

**Regional Board Meeting**  
**Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the Northern Lights Region**

Sunday, June 1, 2025 – 6 pm AT/7 pm PT/8 pm MT (Zoom)

In attendance: Doug Garner (Moderator), Mary Larsen (Moderator-elect), Mary Palmer (Treasurer), Miriam Gentle (at-large, AR/PR Team Chair), Katee Kostecki (Youth/Young Adult Rep), Karrin Lewis (Commission on Ministry), Jeff Foster (Big Sky), Barb Abercrombie (Salish Sea), Angela Kaufman (Salish Sea), Sarah Almanza (Tahoma), Rachel Crum (Tahoma), Paul Allen (Regional Minister), Robin Crabb (notes)

Absent: Ellie Leech (Nominating Chair), Gloria Soja (Personnel), Brenton Nundahl (Youth/Young Adult), Doug Taylor (Big Sky), Max Webb (at-large, Columbia), Matthew Keith (Columbia), Devin Wright (Secretary, sabbatical).

**Doug opened in prayer at 7:04 pm PT.**

**Financial Report and Annual Fund – Mary Palmer**

- Mary shared that the Region is currently stable and looking strong. *See Mary's written summary attached.* From AI assist: "The regional board reviewed financial reports showing strong performance in congregational giving and investment income. Mary also discussed the completion of the 2025 annual fund campaign, which featured promotional materials and a podcast, and mentioned upcoming giving opportunities, including the Pentecost New Church offering."
- The DMF Pentecost Special Offering supporting New Church Ministries is coming on June 1 & 8, 2025.

**Regional Minister's Report – Paul Allen**

- Paul reported on various regional activities and updates and shared upcoming travel plans, including to Montana (Central CC, Billings; Grand Avenue CC, Bozeman), Seattle (Welcome Table CC; Seattle Pride), Sumner FCC, and Spokane Pride. He will attend both summer camps in Lacey, WA and Lincoln, MT in July, as well as General Assembly in Memphis, TN.
- He also discussed the search and call process for several churches in the region, including Creston CC (called a new pastor), United Church in Moscow, ID (called an American Baptist pastor), Waterville Federated (called a shared Presbyterian pastor with two other churches), United CC in Renton, WA (called Kara Markell as interim), and FCC Olympia, WA (doing good interim work with Doug Wirt and Cathy Myers Wirt). He mentioned Ellie's last Sunday at Northwest CC, Seattle, as she and her family are moving to VA. He will be meeting with Northwest CC, Seattle, WA and FCC Bremerton, WA soon.
- Paul highlighted the success of General Assembly grants (11), first-time clergy General Assembly grants (4), and technology grants for congregations (11). This year we have granted two Reconciliation grants with one in the approval process with a decision timeline of November.
  - Doug asked if Paul was being faithful about taking his regular time off. Paul said he sometimes has trouble taking his regular Fridays off due to necessary travel or issues that pop up, but he does try to be sure to take half days off through the week when he can. The Board affirmed he should take regular time off when possible.
  - Karrin reminded the Board that the Nominating Team Chair position will be vacant when Ellie moves. Having spoken to her husband, former Nominating Chair, the person needs to have varied/broad relationships in the Region, or at least be willing to make calls to get to know people and create a region-wide network so that the full Region is included. Paul said he thought there was a partial team in place and will touch base with Ellie.

### **General Assembly Voting Representatives –**

- The Region can have up to five voting representatives. Doug said he expected that Katee was a rep in her role as Youth/Young Adult participant and grant recipient. Katee agreed.
- Karrin said it would be nice to have all four regional areas represented.
- Five names of those who we know are attending that aren't clergy, who already have a vote, are:
  - (Big Sky) Katee Kostecki
  - (Big Sky) Chuck Tooley, Billings, MT (Doug will follow up)
  - (Tahoma) Patricia Yates, Vancouver, WA (Paul will follow up)
  - (Salish Sea) Hyeseong Jeong, Everett, WA (Paul will follow up)
  - (Columbia) Patti Allen, Davenport, WA (Paul will follow up)
- Karrin moved to invite these five attendees to be NLR voting reps, Angela seconded. 100% favorable.

### **Proposed changes to Transformation policy and grant application form –**

- Paul shared that the Transformation Team has wanted a more standardized grant request form and process, less “hodge podge,” and based their proposed changes on the newer [Reconciliation grant policy, and online application form](#), insuring all requests include what is important and in a prescribed format. The team would make recommendations for grants which are forwarded to the Executive Committee and Board for approval. Proposed policy changes were included in a document in the Board meeting packet.
- Angela asked if financials would be part of a grant recipient's post-project reporting; Paul confirmed.
- The Team hopes to provide examples, stories, and improve understanding as to how grants can be used and ways congregations can benefit from these funds and transformation resources/processes in general.
  - Karrin suggested providing varied examples without limiting creativity. Paul clarified the goal is to expand ideas; a thought that came up in recent area clergy gatherings was that churches aren't sure what it means or how the funds can be used. Clarity and communication are key objectives.
  - Katee asked where people wanting information could be directed. Paul said the Team is seeking members and will help congregations and provide information. Team members are Rev. Sacia Vik and Rev. Colin McRaney; one other just resigned. Laity are also encouraged to join the team. Robin has provided Paul a list of clergy who have expressed interest in this in standing forms.
- Motion to accept this policy change and move forward with an online format.
- Vote 100% approved. Robin will format the policy and create an online grant request portal.

### **Regional Minister Evaluation Process (FYI) –**

- The evaluation is handled by the Executive Committee; will progress as described in their May 22 notes. Normally done before budget time, but it was decided to wait until Paul had one year in his position.

### **Pastoral Relations Committee –**

- Doug shared that Paul reminded him about the standard formation of a PRC.
- Karrin noted that sometimes the Pastoral Search & Call Team is the first PRC and cited the general church's materials. Doug asked if she, as Search Team Chair, was offering, she said yes. Paul said that would be fine.
- ~~Doug will reach out to Gloria Soja as Personnel Chair, and will then be in contact with Karrin.~~

### **Confirm Regional Assembly Planning Team –**

- Sarah Almanza (FCC Puyallup, WA) has agreed to chair; Mary Larsen (Puyallup) and Gloria Soja (FCC Helena, MT) will also be on the team. Teams typically have 6-7 planners plus a tech team, and regional support.

### **Proposal for stipends for Camp Staff –**

- Doug explained the background and current iteration and breakout of expenses for this stipend proposal. This started in 2022 for a different reason, but now is a way to incentivize quality Site Directors and auxiliary staff (cook, medical coordinator).
- Katee expressed from her standpoint as a person who has found camp leadership to be meaningful in her life, and also in her experience as a counselor, this is a great idea, a good investment into important roles.
- Mary L. asked about only one Cane Ridge West cook being listed; Gwinwood has employees to do the cooking (per Health Department codes).
- The proposal requests:
  - Total costs for Auxiliary Staff: \$1500 (500 x 3) to come from Camps/Outdoor Ministries Designated.
  - Total cost for Site Directors: \$1000/week x 2 campsites = \$2,000 to come from Youth Ministries Coordinator Residual Funds (\*)
- VOTE was 100% in favor of approving the 2025 stipend.

### **Discussion of grants for Douglass Anne Cartwright and Jenny Jacobson (FYI) –**

- The Executive Committee had approved by email 1) an enhanced clergy/laity GA grant up to \$2,000 for Rev. Douglass Anne Cartwright to take her child, and 2) a grant up to \$6,000 from unused regional Disciples Women's Ministry funds for Rev. Jennifer Jacobson's DWM trip to Kenya. The Region has asked her if she has funds from other sources. She will be available as a presenter after the trip.
- Sarah requested a correction in the Executive Committee notes: "son" be changed to "child." (Done.)
- No vote needed.

### **Confirm new member for the Commission on Ministry (FYI) –**

- A Commission on Ministry member resigned, so there was a need for a clergyperson from the Tahoma Area. Rev. Mitch Becker, FCC Port Angeles, WA pastor has agreed to complete the term (2028).
- No vote needed.

### **Cancellation of Couples Retreat (FYI) –**

- Doug explained the retreat was cancelled for safety/security reasons related to a client of the speaker.
- No vote needed.

### **Donation to The Fig Tree (Paul) –**

- Paul had received information about the Fig Tree resource directory in the Spokane area. Although there is no previous record of it, Columbia area clergy says there is a donation precedent.
- A motion was made to donate \$250 to The Fig Tree.
- Vote was 100% in favor.

### **Additional Topics for consideration (not on agenda):**

- **General Assembly additional discussion (Paul) –**
  - Paul brought up an expense of \$360 for a shared reception at the General Assembly with Western Regions in Ministry (WRIM).
  - Vote was 100% in favor. This will come out of operating funds under Miscellaneous Expense.
- **Spokane Pride event expense**
  - Paul wondered if the Region could cover the cost of a booth for Spokane/Columbia Area churches at Spokane Pride. The cost would be \$250.
  - Vote was 100% in favor. This will come out of operating funds under Miscellaneous Expense.
  - Sarah shared some of the Tahoma churches are excited to be approved for Tacoma Pride event.
  - Karrin asked about the status of a regional O&A (Open and Affirming to all) process. Paul has reached out to Disciples AllianceQ. Last NLR conversations were at the 2022 Regional Assembly.
    - Katee asked if all congregations would be O&A if the Region was, the answer is no, DOC churches are autonomous and would need to complete the AllianceQ process, too.
    - Karrin talked about the process and resources available from AllianceQ. The first part is a “taking the temperature” of either a congregation, or in this case, members of the Region, to see what the general feeling is. The process doesn’t automatically lead to a congregation (region) being O&A, but is a relational, conversational discernment and education process.
    - Doug thought the process was best started at Board level, but conceded that the temperature-taking piece might be a starting point at the next Regional Assembly in 2026.
    - Paul will bring information to the next Board meeting.
- With no further conversation or questions, Paul closed the meeting in prayer at 8:27 PM PT.

### **Next meetings:**

- Executive Committee – 9/18/25 at 6 pm PT/7 pm MT
- Regional Board – 9/28/25 at 6 pm AK/7 pm PT/8 pm MT