

1 **FELLOWSHIP COUNCIL**

2 **July 22, 2016** at the Sheraton Centre Hotel, Toronto, Ontario, CANADA

3 9:00 AM in the Norfolk Meeting Room

4
5 PRESENT: Bartley Sawatsky (Executive Director 2013-2016), Clancy Cruise (Executive Director
6 2017-2018), Richard Todd (A-16), Phil Bryant (A-17), Greg Serafino (A-18), Roy Halberg (A-19),
7 Jeremy Wike (A-20), Michael Saldivar (B-16), Joe Cosentino (B-17), Mark Lingenfelter (B-18), Ron
8 Boehm (B-20), Dan Thornton (C-16), Randy Weekley (C-17), Tim Hodge (C-18), Larry Orme (C-19),
9 Scott Avey (C-20), Tom Avey (Fellowship Coordinator), and Greg Howell (Recording Secretary).

10
11 ABSENT: Kevin Pinkerton (B-19)

12 (note: letter signifies region and number signifies year term ends)

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14 1. Tom led Devotions reflecting on Romans 1:18-28 and the anti-Christian pressures from the
15 world especially as it relates to the LGBTQ community, agenda, and pressure to embrace sinful
16 lifestyles, even by Bible believers.
17
18 2. Approve Minutes of January meeting

19
20 **A MOTION PREVAILED to approve the minutes of the January 2016 meeting as published on the**
21 **Fellowship Council web page.**

- 22
23 3. Finance Team
24 1. Housing Allowance for Tom Avey, 2017

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26 **MOTION: to set Tom Avey's 2017 Housing Allowance at \$35,000 2/p**

- 27
28
29 4. Membership Team—Michael Saldivar, Chair
30 Michael presented two new churches planted by Nathan Wells, and Andy Shenk
31 1. [Grace Ranch, Ashland Ohio](#)
32
33 2. [St. Antoine Bible Church](#)

34 Questions included concern about their definition of church. Michael was assured that they
35 were functioning under the five functions of a church as much as possible.
36 Also concern was expressed about baptizing just the head. There was a post on FaceBook
37 describing it. Michael will check to see if that is standard and what the reasons are/were. We
38 want to make sure they aren't attaching false doctrinal significance.

39
40 **MOTION to present these two churches to delegates as new member churches 2/p**

41
42 Tom noted that at Conference, each church will be moved and voted on individually to give
43 delegates chance to ask questions about each if they desire.

- 44
45 5. Structures Team—Dan Thornton, Chair
46 Revised motions for delegates (CCCI and Charis Alliance)

47
48 **Motion 1: The FGBC will become a charter member of the Charis Alliance and endorses the**
49 **Commitments to Common Identity and Mission. The FGBC accepts the benefits and**
50 **responsibilities of membership and directs the Fellowship Council to select three delegates to**
51 **the Alliance by August 2016. 2/p**

52
53 **Motion 2: The FGBC endorses the Charis Commitment to Common Identity (CCCI) as the**
54 **identity statement of the FGBC and encourages member churches, the AGBM, our national and**
55 **cooperating organizations, and districts, to use the CCCI to train leaders and to communicate**
56 **and explain our movement. 2/p**

57
58 6. New Brotherhood Mutual program
59

- 60 • Background - Brotherhood insures around 133 of our churches including the FGBC, inc. A
61 few years back we enrolled in their group revenue sharing program. The first year we
62 received around \$50k. Years two and three we received nothing due to a bad loss-ratio.
63 Then they cancelled the program due to state licensing problems.
64
65 • Brotherhood has replaced their dividend sharing program with what they call a "Ministry
66 Partner" program. If we move quickly and are approved, the FGBC can realize a \$25k check
67 this fall if we agree to...
68
69 1) Send an email to our member churches and ministries from the FGBC office suggesting
70 they consider Brotherhood (ie: request a quote)
71
72 2) Give Brotherhood our mailing list. They will do one mailing from their office each year. No
73 pressure (they promised... and we have not had trouble with this in the past).
74
75 3) Put a link on our web site to Brotherhood. Doesn't need to be on the front page.
76
77 • These are pretty much the same things we did for the pervious program.
78 • This is an at-will arrangement. We can cancel at any time.
79 • Tom suggests we use the first check to offset this year's conference losses and then for the
80 rebranding initiative. He won't know what the losses will be until November.
81 • He has lots of experience with Brotherhood and would have no problem recommending them.
82 One of our churches recently faced huge legal challenges and Brotherhood stood with them.
83 Randy Weekly told of a situation at their church where they were covered for the situation, but
84 not during the treatment some time later and Brotherhood came in are cared for lawyer and all
85 expenses, because the problem occurred when they had been covered.
86

87 **MOTION: That the FGBC become a ministry partner with Brotherhood Mutual and accomplish**
88 **their connection requests to our member churches. 2p**
89

90 7. Women in Ministry position from Structures Commission - Do we want to present the idea to the
91 delegates?

92 Encompass has been working on this for some time and has a very large document (236 pages)
93 that is strongly complementarian and marries well with what FC Structures Team came up with
94 last year. Women of Grace are also working on a way to certify women. AGBM has been
95 asked to tackle this but has shied away because anything AGBM approves will be twisted to
96 equal licensure. Some have suggested this should be part of the North American 4th cluster of
97 the CCCI. Tom Avey suggested that maybe this should be on the agenda in January.
98 Encompass intends to publish their report as a book. Phil Bryant commented that the 4th cluster
99 will probably take on its own form. Dan Thornton interjected that the 4th cluster will be
100 comprised of leadership issues and thus needs to be owned by the Fellowship Council with
101 strong input from resources such as AGBM, the Social Concerns Committee, and Encompass,
102 etc. Tom remarked that since the 5 year review was built into the CCCI, some statements of
103 leadership might even disappear after the five years. Tim Hodge has been working on a chart
104 of past resolutions and items that might be included in the 4th cluster. He offered that he could
105 bring a pretty complete list to the January meeting.
106

107 **MOTION: That Tim Hodge and the Structures Team come back with items for the 4th cluster to**
108 **January 2017 meeting. 2p**
109

Discussion included: There are lots of 4th issue things that should not be what didn't get in clusters 1,2,3. But to be leadership issues. There should be consensus on what should and shouldn't be in. FC representatives really are the gate-keepers. We are non-creedal, so cant/won't become militant. DG reminded us that CCCI is center-set so as not to put anyone "in or out". TH-clarity of our documents will expose those who are out of step. In a Fellowship, "in or out" is determined by relationship. We don't like hard lines, but need clarity. Fellowship is the glue that holds us together. If we don't like each other, it won't matter what our doctrine or policies are.

TH—stated that he will work on purposes and the process. We will need the Encompass document and other resources to refer to, not just a two sentence statement with two verses. The statement will just be the frame.

MOTION: That the Women in Ministry Statement become the policy for the FC. 2/p

(see Minute page 8, line 40 – p 9, line 40 of January 2016 FC minutes)

Procedure for 4th cluster: passed by the FC, then 20-30 leaders, or researchers, maybe need to work with AGBM, or district, time zone before drop-dead line.

8. The Identity Initiative and Branding Task Force - report from Bartley, Scott and Tim

Tim read his letter/memo.

Bartley would like to have FC approval to share at close of Conference business meeting that we are looking to change our DBA name. He envisions that requests from churches and Focus Retreats will be made in the fall. By the January 2017 FC meeting suggestions will be narrowed down. In the spring logos will be prepared for viable options, announced/unveiled at 2017 conference. Doing-Business-As name change doesn't need to be voted on, because it is not a corporate change.

"Brethren" doesn't mean much to people we are trying to reach. Areas where other Brethren churches exist, we are totally different (they are greenpeace, liberal theology, and dress funny, etc.). Sixteen per-cent of FGBC's don't use "Grace" or "Brethren". DG—we need a name that cannot be reduced to a series of letters (ie FGBC). We want to avoid insiders talk, code words. It is ten times as difficult to remember the alphabet soup as what it means.

The team has determined that "Grace" should automatically be part of the name. The thing to be determined is what modifier should go with it?

"Fellowship" = friendly relationship among people

"Alliance" = union/relationship working together, state of allied, joined together

"Network" = system connected to each other, group or organizations that work together

"Union"

We have a great window of opportunity right now—"golden age of relationship" in the FGBC.

BS—want to roll out next year, with nice clean short name. Young people will especially enjoy, lots of energy, lots of positives.

There are great names out there, but great organizations are already using them. Lots of URLs are claimed already. Grace.com owned by another church—doesn't even have grace in its name!

COMMENTS: not radical, just responding to what is. 80% of churches not using "Brethren".

Suggestions: GraceNet, Grace United, Grace Churches. TH—succinct is best. A 3rd word only if necessary. It would be better to have a two word name with a tagline identifier.

“Grace United” is already a Canadian denomination, but not who we would want to be identified with either.

“Alliance” directs people to think of CMA. But we might prefer CMA baggage over some other baggage.

Local church names don’t have to identify with the national name (they aren’t now!)

“Grace Churches” Tag lines: moving together, alliances of missional churches, gospel churches, united on mission “churches” becomes redundant

Thinking outside the box= “Grace Coalition” —but has temporary and political connotations. We need to come up with the word that means something and is moving forward. “Impact”?

Should we hire experts? DG—Encompass got more than just a name with the consultants, they showed some of our weaknesses in recruiting, etc. TH—his thought is to come up with the name ourselves and then hire experts to work on logo.

MOTION: That we announce the Doing-Business-As name search to the delegates. 2p

COMMENTS: By consensus new name will incorporate “Grace” someone said “I have a strong feeling for ‘Grace Alliance’ if it has a strong tag”

STRAW POLL: Grace Alliance—5, Grace Union—2, Grace Churches—7, Grace Synergy (Gospel-centered movement of churches)—2 plus some changed their vote.

DG—the test is how do you explain the name to potential members? It can’t exist in a vacuum. How do you put it in conversation? Does it need an article (The)? And what are we a part of again? ie: “We belong to the movement of Grace Churches”

If we stay with a “Grace” type name, we can find the name in house, but hire professionals to do logo. We have been playing catch up since “German Baptist Brethren”. It is time to be proactive and move forward while we have a calm window of opportunity.

QUESTION: should we keep the name and logo search under wraps or be transparent? DG—found it beneficial to do strategic leaking of things to certain people. Also the value of experts is that they noticed some things that needed better exposure.

BS—I want to reveal the DBA name change at the end of Conference with some of the suggested names.

DG—probably two tiers to this: How to reveal to Conference and how to involve positive input for name change in smaller groups.

TH—we all need to be familiar with the DBA reasons, constructive, rather than critical comments and conversations.

SA—write down or bring ideas to fall Focus Retreats

9. Budget

Next year’s conference will be in Fremont. That will greatly reduce actually conference costs and Keith wants to drastically cut registration price to \$90. Because of proximity we should be able to have lots of cohorts in Ohio attending, whole church staffs. Lots of locals are close; want to be sure cost does not impede their attendance. It won’t really change the price for those flying. And hotels will be hard to find and about 40 miles away. Fremont church intends to donate facility expenses.

Discussion brought up that we could keep the price higher than necessary to offset future costlier conferences. Keith's goal is to get 1000 people to Fremont. Tom resisted attempts to encourage higher price.
It was noted that Colorado is being considered in the future, maybe Estes Park.

MOTION: That the 2017 budget be approved and presented to the delegates for adoption. 2/p

10. Executive Directors report

1. Clancy Cruise—expressed humility and gratitude for being chosen to lead the Fellowship the next couple years.

He stated that unity doesn't just happen in our churches. He is very excited about where we are headed. Since he gets around a lot, he sees different churches in different denominations, but states that what we have in the FGBC is incredible!

Important to "not look at unity anymore with suspicion—this what Jesus prayed for!" We are a little like Gideon, least/youngest, but one of the signs is our unity. It will take some courage to press forward. But it's cool what's happening. Let's back each other up and encourage each other, good team, good plan lets execute the plan.

Clancy will run the Focus Retreats this year—talking about pastor's family/home/heart—like last year very conversational. Part of the reason young men don't want to get into ministry is because they're scared of leadership. He will emphasis the important of making home good.

Tom Avey said 3 years is too long to make a pastor be Executive Director. Its good to divide the jobs the next couple years: Clancy—Focus and Keith Minier will conduct Conference.

Tim Hodge distributed the welcome folder he made for workshop "Welcome to the FGBC" It is very well done.

11. AGBM endorsement of the CCCI

The Association of Grace Brethren Ministers board of directors agreed unanimously to endorse the CCCI document approved by the Charis delegates. We recommend that our fellowship join the Charis Alliance and also adopt the CCCI document as a fresh expression of our core beliefs and values. By joining the Charis Alliance we are excited that we are aligning ourselves with the international community of Grace Brethren people.

Tom questioned if he was missing concerns about CCCI since he has heard almost no complaints. Group agreed few complaints.

12. Plan for Business Meeting

What happens Monday with the vote? Motions are in place, Dave G will give a three minute introduction, then show the video.

Motion needs time for discussion (on the motion not the CCCI details). Dan T noted that it is important to introduce it as our identity statement not a new Doctrinal Statement. We are not changing the Constitution, can't yet anyway.

D Guiles expressed not to let up in prayer. The dominoes may be lined up, but they won't fall over automatically.

Lot of exciting things in our fellowship. Combined campuses, dying churches coming under the umbrella of existing churches.

We have a new identity and working on a new name.

Closed meeting with several leading in prayer.

273 Respectfully submitted,
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276 Gregory M. Howell,
277 Recording Secretary