

10 January, 2007

To: FGBC Fellowship Council

From: Terry White, BMH Executive Director

Re: Requested year-end report from Brethren Missionary Herald Co.

The assignment: The report should focus on significant achievements and developments in your ministry in 2006 and plans for 2007. Also, you should answer the question, "How has the organization you lead cooperated in the GrowGoLead vision statement?"

BMH tries always to keep in front of us our mission statement:

The mission of BMH is to nurture Great Commission teamwork among the people and churches of the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches by building bridges of communication.

The primary ways we do this are:

1. News dissemination through *FGBC World*, the websites, and the blog
2. Providing a platform for Grace Brethren people who have something important to say
3. Assisting churches and other national organizations with communication services
4. Building bridges of personal relationship by participation in Fellowship-wide functions

The year 2006 was one of enormous change and re-orientation for BMH. It was only on February 14 (we refer to it internally as the "Valentine's Day Massacre") that our bookstore tenant hinted they might wish to close the store and leave Winona Lake.

You know what happened. We quickly made internal adjustments to break leases, to take on disenfranchised employees, to find another tenant for the store space, and to continue the mission of helping churches and the Christian community with a source for resources. The subsequent signing of a long-term lease with Tree of Life and the significant renovation of the facility give testimony to God's goodness in answering our prayers.

In addition, our national marketing program for BMH Books got underway in earnest. Through our national consultants, we launched into relationships with distributors that now give us access to about 1,400 Christian bookstores, with availability of our product on CBD.com, Amazon.com, Walmart.com and other outlets. We also began exhibiting at functions such as the International Christian Retailer's Show (formerly Christian Booksellers Association), the Evangelical Theological Society, and others.

This year we also turned a corner to fulfilling a longtime dream of mine—to begin channeling some of BMH’s funds into literature ministry and support on our mission fields. That commitment begins this month in Africa, and we plan to expand it to Argentina, Brazil, and other areas as God provides the resources and reveals the vision.

FGBC World has now completed three years of publication. The January/February 2007 issue is the 19th issue. I believe it’s time to evaluate the publication’s effectiveness and we are doing that in several ways, including the conducting of 10 focus groups. Our new editor, Liz Cutler Gates, has been charged with bringing more intentional strategic planning to the publication than we have had.

I recently read in some historical material that the *Brethren Missionary Herald* magazine reached a circulation of about 11,000 at its height. I’m pleased that *FGBC World* this current issue circulated 15,376 copies, including 1,338 to individual subscribers. So, as the only all-Fellowship periodical, I believe it has the highest saturation rate ever for a Fellowship publication.

We know, of course, that sheer numbers of copies distributed does not tell us how many are actually reading (or even receiving) it, and so that is part of the goal of the focus groups—to determine effectiveness.

BMH Books has had a banner year. Though we still have a long way to go, our gross sales have been:

2004 - \$232,549

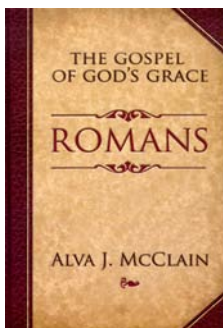
2005 - \$332,342

2006 - \$355,553

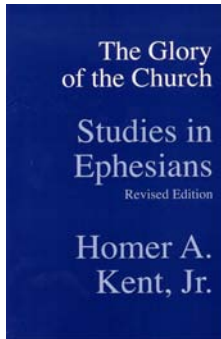
We had topped the previous year’s sales total by early November this year. We are dropping the sale of Sunday School curriculum and VBS kits (we’ll try to steer those customers to Tree of Life), as they are labor-intensive and not very profitable.

Just by way of reminder, here’s a month-by-month summary of our new and re-issued product and events during 2006:

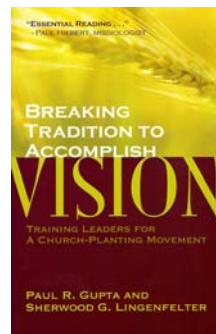
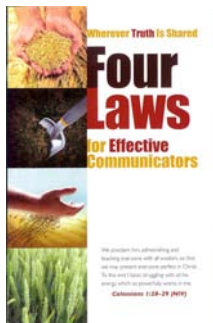
January



February

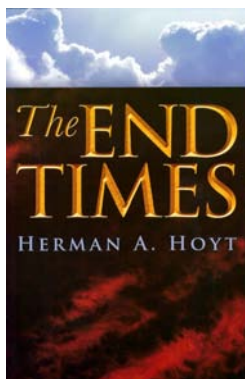


March

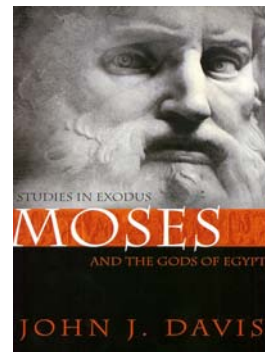
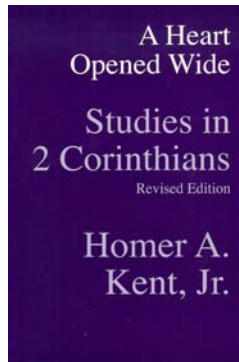
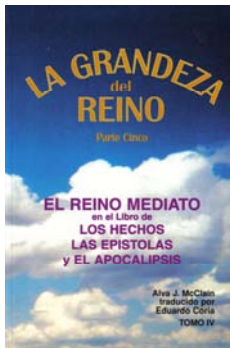


May

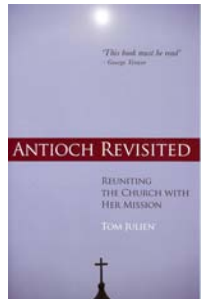
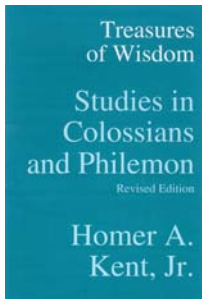
- Signed agreement to be distributor of all John/Norma Whitcomb printed products
- Regained publishing rights to Edmond Hiebert commentary series



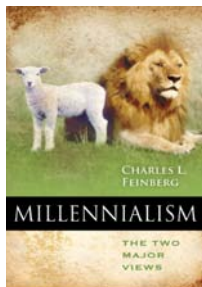
June



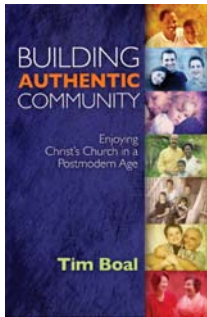
July



September



October



Signed agreement to be sole distributor of John Davis' books (acquired 8 additional titles)

December



Plans for 2007

Looking into 2007, we believe BMH will emerge from a “year of huge changes” into a year of “stabilization.”

- We will continue our commitment to AGBM, managing its newsletter, website, blog, and other communications
- We will forge a new working relationship with Women of Grace. Janet Minnix has already invited Liz Cutler Gates to attend the WOGUSA leadership summit this year, and we hope to serve them in several ways.
- We thank GBIF for its confidence in us, both with a financial contribution, and with its decision to be a paid advertiser in *FGBC World*. We will faithfully carry GBIF’s message to our readers as frequently as they wish.
- We will refine and sharpen the effectiveness of *FGBC World* and of our websites and blogs

- We will continue our commitment to Grace Brethren authors. Among those whose books are scheduled for 2007 are Kary Oberbrunner, John Davis, Dan O'Deens, and Bruce Triplehorn.
- We will engage in significant personal and financial commitment to strengthening literature ministries (writing, editing, publishing) in Africa and other mission fields where GBIM is working

We are helping with **the LEAD vision through NEWS** (both *FGBC World* and the blog) by giving effective leaders a larger audience and by providing local church leaders with ideas and Fellowship contacts to help them in their work.

We are helping with the **LEAD vision through PUBLISHING** by providing a channel for good writers to impact many others in the Fellowship (the moderators, and others like DeYoung, Whitcomb and Peugh). We believe our published resources are essential for young developing leaders so they can gain history, theology and cultural perspective regarding our Brethren movement.

We are helping in the **GO and GROW vision** by intentionally emphasizing positive examples of evangelism and church growth in our news and publications. We have great faith in what God is going to do through the Brethren movement and want to provide the supportive communications necessary for the movement to continue.

On behalf of our employees and our board, I want to thank the Fellowship Council for the privilege of playing a role in seeking to increase effectiveness of our churches and organizations in fulfilling the Great Commission. As God supplies the energy, vision, and resources, BMH will continue to partner with you to the best of our ability in implementing GoGrowLead momentum for God's glory.