

FELLOWSHIP COUNCIL MEETING JULY 24, 2017 Grace Community Church, Fremont OH

PRESENT: everyone—Adam Johnson (new 19-C) Jeremy Wike (20-A), Clancy Cruise (18 Executive Director), Tim Hodge (18-C), Tom Avey (Fellowship Coordinator), Greg Sarafino (18-A), Dave Guiles (Encompass Exec. Director), Joe Cosentino (17-B), Randy Weekley (17-C), Roy Halberg (19-A), Scott Avey (20-C), Ron Boehm (20-B), Phil Bryant (17-A), Mark Lingenfelter (18-B), Adam Copenhaver (21-A), Doug Black (21-B), Kevin Pinkerton (19-B), Doug Courtier (21-C), and Greg Howell (Recording Secretary)

Clancy gave devotions from 2 Kings 12 and the life of King Jehoash. He became king at the age of 7 and was instructed by Jehoiada, the priest and did right as long as Jehoiada was alive. Then Jehoash went off the rails. Clancy suggested that the moral of story is: have a good mentor. We are the mentors for our Fellowship and in our individual churches. We need to be good! He then instructed the council members to take some time before the Lord for a few moments to refocus since we are leaders.

Tom Avey led the Council through the agenda asking for Consensus approval of following 5 items:

- Approve the Minutes of the January 2017 meeting in Seal Beach.
- Approve Tom's housing allowance for 2018 at \$35,000
- Approve Mark Penfold's housing allowance for 2018 as 50% of his salary.
- Ratify the Email vote to appoint Adam Johnson to fill Larry Orme's remaining term.
- Approve nominees for the nominating committee: Bruce Barlow, Phil Bryant, Joe Cosentino, Brad Gromis, Dan Jackson, Mike Jentes, Joel Richards, Viki Rife, Dan Thornton, Rich Todd, John Ward, Randy Weekley

The previous actions were all approved by consensus.

GO2 REPORT: In April, Go2 publically stated: "Go-2 Church Planting Ministries, the national church planting organization of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches since 2006, is discontinuing operations. Tim Boal, who served as executive director since its inception, resigned in November 2016." Based on this declaration, Go2 is no longer considered to be, nor listed as a National Ministry of the FGBC.

GB CANADA REPORT: (a cooperating ministry) has changed its name to "Assist Church eXpansion" with Rev. Nathan Bryant as the Executive Director. This new entity will combine the church planting efforts of GB Canada with church planting efforts in the US for a unified approach to planting and assisting legacy churches in all of North America.

EQUIPPING NETWORK REPORT from Tom Julien —see written report in binder.

REPORTS FOR DELEGATES to be brought to the Conference floor

New member churches - We need individual motions to recommend them to the delegates.

A MOTION PREVAILED to recommend the following churches individually to the conference delegates as member churches: Chelsea, Michigan; Layland Church; Lexington, Fox Hollow; & Ashland Village

POSITION STATEMENTS—Clancy reported that the committee is not ready to present position statements at this conference. He expressed gratitude for all of the input. He states that, "we have very valuable starting points, but don't have finished statements for this conference." Ultimately the

Fellowship Council determines those statements. Since we never have had position statements, the committee wants to carefully craft them so they will be beneficial to the local church. Continuing Resolutions come close and some might become Position Statements. They are trying to think it through carefully since we have never had to ‘live harmoniously under’ Continuing Resolutions before. A resolution might be the breeding ground for a future Position Statement. The committee has done a lot of speaking and a lot will be done by email. We need to get Position Statements into expressible language that works for the local church.

Position Statements will not be a place to duke out ideas. The Committee will be determining what is it that the bulk of us believe. The Committee is not ready to bring any Position Statements to this Conference but will in the future and understand they are obligated to make this happen. But it will take quite a bit of work to make this happen.

COMMENTS: Glad this is not being rushed, want to vet items carefully.

Dave Guiles—same process is supposed to be happening in the rest of the world, in 2020 some global Position Statements may move up to cluster 3.

Roy Halberg reminded to keep Don Shoemaker in the loop. Clancy responded that committee is in constant communication with Don.

Tom and Clancy pointed out the written recommended process. (see <http://www.fgbc.org/fc/documents/Postion%20Statements%20process.docx>)

COMMENT: Delegates need 2/3 to approve, Fellowship Council should do the same. That will be added to the Position Statement process.

Clancy clarified that this document for the process is just for the Fellowship Council and not for the delegates (yet).

A MOTION was tabled until after the next presentation: to approve the process as stated in the process document as amended.

REBRANDING RECOMMENDATION (Consultants Ede Bittle and Laura McEndres join Fellowship Council) Scott/Tim/Bartley narrowed the field of options at the February Fellowship Council meetings. But some concerns were expressed, so they did a pause and got some professionals, Ede, Laura, Scott Feather, and Brandon Rack. Dave Guiles, Tom Avey & Clancy Cruise were also involved.

They concentrated not on what we are all happy or unhappy with today, but 20 years from now. It has taken over 25 meetings to come to this point. Tim Hodge expressed his pleasure with the work that has been done thus far. They then showed a Video put together for the rebranding team, presenting two options. The second option is what is being put forward for the Fellowship Council at this time. Their suggestion then is: Charis Fellowship

COMMENTS: Phil: “Charis” is an unknown word. It will be a hard sell in Canada.

Mark, we will also have to explain Charis

Adam C—gives a blank slate

Kevin—we still all don’t pronounce it the same, Kah reece or Care iss

Doug-- echo, me

Jeremy—it’s not about me and my generation, but for those younger than me.

Adam J—Journey Church—have to explain no matter what, can explain better what Charis is than why not part of rest of Brethren.

Clancy —we need to be united on the big umbrella, but can name our local churches whatever we want.

Tim—we have effectively rebranded ourselves as a Fellowship.

TAvey—I like it, but I’ve had time to think about, “Fellowship” is what we refer to us as

Dave G—didn’t like Charis at first, but there is power in a name. Local churches don’t have to change names, it’s not part of the process. But local is a part of the national family name. What we really are is the “Fellowship.” What is the best second name? that’s where we need to agree and look to the future, what will last beyond us.

Joe—Our granddaughter’s name is Charis which has become a great opener when people ask the name of his new granddaughter, they find it “pretty” .

Randy—really want to get “Brethren” out, glad to be associated with something global and that we don’t have to change local church name.

Roy—negative at first, I pastor Grace Fellowship Church. Maybe it will open opportunity to share the Gospel. It will be a fresh way to explain FGBC.

Scott—from language standpoint, we call ourselves “Fellowship”, that propels us into that next generation. If we are going to err, should be on the side of the millennials.

Ede—We don’t actually own “Grace” because it is too generic. Same with Fellowship. Each presents a language barrier—people don’t really react to new words. That suggests a benefit of needing to explain. Charis digs deep to the global network which is a very big plus. Getting Brethren out is good to reach a younger, broader, global audience. Charis gives a clean slate.

Laura explained the rejection of “Grace Church Network”: There are too many unconnected Grace Churches. Millennials consider “network” good for business, but cold for relationships. Charis will appear deeper.

Tim—the suggested Process: 3 weeks communication with Fellowship Council for further clarification. Poll on email. Confidentiality DON’T SHARE THIS! Exceptions: wives! This is going to come to a vote, but we have to all be on the bus. Give this a vote and don’t look back. Want to find what’s best going ahead.

Process of Position Statement motion taken off the table.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS—motion does not say it is part of the Identity statement—but is included in Constitution changes.

The 3 people of initial team from the Fellowship Council are: Ron, Tim, and Clancy. The Executive Director chairs the committee. So future Executive Directors will need to realize when accept the nomination/appointment that this is also part of the job.

Just to clarify there are 3 from the Fellowship Council that fine-tune the selections before approval of whole Fellowship Council then to Conference for delegate vote to add to the other Position Statements (when we have some).

Adam C -- are these position statements doctrine or consensus issues? some will take more and different kind of work. A: Committee will welcome initial input.

Tim H—each statement needs to be brief, but supporting documents for reference.

Dave G—somethings we know we have consensus, some we need to study so that we can have consensus—we need to have both.

144
 145 Jeremy W—CCCI is the global consensus, Jesus, 2-doctrine, 3-distinctive, 4-regional in order to help
 146 the fringe to understand where we are, but mindful of the broader evangelical world.
 147
 148 Dave G—bridge building to those we ought to cooperate with. 3-no shame to declare who we are as
 149 family 4-cultural/regional distinctives
 150
 151 Jeremy W-is it an internal or external document?
 152
 153 DG—bridge-building with 1-3, surprised if most churches would put 4th on website, we need to
 154 identify our positions, but some may be no longer in 5 years. They will be more about who we are and
 155 maybe helps protect us legally
 156
 157 Tom A will send survey answers to all
 158 Jeremy W—if these are to be binding, shouldn't we expect consensus on the Fellowship Council?
 159
 160 They should be approved unanimously by the Fellowship Council. There can be many speakers
 161 against in order to be sure all views are heard, but we all own the final decision as if the approval were
 162 unanimous.
 163
 164 A MOTION PREVAILED: to approve the process for determining Position Statements as amended
 165 (committee is made up of 3 Fellowship Council members with Executive Director as the chair and each
 166 Statement must pass with at least 2/3 Fellowship Council approval).
 167
 168 CHARIS CELEBRATION SUNDAY
 169 Dave G--Charis was just a feeling internationally (before 2015). It changed at Bangkok, in November
 170 2015 with the Identity Statement. We (North America) joined the Charis Alliance as Charter members
 171 at last year's conference (2016). Then in 2020 the actual Charis group will vote on who their
 172 representatives will be. Currently there are 11 charter members, 3 in the application process, 5
 173 countries need to have enough churches (3) to be able to join, and 12 more countries with boots on
 174 the ground of which many will probably participate in 2020. We ought to invite all the Charis churches
 175 globally to celebrate with us on the same Sunday this Fall—Nov 5, 2017 Charis Celebration Sunday
 176
 177 A MOTION PREVAILED to endorse the Charis Celebration Sunday, November 5, 2017 and encourage
 178 our North American churches to participate on that day.
 179
 180 HOPE TEAMS OFFERING PROPOSAL - Dave Guiles
 181 Dave posed the question about how to respond to the refugee problem, globally. Encompass can just
 182 take the problem to the churches, but maybe this is one of those things/times that the FGBC can do it
 183 together. What does that mean? For us together to say we need an end of year or Christmas offering
 184 for the helping of vulnerable people. Dave showed video promoting Hope Teams—individuals from
 185 various Charis churches spending extended time in depressed locales (Brethren Peace Corps) .
 186
 187 The Fellowship Council looks with favor to endorse the Hope Team initiative with the intent of it
 188 spinning off more like it
 189
 190 A MOTION PREVAILED: that the FGBC partner with Encompass for a year end/Christmas offering to
 191 endorse Hope Teams.

2018 Budget

		2017 Budget Proposed
Revenues		
(1)	Membership Fees	\$ 215,000
(2)	Conference Income	50,000
(3)	Focus Retreats	45,000
(4)	Donations	135,000
	Other Income	500
Total Revenue		\$ 445,500
Expenses		
Program Services		
(2)	Conference	88,800
(3)	Focus Retreats	70,700
Supporting Services		
(5)	Fellowship Council and Executive Director	139,500
	General Administration	146,500
Total Expenses		\$ 445,500

Footnotes

- (1) **Fellowship Fee Schedule**
- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| | Proposed |
| Per attender (before May 15) | \$ 6.45 |
| Per attender (after May 15) | \$ 6.95 |
| Maximum per church (before May 15) | \$ 8,300.00 |
| Maximum per church (after May 15) | \$ 8,800.00 |
- (2) **National Conference Income and Expenses**
National Conference income and expense amounts will change with the size (attendance) of conference. The difference between these amounts is the amount of salaries allocated to conference from office staff salaries .
Conference in 2017 will priced to attract multiple staff and leaders from each church.
- (3) **Focus Retreat Income and Expenses**
Focus Retreat income and expense amounts will change with the size (attendance) of the retreats. The difference between these amounts is the allocation of office salaries to focus retreats plus of anticipated loss due to financial aid and operation costs.
- (4) **Donations From National Ministries**
National Ministries have voluntarily supported the National office since 1997.
Additional funds have been given for the establishment of a moderators office since 2010
- (5) **Fellowship Council and Executive Directors Office Expenses**
Fellowship Council expenses include the cost of annual meetings of the Fellowship Council and of operational and ministry costs for the Moderator's office.

cohorts and training for this year. We will do cohorts again with connections continuing from this conference.
Tom wanted to go out West. But Denver is not west enough for Westerners. The down side here in Freemont is shortage of hotels and restaurants and they are too far to walk to. There are some host homes, however. Akron wants us, but facilities will be a limiting factor. They are large but spread out with several campuses and not one large enough to accommodate us like Freemont or Wooster or Columbus has in the past. Then in 2019 we will go out West, maybe Simi Valley?

WHAT DO WE MEAN TO “LIVE HARMONIOUSLY”?

Phil B—gave the illustration of licensure candidate that only gave reformed answers. Exam Board knew his heart. The candidate was not working against anything, so Exam Board wrestled with how to move him toward harmony. A pastor or candidate can say, “I can believe different than identity documents, but live in harmony”. So the solution needs to be discipling people who will become part of us or are we making disciples who can live harmoniously under or ones who can’t. If I am making disciples who can’t, then maybe I am not living harmoniously.

Randy W—expressed dealing with similar situation in Florida.

So we need to anticipate this question. What do we mean by it? Clancy wants to be ready.

What other questions if we change Constitution?

Can we keep our old Statement of Faith—Yes

Randy W Elders of the church are the ones who draw the line about harmonious.

Tim H—a lot of the discussion is about moving forward,”O, this is who you are, we want to join in with you.” The stronger the language, the harsher the consequences.

Phil B—This is the time of opportunity for us, timid after 90’s not wanting to hurt, but brought in assistants and pastors from other denominations without a lot of scrutiny. Identity Statement is a clarification, astounded with the agreement. By and large we have kept all the major players. Opportunities, they can self-select, not trying to get rid, but spell out who we are so they can join and or not continue. We need to talk about who we are not in a derisive or divisive way, but to celebrate who we are more, exercise grace and draw some back to us and new ones like us back.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

#1 Motion: The Fellowship Council recommends to the delegates that they replace ARTICLE III Section Two of the Constitution with:

Section Two. Identity Statement. The Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches has a corporate commitment to a basic body of beliefs founded on God's revealed truth. Historical documents including The Message of the Brethren Ministry (1921) and the Statement of Faith (1969) helped to guide our growth and development for many years. The Charis Commitment to Common Identity (first adopted 2015) as approved by the national conference is the current expression of our ongoing quest to apply the unchanging truth of God’s Word to the constantly changing realities and needs of our world.

Individual churches who are members of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches Inc. remain distinct, autonomous legal entities, yet we share a common passion for Jesus, His truth, His mission, and His Church.

AND ARTICLE IV Section One with:

Section One. Requirements. Any congregation of believers desiring membership in the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Inc., shall meet the following conditions:

1. It shall agree to cooperate harmoniously within the parameters outlined by the Charis Commitment to Common Identity and the Position Statements.
2. It shall actively pursue the purpose of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches as set forth in Article II.
3. It shall have a basic organization consisting of elder(s) and deacon(s), or similar responsible officers.
4. Requirements and responsibilities for local church membership shall be established by each church and shall not determine the church's membership in the Fellowship.
5. No church shall be denied membership in the corporation because of failure to support any institutions, ministries, or boards, either district, national, or cooperating recognized by the Fellowship.
6. Failure to comply with these corporate membership requirements may subject the church to dismissal.

#2 Motion: The Fellowship Council recommends to the delegates that they add Article VI Section Five to the Constitution:

Position Statements. The Fellowship Council shall develop Position Statements deemed necessary and helpful for the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches to address or clarify specific issues of culture, theology, or practice within the ministry context of North America. Position Statements will require a 2/3rd vote of affirmation from delegates at the annual business meeting of the corporation. In addition, each Position Statement will require re-affirmation by the delegates every five years.

A MOTION PREVAILED to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory M. Howell,
Recording Secretary