

## 1 FELLOWSHIP OF GRACE BRETHREN CHURCHES

2 **Fellowship Council Minutes**

3 MID-YEAR MINUTES Feb. 1, 2003

4 Simi Valley, California Grace Brethren Church of Simi Valley

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6 ❖ Saturday, February 1, 20037 ➤ PRESENT: Bob Combs (Moderator), Jeff Gill (Past Moderator), Tom Avey (Fellowship  
8 Coordinator), Ron Boehm, Dan Allan, Jesus Munoz, John McIntosh, Mike Jentes, Ted Kirnbauer,  
9 Ed Waken, Vic Young, Ken Bickel, Dave Ogden, Joel Richards, John Teevan, Jerry Young, Terry  
10 Taylor, Mark Saunders and Greg Howell (Recording Secretary)11  
12 ➤ Moderator Bob Combs announced that the Columbia shuttle disintegrated upon reentry this  
13 morning. We paused for prayer for the families and NASA personnel. He then told a story about  
14 the lady who was very depressed that she couldn't be home for Christmas and then the thought  
15 struck her that "it's not your party". We forget that it is not about us. He told of his cleaning days  
16 and how Ephesians 1 came alive to him: It's not our party because: 1) God sees the big  
17 picture—v.5, He used an illustration that James D. Jess often used, we look at life like a little boy  
18 looking at a circus through the fence—whatever he sees influences his outlook—God sits on the  
19 fence and sees the whole ; 2) God has a better purpose, v. 9, 11, --"if it had been left up to me, I  
20 wouldn't have done nearly as well (or as much)", 3) God throws the best party, v. 12,14—to think  
21 that God would somehow use me to make a difference in somebody's life. Bob gave the  
22 illustration of Tosconini after he had conducted a symphony—he said to the orchestra, "I am  
23 nothing, you are nothing, Beethoven is everything"—"I am nothing, you are nothing, Christ is  
24 everything".25  
26 ➤ Vic Young—described his ministry and led in prayer. They serve about 100 mile radius. Fountain  
27 of Life Bible Church is located in the Tri-city area (Bristol, Kingsport, Johnson City, TN). The  
28 church is looking forward to having Conference there in 2004.29  
30 ♦ 020103-01National Conference plan

- 31 • The Leadership team has a 3 year commitment from Grace College & Seminary
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- 32 • Alternating Conferences would begin 2005 and be evaluated after the first one, but with
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- 33 three planned. The evaluation will consider WHO is showing up as well as logistics and
- 
- 34 regular concerns. This is a risky venture, nothing ventured/nothing gained, so we need
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- 35 clear expectations. Tom will handle promotion. Will the training be exclusively for FGBC
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- 36 or others also? Scholarships would be available only for FGBC. Jeff will be doing massive
- 
- 37 surveying of what courses would be valuable. Each commission needs to list potential
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- 38 courses during their committee time for Jeff's information.
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- 39 • Statement of purpose discussion:
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- 40 ▪ Alternative Conference also needs solid purpose (get more people there also, not
- 
- 41 just play to the pastors/leaders that already attend). It needs to create an
- 
- 42 opportunity, an expectation. Can we get Conference as jazzed as BNYC? The goal
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- 43 is to replace the "Grace" common experience (used to be everyone came through the
- 
- 44 same educational hallowed halls.) FOCUS retreats came out of troubled times, to
- 
- 45 get us to know each other. Six month later FOCUS retreat to train leaders.
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- 46 ▪ Dan Allen stated he is going to really concentrate on FOCUS retreats during his year
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- 47 as Moderator. It is more like a BNYC atmosphere at FOCUS than Conference where
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- 48 there are so many agendas clamoring for platform time. There is a missing element
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- 49 from the past—families, like Camp Bethany. Is there a place where we can get
- 
- 50 everyone together, making it a family event? The problem is we don't have the
- 
- 51 control and CE doesn't want it.
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- 52 ▪ The training conferences will be for pastors, and won't be run by our cooperating
- 
- 53 ministries. We will have more control. FOCUS retreats evolved—this will also
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- 54 evolve. FOCUS is highly relational so it attracts the young guys.
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- 55 ▪ We need to find out how to attract young leaders. We have to be aggressive. We are
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- 56 the Progressive branch of the Brethren, we need to stay progressive. We need to

1 take action so that we aren't left wishing in 10 years that we had done something 10  
2 years before.

- 3 ■ A sampling of what is being taught at Grace can happen at a training Conference.  
4 We also need to be careful not to let FOCUS evolve away from centering on God  
5 (some training is creeping in). Maybe the training needs to learn from the  
6 decentralized nature of FOCUS retreats by bringing the trainers from Winona Lake to  
7 the regions, rather than making everyone have to travel to Grace. There should be  
8 no restriction on who can come.
- 9 ■ It was suggested that FOCUS retreats need to be more than just one full day, make it  
10 at least two full days.
- 11 ■ Need to do something to reach out. It would be better to have trainers come to the  
12 trainees than, the trainees have to come to the trainers.
- 13 ■ We need to develop limited, clear expectations.
  - 14 ✓ Two target groups—current leaders, desiring continuing education and the  
15 emerging leaders, fragmented, needing training (whether they recognize it or  
16 not). The movement is toward decentralized in many realms not just churches.  
17 We need to get some people together that don't know each other. And we  
18 annually need a business session. We could have a blow-out celebration the  
19 weekend of and then a training session with the degreed program following.

21 **020103-2 A MOTION PREVAILED to implement alternating, training Conferences every other year**  
22 **according to the Leadership Team's recommendation for Conference through 2010.**

- 24 ➤ 020103-3 DON SHOEMAKER—Social Concerns Committee
  - 25 ♦ Don stated that we (FGBC) are pretty light in our social concerns compared to our related  
26 Brethren.
  - 27 ♦ He desires specific wording in the strategy to emphasize our cultural awareness. The  
28 Committee is working out a clear biblical rationale for what we are about. There is a need to  
29 encourage local church activism, blood drives, voter registration/polling place. Don also  
30 wants to elevate social concerns at Conference. He asked us to remember 1988 when  
31 Chuck Colson and Joni Erickson were guest speakers. Conference needs some practical  
32 social concerns emphasis, like the chaplains' involvement at Conference this year in  
33 Philadelphia. We don't know how many FGBC chaplains we have because, we don't have to  
34 endorse them as with military chaplains.
  - 35 ♦ The Committee is open to criticism.
  - 36 ♦ He suggested Eric Eickhoff and Glenn Rininger for nomination to Social Concerns Committee
  - 37 ♦ Discussion included: Social Concerns needs to have an influence at BNYC like a citizenship  
38 recognition (membership, voter registration—like Boy Scout merit badge.) We need to  
39 present a distinctively Christian response to evolution. It was commented that the move from  
40 position papers to action recommendations was very good.
- 42 ➤ 020103-4 STRUCTURES COMMISSION
  - 43 ♦ Nothing to add to Fellowship Council & VISION
  - 44 ♦ The commission agrees with the recommendation to begin Fellowship Council  
45 Representative terms 1 year after election.

47 **020103-5 MOTION: To recommend to the delegates that Fellowship Council members be elected**  
48 **one year in advance of their term so that they could meet with the council (without a vote) for the**  
49 **purpose of orientation. 2/p (note this motion was later rescinded)**

- 51 ♦ The commission agreed that vision needs to be reviewed at FOCUS Retreats.
- 52 ♦ The commission presented the following committee appointments and nominations:
  - 53 • Nominating Committee: We need to place 12 names on the ballot. 6 will be elected by  
54 the delegates to the nominating committee
    - 55 ■ Dan Thornton, Dan White, Mark Saunders, Tom Hocking, Jesus Munoz, Tad Hobert,  
56 Ron Boehm, John McIntosh, Jeff Gill, Robert MacMillan, Randy Weekley, Jim Brown

(Phila) on the ballot for nominating committee pending their acceptance of the nomination.

- Parliamentary: Galen Wiley.
- Membership Committee: To ask (in order of priority) Brad Kelley, Steve Shipley, Doug Courter, Greg Stoeve, Phil Teran, Richard Todd.
- Pastoral Connections: Greg Howell
- Secretary: Tom Avey -Appointment requires delegate ratification.
- Treasurer: Tom Stallter- Appointment requires delegate ratification.

**020103-6 MOTION to approve committee appointment and nominations. 2/p**

**020103-7 MOTION to appoint Eric Eickhoff and Glenn Rininger to the Social Concerns Committee. 2/p**

**020103-8 MOTION prevailed to rescind motion 020103-2 to elect Fellowship Council members one year in advance of their term of service. 2/p**

➤ 020103-9 MEMBERSHIP COMMISSION

- ♦ Presented NATIVE NEW LIFE CHURCH, Albuquerque, NM and MARYSVILLE GRACE BRETHREN CHURCH, Marysville, OH be recommended to the delegates for membership in the FGBC.

**020103-10 MOTION: That MARYSVILLE GRACE BRETHREN CHURCH, Marysville, OH —Clancy Crew, Pastor be recommended for membership in the FGBC. 2/p**

**020103-11 MOTION: NATIVE NEW LIFE CHURCH, Albuquerque, NM —Arnold Betony, Pastor be recommended for membership in the FGBC. 2/p**

- ♦ 020103-12 Delinquent Churches
  - The Commission recommended asking both Boswell and Tremont to send letters requesting waiver of membership fees, to Tom Avey with a courtesy copy to John McIntosh. They also recommended that pending the receipt of these letters we forgive fees and extend one year of grace (2001) and that the chairman of the respective districts be encouraged to come along side to encourage them (maybe help pay fees). John will follow-up Jackson/Tremont and Dave Ogden will follow-up Govey/Boswell.

**020103-13 MOTION: to forgive Laurel Mountain Grace Brethren Church, Boswell, PA one year (2001) contingent on receiving a letter requesting such and explaining why. 2/p**

**020103-14 MOTION: to forgive Echo Valley Grace Brethren Church, Tremont, PA one year (2001) contingent on receiving letter requesting such and explaining why. 2/p**

- The Commission advocated a proactive approach to helping churches before they become too delinquent. Each Membership Commission member will contact the following delinquent churches and districts to encourage them: Yakima, WA; Troutville, VA; Johnstown (GBC), PA; Pickerington, OH; and Eagle River, AK.
- It was recommended that churches that are in good standing be recognized with a certificate suitable for framing. (Tom will do this—following years with a sticker seal to update) House churches –recognize each network (not dependant on mother church's health). The Commission is still working on other details.
- It was voiced that the listing of daughter churches in the annual (Handbook) was appreciated. Also that the Commission conference call was very profitable.

- National health Insurance—not discussed. Tom gets questions and doesn't think it is doable, suggests that AGBM survey interest. We are too loosely organized to make it a reality. John has a broker who would make a report to AGBM if interested. Tom suggested that there would need to be two major benefits—1) cheaper, or 2) to help smaller churches). May be more viable now than in the past because of sky-rocketing health insurance costs. In the past the obstacle was that we are an open group (members can "elect against the system," which means we could be seen as a collector of sick people).

➤ 020103-15 FINANCE COMMISSION

- ◆ Report of phone conversation –print out. The Commission reviewed the financial statement and the budget. The budget needs to be adjusted up-\$2140 to reflect the amount approved for Tom's retirement analysis was not a part of his retirement expense/contribution but a service to assist him.
- ◆ The minutes need to be corrected concerning Tom's retirement analysis
- ◆ The financial summary was reviewed by committee

➤ 020103-17 The Leadership Team created a care team, personnel team to watch out for the welfare of the Fellowship Coordinator and his assistants. Three men from Winona Lake area (past-mod will also be member (4) and the liaison with the Fellowship Council) (John Teevan., Jeff Gill, Galen Wiley). Jeff is currently wearing two hats, Bob Combs will be added at the end of his term as Moderator.

➤ 020103-18 Membership Fee—funding for the Fellowship

- ◆ Ron Boehm stated that attendances are plateaued, and membership is declining. The previously approved plan jumps the fees dramatically especially for progressive churches (because they tend to have a greater gap between attendance and membership). Ron rethought the previous approved plan. The Commission has a divided opinion. The current budget reflects an increase to \$5.50/member. It may be better to help churches to identify members and committed core. Counting the faithful and maybe establish the fee on that.
- ◆ The Commission recommended that a Task force composed of Ron Boehm, Ed Waken, Joel Richards and Todd Scoles to work on promotional materials by Conference time answering the question; "What is the value of a fellowship?" and let it trickle down to "What is the value of belonging to a local church?"
  - Churches do not exist for the benefit of denominations, denominations exist to help churches.
  - The question the brochure (promo) is to answer is "what does the money go for?"

**020103-19 MOTION: that the finance commission form a task force to study and promote membership and report to Fellowship Council at the pre-Conference meeting. 2/p**

➤ 020103-20 The Gathering

- ◆ Money will be allocated to get the Fellowship Council representatives there, everyone else will be invited at their expense.

**020103-21 MOTION: to proceed with The Gathering, March 2004 2/p**

➤ 020103-22 STAT REPORT do we need additions in light of the vision?

➤ 020103-23 Hispanic/Ethnic Representation

- ◆ Tom mentioned that the reason Jesus Munoz was present is that he feels a need to have continued Hispanic/Ethnic Representation after Jesus' Fellowship Council term ended July 2002.

- 1 ➤ 020103-24 Tom will put together a committee to move forward with SALT in the US based on  
2 GBIM's model as presented by Dave Guiles.  
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4 **020103-25 MOTION to adopt the Finance report including the budget with the changes in salary**  
5 **and expenses for The Gathering. 2/p**  
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- 7 ➤ 020103-26 National Conference Preview 2003 --John Teevan  
8 ♦ The day of growth through assimilation is over and day of growth by church planting is here—  
9 that's what the moderator's address is going to say.  
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11 ➤ Dan Allan 2<sup>nd</sup> Moderator-elect, shared some background and personal information. He was at  
12 Norton for 3 years with Bob Combs where he received a clear picture of ministry being all about  
13 people. He has been at Ashland for 18 years. He started there as youth pastor with John  
14 Teevan. He is married to Holly and has 2 kids. The Fellowship is a reflection of his own church.  
15 They are becoming farsighted as a church (fellowship), very in touch with things around the  
16 world, but the closer the ministry gets to home the more blurred our vision becomes.  
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18 Dan closed in prayer at 3:24pm and Bob declared us adjourned.  
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20 Next Meeting July 24, 3:00 pm.  
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