

Fellowship Council Minutes
July 23, 2004
Kingsport TN

PRESENT: Joel Richards (04), Bob Combs (Moderator 03), Keith Shearer (Moderator 06), Ken Bickel (AGBM President 04), Larry Edwards (07), Ed Waken (06), Jerry Young (04), Jim Brown (07), Vic Young (06), Mark Saunders (05), Mike Jentes (06), Dan Allen (Moderator 05), John Teevan (Moderator 04), Tom Avey (Fellowship Coordinator), and Greg Howell (Acting Secretary).

ABSENT: Nathan Zakahi (07), Dave Ogden (05), Terry Taylor (04), Ted Kimbauer (05)

Moderator John Teevan opened the meeting reminding us that our purpose is “glory in God’s church” not in our church or small group—etc. He welcomed us and spoke to the reality that we are not a denomination. Relationship and closeness is what makes us. John Fischer will be guest speaker/musician because of his creative artistry.

Bob Combs opened with prayer.

A MOTION PREVAILED to Approve the Minutes of the Jan/Feb 2004 Mid-year Meeting as printed.

- a) Distribute Business Meeting Agenda as given to delegates. <reports>
- b) New Church applications since our last meeting: Ed Waken
 - i) The Happy Church <Application> Jackson, KY—Pastor, Michael Tabor
 - ii) The Haitian Community Church <Application> Jacksonville, FL—Pastor Job Cesar
- c) Report on Mt Laurel GBC, Boswell, PA – membership status: Ed Waken—made things right, because they want to be in the Fellowship.

A MOTION PREVAILED to Rescind the motion from Feb meeting concerning the recommendation to the delegates to remove Mt. Laurel GBC from the membership.

- d) Budget for 2005: Tom Avey
 - i) Need to approve and recommend to delegates. <Budget Printed in the 2005 FGBC Handbook>
- e) Promise of Honor proposal: Tom Avey
 - i) Based on projections by the Retirement Planning committee, we have enough funds in hand to meet the long-term promise of honor commitment. <Projections>

Tom Avey—Promise of Honor represents a simple budget, income from \$1 per member assessment in matched to an expense in the FGBC financial records which is paid to the Promise of Honor Fund, administered by the Pension Investment Committee which is a creature of conference..

General Discussion:

What kind of cash balance do we carry in Promise of Honor? \$90,000.00. This is enough to carry the projected expenses related to Promise of Honor

The FGBC budget for 2005 is less predictable than in past years due to Equip05.

Tom Avey, doesn’t like to let FGBC funds to drop below \$40-50,000.

The proposed budget for 2005 includes a cessation of the Promise of Honor fee (\$1 per member) and an increase in the regular membership fee of .50. Net reduced cost to churches of .50.

We should only charge what we need.

We should ask for an increase and attach it to what it is going to cover, vision.

We should maintain small increases to keep balances stable and avoid emergency “catch-up” scenarios.

Reducing Promise of Honor assessments is matter of integrity. PoH is over, so should the dollar increase. If we need to increase, it needs to be separate issue.

Should we increase the membership fee \$.50 without ending PoH? No, we would probably only increase \$.25.

However there are many unknowns in 2005 with Equip05 so we should be conservative.

A MOTION PREVAILED to recommend to delegates to end the funding of the Promise of Honor.

A MOTION PREVAILED to present the Budget to the delegates to approve with a \$.50 member-ship fee increase.

- f) Membership Fee Task Force report: TA
 - i) Certificates have been distributed

- ii) “Why Associate” brochure has been distributed
- iii) We are watching North Central Ohio District membership fee system with interest. It is as follows:
 - (1) 100 or less \$25/yr
 - (2) 101- 300 = \$300
 - (3) 301-500 = \$350
 - (4) 501 – 1000 = \$600
 - (5) 1000+ = \$1000
 - (6) Based on attendance.
 - (7) Church self-determines what to count for average church size.
- iv) For example: based on projections for 2005 membership fees (using the current system) an FGBC-wide scheme would look like this...
 - (1) 100 or less = \$200/yr (2 delegates)
 - (2) 101- 300 = \$650/yr (6 delegates)
 - (3) 301-500 = \$1,050/yr (13 delegates)
 - (4) 501 – 1000 = \$2,100/yr (22 delegates)
 - (5) 1000+ = \$4,700/yr (30 delegates)

No action needed yet until North Central Ohio District shows how this works. How we count (membership? Attendance? Which attendance?) should be carefully determined. How small groups relate to corporate gatherings, etc. needs to be considered.

- g) Sponsoring agency for the office of Endorsing Agent: (Larry Chamberlain presented letter to Fellowship Council explaining the change in structure of Grace Brethren North American Missions (GBNAM) and Grace Brethren Investment Foundation (GBIF). With the change in structure GBNAM (previously named as the Parent Organization in 1988) they now present the following recommendation: *“RESOLVED: that we authorize and approve the transition of sponsoring agency for the office of Endorsing Agent from Grace Brethren North American Missions, Inc. to Grace Brethren Investment Foundation, Inc.”* Grace American Indian Ministries (GAIM) has transitioned already from a school to church planting, so GBNAM board decided to place GAIM directly under the GBNAM board. AIM is going very well and expected to expand into other tribes and areas.

A MOTION PREVAILED that we authorize and approve the transition of the parenting organization for the office of Endorsing Agent from Home Missions Council (Grace Brethren North American Missions, Inc). to Grace Brethren Investment Foundation, Inc.” with one “no” vote.

Discussion—we need to revisit how do we do Chaplaincy at Mid-year meeting and also what financial or liability GBIF might encounter. Can revisit with Larry presenting the Endorsing Agent’s report to Fellowship Council regularly.

- h) Equip 05—printed promo presented

- i) The Gathering Report: JT

Ideas—we need new groupings instead of districts

We need an Enduring Visionary Leadership Community

There is a session a conference planned to report on the Gathering.

John will report on what happened, nothing is in concrete—only next step, October.

What is the “this”? 4-5 priorities for a vital movement

#1 church multiplication movements,

#2 Faithful Effective Innovative (FEI) church movements

#3 Transformational church movements

#4 Backbone churches (60-80% of the FGBC)

At the Gathering the group realized that the FEI group is what we need to concentrate on as a first step. So we are going to gather 18 or so FEI pastors in Atlanta in October in advance of the Injoy Catalyst conference. All are paying their own way, about 18 (several were already planning to attend). We will meet with Bullard before the the conference, to see that they all have some things in common, help the network together for mutual advancement and help them gain a larger vision beyond their own ministry and for the FGBC.

DA—not clear what it would be going into the gathering. But need to do the next step. FEI tend to want from them but not providing for them. Pull them together to sharpen, challenge, and refresh them. Will have a “pull up” effect on the rest of the fellowship. Where’s it going to go—“let’s see”

KS—great transitions for him, conversations coming out of The Gathering were great, we need to go somewhere, and this is helping us go there.

DA—thinking a lot about how the FGBC moves. Not by electing people and telling us what to do and we do it. Influencers help shape us individually and through family relationships. Leaders are leaders because people follow them—need to get these people together so they can share together.

BC—real concerned about young guys, want to make sure that they know that we care about them and value them.

MS—how does this relate to churches that are dying?

JT—Presiding and Providing churches, need to care about them

TA—Bullard is going to talk about how churches can transform and turnaround - getting churches to help other churches.

DA—need Equip 05 to have guys sit together and share what was done and can be done on turning churches around

TA—Percent of declining churches: 45% growing, 45% declining, 10% static

TA—about church transformation: Charlie Ashman does really well from Paraclete. However will will hurting churches accept the help of stronger churches?

JR—FOCUS retreats are the best thing that has happened to FGBC, rubbing shoulders with leaders, places for healing, just being together in relationship.

MJ—What opportunities are there for the other types of churches to interact?

TA—Hhow much energy do you put into churches whose doors are going to close? We not trying to get these guys (FEI) together to organize them, name them, etc. Join them in what they are doing. Meeting Tuesday 3:30pm, to find out what you can add.

MJ—is there a written report?

JT—core values, next step is to work hard on core values, more of a question about how it is packaged,

KS—suggested slogan, *Jesus: His Word, His Church, His Mission*

Next step: Need to do more work on who we are (core values, FEI, enduring/visionary)

Life blood of any denomination/fellowship is church planting, multiplication

Kurt will come to Fellowship Council in February to help us figure out how to make church multiplication a national project

JB—how do you define effectiveness? Fellowship Council is not true representation of Fellowship. We constantly say we are looking for broad answers but not asking broad audience. We tend to have a narrow definition of effectiveness, ie picture of Winona Lake on back of this year's brochure declaring that we want to reach the world. Thrilled that there are 3 women presenters next year, but rest are white/middle class professionals.

EW—We need to be getting younger guys and need to be intentional about reaching and show-casing what we are doing well.

Boomer mentality is buildings, budgets, and big-shots.

JT—Bullard might have said the same things, seemed so simple and obvious, but we hadn't thought of.

DA—need to highlight and endorse so we can get the ball rolling. Needed to decide who to invite to even get started.

JB—need to be inviting the people to the discussion who are innovative.

TA—would love to go to the next meeting of house churches leaders. Bullard—boxes and clouds movements are clouds, We need to be thinking and acting more like a cloud.

JB—innovative pastors are not asking how they are going to pay membership fees, but what is the value of being a part of the fellowship?

MJ—reminded us of “pathfinders” assignment of a few years ago, when Fellowship Council interviewed innovators--may need to do it again.

JB—looked at Equip 05 tabloid and noticed white faces and probably need to include ethnic leaders that are doing effective ministry. Thinking outside of our box.

TA—need to do more diversity, corrections to be made for Equip 07

JB—sky has a lot of clouds, maybe we are a bunch of clouds

EW—85% of teenagers leave church after high school, because we segregated teens and children from church. Future is bringing them together (with whole church family).

- j) Heritage Project Report: JT—invited several historical guys asking them to work together on preserving history—Tuesday 9:30pm. 2008 is 300th anniversary of Brethrenism. Perhaps we need to schedule conference (2008) in Philadelphia and host a celebration for all of the branches in Germantown/ Philadelphia. Since only official celebration is set for Swartzenau

PRESENT: John Teevan—04 Moderator, Larry Edwards--Treasurer, Ed Waken, Tom Avey—Fellowship Coordinator, Keith Shearer—06 Moderator, Dan Allen—05 Moderator, Jim Brown, Greg Howell—acting Secretary.

1) Focus Retreats 2004/05

- a) Theme: Proverbs 4:23 "The Leader's Heart"
- b) Dates: NW--attendance a little light
 - i) Central: October 11-13, 2004 (Pokagan)
 - ii) East: October 25-26, 2004
 - iii) Southwest: Jan 31—Feb 2, 2005
 - iv) South: Feb 28—March 2, 2005
 - v) Northwest: May 16-18, 2005
 - vi) Arctic: none (Ed Waken there instead)
- c) General Schedule:
 - d) Session #1: Session #1 Guard Your Heart . . . The Wellspring of Life.
 - e) Content: Prov. 4:23 Introduction to the theme of the retreat
 - f) Session #2 Restoring Your Heart . . . Engagement and Retreat
 - g) Subject: Sabbath Rest
 - h) Worship, 30 minute "Silence" video, Time alone with God
 - i) Session #3 Others and My Heart . . . Friends and Family
 - j) Description: We need one another
 - k) Included an interaction activity/game
 - l) Session #4 Ministry From the Heart . . . Doing and Being
 - m) Description – great time of worship on Being AND Doing
 - n) Session #5: WEDNESDAY "How to Run and Not Lose Heart"
 - o) Panel discusison

2) Winter 2005 Fellowship Council Meeting

- a) Location—Sacramento (Greg Stoeve) –near airport
- b) Dates: Feb 3-6
- c) Schedule
 - i) Thursday, Feb 3
 - (1) 5:30 Dinner
 - (2) 6:30 Worship/Prayer
 - ii) Friday, Feb 4
 - (1) 8:00—5:00 meet
 - (2) Focus on how to make Church Multiplication a national priority
 - (3) Focus Cooperating Organization--GBNAM
 - iii) Saturday, Feb 5
 - (1) 8:00—5:00 meet
 - iv) Sunday, Feb 6
 - (1) Attend/preach/share in area churches
 - v) Monday, Feb 7
 - (1) Travel home day
- d) Focus will be last Monday of January

- 3) AGBM—Fellowship Council needs to cooperate with them while they are in transition. Jerry Young will be suggesting that we revamp, call for new constitution—based on 1894 actions, and that it return to being professional/continuing education organization

Summary of Open Discussion (no action taken):

Everything that happens in the fellowship ought to be discussed by the Fellowship Council. John Teevan's goal is that AGBM have a close tie with Fellowship Council almost merge (AGBM's guy should have an office next to Tom Avey's) By the way retired ministers ought have reduced dues (half). The AGBM Balance is creeping up, not jumping (as increase would indicate)—they ought to be putting money in the bank getting ready for the Executive position to be created after Jerry's recommendations are implemented.

Side note—Tom is moving into BMH offices, this will also facilitate cooperation--and not duplicate what Terry is doing—ie website,

- 4) GBNAM: How do we respond? If they are separate organizations, we have to separately recognize them—but they (GBIF) need to apply and request such. How is this thing really restructured?
 - a) Fellowship Council should prepare to recognize the GBIF and be glad that they want to broaden their beneficence beyond GBNAM to a greater degree than they have (share cash—look beyond funding NA missions)

b) Leadership team should sit down with their leaders to see what we need to know (Dan Allen & John Teevan with Bob Fetterhoff—pres of GBNAM and Jerry Michaels—pres of GBIf, and Tim Boals—new acting Ex Dir of GBNAM) or any part of that group yet this week. John to attempt to arrange Breakfast Thurs.
Tom expressed tremendous respect for Larry as he has handled the recent suit against GBNAM.

- 5) Membership Fees—suggest that leadership team come up with plan for Fellowship Coordinator staff and increase membership fees to fund. Needs to be Winter Fellowship Council agenda item
- 6) New Churches—Can we bring the leader of each new church to Conference the year their church is admitted? This would be especially valuable because they often can't come because of expense. Put on winter agenda.
- 7) Minority Blocs—consider inviting diversity reps to meet with Fellowship Council. Especially at winter meeting. Make this a Winter Fellowship Council agenda item. Should have Kurt bring some of these guys along (2 guys—Hispanic, black—invite to Sacramento) to hear their voice and get their perspective about getting diverse reps. Should be okay to invite men so that diversity is at the table. Maybe Equip 07 can have something specific for them as a result of their input.

MOTION PREVAILED: invite guests to promote diversity at our Fellowship Council meeting in Sacramento, 2005.
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Discussion—have them follow Kurt's presentation, with prepared perception about where we can plan growth and consider changes to better meet needs for them (an other diverse groups?)

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory M. Howell, acting secretary

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