

United Church of God, *an International Association*
Council of Elders Meeting Report
May 8, 2007 – Cincinnati, Ohio

Following the General Conference of Elders Annual Meeting, which took place May 5 to 7, Robert Dick called the Council of Elders to order at 9:30 a.m. in the Athens meeting room of the Holiday Inn Eastgate. Two Council members joined the meeting later in the morning. Jim Franks started the day in a meeting with the regional pastors, and Richard Thompson was teaching a class at the Ambassador Bible Center. Mr. Dick welcomed Roy Holladay and Robert Berendt, selected at the GCE to join the Council in the next fiscal year.

Mr. Dick requested Council approval of minutes for meetings held in February 2007 and teleconferences on March 28 and April 12, 2007. A request was made for a correction to the minutes of an executive session. The correction will be discussed in executive session.

After an overview of the agenda for today's meeting, Mr. Dick introduced Church president Clyde Kilough for the unified report, given at the beginning of each session.

President's Unified Report

Mr. Kilough said that he only had three brief updates to share with the Council, since the operation managers had given thorough reports at the just-concluded GCE.

First, he stated that Jim Haeffele has been named the regional pastor of the newly formed Florida Region, which had previously been part of the Southeast Region. Mr. Haeffele will also pastor the Miami and Fort Myers congregations.

Mr. Kilough then related two Education Program developments. He commented that the recent tour of Egypt, which took place April 4 through 13, was extremely successful. A total of 49 members participated. The goals of the program were to bring the biblical account alive and build faith in God and His Word, provide fellowship to strengthen individuals spiritually and help participants gain knowledge, understanding and respect for the Egyptian culture and people.

Based on the success of this trip, future travel education opportunities will be considered to biblically significant locations, such as Greece, Israel, Jordan and Turkey. Mr. Kilough also noted that immediately after the tour, David Register, director of Education Programs, and Cory Erickson, elder and Jordan Festival coordinator, met with Jordanian officials to discuss plans for future Feasts of Tabernacles, travel education tours and Youth Corps projects in Jordan. Mr. Register and Mr. Erickson held meetings with officials from several schools for mentally and physically challenged youth, all of which expressed interest in Youth Corps projects in the summer of 2008 and beyond.

Mr. Kilough also announced the forming of a Women's Planning Task Force. Members of the task force, who provide an array of talent, experience and expertise, include Dee Kilough (chairperson), Judy Servidio, Karen Meeker, Gloria Carey, Colene Erickson, DeLee Hargrove, Pam Myers, Barbara Sackett, Ina McLemore, Erin Roscoe, Marjolaine Meeker and Kay Schreiber. The task force will be responsible for reviewing and assessing current women's education programs, reviewing and assessing proposed programs and recommending new programs or modifications to programs.

At that point, the Council went into executive session for approximately 1½ hours.

Home Office Relocation

Since the relocation of the home office was approved during the General Conference of Elders meeting, Mr. Dick asked Mr. Kilough and Tom Kirkpatrick to update the Council on the steps that need to be taken at this time toward the purchase of property in Denton, Texas.

Mr. Kilough commented that the Council needs to travel down two distinct pathways. One pathway includes taking specific, concrete steps to fulfill the approved proposal. The second pathway is less concrete, involving dealing with the perceptions and feelings of members of the General Conference of Elders and identifying lessons learned during the process.

Mr. Kilough stated that since the move has been approved, the administration is ready to move forward to resolve issues related to the purchase of property.

The Council passed a resolution authorizing the administration to move forward with acquisition of the land once the following three items are accomplished:

- Zoning and traffic mobility factors required by the Church for the planned home office are secured.
- Detailed, professional engineering-based cost estimates of infrastructure developments are in line with original projections.
- Environmental assessment indicates that the proposed property is in compliance with appropriate environmental parameters.

Mr. Kilough noted that to this point, four Council members have seen the property under consideration. He said that he would like as soon as possible for the rest of the Council members to also visit the site to see it for themselves and get a "feel" for the location and surrounding area. Victor Kubik emphasized the importance of such a visit since only a handful of people have seen it. He feels that we should not rush the process for a decision of such magnitude that will impact the Church in so many ways.

Ten Council members voted in favor of the resolution. Aaron Dean abstained; Mr. Kubik voted against. Mr. Dean was not opposed to the resolution but felt there may be other issues besides those that were listed.

The Council then considered a resolution to establish a restricted fund to which members and other supporters of the work may make special donations, over and above regular tithes and offerings, for the purpose of helping to finance the relocation of the home office. The resolution passed by a unanimous vote.

Hymnal Project Update

Steve Myers, chairman of the task force that is working to prepare a new Church hymnal, gave the Council an update on the status of the project. Mr. Myers commented that the task force established criteria for evaluating the current hymnal and suggested additions. The review criteria include seeking God's inspiration in selecting hymns to praise Him and edify His people, text (including doctrinal accuracy), musical quality, musical accuracy and suitability. Mr. Myers commented that the task force had taken care to not include hymns that would be offensive to members, but pointed out that musical tastes and preferences are quite subjective, and members have had their own experiences with particular hymns.

Changes and corrections were made to a few hymns in the current hymnal to make them more acceptable. The task force has considered some 400 suggested additions to the hymnal and reviewed more than 200 original compositions from members.

The task force recommends publishing a 256-page hymnal that will include 194 hymns, 68 of which will be new. The proposed selection includes 20 additional hymns composed by Dwight Armstrong and 21 written by past or present Church members. Mr. Myers provided each Council member with a booklet that included a draft of all the suggested new hymns. He also demonstrated a number of the new hymns, assisted by pianist and task force member Janel Johnson, and then provided the Council with a number of samples for covers, colors and binding options.

The next major step in development of the hymnal is a doctrinal review, under the direction of Leon Walker, chairman of the Council's Doctrine Committee. The production and distribution schedule will be based on the completion of the review.

Trustee Named for New Zealand Trust Fund

Mr. Walker noted that it is the responsibility of the Council of Elders to name and/or remove trustees to the charitable trust, United Church of God New Zealand. He explained the need for adding a third trustee. Current trustees are Leon Walker and Art Verschoor. Mr. Walker recommended that Jeff Caudle be added. The Council unanimously passed a resolution naming Mr. Caudle to that position.

Wednesday, May 9

There is no report for May 9. The Council met in executive session the full day.

Don Henson

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