the conclusion of games Nov. 10.

for American fans to ever get to

for spring training in February.

be the last (*MWR*, Nov. 11).

MB leader pleads no contest, withdraws from international role

By Tim Huber
Mennonite World Review

After an arrest in January for solicitation of prostitution in Fresno, Calif., a Mennonite Brethren leader resigned from a conference leadership position and withdrew from another.

Wall

Gary Wall, who served since 2002 as district minister of Pacific District Conference of the U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, had accepted the role of U.S. national director with the International Community of Mennonite Brethren, to begin in 2020.

ICOMB executive director Rudi Plett told *MWR* the organization was not aware of the arrest when it announced in May that Wall was joining ICOMB.

"We have tried to be open, but wise, supportive and caring for all involved people and institutions in this process," he said.

Fresno County court records indicate Wall was arrested Jan. 23 on a misdemeanor charge of agreeing to engage in prostitution. Local media reports from the time stated 18 people were arrested that day at a Fresno massage parlor during an operation in which people were detained for soliciting an undercover officer for sex acts in exchange for money.

On May 21, Pacific District announced Wall had resigned as district minister, effective July 2, in order to work for ICOMB. A severance package ran through the end of the year.

In a report by the MB magazine *Christian Leader* on May 29, Wall said: "The decision to respond affirmatively to the invitation to join the ICOMB team is a work of God's Spirit as I have wrestled with the implications of what has become a clear call to leave my ministry in the PDC. . . . Transitions such as this present an opportunity for fresh leadership vision."

Pacific District moderator Pat Coyle announced Wall's decision in a letter to PDC pastors.

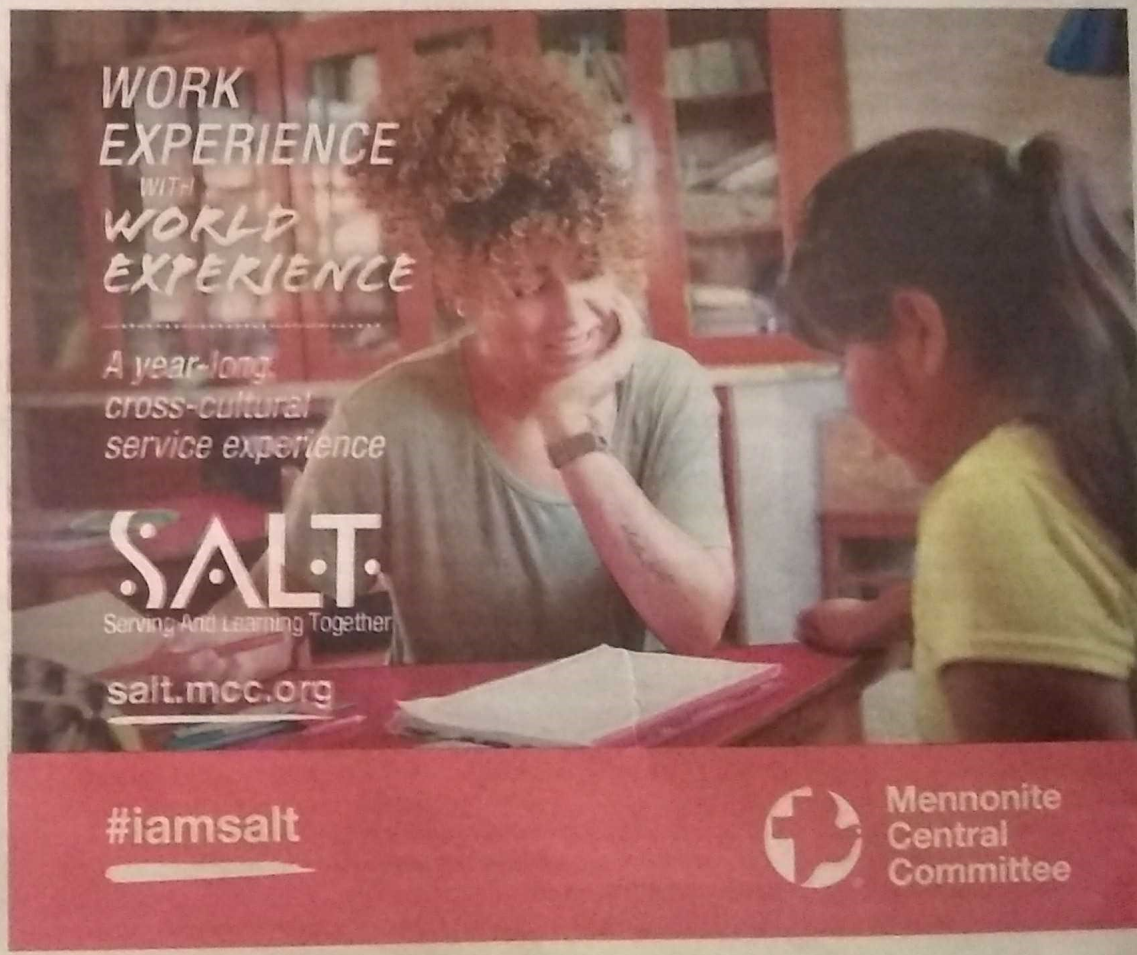
"I will miss his friendship but know the Lord has wonderful plans for him in his new role in the greater MB world," wrote Coyle, senior pastor at Shafter (Calif.) Mennonite Brethren Church, at the time.

About three months later, on Aug. 26 in county court, Wall pleaded no contest to the charge.

Withdrawal from ICOMB

On Nov. 5, ICOMB announced Wall had withdrawn from plans to serve with that organization.

"It is with disappointment that we communicate that Gary Wall has for personal reasons withdrawn his availability to become a USMB-based advocate and resource development partner for the International Community of Mennonite Brethren," stated ICOMB executive director Rudi Plett and the ICOMB Executive in November. "In light of this, we wish Gary God's favor in the next season of his life journey and encourage you to do the same."

Neither organization mentioned Wall's arrest in public statements.

When contacted by *MWR*, Coyle said Wall's conclusion of service with Pacific District was a private personnel matter. He would not comment on when PDC learned of the arrest, if people should know he was arrested or if Pacific District shared that information with ICOMB. "As a district we appreciate his 17 years of service, and that's all we're acknowledging at this time," he said.