

Proposals from the Fellowship Council

Background: The board of directors of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches (FGBC) is called the “Fellowship Council.” It is made up of 12 people, four from each region of the country (East, West, and Central) who serve for four years. Members cannot serve sequential terms. The chair of this board and is the “Moderator” of the FGBC. The moderator is elected as a second moderator-elect and serves on the Fellowship Council for four years. He serves as Moderator for one year. Fellowship Council members and moderator are elected by delegates at the annual business meeting each summer.

Recommendations from the Fellowship Council:

- 1) Increase the size of the Fellowship Council from 12 to 15. Five from each region.
- 2) Increase the term of the Fellowship Council member from four years to five years.
- 3) Decrease the required years between terms from four years to two years (if re-elected).
- 4) Increase the term of the moderator (as moderator) from one year to three.
- 5) Elect a vice-moderator on the same ballot-question (“ticket”) as the moderator for the same three year term.

Questions and Answers:

Q: Why is this change to the Fellowship Council being considered?

A: The Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches wants to know Jesus and to make him known; everywhere... everyday! We unite around the Bible, biblical relationships, and mission. The FGBC Constitution says our purpose is “to encourage and enable member churches in equipping and uniting the saints in fulfilling the Great Commission.” The Fellowship Council after much discussion and prayer believes that these changes will help us better realize this vision and core values.

Q: How will these structural changes help?

A: The Fellowship Council is a highly representative group of leaders. The council has an entirely new membership every four years. More than 50 people have had the opportunity to serve on the council over the past 10 years. These recommendations are designed to increase this highly participatory nature of the Fellowship Council and to increase the council’s ability to sustain focus and provide consistent leadership.

Q: Why a three year term for moderator?

A: Currently, moderators have only one year to communicate and advance their vision for the FGBC. The change to a three-year term will increase the opportunity for effective communication and team building.

Q: Will this require too much of a local pastor?

A: The total commitment would remain at four years. Moderators would be elected one year prior to the beginning of their term so they can be trained by the previous moderator.

Q: Why do we need a vice moderator elected on a single ticket with the moderator?

A: The moderator-nominee would be able to select his vice-moderator based on his giftedness and the needs of the FGBC. This would make a more effective leadership team.

Q: Will this create an unwanted power-block in the FGBC?

A: Member churches of the FGBC will remain autonomous churches. Cooperating Ministries will remain autonomous ministries. The Fellowship Council will be even more representative. Delegates from member churches will still elect Fellowship Council members and Moderators and approve new churches. The only change will be our ability to sustain and build a Fellowship-wide focus on ministry.

Q: How will these proposals be processed?

A: A first reading of proposed changes will be presented at the 2007 conference business meeting on July 29. Fellowship Council members will be available for feedback between the 2007 conference and the 2008

conference. A final recommendation will be presented at the 2008 conference and requires approval by the delegates.

Q: How will these changes be implemented if approved?

A: John McIntosh has already been elected to serve as moderator in 2009. The Fellowship Council is recommending that Tom Julien be elected this summer to serve as moderator in 2010. Tom Julien (if approved) and John McIntosh will provide leadership during the transitional years of 2009 and 2010. If the recommended changes to the Constitution and Manual of Procedure are approved in 2008, the first three-year moderator will be elected in 2010 for the 2011-2013 term. If those changes are not approved, a new election will be conducted in 2008 under the current system.