

Fellowship Council Meeting
January 24-27, 2008
Seal Beach California

THURSDAY --January 24, 2008 6:00 PM

The Council had dinner at Yucatan Grill with wives and Dr. Shoemaker (host pastor) and Mrs. Shoemaker. They then went to the Grace Community Church in nearby Seal Beach and had a time of sharing and praying.

FRIDAY --January 25, 2008 8:30 AM

PRESENT: John McIntosh (Moderator-2010), Ron Smals (Central-2010, Tom Hocking (West-2009), Larry Humberd (East-2010), Phil Sparling (West-2010), Phil Hefler (West-2011), Dan O'Deens (East-2008), Doug Black (East-2011), Skip White (2011), Robert McMillan (West-2008), Tim Boal (Moderator 2008), Oscar Chavez (Hispanic Ministries Consultant), Jason Carmean (Central-2009), Tom Avey (Fellowship Coordinator), Greg Howell (Recording Secretary).

ABSENT: Jim Brown (Moderator-2009), Dan Gregory (Central-2008),

NATIONAL MINISTRY REPRESENTATIVES: Larry Chamberlain—Grace Brethren Investment Foundation, Ed Trenner—Grace Brethren International Missions, Ken Seyfert—Grace Brethren Investment Foundation & Retirement Investment Plan, Terry White—Brethren Missionary Herald, Janet Minnix—Women of Grace USA, Timothy Kurtaneck—CE National, Ron Manahan—Grace College & Seminary.

Devotions were led by Past Moderator Tim Boal. He read 2 Corinthians 1:9 and shared a story about being stranded in Rome and beginning a conversation with a retired senator who had just become a Christian and happened to live three blocks from the new church planter. The church planter had been praying and fasting for two weeks for a mature couple to join that work. As they boarded the plane the senator remarked that he thought that the reason for the delay might have been so that Tim could talk with him. Tim used this as an illustration that God orchestrates events that appear to us to be totally random or even very inconvenient to put people where He wants them when He wants them for His purposes of building His church. Tim then led in prayer.

John McIntosh explained that the reason that he was leading this meeting is because of a tragedy in Jim Brown's church family. Tom Avey reviewed the basic schedule and major goals for the meeting.

John welcomed Jason Carmean, Skip White, Phil Hefler, and Doug Black as incoming new Fellowship Council representatives.

A MOTION PREVAILED TO approve the minutes of the Summer 2007 meeting as posted on the Fellowship Council webpage.

Jason Carmean was asked to fill Andy Wirt's vacancy (since Andy resigned due to his hesitance to be away from his young family and difficulty in fulfilling his duties)

A MOTION PREVAILED to place Jason Carmean on the Fellowship Council to complete Andy Wirt's term as Central Representative ending after conference 2009.
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It was noted that this will need to be ratified by delegates at conference this summer.

NATIONAL MINISTRY REPRESENTATIVE reports:

Each representative was given 15 minutes to highlight the ministry he/she represented and answer questions.

CE National—Timothy Kurtaneck suggested that CE might be changing the meaning of their name to *Church Encouragement* to emphasize that CE is more than just youth. He also announced that *Momentum* will have two locations and functions this summer. Last year CE took a real financial risk in rebuilding 36 homes at Momentum. Operation Barnabas will seek to minister in the west and in the east this year which will involve a lot of driving. Operation Barnabas International is coming back and will visit Cameroon this year. TK informed the Fellowship Council that the 412 Commission would be discontinued due to limited enrollment resulting in a shortage of sufficient funds.

BMH—Terry White told the Fellowship Council that the Brethren Missionary Herald Company would be focusing on Brethren authors. Todd Scoles book on Brethren distinctives (from his D.Min thesis) will come out before conference and the 300th anniversary of beginning of the Brethren Church. Terry also explained that he has helped and will continue to help find shared equity publishing for limited appeal books. He had hoped that BHM Books would be the cash cow to fund the other parts of ministry. However, as successful as the books division has been, most of the revenue has been pumped back into the books for on-going projects. BMH is serving more as a communications agency for other parts of FGBC (any 501c 3). He is working with the Fellowship Council Membership Commission in generating a new version of the “Who are the FGBC” brochure. He is personally very involved with the 300th anniversary as a member of the Brethren Encyclopedia Committee. The FGBC will be disproportionately involved because of the Charis gathering in Hamburg. He suggested that the blogs be checked regularly (AGBM and editor’s blog) because traffic has increased especially in times of emergencies.

Comments and Questions: LC—Thank you for your service to the FGBC. RS—FBGC World is the most read publication in his church. DO—There may be great resources in local churches that may be available to help BMH in their mission.

RIP (Retirement Investment Plan)—Ken Seyfert explained that this is a creature of FGBC, not a national ministry. But it is an important ministry to pastors. We offer 19 investment options through AUL. There should be a 401 A plan available to every pastor as a benefit from their local church. RIP does not offer specific investment advice but makes information and products available. The FGBC’s retirement investment plan is in the top 1% of One America plans (located in Indianapolis). It is important for pastors not to leave their families destitute when they die. Linda Leonard is very capable in providing support for individuals with questions.

Comments and Questions: Can the committee communicate with local churches directly? Yes, more will be done. Support and paperwork will be available. Terry offered that BMH might be able to help with information. Ken informed the Council that 10 years ago the fund had 1.5 million dollars. Now it is about 8 million because of the participation and return on investments.

GBIF (Grace Brethren Investment Foundation)—Larry Chamberlain expressed that GBIF was delighted to continue to oversee the chaplaincy and directed the Fellowship Council read Col. Schumacher’s report. Then he asked Ken Seyfert to provide the details of GBIF activity. Ken referred to the printed report and noted that 13 million dollars was provided in loans this year. He pointed out that the GBIF needs to form partnerships in order to continue church financing especially with mega

churches (i.e. Raleigh, NC). He maintained that GBIF will still the lead in these partnerships and no FGBC money will be used to plant non-FGBC churches. The reality is that non-FGBC money is being loaned or given to plant FGBC churches. He and the board are grateful that delinquencies are at zero. They are licensed in all states in which GBIF is doing business, including California. He reminded the Fellowship Council to thank God for what He has done.

Comments and Questions: Is GBIF financing any work overseas? Answer: No. We do in Canada. Hands are full with domestic opportunities. Credibility is very high in all states, especially Pennsylvania and California. We have a large capacity to make loans. Also more than 50% of proceeds are given back to the Fellowship as gifts to NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. GBIF is very generous in giving away its profits to FGBC ministries. We are not a savings and loan and are only licensed to loan to and accept investments from FGBC individuals and entities. We are pleased to sponsor the military Chaplaincy program. The Eagle Commission has 150 supporters. Our website is www.EagleCommission.org. Larry encouraged pastors to put something in their bulletins especially around Memorial Day about joining the Eagle Commission or helping the commission identify FGBC active military. We currently have 7 active and 1 reserve chaplains. One retired last year (Ralph Molleneux) and three will retire this year. We will honor them at conference. Chaplain's wife, Robin Graham, wrote a book that BMH is publishing that will be very powerful for those who have experienced abuse and how God can deliver them.

WGUSA (Women of Grace USA)—Viki Rife was at a conference for women's ministry leaders and was interviewed to participate in the conference—they wanted to know why she was attending a women's conference as a leaders of a girls ministry. Her answer was "because we want to start with girls." This was a novel concept for the conference leaders. All of the curriculum is now on CD and women can subscribe to the magazine on-line. The magazine is very good for new people to church. We are in the process of restructuring the government and membership. A woman can be member of the national organization without being a member of a local group. An annual contribution will make a woman a corporation member. We also want to draw women from all areas and churches for the new board.

GBIM (GRACE BRETHREN INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS)—Ed Trenner explained his gradual transition to GBIM to be on staff (part-time now, half-time at Orange church—next year full time at GBIM). Executive Director Dave Guiles' purpose has been following Tom Julian's philosophy (missions is not what you do for the missionary but through the missionary) from the beginning of his leadership. The objective was to put church planting into the hands of nationals as soon as possible. Argentina is a good example.

Comments and Questions: Can you give some examples of highly trained teams? Answer: Thailand, Argentina to Chile. Also local church businessmen who have international connections. Something like Mitch Carriaga does with his contacts in China. Trying to put together teams that do not require missionary oversight so as not to distract from their work - like Ripon's medical team. Q: How is it that the number of churches outside of the USA bumped up from 1100 to 2100 recently? Answer: Because of the emphasis on "no new work starts with a missionary". These are all new churches. Q: What is the border between home and foreign missions? Is there a strategy or is it just serendipitous? Answer: What fits is reaching internationals (in the context of American communities), because inevitably some will return to home nations and evangelize. Q: Is the primary purpose church planting? Answer: Yes, everything else is to facilitate church planting.

GRACE COLLEGE & SEMINARY—President Ron Manahan explained that the purpose of the change in the religious studies department was to bring a rebalancing of what was being offered

(academics or ministry). The department of Religious Studies has experienced a decline in majors and a 65% decline in enrollment. It is now renamed the School of Ministry and will require resident faculty members that are committed to local church ministry. We are also planning seminars with 4-5 days of intense interaction with ministry professionals. We expect these changes to have a positive impact on the FGBC. The online education will begin with the Seminary. The goal is to have online seminary degrees. Online is not a school but a delivery system. We will probably see graduate degrees in education and counseling also. On the drawing board is one online business program. We intend to see online as a positive delivery system. History of Theology will be the first online course. Mark Soto is teaching.

Comments and Questions: Why the apparent disclaimers about connection to FGBC in your report? Answer: The first paragraph is about legal separation. The last paragraph is a reflection of FGBC financial support. A School of Adult Education survey discovered that the community understands what we believe and what we are about. Their disagreement is that they find us obnoxious and it is not always “Jesus” that gets in the way. We are trying to develop a model of ministry to connect with people in order to provide opportunities to share the gospel. Several major donors are not even believers. Statistical reasons that drive changes; Indiana is one of lowest educational attainment percentages in nation. Local people want to come on campus. It is interesting as how God orchestrates obscure people to contribute to Grace. Q: Were there doctrinal concerns prompting the change in Religious Studies? Answer: Mostly pedagogies and perceptions. As I explained to the people involved, “Perceptions over time are such that even the good days are not good”. It was not really over theology. Q: Will there be a closer connection with seminary? Answer: Yes, Jeff Gill will be the Dean of the School of Ministry. The main part will be a change in the curriculum which will be worked on this spring. Currently less than 10 students will be affected by the changes. Terry White mentioned that from his observation the changes and restructuring was communicated and handled in a very godly way.

AGBM(Association of Grace Brethren Ministers)—Joel Richards was not present.

GBNAM (Grace Brethren North American Missions)—Tim Boal shared that the legal costs are and would be so exorbitant that the best stewardship of ministry and resources was to cease the operations of GBNAM effective December 31, 2007. An independent holding company is in charge of the assets. Galen Moomaw is the sole remaining trustee.

FEEDBACK COMMENTS FC MEMBERS HAVE GLEANED FROM DISTRICT DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO FELLOWSHIP COUNCIL AND MODERATOR TERMS:

Jason Carmean shared that two district pastors are against the new moderator selection process and intend to object at conference when the discussion is brought up.

Robert McMillan shared that the luncheon meetings at Equip 07 seemed to attract young turks that assume that “they” are sneaking in a power grab. They couldn’t really define how it could be a power grab, but assumed there was a conspiracy. There will be soft approval in the North Cal district.

Tom Avey said that this is not a seismic change, but it will slow down the turnover on FC and allow some greater continuity.

Phil Hefler voiced some concern that there seemed to be a foregone conclusion of the “who” being determined in advance.

Dan O'Deens said he was not convinced that there is a pastor in the Fellowship that can take the helm for 3 years. And if we can, will we be able to find others who can for the following terms.

Larry Humberd stated that the reality is that a moderator can't really run the ship and especially can't run it a ground. What's the worst scenario if this doesn't work (FC integrity would be in question?)

Doug Black noted that the new system ties up 2 guys for a 3 year commitment.

Tom Avey said it was actually 2 men for 4 years as a ticket (mod and vice) and then in their last year training the next team it would be only one year overlap. We could change the language to make the ticket just one or two years.

Robert McMillan warned that we live in an era that fosters suspicion. We need to constantly publish and make information available. The objectors will still be vocal, and the uninformed will still object, but we can point out all of the ways that information was disseminated and available.

Tom Avey noted that the proposal calls for the FC to be the Nominating Committee for moderator and have the current Nominating Committee still select the FC nominees. As it is now, the outgoing FC reps are asked to serve on the Nominating Committee (and some will be elected to serve) because they have been in on vision discussions.

John McIntosh suggested that a longer term moderator can champion something that is bigger than any (or all) NAT/ORGs. We are all kind of doing our own thing. What would happen if we all were following the same vision and when the moderator finishes his term, the new moderator can just carry on the enduring vision.

Jason Carmean asked, How do we get beyond one moderator trying to make an impact for one year?

Tom Aveu said that we tend to down play our strengths. Barna says the average church in America is 85. We are more like 185 and in Ohio it is 311. I look forward to the day when we can concentrate on one theme for three years. The only moderator that I have had to live with his initiatives beyond his term is Teevan and the Equip rotation. Structure doesn't solve anything, but it sure can get in the way. Maybe we can slow things down a bit (5 year FC terms and 4 year moderator terms) in order to discover the structure that really will allow us to move forward. We have to re-own the past decisions every meeting because of the rapid turn-over.

John McIntosh said he is willing to serve but still needs approval from his board because they want to know what power and authority he will have and time it will cost the church. Tim shared with them last week that no extra Sundays away but FOCUS retreats took him from his church in the middle of the week five times. Tom will share in a couple of weeks about the other costs and obligations.

Robert McMillan noted that a moderator's address at beginning of his 3 years could really be an effective beginning and then have the 3 years to develop and will help accomplish his vision.

Dan O'Deens suggest that maybe we need a new title. "Moderator" really only expresses how the business meeting is conducted. What is the structure to help John be able to influence and strengthen the fellowship?

Tom Avey distributed the Enduring Vision Team and National Ministry Executive Team outline sheet. (ATTACHED) Each will be like a cabinet around the moderator. These would be creatures of the FC not of the FGBC, so they need not be approved by the delegates. This will enhance the teams. Tom is convinced, based on Ephesians 4, that in any group there are the resources needed to accomplish God's plan. He likes the rotation because it involves so many guys.

EQUIP 09

THEME 2 TIMOTHY 2:2

We have the option of having it in Columbus. This will create more interaction than the Grace campus can offer. We can also save some costs by staying in homes (we had 100 homes available last time conference was in Columbus). They have great facilities. We do have a solid invitation from the NCO district. Registered participants at Equip 05 were 272 and Equip 07 increased to 384. John wants to use the Jones soda theme "deposit required" and emphasize "Who are you pouring your life into?" Each label on the Jones Soda bottles is a different picture. Tom stated that the course offerings will be based on Ephesians 4:12 (Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Shepherds, Teachers, and Administration added). The focus in each session will be on KNOW, BE, DO, REPRODUCE. Continuing education units (CEU's) will be given and honored by Grace College (and Seminary?). Tom gave some possible course offerings. He wants input. We need to have a catalog printed by this summer, but didn't want to be premature. Bernie Simmons will coordinate the children's ministry. And there will again be a Seniors' menu (about 100 participated last year). We may be able to attract folks from several local churches.

Open Discussion:

Larry Humberd noted that there was nothing on missions or practical youth ministry stuff (though CE does stuff on its own). Maybe we need a parenting track or class.

Tom Avey suggested that Mike Scara may be able to do a session or track on family ministries. The women's counseling track was very effective (taught by Tami Shultz). In 2007 we increased the topics and then needed to drop some.

Jmc—Ohio asked to provide fewer offerings because there were too many choices.

Terry White noted that if there were short courses there might be a place to incorporate topics like Ken Seyfert was talking about (pastors compensation, retirement, etc.).

John McIntosh asked what we could do on our end to encourage your local leaders to take time off work to attend an Equip conference?

Larry Chamberlain —just what we have been talking about. Offering a track for lay leadership—support pastor and church mission and embed some of these topics into the track.

Jason Carmean suggested having some evening classes for locals so they wouldn't have to take time off? But actually I would rather have my folks get a sense of the big picture at a celebration evening. Larry Humberd agreed.

Phil Sparling suggested we should have affordable, quality training (well rounded), free time enough to debrief/process together.

Larry Humberd added that we needed a Community focus (like at BNYC), a special celebration or program that could be attractive to the local community that could highlight all that is good about FGBC and maybe an outreach as well, like a concert or something to which we could invite the community.

John McIntosh noted that the last time we were there (in Columbus) it seems like they had a concert.

Oscar Chavez said he saw lots of Hispanic pastors at Tampa, but not at other conferences since. If we can get homes and some tracks in Spanish that will make it tailored to their desires we maybe able to attract more again.

Tom Hocking suggested that we could set up mentoring groups of about six and be as a group through the week. I went to post-modern seminar and learned around tables in groups. It was really good to learn with a team.

The meeting was adjourned until 8:30 Saturday morning.

SATURDAY - January 26, 2008 8:30 AM

PRESENT: John McIntosh (Moderator-2010), Ron Smals (Central-2010), Tom Hocking (West-2009), Larry Humberd (East-2010), Phil Sparling (West-2010), Phil Hefler (West-2011), Dan O'Deens (East-2008), Doug Black (East-2011), Skip White (2011), Oscar Chavez (Hispanic ministries consultant), Jason Carmean (Central-2009), Tom Avey (Fellowship Coordinator), Greg Howell (Recording Secretary).

ABSENT: Jim Brown (Moderator-2009), Dan Gregory (Central-2008), Tim Boal, Robert MacMillan

NATIONAL MINISTRY REPRESENTATIVES: Terry White—Brethren Missionary Herald

Tom Hocking led devotions from James 4:1-3

Commissions met separately to consider recommendations for the full council.

Finance Commission Recommendations:

A MOTION PREVAILED to approve Jason Carmean as treasurer of the FGBC.

A MOTION PREVAILED to approve the 2007 financial reports as printed.

A MOTION PREVAILED to approve the 2008 detailed budget of \$361,000.

A MOTION PREVAILED for someone from the leadership team or Doug Black from the finance committee have a conversation with Charlie Ashman by the end of April, 2008 for the purpose of determining his current mindset about his salary and responsibility changes which will be effective February 1, 2008. In light of expected future EVT expenses and the need for increased administrative help for Tom Avey, this conversation should move in the direction of relieving Charlie of his conference responsibilities (meal coordinator, delegate issues, etc.) and encouraging him to redouble his efforts in consoling churches and the delinquent church ministry. The goal would be to pay Charlie hourly for his people ministry and use the remaining portion of Charlie's salary to fund administrative help to accomplish his administrative responsibilities.

Rationale: we need to protect Tom Avey from appearing to make unilateral decisions regarding Charlie's work. We want to provide honor to Charlie for his years of service and the important role he continues to play with delinquent churches. We want to be good stewards of the FGBC's funds.

A MOTION PREVAILED to empower Tom Avey to propose a 2009 budget based on the new fee structure and on the results of the conversation mentioned in the 4th motion by the July meeting.

A MOTION PREVAILED that we encourage CE National to increase the contribution to the FGBC to \$5,250 annually to be in line with other major National Ministries.

Discussion: Should we evaluate the need for cooperating ministries contributions also? Is a time study needed to determine Tom's service to National Ministries? Tom doesn't believe he is controlled by the National Ministries. The intent of talking with CE National about their contribution will be to be consistent with other National Ministries. National Ministry donations are for the FGBC and not for Tom's salary. He is the link to keep the organizations working and communicating together. Tom says that the strength of influence of National Ministry leadership comes from fact that the National Ministry leadership is static and the Fellowship Council is always revolving, which is why we want to create an enduring vision team, to provide more continuity and stability.

MOTION: that the Fellowship Council continues to look at the accountability structure of the financial gifts to the FGBC as it relates to Fellowship Coordinator position and the time given to National Ministries in FC meetings. Fellowship Council needs to recognize that the primary function is to serve FGBC churches. MOTION TABLED

Discussion: Create an agenda from now on that reflects a change in time commitment relative to National Ministry and FGBC churches.

STRUCTURES COMMITTEE REPORT:

A MOTION PREVAILED to ask Nathan Zakahi to serve as chair of the 2008 nominating committee.

A MOTION PREVAILED to approve the following names for the Parliamentary Committee and empower the moderator to select three before the annual business meeting: Jesse Deloe, Dave Plaster, Galen Wiley, Mark Soto, Bud Olszewski, Doug Courter, Todd Scoles, Fenton McDonald, Doug Sabin

A MOTION PREVAILED to approve the following names for the Membership Committee and empower the moderator to select three before the annual business meeting: Roy Halberg (California), Terry Daniels (California), Larry Edwards (Ohio), Roland Maust (Ohio), Christian Becker (Virginia), Don Eshelman, Brad Kelley ('06), Steve Shipley, Charles Thornton

A MOTION PREVAILED to recommend Jason Carmean to the delegates as treasurer of the FGBC.

A MOTION PREVAILED to recommend Tom Avey to the delegates as secretary of the FGBC.

A MOTION PREVAILED to make a single recommendation to the nominating committee for moderator 2008-2010 from the following prioritized list: Dan Allan, Nathan Zakahi, Tom Hocking.

A MOTION PREVAILED to amend the proposed constitutional changes to the moderator term from a mandatory 3 years to a variable 1-3 year term. Article VII section three, if approved would read: "Term. The moderator and vice moderator will be installed at the conclusion of conference one year after they are elected and will serve for one to three conference years..."

A MOTION PREVAILED to nominate the following names for the nominating committee: Robert MacMillan, Larry Edwards, Mike Jentes, Doug Courter, Nathan Zakahi, Larry Humberd, Tom Hocking, Skip White, Glen Shirk, Andy Wirt, John Ward.

Changes to the Enduring Vision Team working document was distributed.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT:

A MOTION PREVAILED to recommend Grace Connection of Englewood, Ohio to the delegates for membership in the FGBC.

A MOTION PREVAILED to recommend Life Spring Church of Brownsburg, Indiana to the delegates for membership in the FGBC.

A MOTION PREVAILED to recommend Spring Valley Grace Brethren Church of Elyria, Ohio to delegates for membership in the FGBC.

A MOTION PREVAILED to recommend Catalyst Church of Kent State, Ohio to the delegates for membership in the FGBC pending a written recommendation from Western Reserve GBC of Macedonia or from the Northeast Ohio District.

A MOTION PREVAILED to delay recommendation of Grace in Action as a Cooperating Ministry until that ministry has proven viability and published its planned curriculum.

Discussion: Grace in Action has a strong board and mission statement. It was recommended that we provide display space at iGo08 at discounted FGBC prices.

MOTION: to recommend Go2 Church Planting to the delegates for acceptance as National Ministry pending review of their final ministry plan after their April meetings.

A SUBSTITUTE MOTION PREVAILED: We enthusiastically affirm the vision and appreciate your leadership in the development of the G0-2 ministry and look forward to the presentation of your ministry plan in April, 2008. The Fellowship Council will consider your application for formal recognition after receipt of that plan. We commit to praying with you through this process anticipating that God will bless the FGBC with both healing and growth through the G02 ministry.

A MOTION PREVAILED to approve the following list of names to represent the FGBC at Charis this summer: Robert Wagner, Steve Kern, Bob Combs, Jim Laird, Julie Schumacher, Greg Barshaw, Dan White, Larry Humberd, Syliva Totzke, Greg Stoeber

Keith Shearer is our representative on the planning committee for Charis. Keith and Tom Avey with approval from the leadership team have developed this prioritized list of potential delegates. The plan is to ask them to serve at the expense of their church. The first three to respond positively will serve.

LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORT:

Next Fellowship Council meeting: Friday, July 25 @ 1:00 – 6:00. Leadership team meets that day beginning at 9:00 am.

Winter 2009 meeting: Wednesday January 21, 2009 beginning at 6:00 in Seal Beach, CA through Sunday January 25, 2009.

Future agenda items:

- Who will be our Enduring Vision team members?
- Who defines the FGBC? How do we discuss theological and ministry issues?