

Mid-County Church of Christ

9207 Manchester, Rock Hill, Missouri

December 20, 1997

To: Task Group Members

From: Bret Blackford

Re: December 20, 1997 meeting minutes

In Attendance:

Jeff & Marion Earnhart, Dave Coffey, Dave Weiler, Gwen Walker, Jeff Kryder, Bret Blackford
(Ron Becker will be asked to attend future meetings)

Jeff Kryder, Meeting Facilitator, opened the meeting a little after 8am.

Initial discussion was over the 'Purpose Statement' and 'Approach' as documented from the last meeting (Dec. 10, 1997). No material objection was made to either the 'Purpose Statement' or 'Approach' and are assumed to be ratified. The purpose of the group will be communicated to the congregation via a bulletin article to be written by Jeff Earnhart. This article will address the responsibilities of the elders and those of the 'group.'

Consideration was given to the life/duration of the 'group.' Most members feel that the work of the group will take several years to complete. At some point it is hoped that the group will be replaced by a 'Deacons Meeting,' or a small-group leaders meeting. As the responsibilities of the group are expected to span several months (years), a rotation of members was proposed. The rotation period is thought to be every 6 to 9 months.

Needs defined by the elders (as outlined in the minutes of the last meeting) were discussed, and a few other needs were added to the list. The group made an assessment of these needs, ranking them by order of perceived importance, with the following results:

- 1.) NEW MEMBERS/VISITORS
- 2.) EDUCATION
- 3.) FELLOWSHIP

As a group we have committed ourselves to these areas, specifically to New members/ Visitors. Areas of responsibility were established as follows:

- * Get new member/visitor information from Dale Robinson and other sources (Bret)

- * Get information from Gerald Davis
- * Talk with Bob Grigg about the Worship Committee and any potential overlap (Jeff Kryder)
- * Pray and Communicate with congregation (all members)

It was mentioned that many of the deacons work in a vacuum. There needs to be increased communication to inform the congregation of what God is doing in these particular areas, and to let people know of areas where help is needed.

As a group we need to be committed to challenging those in areas of responsibility. We need to prayerfully and compassionately address work that has not received appropriate attention. (E.g., perhaps Randy Crawford needs the love and challenge of this group to fully carry out the work for which he is responsible.) We also need to continually be praying for the leaders of this congregation - that the elders, deacons, ministers, etc. will be men of vision who are truly devoted to God.

Please remember that what we discuss is in confidence.

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CC: Bret Blackford at Audit
Subject: Mid-County task group minutes

MID-COUNTY CHURCH of CHRIST
9207 Manchester, Rock Hill, Missouri

January 27, 1998

TO: Task Group Members

FROM: Bret Blackford
968-8089

Re: January 24, 1998 meeting minutes

In Attendance:
Jeff Kryder, Bret Blackford, Dave Weiler, Dana Robinson

Jeff Kryder, meeting facilitator, opened the meeting a little after 8am.

Jeff opened with the following passages ...

Acts 15:4 "When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and elders, to whom they *reported* everything God had done through them."

Acts 21:17-19 "When we arrived in Jerusalem, the brothers received us warmly. The next day Paul and the rest of the elders were present. Paul greeted them and *reported* in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry."

Colossians 4:7-9 "Tychicus will tell you all the news about me. He is a dear and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. I am sending him to you for the express purpose that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts. He is coming with Onesimus, our faithful and dear brother, who is one of you. They will tell you everything that is happening here."

I Thessalonians 1:4-10

The above passages deal with the idea of reporting. With our body here at Mid-County perhaps a forum for reporting would be a good idea. It is questioned whether reporting happens enough with the elders, the deacons, etc. We should report not just what is needed (e.g., "the food pantry needs volunteers"), but what God is doing (e.g., "we are feeding the hungry, serving the needy"). These passages talk about the value of intercessory reporting - having a third party witness - bragging on people for doing right (or, more accurately, allowing God to do right through them).

New Members/Visitors can be aided by hearing more of where and how God is working in this body.

Question (Q): How do we obtain closure or gain momentum on this New Member/Visitors task item? How do we keep this issue in front of the body?

Simple guidelines as a member/group leader will help. E.g., talk to a new person each week. This cannot be mandated. The trick is figuring out how to encourage such activity.

The visitor card seems to be a good mechanism. There may be benefit if the card is given to closest geographic house church for follow-up.

Wednesdays (whenever small groups are held) may be a good format to discuss New Members/Visitors on some periodic basis. There may also be some benefit on a "Hospitality" series taught from the pulpit on Sundays.

Jeff discussed finding a theme for the year. We can have a bulletin spread discussing the group/committee's vision - talk about what some people (e.g., Weiler/Coffey, Davis monthly dinner) are doing. Get a meeting with Gerald and Debbie Davis to discuss their role and how we can help.

The job descriptions of the various staff members/deacons should be reviewed.

The visitor cards address visitors and new members will be discussed with Gerald Davis. We need to keep these people (new members/visitors) before the Wed. group leaders.

Q: What is the process for becoming a member? What is discussed with the individual(s), how do we inform the body, how do we plug-in the individual?

Much of the above question will be dealt with by Dale Robinson as he drafts up his thoughts on the process for presentation to the committee. This will also be part of Gerald Davis' role to ensure that this part of the new member process occurs.

Small groups may take on a new emphasis as they shepherd new Christians, welcome new members.

"People come in our front door. How do we keep notice them before they go out the back door?" -Dana Robinson

We will try to plug someone, maybe Gerald Davis, into this.

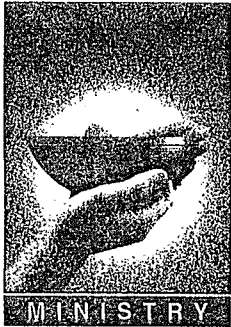
We as a church need periodic reporting/accountability/evaluation. We need to revisit items we have handed off and see how things are running. It may be good to go to the Greeter's meeting to communicate their place in the church.

Next meeting will be February 5, 1998, 8am at the church office. We will concentrate on Gerald and Debbie Davis. We will also ask how we as a group are doing with new members/visitors.

The evening of Thursday, February 5, will be the congregational meeting to discuss what the task group is up to. At the next meeting it is suggested that Gerald Davis report on how his area is progressing. It may be a good forum for quarterly reporting from the members given various areas of responsibility (deacons and small groups could report at this meeting).

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Keeping the church informed should be a major priority of its leaders



If information is power, then a powerful church knows how to harness and distribute priority information to leverage local church

ministry. This article highlights 11 attitudes and strategies to enable church leaders to keep people informed about what's happening and why.

1 Declare the why along with the what. Keep communicating to the church the vision, faith and heart behind practical decisions. For example, don't assume everyone knows why you're going to two services, adding another staff member or adjusting your budget allocations. Clearly communicate the noble reasons behind your actions and decisions.

2 Present priority information again and again. At First Colony church, the congregation administers by the adage that a large church (First Colony numbers around 1,200) must receive a minimum of 14 communications before an important announcement sinks in. I prefer criticisms of over-communication rather than under-communication. If an important piece of information needs to be

absorbed by the entire congregation, communicate with the sporadically attending fringe member in mind. Communicate it often enough and clearly enough that Fringe Frank and his family get the message. If you'll communicate clearly, even to the fringe, many will grow with you over the years and eventually move into deeper levels of commitment.

3 Give more detailed communication to your core people. Disseminate early state information to deacons, ministry leaders, small group leaders, and perspective shapers. Ask for their prayers to determine God's leading regarding potential opportunities. Also, when elders have formulated a plan of action following a season of prayer and committee research, the core leaders in the church should hear about the plan first. They will provide important points of fine tuning and will be ready to communicate informally these plans to the church at large.

4 Have a welcome center. Find the "court-house square" of your church building and invest some money in a very attractive Welcome Center. This area will become "information central" as it becomes the place to ask questions and find updated, informative printed material. Staff it at each service with happy, informed members. Provide informational brochures relative to all aspects of your church life: youth and children's ministry; elder and staff bio sketches; financial reports; tape ministry

catalogs; and any information that guests and newer members will need. We also keep recent copies of our all-church and departmental newsletters.

5 Use strategically placed signs to promote major events and/or changes. Our church family went through two major schedule changes this year. Part of our communication strategy was to place four large signs at the front of the our auditorium reminding people of the new schedule and when it would begin. These signs were up two months before the change became effective.

6 Mail monthly youth calendars. Youth ministries affect both the teenagers and the parents who must drop them off and pick them up. Mail detailed monthly calendars "refrigerator ready," with the basics of who, what, when, where, why and how much on all youth events.

7 Mail weekly reminder post-cards. Youth ministries especially should mail weekly reminder post cards detailing all the upcoming weekend's events. This is particularly helpful if any changes have been made since the calendar mail-out.

8 Invest in a hotline number. Because we have sizeable youth and children's ministries, we have a hotline number available 24 hours a day (274-WORD) for latest details on the youth ministry. Church secretaries may love this even more than parents. This number is particularly helpful for parents who need the latest youth group estimated time of arrival.

9 Take advantage of media and technology. For very important information, prepare

videos for small groups and classes to watch as a first step in the communication process. We often present our church budget via video to our small groups. Many church software programs have auto-phone capabilities enabling your computer to phone automatically either the entire membership or any segment of members with recorded reminders and dates.

10 Have a welcome class that communicates your church personality and strategy. Every person considering membership at FCCC is urged to participate in our six-week Welcome Class, taught by one of our staff ministers. This class provides the prospective new member an opportunity to ask any question (nothing is off limits) and it provides us an opportunity to share the personality, strategy and direction of our congregation. The class ends with a luncheon attended by the elders and staff. We see baptisms for virtually every Welcome Class. Whether a person has a heritage in the church or not, we find the Welcome Class experience to be the best head start program we can give a new member.

11 Consider both a weekly order of worship and a bi-monthly newsletter. Our weekly program details the nuts and bolts of our church ministries, everything from chorus rehearsal schedules to baby showers. Our bi-monthly newsletter (called The Family Connection) is planned by the staff, written and photographed by church volunteers and edited by professionals. Our weekly worship programs give details while The Family Connection newsletter shares successes, personal stories and kingdom dreams through articles and pictures. —RONNIE NORMAN, Sugar Land, Texas

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CC: Bret Blackford at Audit
Subject: Finace Committee

To: Jena Coffey Cc: Don Fitzgerald
 Jeff Earnhart Doloris Miller
 Ben Mehringer Ken Zinkgraf
 Dave Weiler

From: Bret Blackfod

Re: Minutes of the April 20, 1998, Mid-County Finance Committee meeting.

In Attendance:

Bret Blackford, Jena Coffey, Ben Mehringer, Doloris Miller, Dave Weiler,
and Ken Zinkgraf.

The following issues were discussed by the group ...

1. The retirement withholding of the staff should be paid to the pension fund as soon as possible. As of April '98, \$4,400.00 is due from payroll withholding.

From discussions with Dale Robinson, the new pension fund has been established and should be ready for the transfer of funds. Jeff Earnhart has volunteered to supervise this process. Doloris will now remit the pension amounts withheld on a monthly basis.

2. Historically the Church has matched contributions made by the staff at 50% of every dollar withheld, up to 6% of salary. This matching needs to be made for calendar year 1997. This matching amounts to \$5,300.00.

It is the recommendation of the Finance Committee that this matching be made for 1997. To do this in a manner that does not hobble our cash flow it is further recommended that: a) the \$7,000 currently in the Building Fund be transferred to the General fund, and that b) the matching will be made in at least two parts.

3. It is currently *implied* that the Church will continue to match at the rate of 50%. The elders should revisit this. Matching, like in many businesses, may need to be made only subsequent to a financially solid year.

4. Contributions continue to average less than budget expectations (current average is ~\$5,070, budget is at \$5,400). This slows, or eliminates, any gains made on the repayment of the loan to the Internship. It is the thought of the Finance Committee that the debt and the contribution be communicated to the congregation at the next congregational meeting.

5. Mid-year budget to actual reports are to be distributed to responsible parties. At this time these individuals will be asked how they plan to make the budget cuts requested by the Finance Committee (\$10,000 of cuts were requested at our last meeting).

6. Dave Weiler and Bret Blackford have agreed to develop and provide basic financial training to the staff. This training will include the

need to watch budget areas, and to spend ONLY within assigned budget areas. An existing expense request form will be made mandatory. Staff and Interns will also be given a basic idea of what supporting documents should be kept in preparation for federal and State taxes.

7. Jeff Earnhart has again volunteered to be the point person related to various tax issues. Current issues are: Should summer interns receive a form 1099, and can Ron Babbitt increase his housing allowance.

Bret will forward to Jeff the book Income Tax Guide for Ministers and Religious Workers.

8. The missionaries in France have asked our help funneling funds to France. Per Jena Coffey's conversations with the missionaries the funds should be low in volume. The Finance Committee have no issue with Mid-County acting as a repository for these funds and Doloris Miller has agreed to oversee the account (a new checking account is to be established).

9. Participation in the Internship should be monitored. In the event of low participation the support dollars allocated to the Internship should be revisited. I.e., can the funds used to pay for Dana Robinson's salary be better used elsewhere. Funds should be spent on the activities which will add the most value.

10. Currently the church's funds are held in a non-interest bearing checking account. Ken Zingraf, Ben Mehringer and Jena Coffey are looking at alternatives.

Please contact me if you note any errors or omissions in this memorandum.

I thank everyone for there assistance in this process, and will follow-up with the various individuals and the tasks assigned above.

May God continue to guide us as we seek to do His will. And may we continually live lives that are in agreement with our understanding of His will.

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