**Illinois Mennonite Conference**

**Sonido de Alabanza**

**2023 Annual Assembly Minutes**

**March 11, 2023**

Illinois Mennonite Conference met in person for an annual assembly for the first time since February 2020. Our last 2 annual assemblies were by zoom. Our meeting was graciously hosted by Sonido de Alabanza.

Our worship time in music was led by a trio of Sonido singers. Jolene Miller continued to direct our worship through scripture, confessions, and prayer. Senior pastor and Sonido founder Juan Ferreras welcomed everyone and shared his pilgrimage of faith from Puerto Rico to planting Sonido’s community of believers in Cicero.

Pastor Jai Prakash introduced his long-time colleague in ministry, Reverend George Iype Kovoor from Lexington Kentucky. Pastor Kovoor addressed Missions: Divine Imperative.

Lunch – Sonido member Fabian Esteban oversaw the preparations for a wonderful lunch break.

**Ministries** - After lunch, representatives from several Mennonite agencies updated us on their ministries: Eric Martin from Mennonite Mission Network, Rachel Ringenberg Miller from MCUSA, Ronn Frantz from Mennonite Disaster Service, Randy Detweiler from Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Jay Witmeyer from Lombard Peace Center, and Krista Dutt from MCC Great Lakes.

**Finances –** Congregations’ giving to IMC (not pass throughs) was down $11,000. Some of that was simply due to the calendar year it was booked. There was a surplus after operations of $46,797. After disbursements to Nepali Outreach, church grants, and Mennonite World Conference, there was a surplus of $20,297. Spending plan for 2023 was approved.

**IMC Teams** – It was noted that over the last two years 14 people have been unsuccessfully approached to serve on IMC teams. Church Life Team members Curt Fenton and Anne Munley have completed two 3-year terms. Curt and Anne are willing to serve two more years to help conclude IMC credentialing discussions. Patty Yordy and Lyle Bohnert are nominated for a 2nd term on MLT. Darrel Miller had been approved for a one-year term in 2022. He is nominated to serve 2 more years as moderator. All nominations were approved.

**Discussion** – The meeting was opened for questions and comments. Most questions were about our discussions about credentialing and eventual decision making. Notably, one person asked for more time before a decision and another asked for a more immediate conclusion. As it was stated in the assembly materials, there would be another listening/discussion gathering and then churches would be individually canvased for their preferences.

Pastor Sergio Nava of Sonido de Alabanza closed our meeting in prayer.

There were 25 in-person IMC attenders (includes 8 team members), about 10 by zoom, 8 agency representatives. There were many Sonido hosts and helpers.