



Report to Fellowship Council

February 3, 2006

Thank you for this opportunity to report on the ministry of Grace Brethren North American Missions. The Lord's goodness in allowing us to participate with Him in the expansion of the church in North America continues to be a great privilege.

GBNAM embarked on structural changes at the beginning of 2005 as an organization by creating separate but overlapping Boards of Directors with our sister organization GBIF. The separation of Board was also followed by a separation of staff and some internal restructuring in order to streamline the ministry.

We now have two rented locations for support staff. We are renting space in the International Missions Building as well as office space from the Penn Valley GBC in Telford, Pa. Computer networking and voiceover internet protocol technologies connect our offices for functionality.

The big efforts strategically in ministry last year was to make first efforts at releasing more financial resources to the FGBC for church planting endeavors. In November we announced our matching grants campaign of \$250,000 for church planting. We have received several grant applications to date and anticipate more as we proceed through the year.

The TAG group meetings in Cary, NC and Powell, OH should serve as a great encouragement to our fellowship that church planting is on the front burner in the minds of many. Additionally, the Micropolitan Church Planting movement in Ohio, hoping to plant "one church a day" in Ohio is off to a fast start and under the capable leadership of Tony Webb.

GBNAM will be partnering with Vision Ohio using facilities provided by Northwest Chapel Grace Brethren Fellowship in Dublin Ohio (Terry Hofecker, pastor), and GBNAM's Telford location at Penn Valley Church to open up the first two GBNAM Operation Centers for regional church planting. The desire of each center is to create a locale and environment where systems for assessing, coaching, fund-raising, training, spiritual development and releasing church planters to catalyze a movement. Each center will have regional pastors and laymen involved in a highly intensive church planting movement. Other Operation Centers (formerly called "Key Church Resource Centers") will come online in the next several years as discussions with additional churches throughout North America continues.

We are also very enthused about our new partnership with Grace Theological Seminary in the offering of a one week training course for church planters. This

course is an effort to launch churches in an 18 month span from conception to launch. As part of this effort we built, in conjunction with the Character Based Living Corporation, a web based assessment process that is a fishing pool for church planting recruits. Our first advertising campaign in Relevant Magazine and on the Relevant Web-Site generated 8,000 site hits and approximately 150 assessments. Our prayer is that ten percent of assessments would result in actual church plants. Our next efforts for on-line assessments will be through a campaign to our Grace Brethren Churches asking each Pastor to encourage all attendees to log onto the GBNAM website and take the assessment. We believe our best harvest workers are currently in our pews and need to be identified.

Because we desire **to see a movement** we hope to release workers on church planting teams to the harvest field with a variety of spiritual gifts. GBNAM has asked the Association of Grace Brethren Ministers to hold a summit of District Examining Board Chairmen in March of this year. The summit, which will be held in Lititz, Pa., is for the purpose of developing a category called "Commissioned Church Planter".

It is our belief that different levels of leadership require different skill sets and probably need to be evaluated and assessed based on the responsibility and level of expertise required at that leadership level. **We also believe it is a primary way to create movement.**

Let me give an illustration using a very common model based on five leadership levels.

- Level I Leaders - Grassroots (small group leaders, household heads)
- Level II Leaders – Assistants (deacons, deaconesses, youth workers, ministry workers)
- Level III Leaders – Evangelists (church planters, church planting teams)
- Level IV Leaders - Overseers (elders (men only), vocational and non- vocational)
- Level V Leaders - Apostolic (agencies, seminaries, mission enterprises etc)

A movement of church planting will require many hands, not all of whom will be elders or pastors. Therefore, we need to acknowledge church planter skill sets at a level below ordained and licensed elder. **We believe this will encourage hope among many in our pews to get involved in the missionary enterprise.** It is also possible this will become a recruiting pool for leaders at higher levels. The "Commissioned Church Planter" therefore, would be at a level of expertise and skill different from that of a level IV or V leader.

Excitement is present in the FGBC in the area of new church development through daughter church planting. From information we have gathered at the TAG meetings, from District Mission Boards, and from those involved in church planting in the FGBC, it is our belief that one dozen new churches will start this year. We will be encouraging each one of them to join the FGBC immediately upon their launch in order to encourage their participation in our family of faith.

Additionally, ethnic-American church planting is moving rapidly. Our Hispanic and Haitian works are multiplication minded with plans developing for the launch of several new works in 2006.

GBNAM will be working diligently in our 2006 publications to collect and publish the names and leaders of all current church plants taking place in the FGBC in North America. Expect a publication in late April or Early May that highlights every church plant in the FGBC. You could help us immensely by providing us with the name and leader of any new church of which you are aware.

GBNAM is working diligently with ministry in the major cities of North America. Team Canada has now launched into their second major city with Phil Bryant's move to Vancouver. Greater Toronto, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Chicago, and New York City continue in their development with healthy churches or teams in place. GBNAM just purchased a Victorian Home in SF for Kevin and Sieu-Choo Ong to host a hospitality center for international students in the city. From this home we hope to minister to a needy segment of this great city.

As always finances is a major concern of our organization as it is with so many other groups. We believe God will provide for us as the vision for church planting enlarges. On the stewardship side of our responsibility we will be selling our Winona Lake building in March and we have reduced staff by two and one-half employees by combining jobs and outsourcing in order to cut our overhead. Please pray for our staff as they work tirelessly for the Lord of the Harvest.

Thank you again for the opportunity to present this report. I look forward to interaction with you in February!

Sincerely in Him,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Timothy E. Boal".

Tim Boal
President
Grace Brethren North American Missions