

BOARD MEETING
Cherry Log Christian Church
February 2, 2013

The first meeting of the new Board, operating under the new By-Laws and Constitution, was held in the Conference Room at 10:00 am.

The 2013 Board consists of the following: Moderator, Sharon Meek; Vice Moderator, Jerry Johnson; Secretary, Janet Tripp; Treasurer, Caroline Carder; Chair of the Deacons, Tom Mitchell; Chair of the Elders, Lucie Coffie; Chair of the Trustees, Ronald Midkiff; Chair of the Resource Council, Tom Mitchell; Chair of the Discipling Council, Beth Roberts; Chair of the Outreach Council, Bill Thompson; Elders (2): Janet Tripp and Lucie Coffie; At-Large Congregational Members: Lynn Barrett, Julie Johnson, Bill Groce, John Sugg; Senior Minister, ex officio, David Griffin.

All members were present for the meeting. Jack Senterfitt, Chair of the By-Laws and Constitution Committee was invited to help the Board understand our role under the new system and to answer any questions that the Board members may have.

Opening devotion and prayer

Sharon focused on joining together in discipleship and obedience to Christ. This devotion was the Preamble of our church constitution. Sharon shared some thoughts about how we can work together as a Board highlighting the Conversation Covenant that she had e-mailed to us before the meeting. (This covenant is attached and was shared with Sharon by Julie Johnson)

Welcome to the new Board

Board members were invited to share with each other by introducing ourselves and sharing who we are, what is helpful to know about us and what are our vulnerabilities.

Thoughts from Sharon

How do we conduct our meetings? The By-Laws say: 1. The Board will perform its duties according to the authority granted in the Constitution and Bylaws or otherwise designated to it by the Congregation. 2. In keeping with the traditions of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), final decisions will rest with the Congregation. The Board and the three Ministry Councils will be responsible to and report regularly to the Congregation through an announced and published program of town hall and Congregational gatherings so that transparency of operations and broad-based participation may be established. 3. The Board will concern itself with matters of policy rather than with administrative, day-to-day operational matters. The Board will take into full account the total nurture, witness, and mission of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the needs of the immediate community in which the members of the Church live.

Sharon went on to say we are going to have controversy and discussions. We need to do a better job as we start to have better conversations that fill out into other groups and to respect each other. Let's get down to our purpose of discernment, policy and vision in our responsibility for overseeing the church's program.

Board: Constitution, By-Laws – Authority, By-Laws – Responsibilities

Ministry Council Responsibilities – Ministry Council Responsibility

Discussions with Jack:

Discernment is critical – discernment vs. judgment – guiding thoughts informed by people on committees with no rehashing or re-doing committee reports. Build on a method of accountability so people know what is going on. There is no need to spend fifteen to twenty minutes in changing the demographics. This is not the time to deal with that kind of disservice. The Board needs to have strategic thinking not a long strategic planning committee. Everybody hears the same kinds of criticism: “I don't know what is going on” from the membership. The four members at large come to the table unencumbered by a committee. Make yourselves known and available to the congregation as someone they can talk to giving them freedom to think more broadly, let them know they can come before the Board with whatever. This also applies to everyone else on the Board.

Things need to be reported to the congregation. Most people do not read. If you have

We already have questions where something is not addressed. There is an overriding learn-as-we-go making adjustments as needed. Let the congregation know that things can be considered as questions come up. Have the ability to say we do not know and are growing out of experience.

Try to look at the big picture and the larger concerns down the road. The Board has the responsibility to work with a committee when there is conflict as a moderator to help resolve their differences. Page 7, III D Item 6 & 7 in the By-Laws. That was intentional. The Board will need to take responsibility.

Question, *Bill Thompson*: Can you give insight to when a budget is passed – if there are changes there is a process suggested for the purpose of determining some negotiation during the year that two councils can shift the money from one place to another. *Sharon*: That is one of the things that we have to grow into. We need to look at some of these things that do not provide stress on the church to raise more money from the congregation. *Bill Groce*: As the fixed costs, X + Y fluctuates, this is one of the things that over a period will need to be learned by experience. Hope we do not come down to hard and fast rules monk-eying around with numbers. *Jerry*: Limits are not hard and fast. With a two year trial period – try it, see if it works out. *Jack*: Page 7 Item 8 speaks the specific language. There are members who are uncomfortable with that. Good town hall meetings, give an opportunity for members who are more about specifics to come along with this. Not every decision takes a Board action. There is no real way to discern this. It reflects spending from the top down. It has to come from the bottom up. We want to do what the people want to do through the Discipling Ministry on a broader base. The final decisions will always rest on the congregation and how they choose, more on possibility rather than hard lines.

Substantial cuts need to be done to the budget. No ad hoc task force or committees will be very much involved for information if it doesn't get talked out, the Council is to report regularly. There will be a Town Hall meeting at the end of February to let the congregation know where we are – to share what we are going through so they will know what is going on. Questions need to be open – not questioning to get closer to discernment – to let the congregation know that we do not have all the answers and we need to keep informing and telling them. Can't have too much communication, the congregation needs to know that they were heard before a decision is made.

Sharon: We are allowed to establish additional councils as needed when necessary. That chair will be a member of the Board.

Reports from Ministry Councils

Sharon addressing the Council Chairs: It is the Ministry Councils responsibility to find ways to let the church know what is being done. One good example was Bill Thompson's report during the worship service at the offertory time. Ultimately what is being done is not up to the committee, it is up to the Board. It is the council's responsibility to report to the Board what bubbles up that is necessary for the Board to act upon.

Board members are asked to review the written council reports from the groups before the meeting for information only. In order to facilitate reconciliation between or among councils when conflicts arise, they need to be addressed through e-mails. The web site will have written reports from each of the councils giving information to the congregation so the people will begin to know what each council does.

Resource Council - Tom

Finance Committee – Working with current budget difficulty in finding ways to meet the ad hoc team of three, Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair and Malinda to be able to keep up with the budget approved last November. The budgeted assumption for growth is way below the average, exhausting the cash reserve to catch up in November. December was strong. January will be strong because few leaders pay lump sums at the beginning of the year. There is no evidence there will not be a jump in income. Therefore, in order to pay our bills we need to get the budget in line with expenditures. The committee will meet February 14 and hope to bring to the Board the reduced amount then. *Sharon*, Are we looking to see how we can

reduce spending in **everything** in the church? *Tom*, The ad hoc group is being very diligent in putting this procedure into place.

Property Committee – Settlement on the tile issue is still ongoing. Committee is continuing to address the Little White House and the Church on the Hill. Some restrictions have been taken off the church.

Finance Committee – *Bill Groce*, A technical correction is necessary from the Board. Because of an error in the computer printout of the work sheet, the total that was approved at the Congregational Meeting was incorrect. The original figure approved was \$397,140. The figure should have been \$401,124. The Finance Committee moves that the figure be corrected. The motion was seconded by Caroline and others. Motion carried by the Board. The committee has come up with a policy on gifts to get it in front of the church. (Sheet attached.) Please share any comments you may have with Bill Groce.

Discipling Council - *Beth*

The Council is intentionally serving activities that involve our members. Need to address the corridor space within the church that comes from the listening team.

Worship Committee – New worship services coming up. There will be a Maundy Thursday service.

Membership Committee – Working with the Elders to see how congregational care is being worked out.

Legacy Partners – Working on exercising resources in perpetuity.

Children and Youth – More adult leadership is needed. Please pray about it. There is need for teachers in all areas. Judy Wyndham, Kristi and Julie have been terrific.

Outreach Council – *Bill Thompson*

Need people to be a part of the inactive **Health Committee**. Bill expressed concern about holding hands and hugging during this unusually bad flu and virus season.

Special Offerings – We are tied into the Regional Church with all ministries involving special offerings. We participate in the Week of Compassion. The committee would like to and a new one for Reconciliation of Ministries to be scheduled the end of September which grants to churches dealing with racism. These offerings are to be over and above regular giving.

Bill was interrupted at this point when a member was made aware that a snow storm has unexpectedly come upon us. We all started to scramble to get to our cars with the hopes of getting to our homes before the roads become impassable.

A quick announcement was made as we were leaving that the Listening Committee will come to the Board hopefully by the end of the month with their report. It is completed and just presented to the Elders who brought it before the Board.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Tripp, Clerk

Conversation Covenant

Feb 03, 2009

From The Very Rev. Douglas Travis' Letter from the Dean webpage

At Seminary of the Southwest above all we honor the call to friendship - friendship with God the Father through Jesus Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit. (John 15:12-17) Through our friendship with God, we pursue friendship with each other as well.

One way we express our Christian friendship is through our "conversation covenant". We seek to listen as well as speak, to show kindness and humility, and to acknowledge that we might be wrong. We yearn to be a people who without exception see in the face of the "other" a friend, someone for whom Jesus has died and whom Jesus has invited to join him at his table, the heavenly banquet.

Conversation Covenant

A seminary community is a school of inquiry and interpretation: inquiry into the mystery of God in Jesus Christ and interpretation, in both action and reflection, of God's creative and redemptive love. Frank, confident, and trustful conversation is an essential part of our common learning. Often, though, we are lead into difficult, even disturbing, conversations as we bring the length and breadth of our assumptions, hopes, opinions, and certainties, into the formative power of Christian faith. Avoiding the issues around which passion and disagreement reside might well be an easier path, but commitment to remaining in conversation with one another despite our differences is part of our calling as disciples of Jesus Christ.

In order to mark both our commitment to conversation and our recognition of the challenges, we affirm...

that we are all made in the image of God and must, therefore, treat one another with respect and dignity;

that we are free to explore different ideas and beliefs as well as to grow and change theologically;

that we share a common sinfulness and, therefore, will understand only partially and be mistaken frequently;

that we do not have to agree in order to love one another;

that our conversations, even our most passionate disagreements, take place in the Spirit whom we seek not to grieve.

and we strive...

to approach conversation with a willingness to listen and learn, acknowledging the value of opposing views;

to treat one another as honest inquirers, attempting to discern God's truth in a complex world;

to engage ideas without attacking or dismissing those that hold them;

to acknowledge the limited perspective of our own experience and opinions, and be open to the possibility of our views changing;

to consider the possibility that we might be mistaken, secure in the knowledge of the love and forgiveness we have all received in Christ;

to challenge one another while seeking not to give offense;

to consider challenges from others while striving not to take offense too readily;

to serve reconciliation by sharing when we have been offended ;

to acknowledge stereotypes, ask for clarification in order to avoid misunderstandings, and make room for complexity.