in areas that received little international attention.

The majority of international grants in 2025 supported responses to conflict by Global Church of the Brethren members in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Nigeria, and the Church of the Brethren Mission in South Sudan. The ongoing conflict in the DRC between the national army and the M23 rebel group has created destruction, chaotic conditions, economic hardship, and food insecurity which spilled over to the neighboring countries of Rwanda and Burundi, with the latter receiving many refugees. EDF grants have helped Brethren leadership in DRC and Burundi to serve church members and neighbors. In South Sudan, BDM has partnered with the Global Mission office on strategic planning, while concentrating on humanitarian relief to support families impacted by flooding as well as escalating conflict between the two major power groups in the government.

The Nigeria Crisis Response, a partnership between the Church of the Brethren and Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) since 2014, provided food and agricultural distributions, medical assistance, livelihood training centers for widows and orphans, new wells for drinking water, education assistance for orphan children, trauma workshops, and home repairs for the most vulnerable during 2025, and continuing through 2026.

Several staffing changes early in 2026 saw Michael Scalzi retiring as the CDS program assistant and Jenn Dorsch-Messler resigning to work with another disaster response organization. We expect new staff to be in place by the time of the district conference.

Toward the end of 2025, with the help of a Lilly Foundation planning grant, BDM gathered a broad range of information about its current work and impact, helping it to envision how its ministry could be improved and extended. This served as the foundation for a strategic planning process which in turn led to the application for and receipt of a three-year Lilly Foundation implementation grant. This grant will support the strategic plan's goals of strengthening BDM's US programs and increasing volunteer participation. While these funds focus on program improvement and growth, continued support from individuals, congregations, and districts will be key for ongoing operations.

Brethren Disaster Ministries' mission to share Christ's compassion and transform lives by working toward recovery and healing for disaster survivors is only possible because of the faithful support and sharing of God's bounty of all who partner with us through donations of time, talent, treasure, and prayer. We are humbled and thankful for your commitment, compassion, and generosity.



Roy Winter, Executive Director for Service Ministries
*On behalf of BDM staff: Sharon Franzén, Kim Gingrich,
and Carolyn Neher*

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ANNUAL REPORT

BRETHREN VOLUNTEER SERVICE



| Brethren Volunteer Service Updates

New Opportunities

Under new leadership, BVS has introduced several exciting changes. A new early enrollment initiative gives motivated volunteers the opportunity to apply early for targeted volunteer placements—this year, 9 applicants joined BVS during this time! A new pre-orientation discernment period helps volunteers gain a deeper understanding of the policies, procedures, and expectations of BVS before they sign their service covenant and attend

orientation—this aims to improve volunteer retention and resilience. And, four new project sites allow more options for the upcoming year: SPARK, a service-learning organization in North Carolina; Shepherd's Spring Camp and Global Village in Maryland; Food for Greater Elgin, a food pantry in Illinois; and The Shalom Project, a gap-year program in Pennsylvania. BVS is excited to offer these new opportunities to our volunteers!



"Though the world certainly seems chaotic currently, these months in BVS at SnowCap Community Charities have given me hope and shown me the sheer incredible number of people who are working toward making a more just world where everybody looks out for their community and everyone has enough."

— Josiah Esch, Unit 338

| Volunteer Spotlight

Meet the FaithX BVSer

Aly Heckeroth is serving her second BVS year as the Assistant FaithX Coordinator in the BVS office! Aly helps to plan FaithX trips and supports the work of BVS.



| 2025: BVS by the Numbers

- **Full-Time Volunteers:** 43 served in 8 states, Japan, and Northern Ireland.
- **Short-Term Volunteers:** 165 served in 7 states and Uganda.

| BVS Staff Transitions

Welcome New Co-Directors!

After three years of service as Director of BVS, Chelsea Skillen resigned from her position in early 2026 ahead of a move to Portugal. We are grateful for Chelsea's leadership, generosity, and commitment to service.

In January 2026, Marissa Witkovsky-Eldred and Virginia Rendler accepted the positions of Interim Co-Directors of BVS.

Marissa resides in Spruce Creek, PA, and served with BVS during the 2018–2019

year (Unit 321) as Assistant Workcamp Coordinator in Elgin, IL. She continues her current role as Coordinator of Short-Term Service (FaithX) while also providing leadership in the administration of BVS as Co-Director.

Virginia resides in North Manchester, IN, and served with BVS during the 2022–2023 year (Unit 331) at the Corrymeela Community in Northern Ireland. She continues in her role as Volunteer Coordinator while also leading BVS development and partner relationships as Co-Director.

Although the role is currently designated as interim, there are no plans to pursue candidates for the BVS Director position.

Marissa and Virginia are excited for the future and looking forward to leading BVS into its next chapter as Co-Directors!



Orientations

19 volunteers completed orientation in 2025. Summer orientation (Unit 337) was at Camp Colorado and fall orientation (Unit 338) was at Camp Mardela. Orientations for 2026 will be held at Inspiration Hills Camp on July 28–August 5 and Camp Emmaus on September 15–23.

Did You Know?

- BVS welcomes anyone over age 18... young adults, mid-age, or retirees!
- FaithX offers custom short-term service trips for districts, churches, youth groups, or families!

Stay in Touch

- * www.brethren.org/bvs/
www.brethren.org/faithx/
- ✉ bvs@brethren.org
faithx@brethren.org
- ☎ (800) 323-8039

| FaithX Updates

Living With Purpose

In 2025, FaithX welcomed 165 youth and adults for 9 week-long service trips in Uganda, Arkansas, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Oregon, North Carolina, and Virginia. Participants ranged in age from 11 to 70, represented 26 Church of the Brethren congregations, and 36% were first time attendees! The year's theme, "Living with Purpose," was grounded in Ephesians 4:1-3 and invited participants

to explore the unique ways that Christ calls them to serve and love others. Thank you to Rachel Johnson for serving as our BVS Assistant FaithX Coordinator for the 2025 season!

In 2026, FaithX will host 5 trips with over 60 youth, adults, and young adults with intellectual disabilities. The 2026 theme is "Break Through" inspired by Isaiah 43:2.



"The knowledge that FaithX trips provide is astounding. A lot of it is getting to know what goes into serving people and understanding what people are going through. It is very interesting and eye-opening."

— Kellen, Senior High Participant

**Minutes of the
Sixty-Second Annual District Conference
Pacific Southwest District of the Church of the Brethren**

November 8, 2025 La Verne Church of the Brethren, La Verne, CA

I Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Norma Sexton at 9:15 a.m.

II Introduction of Leadership: Norma Sexton

The leadership of the conference was introduced: Norma Sexton, Moderator; Don Shankster, Moderator-Elect; Laura Miller, Clerk; Russ Matteson, District Executive Minister; Gail Heisel, Timekeeper.

The rules for speaking were explained.

III Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum

There were 63 delegates present and 21 churches represented. A quorum was present.

IV Organization of Iglesia Cristiana Elohim as a Fellowship: Jay Irizarry

The delegates were directed to page 67 of the Business Book.

There was a recommendation from the Policy Board to organize Iglesia Cristiana Elohim as a fellowship. Approved.

The delegates from Iglesia Cristiana Elohim took their places as delegates.

V Dedication of Delegates: Norma Sexton

The delegates were directed to Page 7 of the Business Book for the Dedication of Delegates.

VI Approval of Agenda and Minutes from the 2024 Conference

The delegates were directed to page 4 of the Business Book and the packet insert for the agenda for today. The delegates were also directed to page 53 of the Business Book - Exhibit A for the minutes from the 2024 Conference.

The agenda and minutes were approved by consensus.

VII Minutes Review Committee: Norma Sexton

Gail Heisel (La Verne), Diana Murray (Papago Buttes), and Lois Frantz (Empire) were named to the Minutes Review Committee.

VIII Introduction of Guests: Russ Matteson

Russ Matteson introduced several guests attending the Conference: Nancy McCrickard, Church of the Brethren, Inc.; Erik Brummet, Edward Cesar, and Barbara Date, Mission and Ministry Board members; Jeff Carter and Janet Ober Lambert, Bethany Theological Seminary and Brethren Academy; Lynnae Rodeffer, Eder Financial; Matt Guynn, On Earth Peace; Marcus Mahling, Mennonite Insurance Agency.

IX Table Talk: Getting to Know Each Other

The topics were *‘What brings you peace?’ ‘What takes away peace for you?’ ‘Did your church use the book about the Prayer of St. Francis?’*

1 **Business Items**

3 **X Presentation of Ballot: Don Shankster**

4 The delegates were directed to Pages 16, 17, 18 and 59 of the Business Book for the
5 ballot. There were no nominations from the floor.

6 **Paul Lovelace (Pomona Fellowship) moved and Bill Himes (La Verne) seconded that we**
7 **treat the ballot as a slate and approve the ballot as a slate. Approved, unanimous.**

8 The following people were elected to the 2026 Policy Board:

9 Moderator Elect: Cady Laycook (Journey South Bay)

10 Program Committee: Jonathan Roblero (Salvador Viviente)

11 Nominating Committee: Robert Morris (Modesto)

12 At-Large Representative: Ruth Rivera (Principe de Paz)

13 At-Large Representative: Jack Meek (La Verne)

14 At-Large Representative: Orlando Roman (Iglesia Cristiana Elohim)

15 AZ/NV Representative: Dean Sabo (Circle of Peace)

16 **Reports from Denominational Agencies**

17 **XI Report From the Church of the Brethren, Inc.: Nancy McCrickard**

18 1 Nancy McCrikard gave a report. There is a report on Pages 48-51 in the Business Book.

19 2 More information is available at Brethren.org.

20 **XII Report From Bethany Seminary: Janet Ober-Lambert**

21 1 Janet Ober-Lambert gave a report from Bethany Seminary/Brethren Academy. There is a
22 report on Pages 43-47 of the Business Book. A video was shown.

23 **Policy Board Reports**

24 **XIII Policy Board Chair Report: Jay Irizarry**

25 1 Jay Irizarry gave a report on the activities of the Policy Board.

26 2 The written report is on Page 21 of the Business Book.

27 3 Jay thanked those who worked on the Policy Board and Executive Board this year and
28 those congregations that hosted the board meetings: Iglesia Cristiana Elohim and Conexión
29 Pasadena.

30 **XIV Ministry Commission Report: Jon Chubb**

31 1 There is a report on page 22 of the Business Book.

32 2 Jon thanked those who helped with the work of the commission.

33 **XV Stewards Report: Gail Heisel**

34 1 There is a report on Page 23 of the Business Book.

35 2 Gail reported that the 2024 auditor's review of the PSWD finances is complete.

36 **XVI Congregational Vitality Task Group: Bill Himes**

37 1 There is a report on Page 24 of the Business Book.

38 2 Bill highlighted some of the grants available to churches.

39 **Business Item**

40 **XVII 2026 Budgets and 2027 Operating Maximum: Jay Irizarry and Russ Matteson**

41 1 The delegates were directed to Pages 63 and 64 of the Business Book.

- 1 2 **The policy board recommended to the District Conference to approve the operating**
2 **budget and the church planting support budget. Approved, unanimous.**
3 **The Policy Board recommended to the District Conference to approve the Operating**
4 **Maximum for the 2027 Operating Budget. Approved, unanimous.**

5 **Reports**

6 **XVIII Standing Committee Report: Shawn Carothers**

- 7 1 Shawn Carothers gave a history and explained the purpose of the Standing Committee.
8 2 There is a report on Pages 14 and 15 of the Business Book.
9 3 Shawn noted that the Nominating Committee requests suggestions for those who could
10 serve in leadership at the denominational level of the church.

11 **Reports from the Church of the Brethren Agencies**

12 **XIX On Earth Peace: Matt Guynn**

- 13 1 Matt Guynn shared a PowerPoint presentation about On Earth Peace.
14 2 There is a report on Pages 41 and 42 of the Business Book.
15 3 Matt highlighted the Be Smart program about gun safety.
16 4 A partnership named the Deportation Defense Response Team was formed with several
17 districts, including the PSWD, and On Earth Peace staff in light of the deportations
18 happening in 2025.
19 5 Prayer was offered for congregation members who have been deported or detained.
20 6 A legal and mutual aid fund was established for those affected by deportation policies.

21 **XX Eder Financial: Lynnae Rodeffer**

- 22 1 Lynnae highlighted the services of Eder Financial and presented a video.
23 2 There is a report on Pages 39 and 40 of the Business Book.

24 **Reports**

25 **XXI Program Committee Report: Norma Sexton**

- 26 1 Norma thanked the Program Committee for their work planning this conference.
27 2 Delegates will receive an evaluation form. These forms are taken very seriously for future
28 planning.

29 **XXII District Executive Report: Russ Matteson**

- 30 1 Russ thanked delegates and others for attending. New delegates were recognized with a
31 round of applause.
32 2 A report is available on Pages 11-13 of the Business Book.
33 3 Edward Cesar, Joseph Guthrie, Jay Irizarry (the tech staff), Iris Berumen (translation), the
34 staff at La Verne, and the kitchen staff were all recognized with a round of applause.
35 4 Russ thanked the Policy Board for their work and the churches who hosted the meetings.
36 5 Jay Irizarry was recognized for his six years on the Policy Board and two years as chair.
37 6 Norma Sexton was thanked for her eight years of service on the Policy Board and as
38 Moderator-elect and Moderator.
39 7 Those who serve in their local churches in a leadership capacity were recognized with a
40 round of applause.
41 8 The pastors were recognized with a round of applause.
42 9 Russ thanked Kimberly Rouse for her work as Administrative Assistant.
43 10 Russ thanked Gilbert Romero for his work with the licensed ministers on their journey.

- 11 Last year's Table Talk was about creating an intern position to learn about District Ministry. In June, we called Jose Rudy Amaya as an Associate District Minister intern. Rudy Amaya was recognized with a round of applause.
- 12 Russ emphasized the need for the District and local churches to support the work being led by On Earth Peace to support our immigrant sisters and brothers.
- 13 The Western District Executive Ministers have been working on how to connect as Brethren. Several leaders from the seven districts held a number of Zoom meetings to get acquainted. Several western Brethren gathered at the Annual Conference. Russ extended an invitation for anyone interested in joining the gathering and to contact him if they have an interest in participating.

XXIII Promotion of New District Opportunities in 2026 and Beyond: Russ Matteson

- 1 National Youth Conference: A video was shown about the upcoming National Youth Conference. Marvin Ramos shared his experience of visiting the site for National Youth Conference 2026. The District will help with transportation and registration costs to NYC.
- 2 Invitation to be part of the Incarnational Innovation Process: More information will be available soon.
- 3 M&I Fund - New Ministry Opportunities grants can be used for staffing support of new ministries. More information will be available soon.
- 4 The Connection Project: A video was shown regarding new ways to use social media and websites to help churches connect with their neighborhoods. The idea is to help every church to create an online presence. There is information in the delegate packet.

XXIV Table Talk

- 1 The topic was: *'What will you take back from District Conference to your congregation?'*

XXV Moderator's Final Thoughts: Norma Sexton

- 1 Norma expressed that it was a joy to serve as Moderator.
- 2 Norma was recognized with a round of applause.

XXVI Consecration of the 2026 Leadership

- 1 The 2026 leadership was consecrated.
- 2 Don Shankster and Cady Laycook were consecrated as Moderator and Moderator-Elect.

XXVII New Moderator's Comments

- 1 Don Shankster shared his theme and logo for District Conference 2026: Abound in Hope.
- 2 District Conference 2026 will be held on November 13 and 14, 2026, at Journey South Bay in Redondo Beach.
- 3 Erin Matteson led the congregation in singing the conference hymn: 'There's A Wild Hope in the Wind.'

XXVIII Adjournment: Norma Sexton

- 1 The District Conference was adjourned at 4:33 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Laura Miller, Clerk

In August, 2026, the draft copy of the minutes was examined and given preliminary approval by committee member Gail Heisel (La Verne), Diana Murray (Papago Buttes), and Lois Frantz (Empire).

Pacific Southwest District – Church of the Brethren

November 2026 – November 2027 Ballot

Candidates are listed alphabetically by last name.

CVCA=Central Valley California, SOCA=Southern California, AZ/NV= Arizona & Nevada

Incumbent=Nominee is finishing an elected term to the same position; Unexpired Term=finishing another person's term.

Moderator-Elect

Vote for 1Two year term

	Kim Boardman, Modesto - CVCA

Program Committee

Vote for 1Three year term

	Janice Shaw Morgan, La Verne - SOCA

Nominating Committee

Vote for 1Three year term

	Florencia Merlos, Empire - CVCA

Standing Committee Representative

Vote for 1Three year term

	Shawn Carothers, Circle of Peace - AZ/NV

Standing Committee Alternate

Vote for 1Three year term

	Gail Heisel, La Verne - SOCA

District Board of Administration

At-Large Representatives

Vote for 2 Three year term

	Arnold Mendoza, Centro Ágape - CVCA
	Israel Macario, Pomona Fellowship - SOCA

CVCA Section Representative

Vote for 1Three year term

	Don Wyatt, Empire - CVCA

SOCA Section Representative

Vote for 1Three year term

	Barbara Der Boghosian, Glendale - SOCA

Youth & Young Adult Representatives

Vote for 2Three year term

	Genesis Hernandez, Príncipe de Paz - SOCA
	Jailyn Ortez - Príncipe de Paz - SOCA

Pacific Southwest District - Church of the Brethren Background Information for the 2026 - 2027 Ballot

Candidates are listed by office, alphabetically by last name.

Descriptions of each office are condensed from the PSWD Constitution: www.pswdcob.org

Moderator-Elect (vote for 1): The two year term begins immediately. In addition to being an officer of District Conference, the Moderator-Elect serves on the District Board of Administration, the District Conference Program Committee, and chairs the Nominating Committee.



Kim Boardman Age: 63
Congregation: Modesto CoB

Vocation: Retired/Substitute Teacher

Church Experience: 5 years serving as board chair/ moderator of Modesto COB; Delegate to Annual Conference and Pacific Southwest District conference.

Vision Statement: I have always appreciated the deep, caring diversity that is represented in the Pacific Southwest District. I think our respectful diversity in the ways that we agree to love and worship Jesus and our gracious God is truly a

strength to be nurtured by each of our individual congregations as well as by the district at large.

Following the radical, loving teachings of Jesus while worshipping a generous, compassionate, and forgiving God in our own meaningful ways, allows us to grow as individuals, congregations and a district. My vision for PSWD is to truly "lean in" to our long-standing unity statement trusting that God will be with us in all that we do in His name.

Standing Committee Delegate (vote for 1) & **Alternate** (vote for 1): are elected by the District Conference to serve a 3 year term representing the district on Annual Conference Standing Committee, and are eligible to serve an additional term. When a Standing Committee Delegate is not able to complete the term, the alternate completes the term to provide continuity, assuming the replaced delegate's term limits.



Delegate
Shawn Carothers Age: 62

Congregation: Circle of Peace

Vocation: Retired Teacher

Church Experience: "I Currently serve as pastor of my local church/ CoB, where I provide spiritual leadership through preaching, pastoral care, and discipleship. In recent years, I have led and organized community outreach events, including prayers gatherings, family support initiatives and service projects that meet both spiritual and practical needs. I am open to collaborate with other leaders within the district to strengthen church unity, leadership development, and mission outreach. Through these efforts, I seek to equip the church to be a visible and compassionate presence in our community.

Vision Statement: I wish for Pacific Southwest District to become a shining light on how to continue to be Jesus in the neighborhood, grow and nurture congregations in the 21st century, and be relevant and engaged in our communities.



Alternate

Gail Heisel Age: 66

Congregation: La Verne, CoB

Vocation: Retired School Counselor

Church Experience: La Verne: I recently finished a term on the Peace & Justice Commission and have served as a delegate to District Conference and Annual Conference many times over the years. I also served as the Standing with People of Color (SWPOC) facilitator. PSWD: I am currently the Board Chair which includes sitting on the Policy Board and the Executive Committee. During my term I have also served on the Ministry and Stewards Commissions. Denomination: I am currently in the final year of my term on the Annual Conference Program & Arrangements Committee, and I continue to serve on the Gun Violence Prevention Action Team through On Earth Peace, an agency of the COB.

Vision Statement: My vision for the PSWD is that we continue the work of Jesus, peacefully, simply and together, offering unconditional acceptance and love to all of God's children. "Together" does not mean that we will always agree, but we must strive to treat each other with respect regardless of differing theological perspectives. By working together, we can make an even greater impact on our District, our nation, and the world.

Nominating Committee (vote for 1): The three year term begins immediately. Members may not serve successive terms. Nominating Committee presents to the District Conference a ballot for each vacancy.



Florecita Merlos Age: 63

Congregation: Empire CoB

Vocation: Ordained pastor called to shepherd God's people through preaching, teaching, discipleship, and community outreach.

Church Experience: "I Currently serve as pastor of my local church/ CoB, where I provide spiritual leadership through preaching, pastoral care, and discipleship. In recent years, I have led and organized community outreach events, including prayer gatherings, family support initiatives and service projects that meet both spiritual and practical needs. I am open to collaborate with other leaders within the district to strengthen church unity, leadership development, and mission outreach. Through these efforts, I seek to equip the church to be a visible and compassionate presence in our community.

Vision Statement: My vision for the district is to see strong, spiritually healthy churches that are deeply rooted in Scripture, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and actively engaged in their communities. I desire to support pastors and leaders through mentorship, training, and collaboration so that every congregation can grow in unity, faith, love and mission. Together, I believe we can reach more people with the love of Christ, raised up new leaders, and build a district that reflects God's grace, diversity and purpose.

Program Committee, District Conference (vote for 1): The three year term begins immediately. The Committee is responsible for planning the District Conference program, obtaining leadership, and making all necessary arrangements for the conference, in cooperation with on-site representatives.



Janice Shaw-Morgan

Congregation: La Verne CoB

Vocation: Retired

Church Experience: Various committees/commissions, Board Secretary, facilitator of Bread Ministry, Spiritual Formation leader, choir and handbell choir member, etc. at LVCOB. One term on the Program Committee for PSWD, current member of Mission and Ministry Board for the denomination.

Vision Statement: I would like to see, and be a part of, the district continuing to nurture existing and new congregations with dignity and respect while "Continuing the work of Jesus: Peacefully, Simply, Together."

PSWD Board of Administration: The term begins immediately. The purpose of the Board is to manage and administer the religious and business activities of the District, as authorized by the District Conference.

PSWD Board of Administration: At-Large Representatives..... Vote for 2 (three year term)
Board members must be a member of a Church of the Brethren congregation within the district for at least one year prior to election and must have demonstrated leadership ability.



Isreal Macario *Age: 59*

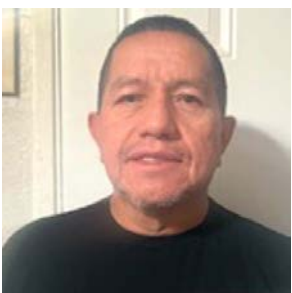
Congregation: Pomona Fellowship

Vocation: Retired

Church Experience: I have been going to Pomona Fellowship COB since January 2025. I went to the 2025 annual conference as a guest and enjoyed the fellowship and the theological discussions. I became member of Pomona Fellowship a few months back. I am currently the chair of the Service & Outreach committee. I am the delegate for the

congregation in the 2026 annual conference.

Vision Statement: Our church is currently taking part in incarnational Innovation (i2) process. Our church is trying to reach out to the community and to help grow our membership. The vision I have for the district is to continue to reach out to communities that have not been part of the church. For our church it means reaching out to immigrants who have children that speak English. The church has hired a bilingual teacher to head up the children's ministry. Helping children become disciples of Christ that will transform their lives and their families. Having the district continue to provide resources will help the local congregations see growth



Arnold Mendoza *Age: 57*

Congregation: Centro Ágape en Acción

Vocation: Moderator and Men's Leader

Church Experience: I lead worship and preach

Vision Statement: My vision is to see church's growth and connect more with the community..

CVCA Section Representative (vote for 1): Board members must be a member of a Church of the Brethren congregation within the district for at least one year prior to election and must have demonstrated leadership ability.



Don Wyatt Age: 68

Congregation: Empire CoB

Vocation: Retired Registered Nurse in Emergency and Disaster Medicine

Church Experience: I am a current volunteer at our Empire COB weekly food distribution. I have served with the Brethren Disaster Ministry and Empire COB board member. I (and my wife) have been PSWD district delegates.

Vision Statement: In an era of divisive politics and shrinking church populations I would like to assist the PSWD thrive. I am recently retired and I am very grateful for the opportunity to serve the congregations of the PSWD.

SOCA Section Representative (vote for 1): Board members must be a member of a Church of the Brethren congregation within the district for at least one year prior to election and must have demonstrated leadership ability.



Barbara Der Boghossian

Congregation: Glendale CoB

Vocation: I am a California Licensed Professional Fiduciary and a National Certified Guardian with my own fiduciary practice. On a personal note, I am married with two children, two dogs, and three cats.

Church Experience: For the past eight years, I have been a dedicated member of the Glendale Church of the Brethren, serving on the church board for six of those years. My leadership experience includes two years as Church Moderator and three years as Board Chair. Currently, I serve as the Event Coordinator, a role I have held for seven years, and I have also managed the church's social media presence for the past four years.

Vision Statement: I deeply value our church's commitment to peace, service, and compassion. I find great fulfillment in supporting our outreach efforts, community events, and various programs that foster connection and unity.

PSWD Board of Administration: Youth & Young Adult Representative. . . . Vote for 1 (one year term)
Youth members must be at least 15 years old and less than 24 years old as of December 31 of the year elected.



Genesis Hernandez Age: 18

Congregation: Príncipe de Paz

Vocation: I am a full time student at Chapman University, majoring in Liberal Studies to one day become an elementary school teacher.

Church Experience: I am an active participant in our youth ministry, Jovenes de Paz. I assist with most of our events and fundraisers, providing as much as I can. I recently had the privilege to attend National Youth Conference where I was able to connect with God and my brothers and sisters in Christ.

Vision Statement: I hope to inspire our youth to get involved in their Church and continue to seek ways in which we can be a light to others while also building our own relationship with God. I believe that connecting with others can help us grow in our faith and spread the love and kindness that the Lord has shown us.

PSWD Board of Administration: Youth & Young Adult Representative. . . . Vote for 1 (one year term)
Youth members must be at least 15 years old and less than 24 years old as of December 31 of the year elected.



Jailyn Orteza Age: 20

Congregation: Príncipe de Paz

Vocation: I am a full time student.

Church Experience: I'm one of the assistants to our youth group and I do what I can to help for a better experience. I love learning new things about the Bible and ways to keep me humbled.

Vision Statement: From all my years of knowing Jesus, one thing I've learned is I can never do anything without him. Without him, I am a lost sheep and have nothing. So long as I have him, my soul will be forever grateful for his sacrifice and his love.

Pacific Southwest District 2027 Operating Budget and Church Planting Support Budget, and 2028 Operating Expense Maximum

In the pages that follow you will find the proposed 2027 PSWD Operating Budget, the 2027 Church Planting Support Budget, and the recommended 2028 Operating Expense Maximum from the Policy Board.

2027 PSWD Operating Budget

In the spreadsheet that follows is the proposed 2027 District Operating Budget. The Policy Board is recommending a budget expense of **\$500,066**. This is an increase of \$8,200 from the 2026 District Operating Budget, and right at the 2027 Operating Expense Maximum (\$500,000) set at last year's District Conference. In general, most areas are flat or slightly down, reflecting our experience over the years since the end of the pandemic. We are feeling the impact of inflation, and the biggest place we experience that is in the COLA for staff compensation.

Some notes regarding the proposed budget by category:

- Congregational Development
 - The district continues to provide and pay for hosting space and domain name management for most of our churches.
 - The Ministry Partnership Funds provide key support to churches working in high poverty areas and with encouraging new ministry efforts through the Jesus in the Neighborhood and New Ministry Opportunity grants here. This area of the budget was decreased, but still is larger than what has been spent in each year since 2020 when this category provided some relief to most churches during the pandemic.
- Pastoral Leadership and Support
 - Support here is for the training of licensed ministers through the appropriate training program. Students attending Bethany, doing SeBAH, EPMC, or TriM are able to do so with only needing to cover the costs of books for the classes thanks to district support. The decrease here reflects the seminary's new full coverage of costs for Brethren students and so frees up district funds that were used here.
 - Significant funding supports the annual pastor and spouse or family retreat. This provides a welcome break and space for connection of those leaders serving our congregations.
- District Operating Ministry
 - The work of our District staff represented in this portion of the budget plays key roles in helping congregations in connecting to resources, supporting Boards and pastors, and working with congregations in pastoral transitions or evaluating future steps in ministry.
 - Staff compensation is increasing by \$12,000. The category reflects a 4.2% COLA increase for non salary scale employees, and the District Executive remains on scale. It also includes anticipated increases to health insurance.

The anticipated deficit for 2027 is **\$259,266**. This is below the operating deficit target of \$300,000 that the Policy Board established in 2016 and has reaffirmed over the years.

It will also be a bit of a challenge as many of our assets are now invested in loans to congregations at 5% and so the amount of money in the stock market is lower than it was prior to 2024. Having our money invested in our churches is a good thing and a priority. It is an investment in helping these churches be better equipped to be with Jesus in their neighborhoods. The District Stewards pay close attention to this and are working to capture market gains happening now and move them to safer Money Market funds so that we do not have to sell stocks when the market is down

2027 Church Planting Support Budget

There are currently five active Church Plants in the district (Las Vegas, Los Banos, McFarland, Pasadena, and Waterford). **The budget for church planting in 2027 is \$31,600.** This is a decrease of \$16,700 from 2026. These funds are used in a variety of ways depending on the needs of the various projects including church resourcing, utilities and facility cost assistance, and tax support. Funding for Pasadena is ending as there are sufficient resources generated from rental income to provide the needed support for leadership.

The funds for the Church Planting Budget come from the proceeds of sales of former district properties.

Action Item: The Policy Board recommends to the District Conference the adoption of the 2027 Operating Budget and the 2027 Church Planting Support Budget as presented.

Pacific Southwest District Church of the Brethren Income & Expense Summary - Proposed 2025 Budget

		2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Budget	2027 Proposed
Contributions Income	4100	23,875	24,375	24,214	27,954	27,300	27,500
Interest and Other Income	4200	64,923	64,377	113,692	215,779	239,200	201,000
Participation Income	4600	10,643	17,514	11,967	11,187	11,200	12,300
Total Operating Income		99,441	106,266	149,873	254,920	277,700	240,800
Congregational Development Ministry	5005	24,382	13,661	30,141	36,461	47,250	42,250
Pastoral Leadership & Support	5300	35,709	30,483	20,996	21,934	29,800	28,300
District Empowering Ministry	5500	21,128	35,793	38,259	44,246	40,850	39,050
Partnership & Property Ministry	5700	18,219	17,563	38,227	22,228	18,000	18,630
Service Ministries	6300	4,279	6,363	6,958	3,917	6,300	6,300
District Operating Ministry	6500	320,769	301,138	323,276	350,213	349,546	365,536
Total Operating Expenses		424,486	405,001	457,857	478,999	491,746	500,066
Operating Deficit		-325,045	-298,735	-307,984	-224,079	-214,046	-259,266

Budget

Exhibit C

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST DISTRICT OF THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN									
2020-2027, District Budget Overview									
Power Church Report Levels		PC	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
1	2	3	4	Line #	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget
2027									
Proposed									
INCOME				4000					
MINISTRY INCOME				4010					
CONTRIBUTIONS INCOME				4100					
	Individuals			4110	2,790	2,077	750	2,075	2,231
	Congregations			4120	26,637	24,240	23,100	22,000	21,983
	Church Closure Contriitribution			4125	0	0	0	0	0
	Groups			4126	0	0	0	0	0
	Subtotal Temp Restricted Income			4700	0	0	0	0	0
	CDS Children's Disaster Rapid Respon			4135	100	0	25	300	0
	Other Income			4140	0	0	0	0	9
Subtotal Contributions Inc.				4100	29,527	26,317	23,875	24,375	24,214
								27,954	27,300
									27,500
INVESTMENT INCOME				4200					
	CHECKING/MONEY MKT INCOME			4210	25,162	6,336	5,687	4,292	1,028
	NOTES REC. INTEREST/FEES			4301	34,309	31,453	28,583	29,681	82,210
	Investment Property Income			4400	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	185,206
	MISC. INCOME			4550	220	24,116	654	404	455
								169	0
Subtotal Investment Income				4200	89,690	91,905	64,923	64,377	113,692
								215,779	239,200
									201,000
PARTICIPATION INCOME				4600					
	DIST CONF INCOME			4610	1,850	6,075	6,554	9,207	7,564
	EVENTS INCOME			4630	863	4,043	4,089	8,307	4,403
								1,977	2,000
Subtotal Participation Income				4600	2,713	10,118	10,643	17,514	11,967
								11,187	11,200
									12,300
TOTAL INCOME					121,930	128,340	99,441	106,266	149,873
								254,920	277,700
									240,800
EXPENSES				5000					
MINISTRY INVESTMENTS				5001					
CONGREGATIONAL DEV MIN				5005					
	WEB SITE DEVELOPMENT			5020	2,241	1,871	882	2,317	2,583
	Ministry Partnership Funds			5180	46,866	30,380	23,500	11,344	27,558
								27,410	45,000
Subtotal Congregational Dev Min				5005	49,108	32,251	24,382	13,661	30,141
								36,461	47,250
									42,250
PAST'L. LDRSH & SUPPORT				5300					
	TRIM (TRAINING IN MIN)			5310	245	477	232	1,000	0
	SEBAH & EPMC			5315	3,020	2,649	3,584	3,976	3,017
	BETHANY THEO. SEMINARY			5320	4,400	5,565	3,939	4,774	0
	PASTORS' RETREAT			5325	606	12,930	23,915	18,541	14,877
	MINISTER'S WORKSHOP			5330	0	1,225	3,240	2,042	1,178
	OTHER DISTRICT WORKSHOPS			5335	300	0	500	0	0
	MINISTER'S ETHICS TRAINING			5336	70	0	0	0	1,924
	PROF. GROWTH SUBSIDY			5338	0	250	300	150	0
								200	1,000
Subtotal Past'l. Ldrshp & Support				5300	8,641	23,096	35,709	30,483	20,996
								21,934	29,800
									28,300
DISTRICT EMPOWERING MINISTRY				5500					
	DISTRICT CONFERENCE			5520	1,945	2,089	10,341	15,964	21,445
	MINISTRY COMMISSION			5540	546	458	2,851	331	275
	STEWARDS COMMISSION			5560	0	3,237	0	1,725	0
	BD OF ADM & WORK GROUPS			5600	2,589	1,271	5,911	8,572	10,165
	NURTURING/CREDENT.COMM			5630	11,101	0	1,350	6,612	0
	RESOURCE MATERIALS			5650	185	274	675	89	637
	INTER-CULTURAL MINISTRY			5660	500	261	0	0	2,038
	NATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE			5670	2,500	2,500	0	2,500	2,500
	Youth Activity & Cabinet Expense			5680/7	0	712	0	0	1,200
								0	0
Subtotal District Empowering Min				5500	19,366	10,802	21,128	35,793	38,259
								44,246	40,850
									39,050
PARTNERSHIP & PROP. MIN				5700					
	DENOMINATIONAL ASSESSMENT			5710	1,430	1,280	1,264	1,251	1,295
	STANDING COMMITTEE			5720	306	306	2,860	2,536	2,453
	UNIVERSITY OF LA VERNE			5725	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
	ECUMENICAL COUNCILS			5730	250	250	250	0	500
	COUNCIL OF DIST EXECS			5740	385	360	0	405	585
	PROPERTY & LEGAL			5800	4,130	11,960	9,845	9,370	29,395
								13,544	8,500
Subtotal Partnership & Prop. Min				5700	10,501	18,156	18,219	17,563	38,227
								22,228	18,000
									18,630

PACIFIC SOUTHWEST DISTRICT OF THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN														
2020-2027, District Budget Overview														
Power Church Report Levels					PC	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	
1	2	3	4		Line #	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Budget	Proposed	
					SERVICE MINISTRIES	6300								
					DISASTER RESPONSE	6310	0	5,822	4,256	5,032	5,215	2,629	6,000	6,000
					CHILDREN'S DISASTER SERV	6320	0	0	23	0	0	0	300	300
					Other Dist Service Opportunity	6350	0	0	0	1,331	1,743	1,288	0	0
					Subtotal Service Ministries	6300	0	5,822	4,279	6,363	6,958	3,917	6,300	6,300
					DIST. OPERATING MINISTRY	6500								
					OFFICE SPACE & UTILITIES	6520	17,357	20,907	20,604	19,687	23,035	19,909	19,700	18,600
					EQUIPMENT & MAINTENANCE	6600	650	6,038	3,489	426	403	4,044	2,000	2,200
					SUPPLIES/PRNTG/PUBLICAT'N	6650	4,937	5,188	5,292	2,304	1,711	2,182	1,800	2,300
					POSTAGE AND MAILING	6670	1,703	1,084	1,830	1,312	2,004	1,656	2,000	2,000
					INSURANCE	6680	15,750	16,280	17,830	17,830	26,833	23,082	24,000	25,200
					AUDIT AND PROF. FEES	6700	26,039	41,925	25,483	33,664	30,245	41,989	35,500	36,000
					STAFF SALARIES	7000	180,016	185,043	180,637	162,290	173,200	177,692	185,926	196,637
					STAFF BENEFITS & RCWF	7100	32,643	31,846	31,748	31,699	35,849	45,793	47,920	49,799
					STAFF TRVL-PROF GROWTH	7500	11,178	24,653	33,660	31,646	29,680	33,281	30,300	32,800
					NEW LIFE/PUB ETC & Misc.	7750	2,859	1,732	196	281	317	585	400	0
					Subtotal Dist. Operating Ministry	6500	293,132	334,696	320,769	301,138	323,276	350,213	349,546	365,536
					Subtotal Ministry Investments	5001	380,747	424,823	424,485	405,001	457,857	478,999	491,746	500,066
								424,484.67						
TOTAL EXPENSES						380,747	424,823	424,485	405,001	457,857	478,999	491,746	500,066	
EXCESS INCOME\EXPENSES						(258,817)	(296,483)	(325,044)	(298,735)	(307,984)	(224,079)	(214,046)	(259,266)	

2028 Operating Expense Maximum

The recommendation for 2028 of \$500,000 is no increase over the 2027 budget. The Board has previously indicated that \$500,000 in operating expenses feels like a maximum outlay, and so we will need to evaluate that number and how we are using resources as we move forward beyond 2027.

Action Item

The Policy Board recommends to the District Conference that the expense maximum for the 2028 Operating Budget be \$500,000.

Bylaws Revision - Calling leadership by slate
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This year the Nominating Committee and the Policy Board took time to look at the process by which we call people into leadership for the district. Our current system calls for a ballot with a vote by the delegate body. A ballot implies that there will be multiple candidates to choose from and that has not been our practice for many years. So the proposed change in the process for calling leadership reflects bringing our bylaws into harmony with current practice.

The proposed process calls for the preparation and presentation of a slate by the Nominating Committee. If there is any objection to any portion of the slate any delegate can simply state that they object and the process will then move automatically to a written vote on each line of the slate. If any person on the slate does not receive a majority affirmation of those voting, that individual is not called and the Executive Board will be responsible for appointing someone to the position and bringing that for affirmation to the next District Conference.

In the following pages you see sections of the bylaws that are impacted to make this happen. Portions being deleted are struck through in red, and pieces being added or changed are in green. The key section is on the 2nd page of this exhibit, in Section G. Rules of Order. The majority of the other changes replace references to "ballot" with "slate" and "elected" with "called".

Action Item: The Policy Board recommends to the District Conference the adoption of the amendments to the bylaws as presented.

1 **E. Officers and Duties. (continued)**

2
3 **1. The Moderator**

- 4 **a. Qualifications.** The moderator must be a member of a Church of the Brethren
5 congregation within the District for at least one year prior to election, may not serve
6 concurrently ~~as an elected member~~ *as a member* on the Policy Board, and must have
7 demonstrated leadership ability.
- 8 **b. Election and Tenure.** The moderator is normally elevated from the position of
9 moderator-elect and takes office immediately following the District Conference at
10 which s/he served as moderator-elect or in the case of a vacancy in the office. S/he
11 serves for a one-year term and then ~~becomes ineligible for reelection~~ *becomes*
12 *ineligible to be called* as moderator-elect for four years. Should the office of
13 moderator become vacant, the moderator-elect succeeds to the office for the
14 remainder of the term.
- 15 **c. Duties.** The moderator prepares the agenda for District Conference, in cooperation
16 with the officers of District Conference; becomes familiar with parliamentary
17 procedure; presides at the business sessions of the District Conference; appoints
18 tellers and timekeeper; chairs the District Conference Program Committee; serves
19 on all District committees (and can ask the moderator-elect to represent the
20 moderator on a District Committee) and on the Policy Board and the Executive
21 Board as an ex-officio member, and may deliver a moderator's address at the annual
22 District Conference.

23
24 **2. The Moderator-elect**

- 25 **a. Qualifications.** The same qualifications are required of the moderator-elect as for
26 the moderator.
- 27 **b. Tenure.** The moderator-elect serves for one year and then assumes the office of
28 moderator. If the moderator-elect serves as moderator during the entire District
29 Conference, s/he is presumed to have served as moderator and would not continue
30 during the next year. At that District Conference a moderator and a moderator-elect
31 would be ~~elected~~ *called*.
- 32 **c. Duties.** The moderator-elect performs all the duties of the moderator when the
33 moderator is unable to serve; may assist at the moderator's request in presiding over
34 a portion of the business session; may assist the moderator by representing the
35 moderator on a District Committee if asked; and serves as an ex-officio member of
36 the Policy Board and the Executive Board; chairs the Nominating Committee; and
37 serves as a member of the District Conference Program Committee.

1 **E. Officers and Duties.** *(continued)*

2
3 **3. The Clerk**

- 4 **a. Qualifications.** The Clerk must be a member of the Church of the Brethren within
5 the District at least one year prior to election.
- 6 **b. Election and Tenure.** The Clerk is ~~elected~~ *called* for a three-year term and may
7 serve two consecutive terms. The term begins immediately following the District
8 Conference at which s/he is elected.
- 9 **c. Duties.** The Clerk serves on the Nominating Committee; records the minutes of
10 the District Conference, and in cooperation with the District Executive Minister(s)
11 prepares the minutes for publication and distribution to the local congregations;
12 forwards to the Annual Conference secretary any queries passed to Annual
13 Conference by the District Conference; assists in the interpretation of the minutes
14 of the District Conference; serves as an ex-officio member of the Policy Board; and
15 records the minutes of the Policy Board.

16
17 **F. Time and Place.** District Conference is held annually in October or November as determined
18 by the District Board of Administration.

19
20 The location of the meeting is determined by the District Conference, alternating in the
21 northern and southern areas of the District when possible.

22
23 All sessions of the District Conference are open to those present, except when the delegate
24 body convenes in closed session. Special meetings may be called at the discretion of the
25 District Conference officers in consultation with the District Board of Administration.

26
27 **G. Rules of Order.** The moderator conducts the business according to Robert's Rules of Order,
28 which will be the standard for any point not covered in the Constitution and Bylaws.

29
30 ~~Nominations from the floor must have the prior consent of the nominee.~~

31
32 Length and number of speeches allowed are determined by the District Conference officers.

33
34 ~~The election of officers is by ballot with a plurality vote, except the moderator-elect and the~~
35 ~~standing committee delegate(s), who are elected by a majority vote.~~

36
37 *District leadership shall be called through the presentation of a slate of nominees for*
38 *affirmation by acclamation. There are no nominations from the floor in this process. If*
39 *a voting delegate objects to affirmation by acclamation, the delegate body shall vote by*
40 *written ballot on each nominee separately. A nominee receiving the affirmative vote of a*
41 *majority of the delegates voting shall be affirmed. If a nominee is not affirmed, the*
42 *Executive Board shall fill the vacancy until the next District Conference, at which time a*
43 *nominee shall again be presented for affirmation.*

44
45 **H. Quorum.** A quorum consists of fifty percent of the total elected delegates representing fifty
46 percent of the churches of the District. The condition of a quorum are met if at least fifty
47 percent of the churches of the District are represented and at least fifty percent of the

delegates of those churches are represented. Delegates are counted towards quorum with either in-person or virtual participation, if those systems are open for all who wish to participate.

I. District Conference Committees.

1. Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee consists of seven members: district moderator, district moderator-elect, clerk, chair of the Board, and three members ~~elected~~ *called* by the District Conference. ~~An elected~~ *A called* member serves for three years and may not serve successive terms. Terms are staggered so that one member is ~~elected~~ *called* each year. The Moderator-Elect shall chair the Nominating Committee. Members who serve by virtue of office serve for the duration of the office they fill.

Nominating Committee presents to the District Conference a ~~ballot slate with one person~~ for each vacancy within the following positions:

- a. Moderator-Elect (two-year term)
- b. Board of Administration members (three-year term)
- c. Nominating Committee members (three-year term)
- d. District Conference Program Committee members (three-year term)
- e. Clerk (three-year term)
- f. Standing Committee Delegate(s) (three-year term or as directed by Annual Conference)

Permission must be obtained before a nominee's name may be placed on the ~~ballot slate~~. Information regarding the qualifications of nominees is provided to the delegates before the ~~vote slate is presented for affirmation~~. Information pertinent to each office, such as length of term and number of persons to be ~~elected~~ *called* is included on the ~~ballot slate~~.

2. District Conference Program Committee. The District Conference Program Committee consists of five members: Moderator, Moderator-elect, and three persons ~~elected~~ *called* by the District Conference. The Moderator shall chair the Program Committee. ~~An elected~~ *A called* member serves for three years and may serve two successive terms. Terms are staggered so that one member is ~~elected~~ *called* each year. The Board Chair is an invited guest without vote. The committee is responsible for planning the conference program, obtaining leadership, and making all necessary arrangements for the conference, in cooperation with on-site representatives.

J. Standing committee Delegate(s). Delegate(s) are ~~elected~~ *called* by the District Conference to represent the district on the Annual Conference Standing Committee. The directives of Annual Conference as described in "*Manual of Organization and Polity 2001-2023*" ~~pages 15-17~~ *Chapter 1 - The Annual Conference, pages 3-6* are followed to determine their eligibility, the number allowed, and the length of their term. *Items 1 through 4 that follow reflect the Manual of Organization and Polity which uses the term 'elected' and 'election'. In the PSWD, the delegate and alternate delegate will be called through the slate process.*

1. Eligibility: Any member of the Church of the Brethren may serve the district on Standing

Committee if that member has been in the district for one year, fulfills the qualifications as set forth by; Annual Conference, and is not a member of the General Board or its program staff or an executive/minister or associate executive/minister of the district. In choosing Standing Committee delegates, districts should give consideration to members of the district board and other people who are actively involved in the district program – including both ministers and lay people.

J. Standing committee Delegate(s). (continued)

2. *Qualifications:* (a) Consecrated Christian living in home, church and community. (b) Faithful service in local church and district. (c) Loyalty to the ideals and the program of the Church of the Brethren. (d) A working knowledge and understanding of the Church of the Brethren and its program of ministries. (e) Ability to exercise mature judgment in the solution of denominational problems.

3. *Membership:* Members of Standing Committee shall be elected by their respective districts to serve a term of three years and are eligible for re-election to one additional term of three years following a full or partial term of service on Standing Committee. After such service, former members will be ineligible to serve for a period of four years. Upon transfer to another district, Standing Committee members who have not served a term for three Conferences will be replaced by the district they were originally chosen to represent. To them as well as their successors the ineligibility rule will apply.

When an alternate Standing Committee delegate takes the place of a regular delegate, the alternate shall continue to serve the remainder of the term in order to provide continuity. The alternate(s) will be elected.

4. *Responsibilities:* The Standing Committee has nominating, legislative, judicial, and envisioning responsibilities. The PSWD Standing Committee delegate is expected to interpret the decisions and recommendations of Annual Conference to the District Conference in a written report. Standing Committee delegate(s) serve as ex-officio member(s) of the Policy Board without vote.

K. Committees Appointed by the District Conference. The District Conference may constitute or authorize continuing or short-term committees as necessary to assist with the ongoing work of the District. When the specific assignment of a committee is achieved, the committee will be dismissed.

Article III. Board of Administration

A. Purpose. The purpose of the District Board of Administration is to manage and administer the religious and business activities of the District as authorized by the District Conference. The District Board of Administration is comprised of the Policy Board and the Executive Board. The Executive Board is the legal agent of the District and is empowered to act on behalf of the District *ad interim* except for those actions specifically reserved for the District Conference or the Policy Board as set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws.

B. Membership. The Policy Board consists of thirteen (13) regular members (3 year terms) and up to three (3) youth / young adult members (1 year terms) ~~elected~~ *called* by the District Conference with one regular member from each section and the remaining members at-large.

Board members ~~elected~~ *called* as sectional representatives need to reside in the section they represent. The Moderator, Moderator-elect, Treasurer and Clerk serve as ex-officio members with vote. The Executive Minister(s) and Standing Committee delegate(s) serve as ex-officio members without vote. Mission & Ministry Board member(s) residing within the District are invited to attend Policy Board meetings.

Article III. Board of Administration. (continued)

- C. Qualifications.** A Policy Board member must be a member of a Church of the Brethren congregation within the district for at least one year prior to ~~election~~ *calling* and must have demonstrated leadership ability. Youth members must be at least 15 years old and less than 24 years old as of December 31 of the year ~~elected~~ *called*.
- D. Tenure.** The term of service is three years. Filling an unexpired term does not constitute a full term. A member is entitled to serve two consecutive full terms. The term of service for youth / young adult members is one year with a maximum of 3 consecutive full terms.
- E. Attendance.** It is expected that Policy Board members will maintain attendance at Policy Board meetings. If a member misses three consecutive meetings, the Executive Board should consider declaring the position vacant and appointing a replacement to fill the vacancy.
- F. Organization.** The Policy Board is organized annually, under the direction of the incoming Moderator, following ~~election by~~ the District Conference. The Policy Board selects from its ~~elected~~ *called* members a chair, vice chair and the chairs of the Stewards and Ministry commissions. Some members of the Policy Board, excluding the Moderator, Clerk and the Board Chair, are assigned to commissions. The Executive Minister(s) and Moderator are ex-officio members of all commissions. The Treasurer meets with the Stewards Commission.
 - 1. The Chair.** The chair performs all duties ordinarily pertaining to the office and other duties that may be assigned by the Policy Board and these Bylaws and serves on the Nominating Committee and is an invited guest without vote on all committees of the Board and the District Conference Program Committee.
 - 2. The Vice Chair.** The Vice Chair performs all duties and has all authority of the Chair when the Chair is absent and performs other duties as may be assigned by the Policy Board or Executive Board. The vice-chair may serve on a commission but not as a commission chair. The Vice Chair may be requested to record the Executive Board minutes.
 - 3. The Treasurer.** The Treasurer accounts for all District funds received and disburses same as authorized by the Executive Board;
 - a. Makes written reports available to meetings of the Board;
 - b. Makes written reports available to meetings of the Policy Board and the Executive Board;
 - c. Is an ex-officio member with vote of the Policy Board and Stewards Commission;
 - d. Serves as Chief Financial Officer of the corporation.
 - 4. The Recording Secretary.** The Clerk functions as Recording Secretary, recording all Policy Board proceedings. The clerk also performs other duties as may be assigned by the Executive Board.

5. **The Policy Board meets** at least 4 times per year;
 - a. ~~At District Conference to organize and elect officers~~ *Following District Conference to organize and select officers,*
 - b. Three meetings to define and review the overall district direction and program and to review the actions of the Executive Board.
 - c. Meetings may occur in-person, virtually, or in a hybrid format. Members are counted towards quorum with either in-person or virtual participation, if those systems are open for all who wish to participate.

Article III. Board of Administration. (continued)

G. Duties of the Policy Board.

1. The Policy Board shall maintain unity within the district and establish an overall vision for the district by fellowshiping, worshiping, praying, sharing and discerning together God's will for the PSWD.
2. Review the actions of the Executive Board to ensure they comply with the directives of District Conference and the vision developed by the Policy Board.
3. Have the sole authority for employment of the District Executive Minister(s). Changes to the employment status of the District Executive Minister(s) require a 2/3 quorum of the voting members of the Policy Board.
4. Be a source of leadership for Task Groups / Commissions established by the Executive Board.

H. Executive Board. The Executive Board is composed of the Board Chair, Vice-Chair, Ministry Commission Chair and Stewards Commission Chair. Officers are Chair and Vice-Chair. The Moderator and Moderator-elect serve as ex-officio members with vote. The District Executive Minister(s), serve as ex-officio member(s) without vote.

1. The Executive Board is the legal agent of the District and is empowered to act on behalf of the District ad interim except for those actions specifically reserved for the District Conference or the Policy Board as set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws.
2. The Executive Board reviews the Executive Minister(s) on at least an annual basis and establishes annual salary and benefits of the Executive Minister(s);
3. Recommends employment and termination of the Executive Minister(s) subject to approval of the Policy Board and in consultation with the Director of District Ministries; and reviews executive staff employment contracts;
4. Fills any vacancy which may occur in the Policy Board, District Conference officers or other elected offices when provisions for filling such a vacancy are not specifically stated.
5. Fulfills the directives of the District Conference and makes an annual report to the Conference;
6. Assigns, defines and interprets responsibilities of the commissions;
7. Decides the number of members on each commission depending on size of work load;
8. Creates and dissolves Task Groups when the direction of the District makes it valuable;
9. Projects long-range planning, sets goals, and initiates new program in harmony with decisions of the District Conference and the vision of the Policy Board
10. Promotes and administers the total church program in the District;
11. Defines the number of and geographical boundaries of the sections of the District;
12. Acts regarding employment of district staff

13. Has custody of and manages all District capital funds, endowments and annuities, or arranges for such custody and management;
14. Holds title to District properties;
15. Negotiates the purchase and sale of property and the borrowing and lending of money on behalf of the District;
16. Allocates and defines authority with respect to the establishment of bank accounts and the signing of checks;
17. Prepares the District budget for presentation to the District Conference;
18. Provides for an annual audit to be done by a public accounting firm and submits the audit to District Conference;
19. Arranges for bonding of persons handling large sums of money, in an amount set by the Executive Board;
20. Receives, considers and responds to concerns brought by individuals or church groups;
21. Brings queries and other business items to the District Conference and processes queries from local churches for District Conference action;
22. Acts on recommendations from the Ministry Commission regarding nominees for ordination;
23. Acts regarding new church plants;
24. Appoints committees and makes appointments;
25. Annually appoints a Treasurer from outside its membership;
26. Affirms commission appointments.

I. Commissions.

1. Each commission selects from its ~~elected~~ *called* members a vice chair and secretary;
2. Maintains and reviews annually a list of specific responsibilities as outlined in the Bylaws or assigned by the Executive Board;
3. Establishes job descriptions for positions accountable to the commission;
4. Prepares an annual budget request and submits it to the Stewards Commission;
5. Reports activities, needs and special opportunities to the Executive Board;
6. Recommends for Executive Board approval persons and committees to perform specific responsibilities related to the commission; and
7. Works cooperatively with the other commission, Task Groups and staff to promote the programs of the church.

8. Ministry Commission.

- a. The Ministry Commission gives counsel and guidance to all ministerial matters in the District;
- b. Counsels and assists churches and individuals in extending and receiving calls to the ministry, becoming equipped and trained for ministry, and licensing and ordaining ministers;
- c. Annually reviews the status of licensed and ordained ministers and lay speakers in the District and makes recommendations to the Executive Board regarding any change in status;
- d. Seeks ways to strengthen the relationships and understanding between congregations and pastors;
- e. Encourages and assists pastors in their professional and personal growth.

Approval of DBA for San Diego First
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The Policy Board received a request in January 2026 from the San Diego congregation asking for District approval to operate under the name "San Diego Peace Church" as their dba (doing business as). The board considered the statement provided by San Diego's leadership in support of this and key elements are included below.

In the last few months, we have used that process to continue the follow up work that came out of our Board Retreat last May. We looked over and polished up, the Mission and Value statements we came up with at the retreat and worked on a compelling Vision statement that will motivate us and inspire new people to join us in this work we do with God's help on our Peace Campus. We had several conversations on the challenge to help new people understand what the word Brethren means today, since most have never heard of that word. It was hard to help new people, especially the LGBTQ+ community, to see we are open and affirming if we use a term that sounds like brothers in our name.

It was important to spend a lot of work on our values and a vision to guide us in what efforts we will be taking in leading as a board, so that what our church is doing is a true reflection of what we say on paper. In planning and in approving activities we want to use our above stated guidelines in our mission, values and vision statements to point us in the direction that we state. These statements shape how we do worship, what partners we have, how we care for our garden and orchards, what kind of presentations we hold at the FMPV, what funds we look for to support the major outreach ministry activities, like immigration and autism ministry and LGBTQ+ activities.

The question is does our Peace Church walk the talk? Can we be authentic in what we do and say so that people will feel confident in working with us to create a better world? We also had the roadblock of people not understanding how "oasis for peace" related to "Brethren" or "Peace Church". Therefore, we are in the process of taking out the "oasis for peace" references to who we are to eliminate more confusion and help people find us easier by using SD Peace Church on our website and other social media sites we use. We feel honored in being Brethren, but when the word itself makes it hard for people to relate to us, we have to look for ways to connect with them so they can connect with the feeling we have in being Brethren. If our whole goal is to help people relate to us, then we need to get to the essence of what it means to be Brethren. That is why we believe we must present that we are a peace church right away up front. Then we can start a good relationship with everyone on the same page.

The Board hopes you will appreciate all the work they have done on this issue and that the members of the CBM will be willing to discuss and approve this new name to be only used in branding and promoting who we are. We will legally keep our name "First Church of the Brethren of San Diego, California" and file for a DBA, that will allow us to accept checks with both names, and we will present our name change to the PSWD in November, 2026.

Action of the Policy Board:

The Policy Board recommends to the District Conference that the San Diego First congregation is approved to use the dba "San Diego Peace Church"

Pacific Southwest District – Church of the Brethren

Locations / Dates / Moderators of District Conferences

1964.....	La Verne.	August 28-30.	R. Truman Northup
1965.....	Modesto.....	October 15-17.....	Marvin Belcher
1966.....	Forest Home.	October 14-16.....	Leland A. Nelson
1967.....	Fresno.	October 13-15.....	Lowell K. Brubaker
1968.....	Long Beach.	October 11-13.....	R. Truman Northup
1969.....	Bakersfield.....	October 10-12.....	Edward K. Ziegler
1970.....	Phoenix First.	October 9-11.....	Jerry Davis
1971.....	Modesto.....	October 15-17.....	Harold D. Fasnacht
1972.....	La Verne.	October 13-15.....	Duane Wyles
1973.....	Fresno.	October 11-13.....	Paul E. Miller
1974.....	Pasadena.	October 11-13.....	John W. Hunter
1975.....	Empire.....	October 10-12.....	Ida S. Howell
1976.....	Long Beach.	October 15-17.....	Marvin A. Belcher
1977.....	McFarland.	October 7-9.....	D. Eugene Lichty
1978.....	University of La Verne.	October 13-15.....	Norman N. Glick
1979.....	Modesto.....	November 9-11.....	Arthur M. Baldwin
1980.....	Phoenix First.	October 24-26.....	LaVon Rupel
1981.....	Fresno.	October 16-18.....	C. Wayne Zunkel
1982.....	Pomona Fellowship.....	October 15-17.....	Barbara Enberg
1983.....	Empire.....	October 14-16.....	Irven Stern
1984.....	South Bay.	November 9-11.....	Galen Snell
1985.....	McFarland.	November 8-10.....	Dwayne Brubaker
1986.....	Imperial Heights.	October 17-19.....	Robert E. Keim
1987.....	Prince of Peace, Sacramento. .	October 16-18.....	Jerry Davis
1988.....	Long Beach.	October 7-9.....	W. Donald Clague
1989.....	Modesto.....	November 3-5.....	Richard L. Landrum
1990.....	Phoenix First.	October 12-14.....	Sherlo Shively
1991.....	Glendale (CA).....	October 11-13.....	Harold J. Forney
1992.....	Waterford.	November 13-15.....	Donald E. Fancher
1993.....	La Verne.	October 8-10.....	Myrna L. Wheeler
1994.....	Fresno.	November 11-13.....	Pat Royer
1995.....	County of San Diego.....	October 6-8.....	Lowell Brubaker
1996.....	Modesto.....	October 11-13.....	Milton H. Ewert
1997.....	Pomona Fellowship.....	October 10-12.....	Peggy Redman
1998.....	South Bay / Imperial Heights. .	September 18-20.	Jerry Davis
1999.....	Phoenix First.	October 8-10.....	Karen Walters
2000.....	Sacramento / Live Oak.	October 13-15.....	Belita Mitchell
2001.....	Bakersfield.....	October 5-7.....	Sherlo Shively
2002.....	La Verne.	October 4-6.....	George Sparks
2003.....	Community Brethren, Fresno. .	September 19-21.	Bill Wagoner, Honorary; Myrna Wheeler, Acting
2004.....	Pomona.	October 29-31.....	David Hurlbut
2005.....	Modesto.....	October 7-9.....	R. Jan Thompson
2006.....	Papago Buttes.	October 27-29.....	Joe Schechter
2007.....	La Verne.	October 12-14.....	Mary Kay Ogden
2008.....	Community Brethren, Fresno. .	November 7-9.....	John Price
2009.....	Sacramento.	November 6-8.....	Jim Martinez
2010.....	Hillcrest, La Verne.	November 12-14.....	Felton Daniels
2011.....	Hillcrest, La Verne.	November 11-13.....	Karen Walters

2012.....	Hillcrest, La Verne.	November 9-11.....	Jack Storne
2013.....	Scottsdale, AZ.....	November 8-10.....	Jim LeFever
2014.....	Hillcrest, La Verne.	November 7-9.....	Erin Matteson
2015.....	Hillcrest, La Verne.	November 13-15.....	Eric Bishop
2016.....	Modesto.....	November 11-13.....	John Price
2017.....	Hillcrest, La Verne.	November 10-12.....	Sara Haldeman-Scarr
2018.....	Hillcrest, La Verne.	November 9-11.....	Karen Pierson
2019.....	Scottsdale, AZ.....	November 8-10.....	Bob Morris
2020.....	Virtual on the web.....	November 9-15.....	Mary Kay Ogden
2021.....	Virtual on the web.....	November 7-14.....	Al Clark
2022.....	University of La Verne.	November 11-12.....	Cheryl Crane
2023.....	University of La Verne.	November 10-11.....	Judy Minnich Stout
2024.....	Prince of Peace, Sacramento...	November 8-9.....	Paul Lovelace
2025.....	La Verne.	November 7-8.....	Norma Sexton
2025.....	Journey South Bay.....	November 13-14.....	Don Shankster

PSWD Board of Administration Chairs District Executive Ministers

	Board Chair	Executive Minister
1964 – 1965.	Jacob T. Dick.	Glen H. Bowlby
1966 – 1967.	Arthur M. Baldwin.	Glen H. Bowlby
1968.	Herbert W. Hogan.	Glen H. Bowlby
1969 – 1971.	Herbert W. Hogan.	R. Truman Northup
1972 – 1973.	Forrest V. Groff.	R. Truman Northup
1974 – 1977.	J. Calvin Keeling.	R. Truman Northup
1978 – 1981.	W. Donald Clague.	R. Truman Northup
1982 – 1983.	S. Loren Bowman.	R. Truman Northup
1984 – 1985.	Marlin Heckman.	Irven & Pattie Stern
1986 – 1989.	James Walters.	Irven & Pattie Stern
1990.	Janice Fralin.	Irven & Pattie Stern
1991.	Roger Richer.	Irven & Pattie Stern
1992.	Todd Hammond.	Irven & Pattie Stern
1993.	Gregg Moser.	Irven & Pattie Stern
1994.	R. Jan Thompson.	Glenn Stanford (<i>interim</i>)
1995.	R. Jan Thompson.	Gene Hipskind
1996.	Tom Bryant.	Gene Hipskind
1997 – 1999.	Jonathan Shively.	Gene Hipskind
2000 – 2001.	Ernest Snyder.	Gene Hipskind
2002.	Sara Haldeman-Scarr.	Gene Hipskind
		Richard Hart (<i>interim</i>)
2003.	Sara Haldeman-Scarr.	Richard Hart (<i>interim</i>)
		Dean Kieffaber (<i>interim</i>)
		Bryan Boyer
2004 – 2006.	Paul Lovelace.	Bryan Boyer
2007.	Jim Davis.	Bryan Boyer
2008.	Bill Johnson.	Bryan Boyer
		Richard Hart (<i>interim</i>)
		Mary Kay Ogden (<i>interim</i>)
		Randy Yoder (<i>interim</i>)
		Don Booz (<i>December</i>)
2009.	Myrna Wheeler / Thomas Dowdy.	Don Booz
2010.	Thomas Dowdy / Don Fancher.	Don Booz
2011 – 2013.	Don Fancher.	Don Booz
2014.	Marye Martinez.	Joe Detrick (<i>interim</i>)
2015 – 2016.	Marye Martinez.	Russ Matteson
2017 – 2021.	Nelda Rhoades Clarke.	Russ Matteson
2022 – 2023.	Erik Brummett.	Russ Matteson
2024 – 2025.	Jeremiah Irizarry.	Russ Matteson
2025 – 2026.	Gail Heisel.	Russ Matteson



Mennonite Insurance Services

A ministry of service.
A commitment to you.



SERVING YOUR CHURCH. SERVING YOUR CONGREGATION.

Mennonite Insurance Services is a full-service insurance agency committed to serving churches, ministries, and the people who make up their communities.



INSURANCE FOR YOUR CHURCH & MINISTRY

We help protect your mission so you can focus on what matters most.



PROPERTY INSURANCE

Buildings, contents,
and equipment



GENERAL LIABILITY

Protection for your
church and ministry
operations



COMMERCIAL AUTO

Coverage for vehicles
and transportation
needs



WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Protection for your
staff and volunteers



UMBRELLA COVERAGE

Extra liability
protection above
your policies



CAMPS & MINISTRIES

Specialized coverage
for camps, retreats,
and special events



Comprehensive coverage.
Competitive rates.
Personal service you can count on.



YOUR CONGREGATION CAN COUNT ON US, TOO.

As a full-service independent agency,
we can help individuals and families with:



HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE

Protect what
matters most



AUTO INSURANCE

Reliable coverage
for you and
your family



UMBRELLA COVERAGE

Extra protection
for life's
unexpected
moments



RENTAL PROPERTIES

Coverage for
investment
properties



RVs & RECREATIONAL VEHICLES

Protection for your
adventures



BUSINESS INSURANCE

Solutions for small
businesses and
self-employed



Have a member who needs insurance?
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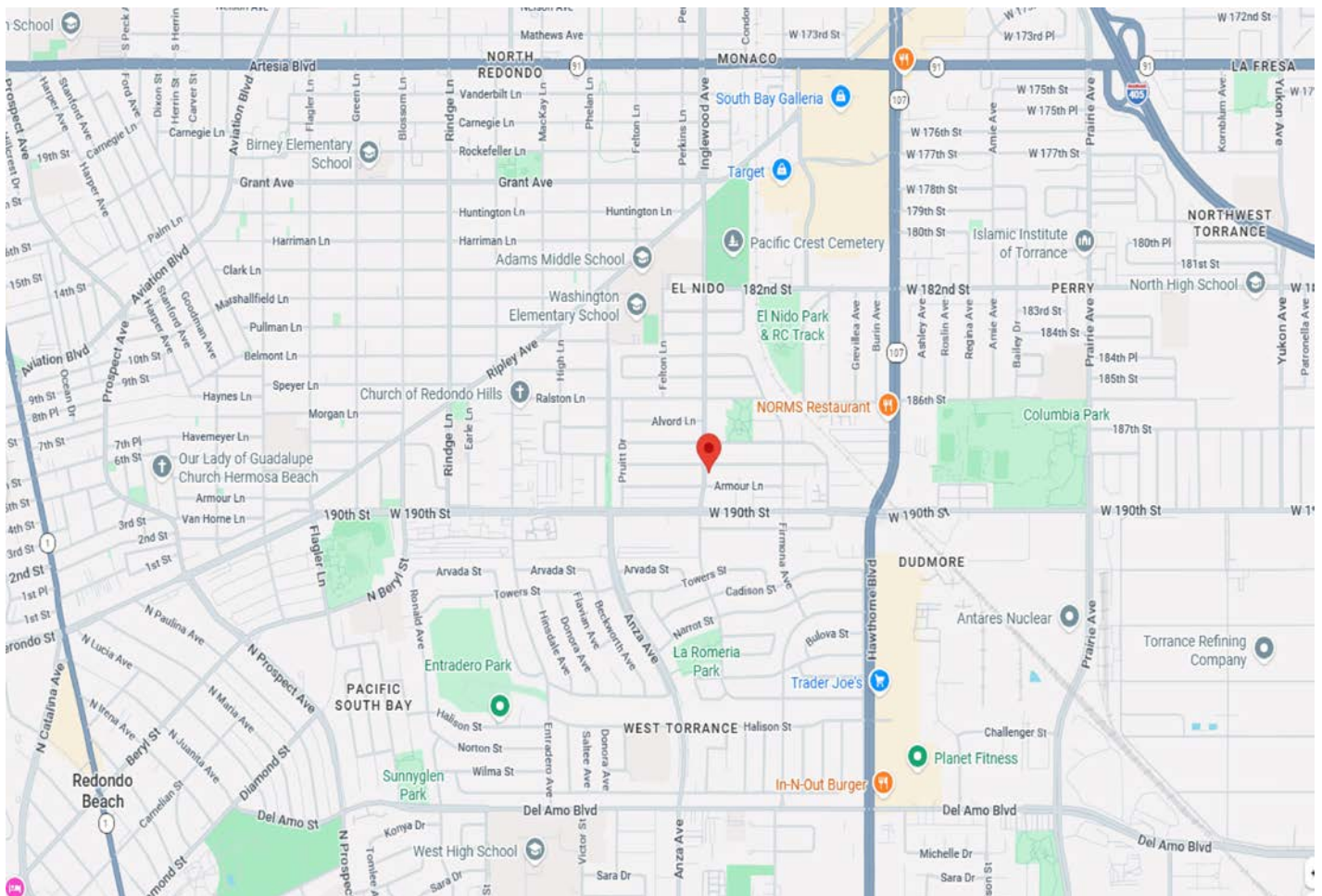


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Faithfully protecting *what matters most.*
Coverage is subject to terms, conditions, and availability of the policy.



Journey South Bay, 2761 190th Street, Redondo Beach, CA



Street parking in front. Church parking lot from Armor Lane, behind church.