

Minutes – Church in Conference

March 7, 2010
Sanctuary

Moderator, Cam Zachry, called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm. A quorum was present.

Mr. Zachry called on Elizabeth Mills to read scripture and pray. Mrs. Mills read the following scripture:

¹²Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

¹⁵Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Colossians 3:12-15

Mrs. Mills prayed.

The Church Clerk was not present, so the Church Treasurer, Bill Livingstone gave both the membership report from January and the financial reports from January.

- The membership report was read and there were no questions.
- The financial report was as follows:
 - Receipts totaled \$811,000 against \$1.62 mil budgeted receipts for a shortfall of \$250,000.
 - Expenditures were under. \$1.80 mil planned, but actual spent was \$806,000 so under spent by \$373,000.
 - No questions.

Revised Budget Presentation – Rob Kibby, chair – Finance Committee

- Mr. Kibby lead in prayer and then made his report
- Discussed the approved budget from June 2009 which was \$13.5 mil, a \$1 mil increase from the prior fiscal year. The bulk of the increase (about 64%) went to Acts 1:8 initiatives. This budget was approved based on the strong giving demonstrated by the church despite the poor economy. But, because of the economy, we held some expenditures in reserve so that expenditures didn't get ahead of giving. Just heard Mr. Livingstone's report on our under-spending.
- Giving was slow the first part of the fiscal year, so Mr. Kibby and Bob Brooks, chair of the Stewardship Committee, came to the church in November asking you to pull together and give. Pleased to report that the December giving this year was the 2nd strongest ever even with the poor economy – this is a big win.
- Mr. Kibby referred to a graph distributed at the beginning of the meeting to visually describe where we are and the projection for year-end. The slope of the giving line for the current fiscal year is very similar to the slope of the line for fiscal 2007-08, when we received \$12 mil.
- Project that we will end with \$12 mil in receipts. The revised \$12 mil budget was well vetted by Department Committees and the Finance Committee.
- Discussed some of the details of the changes.

- Personnel
 - Not cutting any currently filled personnel positions
 - Holding most of the open, but unfilled positions with a few exceptions. The Senior Pastor, the 30's/40's Minister and a part-time Girls minister in the student area are all budgeted to be filled.
 - Reduced the merit pool by 60%
 - Personnel costs represent about 46% of the revised budget
- Communications – advertising expenses being reduced
- Technical Services
 - under-spending is large portion of the reduction
 - We will also hold on some planned remodeling in 5th / 6th grade area
 - Reduced Ministry Day service spending
- Worship – Reduction comes mostly from under spending and eliminating a big-name event in Great Hall worship in second half of the year
- Ministries
 - Childhood cuts are mostly under-spending and postponement of furniture replacement.
 - Sports Outreach – postponing the hiring of an additional associate
- Missions – mostly under-spending and some reduction in 3rd party ministry partnership giving (10% across the board cuts, generally speaking). Actually increased the Alms budget, Texas Baptist Men and Mission Dignity, a fund to help retired, need pastors.
- Administration – deferred maintenance postponed that could be postponed. Debt retirement increased because of unfilled capital campaign pledges.
- We are asking to formalize the spending plan that the church has been following when it became clear we were going to be substantially under budget.
- Some of the things the finance committee observed when this was presented:
 - This isn't easy and has effect on ministry. We are having to cut back on ministry plans, including Acts 1:8 initiatives. Not filling open ministry positions is stretching staff very thin. Think about what can be done if we continue to give faithfully.
 - What happens if we don't hit our \$12 mil revised budget? First, we don't have a liquidity problem. We are currently still under-spending; we have a ready cash reserve, as well as a bank line of credit; and still holding some further expenditures until later in the fiscal year. But most important – continue to give faithfully.
- Questions:
 - Sarah Tarver – Does the instrumental upkeep include maintenance to the organs? Cathryn Hulen answered – Anything that needs to be fixed will be fixed.
 - Don Rose – Is very disappointed at the cuts in Missions, would like to see more creature comforts in the church cut first. Missions work was a passion of his late wife, Lynn, and he intends to take up that mantel for her. He has a couple of questions:

- If designated money is given to a ministry is that ministry's budget reduced by that amount? Mr. Kibby answered – no, each ministry evaluated what designated dollars are available when formulating a budget so as not to leave a pot of dollars out there not being used. Designated dollars are used to offset expenditures in a ministry area, but they don't reduce the level of expenditures in the area.
- The comp/benefits line has been cut by 50%. Are we cutting positions? No, not cutting any current positions. This reduction is due to two open, unfilled positions.
- What is the Theological Education line for? Giving to theological education was cut 10% across the board. Miller Cunningham further addressed this – this is used for training leaders locally and around the world.
 - W. F. (Woodie) Wood, Jr. – Is \$12 mil realistic? Realized he was looking at the wrong figure and stated that when he viewed the correct figure, yes he agreed it was reasonable.
 - No other questions
- The Moderator presented the motion, no second needed because it came from the Deacons and already had the discussion. Called for the vote and ayes have it with no opposition votes cast.

Fellowship of Deacons Report – John Gilley, Deacon Chair

- Thank you Rob, Bill, and Cathryn for the wonderful job you are doing monitoring our economic health on a daily basis.
- So many distractions right now – economy, uncertain government is going a good job representing us, a time of transition at the church, etc. Certain of this – God has a plan for us, not only as a church, but each of us personally. He has a plan and provision every day. Consider these verses: Jeremiah 29:11; Matthew 7:7; Exodus 33:18. Ask God to give us a glimpse of his Glory. Ask Him for provision to complete your work for Him. Ask God to have influence in and through you. Ask Him to increase your ability to impact others for Him and to reveal to you how to discipline yourself to pursue that. You have to have a relationship with God to do this. He will show you His glory and take you to places you never thought you could go.
- Mr. Gilley asked Barry Pryor to come and make a report from the Pastor Search Committee.

Pastor Search Committee Report – Barry Pryor, Chair

- Started with about 80 names, and then asked for more and total list grew to about 120.
- Worked through the list by listening to sermons and services online and about 8 or 9 weeks ago narrowed to a travel list.
- All along the way the committee has asked for prayers as they listen to what God is revealing to them. Committee feels those prayers. They have seen some great things and some things to help them refine their direction.
- There are a number of people on the list that they are excited about.

- So far everyone on the list has been open to dialogue. Of course this is just a preliminary contact and nothing in-depth has been discussed yet.
- The committee has felt the freedom from the beginning to seek the man God is going to bring without thought to a particular leadership model. Know that many of you are concerned about this issue.
- Will commit to promising the church that when a person does come to preach in view of a call, the church will be notified in advance regarding the leadership model discussed and decided upon. Don't know the exact timing, but it will be more than the day before.
- Please trust the process and trust the man God will bring. Feel like our best days are ahead.
- Continue to pray and believe that God will answer in a great way. Pray for the heart of the man God is calling to be stirring.
- At the end of Mr. Pryor's report, Mr. Gilley recognized Miller Cunningham who had asked to speak.

Miller Cunningham

- Please continue to pray for the committee and especially for Barry as his father passed away this weekend.
- Wants to add his gratitude to Rob, Bob Brooks, Bill, and Cathryn and her staff for their great work.
- Thankful for the ways God has continued to bless the work and ministries of this church.
- Just wanted a chance to share in this venue. Have had a chance to share this in other places, but want to say in this meeting.
- So grateful for the work of the Search Committee. They have been working hard and seeking the Lord for the man God has prepared to come and serve here.
- The Search Committee has been charged with the task of finding the best Pastor for this church. There is not, nor has there ever been, any limitation to his authority and leadership as Pastor here.
- My role is to enhance and multiply his leadership in the body and throughout the ministries of this church. To serve him and this church in a way that will help us accomplish our goals.
- I will do all that I can to make him be as successful as possible here....during his transition, and during his tenure here. Will do all that I can to make him the most successful and fruitful pastor the church has ever had.
- It will be my responsibility to affirm his direction, encourage his leadership, defend his authority, and advance his goals, and defer to him where differences exist. My partnership with him should serve to enhance, not hinder, leadership in the church.
- My title, as it stands now, has caused some confusion in the church. I want to eliminate this confusion and fully expect a title change as we draw nearer to his arrival. Expect it and welcome it. At this point, it is premature to assume what it may need to be.

- As I have said many times, I understand the need for change as this new man arrives. He will bring his new and varied gifts and his vision to bear on the direction of this church. I welcome the opportunity to adapt to the changes that will be necessary. It is my prayer that our hearts will be bound together in a common vision for all God wants to do here. The staff has the same prayer – all are looking forward to locking arms with this man and with you to advance the mission God has for us.
- It is critical, during a transition time, that we keep our “mission” as the primary goal. It is our mission that unifies us. We must fix our affections and energy on Jesus Christ and His gospel. Let’s keep our “eye on the ball” and not be distracted by things that keep us from being who God intends for us to be.
- I believe, with all my heart, we are on the brink of the greatest days in the life of this church. Right now we need to be full of faith toward God, full of love toward each other, and full of compassion toward those who have never heard. This is a great day.
- I love this church like you do and I love you and I love that we all feel a deep passion for this church. Thank you for the privilege of serving the Lord here with you.

Other Business

- The moderator called on Larry Byrd who brought two names for church endorsement: Rachel Newman for a scholarship to Truett Seminary through the BGCT and Amy Kumar for enrollment at Criswell College. Larry shared information on both women and stated that the Endorsement and Ordination Committee from the Fellowship of Deacons highly recommend by women for endorsement by this church body. There were no questions.
- Mr. Zachry stated the motion for endorsement and asked for a second. He received a second and called for the vote. They ayes have it and there were no opposition votes.
- Any other items? None.
- Motion to adjourn, seconded, meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.