

Northern Lights Regional Board meeting – Sunday, February 22, 2026

These notes are taken from a recording.

Present: Barb Abercrombie, Paul Allen, Sarah Almanza, Rachel Crum, Jeff Foster, Doug Garner, Miriam Gentle, Angela Kaufman, Matthew Keith, Katee Kostecki, Amy LaCroix, Mary Larsen, Karrin Lewis, Mary Palmer, Doug Taylor

Absent: Brenton Nundahl, Gloria Soja, Max Webb, Devin Wright

Doug brought the meeting brought to order.

Previous Board meeting notes unanimously approved.

Regional Minister Report – Paul Allen

In addition to his annual report to the General Board, Paul covered these highlights (see full report in packet):

- Standing renewal forms are down to eight outstanding
- ALEX data entries are coming in regularly – 32 congregations have completed or are in progress
- Regional Assembly planning is progressing
- AR/PR training for clergy, leaders, and laity will be held in person from 9 am-4 pm on May 1st prior to the Regional Assembly, led by Chris Dorsey (DHM)
- 2026 virtual General Assembly will be held July 10th & 11th. Registration opens in March. Tech training for congregational hubs and Disciples gatherings is being held February 26th & 28th.
- Regional Elders program – 3 yesses so far
- New Church Ministry Team is being assembled
- Annual Fund emphasis will take place leading up to and ending at the Regional Assembly

Regional Minister Housing Allowance Changes – Paul Allen

- Paul explained that he has to update his housing allowance annually and that changes have taken place from 2025 due to his house in Alabama having been sold and no longer having two mortgages
- Doug asked if anyone had questions: None
- Doug asked whether the Board approves making these numbers for 2026 housing allowance official: All in favor
- Paul will send these Regional Board meeting notes to Treasury Services to implement this change for 2026

Column I	Account Title	Actual
1000	Davenport Home	\$38,769.76
2000	Utilitles Davenport	\$4,950.00
3000	Furnishings	\$2,000.00
4000	Health Care (Bonus Discovery)	\$16,800.00
Total		\$62,519.76

Finances – Mary Palmer, Treasurer (see full report in packet)

- Mary shared that the reports included in the packet were preliminary December 2025 reports from Treasury Services. The final reports have since been received. The difference being that a pending transfer to CCF had not been completed, but in the final report it was posted.
- Individual and congregational giving patterns are trending lower
- Total 2025 assets: \$5.32 million; \$7.3 thousand in liabilities; \$5.31 million net assets.
- A DCEF note matures this month at \$274.9k (original \$250k). The Board must decide what to do with it Choices: Roll into another of our DCEF accounts at higher interest of 3.645% or add to a CCF long term investment fund at 4%. We have 30 days. Mary recommends asking Monica (CCF) before deciding. Mary can email the Board for an email conversation and vote.

Bylaws Revisions Update – Paul

- Our bylaws state that a team should be assembled to review them every two years. Bill Jennison was asked to update the bylaws in keeping with the General Assembly's moving to a three-year schedule. His changes primarily included amendments reflecting that transition. Paul and Robin also looked at the current bylaws and suggested several changes including a change of leadership terms to reflect this transition to a triennium (Moderator and Moderator-Elect terms, COM turnover, possibly in off-Assembly years or every three years), as well as some grammatical changes. Bill will create a second draft to present to the Board.
- Our bylaws state the Board must have a 30-day notice to review bylaws amendments for a vote. The Assembly would also need a span of time prior to a vote. Doug calculated a second draft by March 1st, and a voter's pamphlet sent to certified voting reps by April 1st [all voters will not be registered yet].
- Discussion on Mary Larsen's term who agreed to four years (2 Moderator-elect, 2 Moderator) and may not be able to complete an extra year as Moderator. This decision will be left up to Mary.

Open and Affirming Discernment Process – Paul

- An O&A discernment process conversation began at the 2022 Regional Assembly but with so many regional transitions, was then tabled with a new Regional Minister. The conversation will be revisited at the 2024 Assembly. This assembly conversation will surround a vote to begin a discernment process, not a vote on being an open and affirming region.
- Paul has been in touch with Jermell Witherspoon from AllianceQ, who will be at the Regional Assembly and who is excited to work with a region on this process, which will be extended compared to a congregational process, likely three years to the next Regional Assembly.
- Steps will be: Set up an O&A Discernment Team; Select a Chair; Talk to the Assembly; Schedule conversations to meet, hear questions and celebrations; Reach a consensus on how to move forward.
- The Executive Committee voted to recommend this topic to the Board and Assembly.
Doug asked if anyone had questions: None
Doug asked if the Board was in favor of recommending the process of O&A discernment to the Assembly: All in favor

Regional Assembly Report – Sarah Almanza

- The Planning Team meets regularly for check-ins; individuals have taken on various parts
The regional website is being added to all the time: northernlightsdisciples.org/2026-regional-assembly
- Business Session – Doug and Paul will work on an agenda and will tag-team for a State of the Region.
Three main things are:
 - A vote on slate of officers and regional leaders
 - A vote on bylaws updates
 - A vote on moving forward with an Open and Affirming Discernment Process
- Other needs are:
 - Commission/Committee and Ministry Team reports for print docket

Team Reports for this meeting

- Nominating Team – Amy LaCroix
 - Nominating Team is being assembled; Chris Snow will help
 - Trying to achieve a broad balance of clergy, laity, and gender for the Board and COM.
Amy invites emails with suggestions: amybookmamas@yahoo.com
 - Board needs – All four Area Reps; Moderator-elect; Treasurer; Personnel
 - COM will have 5 vacancies
- COM Amorous Relationships Policy – Karrin Lewis
 - Suggested changes made at last meeting were presented
 - Motion by Matthew Keith to accept. Second by Karrin Lewis. Vote: All in favor.
 - Approval date will be added to policy and replaced in all appropriate places (Regional Office)
- Reconciliation Grant Requests – Miriam Gentle
 - Two grant requests have been recommended for approval by the AR/PR Team, need Board vote
 - North Hill CC - \$2500 for ADA Accessible doors
 - Englewood CC - \$2500 for expansion of justice library
 - Board approval vote: All in favor
- Rachel asked if the Board is expected to take AR/PR training at Regional Assembly. No, but/and:
 - The new Board will have AR/PR training as part of their first in-person meeting
 - The Board meeting training does not meet the clergy requirements of six hours
 - All are invited and encouraged to [register for the training with Chris Dorsey](#) in May if they wish
 - [The NLR Board and Leadership policy for Anti-racism/Pro-reconciliation training is here](#)
- Karrin wondered if Board members should be asked to attend AR/PR training at Regional Assemblies instead of the in-person Board meeting so as not to take time from regional business. Responses were:
 - New Board members would not be voted in yet
- Barbara wondered about the date for the in-person meeting; she was unable to make it in 2024 and may be traveling around that time in 2026. Doug just hopes that a majority can make it.
 - AR/PR is required by the Board – how is that handled if missed?

Other questions and comments

- Katee wondered if it was assumed she would take another Board term or if she needs to offer. She would like to. Amy said “great!” and will be asking those who are eligible what they would like to do.
- Katee also related to the Board from Mat Goodrich (Faith Formation Chair) that he would like to have a report included to the Board. *[Note: Mat has been on the request for reports every time.]*

The next Board meeting date and time will be determined by the return of the Bylaws update draft. Otherwise, this is the final full board meeting for the biennium. Thanks were made to board members.

Paul closed the meeting in prayer at 8:06 pm PT.

Submitted by Robin Crabb, Regional Administrator