Dear PDC Pastors and Churches,

On behalf of your PDC leadership, I wanted to take a moment to share some of the progress we have made in promoting safe and healthy environments for carrying out the ministry of the PDC. This update is part of an ongoing effort to increase transparency and accountability within our family of churches. We recognize that your PDC leadership is responsible for setting an example of how to lead with integrity, for the sake of the Gospel. Our hope is this update will be a step in the right direction and provide you with a resource for doing the same within your respective contexts.

Your PDC leadership has committed to the following:

1. To seek resources that will help us clarify the roles and responsibilities of our current leadership structure.
2. To work closely with our various boards to assure that care for self and family is prioritized.
3. To provide resources to our churches promoting safe and healthy ministry environments free of sexual misconduct and abuse.

I'll address our progress to each of these in the same order as listed above:

1. There are three ways we are working towards seeking clarity in our leadership structure.
    a. We have engaged in the lengthy process of updating our "PDC Employee Handbook." This update includes several new areas for training and education, as well as lengthy updates to employee conduct. To perform this update, we have employed outside counsel and are now in the process of editing for relevance.
    b. I have been authorized by the PDC Executive Board to engage the services of Justin Manzey (Latitude Ministries) for assistance in revisioning the additional staff position we first presented at the 2019 PDC Convention. We worked with Justin to bring clarity to the PDC mission and vision, and the Exec Board were very pleased with the results.
    c. Each PDC board has been writing new descriptions and purposes for their respective boards. This is being done in alignment with our USMB Confession of Faith, USMB and PDC Bylaws, and new PDC Plan & Purpose document (see attachment).
2. There are several ways we are assuring care for self and family.
    a. The PDC Executive Board and PDC Board of Faith and Life have taken on increased ownership and responsibility in this area as it relates to me, personally. As my employer, the Exec Board has regularly been checking in to make sure that I am doing well personally, and that I am also making the connections this role requires. They allowed me space to care for my family by limiting travel during the uncertain climate in which I transitioned to DM. They have now encouraged me to take time to be home before/after spending time away from my young boys and incredible wife. The BFL has accepted the role of serving as my "Elder Board." They hold me accountable, encourage me, and do everything else one could hope to have from a team of spiritual overseers. I am grateful for both teams.
    b. Our new "PDC Employee Handbook," once completed, will help us clearly define policies and procedures for taking time off. This both protects the PDC by holding the PDC staff accountable, but also protects the staff by defining how we take time away for R&R.

c. Part of my employment agreement provides me with the ability to see a professional counselor twice a month (on average). This has been an incredible resource for my own spiritual and emotional wellbeing. Professional counseling once held a stigma within many faith traditions. I hope my transparency will encourage others to engage in this valuable resource.

3. As for resources, please see the attached documents, “Sexual Misconduct & Abuse,” and, “Sexual Misconduct & Abuse Appendixes A-D.” The former document was created by our PDC BFL as a resource for our PDC Churches. The latter are taken from the USMB resource mentioned in the letter. We hope these will serve as a valuable supplement to your already existing policies for providing safe and healthy environments for carrying out the ministry of the Gospel.

Thank you for serving our PDC family of churches. Thank you for taking time to read this letter and the attached documents. Finally, thank you for providing me with this opportunity to serve each of you. If you have any questions or concerns, please call or email me anytime (information provided below).

Blessings,

Jordan Ringhofer
District Minister
Pacific District Conference
Of Mennonite Brethren Churches
[redacted]@fresno.edu
[redacted]