

Shared Services: Resourcing Across the GNW

For 7+ years, the treasurers and administrative staff serving in the Greater Northwest Area have been aligning their work across the Alaska, Oregon-Idaho, and Pacific Northwest Conferences. Now, a **Shared Services Model** is taking shape—not to merge annual conferences, but to:

- Deepen expertise
 - Serve churches more effectively
 - Collaborate meaningfully
 - Stay adaptive in a changing world
 - Improve efficiencies where they make sense
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The Roadmap

In 2021, the Pacific Northwest Conference anticipated retirements from its assistant treasurer, accountant, and benefits officer. That, coupled with the retirement of the OR-ID Treasurer and several other finance staff, and the need to move to a new accounting software platform, created an opening for change. A forward-looking proposal for a team sharing responsibility for the financial and administrative work across the GNW Area was developed, with the attrition providing the space to imagine the shift. Still, cultural differences and institutional inertia (and being short-handed) slowed progress toward adaptation of this new “Shared Services Model.”

By mid-2024, there was new energy and focus to make Shared Services a reality by staying focused on the original vision while avoiding mission creep. Sara Goetze, acting conference treasurer in OR-ID since 2023, became a frequent observer in PNW Board and Committee meetings as the team began to learn about one another’s conference practices and processes. In addition, Brant Henshaw, Alaska and PNW treasurer since 2012, has been mirroring Sara’s actions, observing and getting to know the practices and processes of the OR-ID Conference.

Preparing for the retirement of the long serving Alaska and PNW Benefits Officer Bruce Galvin in 2026, we hired a seasoned Human Resources and Benefits professional Kristi Durham. Kristi is starting to learn and speak “Methodist” while bringing much-needed expertise to our team. This past summer, we hired Katrishca Barker, a preacher’s kid who grew up in the Seattle area. Katrishca brings a wealth of real estate and property management experience, which is valuable as she focuses on organizing the management of conference-held properties before broadening into resourcing local churches for property and insurance matters.

At the 2025 Annual Conferences, the approval of a GNW Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer was an opportunity for conference members to affirm this new administrative approach. Since then, we have been busy adjusting roles, filling some openings, and continuing to set standard operating procedures to streamline our work. The new Superintendency structure is another adjustment and adaptation to processes that has illuminated new areas in which we can further improve our support work to conference leadership.

Funding

One of the questions we have heard is how will this model be funded? This is a place where we can do more when we collaborate as an area. We use a ratio to split costs between the conferences, which impacts our ability to hire staff. The ratio for this work is 60% paid by PNW and 40% paid by OR-ID. Alaska will contribute a flat fee for services while their vote to join Shared Services is pending. Most of this funding comes through the apportioned budget of each conference. We have been able to continue fund the Shared Services team because of this collaborative funding model.

What's next?

The Shared Services team will continue to refine our workflows, update processes when appropriate, respond to the changing needs of the conferences, and support local churches in alignment with our ministry priorities. There will be informational and educational webinars to assist local church leaders with needs at the local level. We will continue to look for preferred vendors to add to those we already have that can benefit local ministries. We will augment our ability through all levels of the church to keep people safe, informed, current, and connected so local communities can be served.

Our Commitment to You

We believe these initiatives prepare us to adapt faithfully and effectively as the world and church continue to change.

Shared Services is committed to:

- ✓ Listening to the needs of local churches
- ✓ Supporting clergy benefits
- ✓ Consulting on property and administration
- ✓ Stewarding financial gifts and fulfilling financial obligations
- ✓ Resourcing church committees and servant leaders

Shared Services Leadership Team

- **Brant Henshaw** – Executive Director of Finance & Admin / Treasurer
- **Sara Goetze** – Director of Finance / Assistant Treasurer
- **Kristi Durham** – Director of Human Resources & Benefits
- **Katrishca Barker** - Director of Property Asset Management
- **Bruce Galvin** – Serving as Alaska and PNW Benefits Officer through June 2026