

**MCCGSL INFORMATIONAL FORUM  
MINUTES**

**FEBRUARY 10, 2008**

1. Valerie J. opened the forum with prayer.
2. Rev. Dr. Carol T. gave the purpose and format of the forum: to inform the congregation through allowing them to ask questions and offer comments, through seeing reports; and secondly to prepare for the Congregational Meeting that is in two weeks in order that the members can have time to make informed decisions when these items are voted on. All major decisions are decided by the members of the congregation. Today, we will present the Staff and Ministry Team reports, the proposed 2008 budget, introduce those candidates running for election, and to ask questions and offer comments on any of the above. There will be no voting.
3. Rev. Dr. Carol T. introduced the Board of Directors and the Staff. The Board of Directors are Bettye B. - Clerk, Dave B., Valerie J., Paul L., Toni S., Denise S. - Treasurer, Rev. Dr. Carol T., Moderator, and Jenny W. Toni S. was not present due to the death of a friend's husband. The Staff are: Rev. Jeff B. - Pastor, Dan D.- Director of Administration, Danny G. - Director of Communications and Volunteer Ministries, Katie R. - Administrative Assistant, Rev. Bev S. - Covenant Families (not an employee), Rev. Dr. Carol T. - Senior Pastor, and Rev. Sue Y. - Pastor of Congregational Education.
4. Explanation of Ground Rules  
Rev. Dr. Carol T. said that anyone may ask a question or give a comment. Raise your hand, stand where you are, and a hand held microphone will be brought to you. Please state your name and ask your question/offer comment to whomever is leading that section. There will be a time at the end for general questions/comments. You do not have to be a member to raise a question or offer a comment.
5. Informational Forum Minutes, 2007 and Congregational Meeting, 2007 - Bettye B., Clerk
  - A. February, 2007 Informational Forum Minutes
  - B. September, 2007 Informational Forum Minutes
  - C. February, 2007 Congregational Meeting Minutes

Bettye B. asked if there were any questions. None were asked.

6. Overview of Facilities' Initiative - Paul L.  
Paul L. said that this initiative was implemented in 2006, and the Board appointed two ad hoc committees, the Building Planning Committee and the Capital Development Committee. The BPC is in charge of researching, locating and identifying potential properties for MCCGSL to purchase as a permanent home. The CDC is responsible for raising the funds to purchase this property.

Paul L. introduced Mary Lou S. as Chair of the Building Planning Committee and Jan M. as Chair of the Capital Development Committee. He also recognized the members of both committees.

Jan M., Chair, presented the report on the CDC. (out of order due to her having to leave early) She said that we are in such exciting times within our church. She gave an update on

where the CDC has been and refer back to the 17 step process that was put in place 18 months ago. We're in steps 7 and 8 of that 17 step process. Step 7: Interviewing and Hiring of Fund Raising Counsel has been completed, and are preparing for Step 8: Conduct a Goal Feasibility Study. She went over the Assessment Study Process. (This was all in a handout.)

After the Assessment Study is complete, the hired counsel will take all of the information gathered and put together a written report, which we hope to have by the middle of April. Then, based on his recommendation, we will move forward with the capital campaign, or not.

### Questions

1. Who is setting up the online survey?

Answer: We'll work with Tom on doing that, and then he'll work with us within our system to put it online. It probably will be a link from our website or an e-mail blast.

2. There was a second question, but the person did not use a mic, so the recorder was not able to hear it.

### 7. Presentation of Reports

#### A. Communications' Plan of the MCCGSL Strategic Plan - Danny G.

Danny G. encouraged everyone to read the reports that have been prepared. He then gave the highlights of this report. Prior to his hiring Communications was handled by a team. They now are on a conference call with him every two weeks in preparation for all of the things we're going to be doing in 2008, i.e. an overhaul of the web site, doing some real analysis of our corporate identity package, doing more intentional communication, receiving data and feedback on the effectiveness of our communication. You're probably hearing more now as there is intentional communicating around events. Be sure that he always has your most up-to-date contact information. He welcomes any ideas around communications.

#### B. Congregational Care Program - Rev. Jeff B.

Rev. Jeff said that the Healing Hearts Ministry was established this year. Congregational Care goals are twofold: to build caring relationships within our church and to provide opportunities for congregants to holistically grow and develop. The Prayer and Care Team now send care notes. Two new support groups are in place: Healing After the Breakup and a Bereavement Support Group. These meet on a monthly basis. There are more opportunities for people to grow holistically and spiritually. In 2007 we had a Lenten Taize worship service, a singles' retreat, and a centering prayer retreat. The pastors are available 24/7. Rev. Jeff then gave the 2008 goals for Congregational Care.

#### C. Congregational Education - Rev. Sue Y.

Rev. Sue said that we have secured an excellent curriculum for Children's Church, curriculum that's appropriate for toddlers and another one for school age children. Her goal in 2008 is to get a program in place for teens. We now offer "Creating a Life That Matters", a religious education program which was put together by a number of MCC pastors at the denominational level and made available to MCC churches. She took the training, as did Jackie Mc., Vicki S., and Bonnie L. The four of them now tag team teach with Elaine L,'s technological assistance. This has been an excellent building of community. A World's Religion class was offered this past year. She has written our Advent and Lenten devotionals, which are now sent out by e-mail. Membership classes are no longer held in order to meet scheduling needs of the people who wish to become members. Rev. Sue hopes to use her Social Worker skills in the upcoming Hope and Health Center.

D. Covenant Families - Rev. Bev S.

Rev. Bev recognized the current Covenant Family facilitators, stating that three more Covenant Families were added this year, making it now a total of five. Facilitators are trained differently than in the beginning. They train under the current existing facilitators by attending their meetings. Rev. Bev. then introduced those who are currently facilitators, adding that more plan to be added in 2008.

E. Building Planning Committee - Mary Lou S., Chair

The committee was formed in November/December, 2006. They have agreed to remain in prayer; they have completed the BPC job descriptions, they have reviewed close to sixty properties. This committee has no legal authority; they make recommendations only. Mary Lou S. then gave the 2008 goals. They prioritized their key concepts. They recommended a property last Fall and the Board made an offer. The property was then withdrawn from the market. The BPC no longer has an interest in that property. They looked at our vacant parcels on Dolman St. that they church had owned about 20 years with the idea of selling them. The properties were listed by the Board and were sold. When it was learned that St. John's was going to be sold, we were offered the opportunity to purchase that facility. We paid for an expensive inspection of that property. Based on the inspection and other factors, the BPC made a recommendation to the Board to not purchase that facility. The Board asked them to look for interim rental space. They investigated about 20 facilities before this one was found. A personal relationship led us here, and we were welcomed with open arms.

F. Outreach Initiative - Rev. Dr. Carol T.

Rev. Dr. Carol T. highlighted some major accomplishments in 2007 and some major goals for 2008. Last October we co-sponsored "for the Bible tells me so with HRC (we sold out the first night and Rev. Dr. Carol T. was part of a discussion group with two other pastors); we also had pastors present every night of the showing for a week, and those pastors participated in discussion groups, both formal and informal. Rev. Jeff B. was appointed to the Board of DOORWAYS; co-sponsored PRIDE with Central Reform Congregation, and our intent is to do that again this year.

2008 Goals include: hosting the PAD Conference which targets and celebrates persons of African descent but is open to all. We will kick this off next Sunday with Rev. Belva Boone preaching both services. We received a grant from Missouri Foundation for Health and will be using this to establish a Hope and Help Center which will address the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health of Lesbians, Gay men, and individuals who are HIV+. It will have its own website with health related issues, a printed resource manual, free pastoral counseling by MCCGSL to anyone who approaches us through this center, provide transportation for medical appointments, counseling, etc. We are now participating in Centenary Cares' feeding program to the homeless - our goal being to have 120 volunteers, and the pastors are doing it once a month ourselves. We plan to live stream video either in June or July on [www.mccgsl.org](http://www.mccgsl.org). We hope to have video on the media screens by March 9, 2008. Video copies of our service will then be able to be purchased or give a donation to the church. The final step will be to purchase a camera to be able to do our own music videos.

G. Staff Support and Development Initiative - Rev. Jeff B.

Rev. Jeff B. is in charge of staff support and development. He gave the three broad goals: to provide training opportunities for all staff members; to sustain an atmosphere of empowerment among all church staff; and, to conduct an annual church staff retreat which

would focus on empowerment and team building.

H. Volunteer Ministries - Danny G.

Danny G. introduced all of the team leaders who were present. Moving the church was done all by volunteers and he recognized them. We need volunteers to help set up on Sunday mornings and then to tear down after services.

I. Worship Enhancement Initiative - Rev. Dr. Carol T.

This is ongoing. Key accomplishments for 2007 are: we created a new "hat" for Rev. Jeff B., in that he was appointed the Director of Worship; we increased volunteer integration and developed readiness checklists. Goals for 2008 are: to transition the 9:30 worship to a contemplative style; to incorporate video-media screens and sermons on our website; and to provide diverse worship opportunities. This coming Sunday is Gospel Worship.

**Question:** Is it possible to raise the height of the video screens?

Answer: No, it isn't. Katie H. said she knows it's frustrating, and that they are trying different things, but it's a real challenge. It remains a work in progress.

Rev. Dr. Carol T. recognized our lay delegates: Jackie Mc., Rev. Bonnie L, Vicki S, and Cheryl S.

J. Treasurer's Report - Denise S.

The reason that the financial reports are separate from the binders is that those were reconciled two days ago and will be presented to the Board this Tuesday night for approval. It is planned to have the approved ones on line by Wednesday of this week.

**Highlights of 2007 Report:**

**Balance Sheet:** Our assets and liabilities are listed at \$755,724. That's up approximately 19% from last year. The significant piece of this has to do with the sale of the Dolman properties. Those properties had previously been listed at \$1,000 each, and the two properties together sold for \$125,000. We received between \$112,000 and \$113,000. Though the balance sheet shows all of our assets, these proceeds did not go into the general fund, but into the Building Fund. We only owe \$32,358 on the Grand property.

**Income and Expenses:** We did finish the year in the positive, primarily due to the sale of the Dolman properties, and that we received \$25,000 (half of the grant) for the Hope and Health Center.

**Tithes and Offerings:** We finished at 93% of the budget in our tithes. Our expenses we finished at 95% of the budget. We also got \$28,000 from the Golf Tournament.

**Building Fund:** Our current investment total is \$561,148.62. We have two main accounts in our building fund: the main building fund account was up 2.33% for the year; our investments went flat like everyone else's did, so when we look at the 2nd account, the Quality Management account, that one was down 15.75%. If we look at this account's history, it's actually up 20%. The current recommendation is that we sit tight and this should turn around.

The audit was done for the 2006 financials this year. We use an Ad Hoc team for internal audits and advisors for Stifel Nicolaus. Denise S. is looking for two more people to serve on the Ad Hoc team.

7. Nominations' Panel - Jenny W.

Members of this year's panel were Jenny W., Rev. Bev S., Darca and Val Wiggins. Candidates standing for election for the Board of Directors are: Keith A., Bettie B., and Denise S. Lisa W. is running for one of the alternate Delegate's positions. She is a charter member of MCCGSL.

**Question:** Is it possible to nominate someone from the floor for Alternate Lay Delegate?

Answer: Our Bylaws and SOPPs do not really speak to nominations from the floor.

Rev. Bev S., our unofficial parliamentarian, said that generally speaking we follow the practices of the Fellowship (UFMCC), and it is not done at that level or the Regional level; however, if it is not addressed in the Bylaws, then it should be able to be done. Rev. Dr. Carol T. suggested that anyone interested in an alternate lay delegate position approach her and she'll take it to the Board.

8. Proposed 2008 Budget - Denise S.

Highlights:

The tithes and offerings were set at 6.8% over 2007 actuals. This is a lesser amount.

The Senior Pastor's salary includes the 2nd half of that market adjustment that we approved last year in our Congregational Meeting. It also includes merit increase. This year's budget includes all staff salaries with merit increases as applicable. The Director of Administration's salary was changed to a 32 hour week non exempt status. The Administrative Assistant's position is projected at 28 hours/week. Staff mileage is increased this year because in the past the staff has not submitted mileage.

This budget reflects replacing all of the office computers, which are 5 years old. Our UFMCC tithes and offerings are at 13%. Rent and utilities are primarily based on last year's numbers. The transfer of \$2600 to the building fund account is not shown because it's an internal transfer. It is the intent to continue the \$2600/mo. transfer to the building fund.

All of the ministry team budgets were approved as submitted.

Denise S. said that it becomes a real challenge for our cash flow when we take in only 93% of our tithes and offerings. Her hope and prayer is that each of us will pray over this budget, spend time and decide what our piece of it is. When we don't make our budget, we're not able to do what we say we want to do.

**Question:** What are professional fees?

Answer: This goes to our accountant, \$85/hr. and for the financial review (external review) of the 2007 financials to be completed in accordance with our SOPP's.

9. General Questions & Comments

This is the most heartfelt, most positive and efficient Board and Staff we've ever had.

Thanks for the food and clothing that have been donated this year. We now have 75 people signed up to feed the homeless at Centenary.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Bev Stephenson, Recorder