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Bethel
College

• Office of the President

August 27, 2007

A letter to:

Pastors
Conference Ministers
Conference Moderators

Of these MC USA conferences:

Central Plains
Pacific Northwest
Pacific Southwest
Western District

Your congregation and conference share a special connection with Bethel College. The enclosed Church Relations Update provides a general explanation and historical context of the governance structure of Bethel College. We invite you to share this Update, and subsequent editions, with your congregations. It is typically distributed electronically and is available on our web site. This edition of the Update also includes an article about our booth at the MC USA assembly in San Jose and an article from Dale Schrag, Director of Church Relations.

With conferences emerging from a transformed national conference structure under MCUSA, I write this letter to clarify and strengthen our connection with your area conference and congregations. The formal connection has two key components: (1) Conference representation on the Board; and (2) conference and congregational votes at the Corporation meeting.

(1) Board Representative: The enclosed Church Relations Update describes how your conference is formally represented on the Bethel College Board of Directors. That representation demonstrates a strong connection between Bethel and the local church structure. Beyond mere representation, we anticipate that these persons will have strong passion for and advocate for the mission of Bethel. Our Board's Directors' Committee maintains a policy describing Board member obligations, and we seek to balance gender, racial-ethnic background, and other issues on the Board. I will continue to communicate directly with conference leadership about these appointments.

(2) Corporation: A private Corporation formed Bethel College in 1887. Although the structure has evolved, this Corporation continues to function, with the primary purpose of selecting three members of the Board of Directors of the College. As with other Board terms, the terms are six years and can be renewed for two consecutive terms, so an election does not occur in every corporation meeting. There is no election this year.

(a) Voting Rights: The voting rights in the Corporation have changed over time. Individual contributors have voting rights based on their level of contribution. In addition, each of the conferences addressed by this letter holds 50 votes, and each congregation in each of those conferences holds one vote for each ten members, in addition to the vote of the pastor. Conferences and Congregations must give notice of the delegates in writing. Votes can be cast by proxy, which must be in writing and is valid for one meeting, provided that no individual is entitled to hold more than 150 individual proxies and more than 25 conference or congregation votes.



(b) Attendance: While churches are encouraged to be present at the corporation meeting, historically and practically this corporation meeting has been attended primarily by local persons and serves as an opportunity to give an update on happenings at the College. We are contemplating a change in the bylaws so that, consistent with Kansas law, a quorum is defined as those persons present in person or by proxy at the meeting to ensure that the meetings can be conducted without postponement. We will invite comments about this change at this year's Corporation meeting.

(c) MSMC: With the creation of the Mountain States Mennonite Conference in 2006, including some congregations formerly part of the Western District Conference, a new conference with historic connections has been formed. We are in the process of amending our Bylaws to invite representation on our Board from the MSMC, and this letter will be copied to their Conference Minister and Moderator, with the logistical information to be shared with pastors and congregational chairperson at the appropriate time. We will invite comments about this change at this year's Corporation meeting.

(d) Bylaws: The information described in this letter is intended to reflect the key components of churches' voting rights. If you would like a complete copy of the Bylaws, please let me know.

(e) Notice of Corporation Meeting: The Bylaws define that this meeting is held at 7:30 p.m. on the fourth Friday of September each year. This year the meeting is on September 28, 2007, in the Schultz Student Center on the Bethel College campus. We typically publish the date and time in the Annual Report, along with the agenda.

(3) Broader Connections: These formal connections are important and represent a formal connection with the area and local church bodies. Of course, these connections are further strengthened by many other less formal relationships between Bethel and persons in your congregations. We thank you for your support and look forward to continuing to provide integrity at the intersection of excellence in education, discipleship, and service. You can review these core values in the context of our Mission Statement on our web page.

Communication: Because of these formal and other connections, we look forward to sending your congregation our *Context* magazine, our annual report, notice of web release of the Church Relations Update, and other information. We welcome your suggestions of what would be helpful as well.

We invite your questions and comments.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barry C. Bartel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B' and 'B'.

Barry C. Bartel