

Southeast Gateway Area Board Meeting Minutes

**January 17, 2009
Dover Place Christian Church**

The Board of Directors of the Southeast Gateway Area of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Mid-America met at Dover Place Christian Church on Saturday, January 17, 2009.

Present were Jimmie Chambers, Jr., Patricia Clark, Doug Cripe, Mike Dixon, Troy Dooley, Norma Ellington-Twitty, Joy Faires, Melissa Feldhaus, Jacque Foster, Ashley Gordon, Andy Handy, Larry Hill, Barbara Jarman, Sharon Keith, Brian Kirk, Kay Marshall, John Morton, Margie Pride, Penny Ross-Corona, Dave Sager, Shannon Walton, Steven Williams, Dietra Wise, and Susan Moore.

Moderator Doug Cripe called the meeting to order at 10:04.

Ashley Gordon led the opening devotion.

Margie Pride introduced Madeline Haraway who led a Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism moment of reflection noting the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the impending inauguration of Barack Obama. This led to a discussion about the importance of overcoming stereotypes and avoiding the preconception of African-American and 'white' congregations being segregated. Troy Dooley mentioned a presentation done by Robert Hamblin at Abbey Road Christian Church. A link to this video will be placed on the SEGA website.

Sharing of News from Our Congregations

Information shared included the following: congregational growth, new boards in place, 200th anniversary celebration, participation in New Beginnings, new church progress, building renovations, hosting mission trips, and new ministry groups.

Minutes from the August 9, 2008 Meeting

The minutes from the Board's last meeting were not read as they had been emailed to the group prior to the meeting (Board packet pages 2-5). Norma Ellington-Twitty moved to approve the minutes. Kay Marshall seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Melissa Feldhaus highlighted the 2007 audit, which was distributed to all present. As discussed at the last meeting, it was noted again that the Area's financial hardship actually began in 2007 but was not realized until 2008 as the record keeping was not complete enough to indicate the full picture.

Melissa went on to present the Proposed Revised Budget for 2009 (Board packet page 9), which was created to reflect the trends in 2008. Notable changes from the 2009 budget, which had been approved at the 2007 Area Assembly, were the reduction in insurance cost and the payoff of both the Area's loans.

Penny Ross-Corona noted that the Area has depleted its savings and investment holdings. This leaves no usable funds should the Area experience a cash-flow crisis. Penny assured the Board that the Regional Minister will provide Regional funds should such a situation arise. The Area would intend to repay such assistance when the funds became available. Penny has been in conversation with the Regional Minister, other Area Ministers, and Dick Hamm to continually review the structure of the Region and the financial implications of that structure.

There may not be any Bridgeton Fund grants this year as the fund itself has been reduced significantly by recent market activity.

Financial Coordinator Melissa Feldhaus moved to accept the financial reports and to adopt the newly revised 2009 budget. The motion was seconded by Steven Williams and passed unanimously.

Moderator's Report

Doug Cripe presented the report of the Orchard Crest Task Force which had been distributed prior to the meeting (Board packet page 10). Penny Ross-Corona added that camp publicity will be essential this year to increase usage. The new budget relies heavily on a certain amount of camp registration fees.

Executive Committee

Jacque Foster presented the Executive Committee report which had been distributed prior to the meeting (Board packet page 11).

Administrative Report

Joy Faires presented the Administrative Division Report (page 12 of the Board packet). The group discussed an 'Adopt-a-Cabin' program and is hopeful that the 5 valley cabins will be adopted and cared for by congregations. Fredericktown Christian Church is planning a 3-4 day event in March or April to address some storm damage, tree clean-up, and other pre-season issues for the camp. Jon Daniel and/or Wendell Bellew will oversee all volunteer work.

Property Committee Report

There was no Property Committee Report.

Ministry Division Report

Mike Dixon presented the Ministry Division Report (Board packet page 13). He attended a Commission on the Order of Ministry meeting earlier in the week and reported that 3 ordinations had been approved pending successful completion of seminary requirements (Jonathan Hall, Lorrie Kovell, and Amanda Gosik). The Division will meet on Wednesday, January 21 to determine the renewal of 6 Area ministerial licenses (possibly to be called 'commissions' in the future).

Norma Ellington-Twitty commended the Commission on the Order of Ministry for their hard work. She was, as a new member, very impressed by their dedication to effective ministry.

Mission Division Report

Larry Hill of LifeWind Christian Church was present to highlight his written report (Board packet pages 14-15) noting that the work of building this new church is very difficult but, on the whole, going well.

Dietra Wise of Liberation Christian Church outlined her written report (Board packet pages 16-17) and requested Area support towards her 'launch goal' of 100 attendees. Regional support of her housing allowance ended on December 31, 2008 so she has accepted a full-time chaplaincy with her current employer effective February 1. Until that time, SEGA will continue to pay her housing allowance out of congregational donations to New Church Starts.

The Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism report (board packet page 18) was accepted as written.

Penny introduced the opportunity to enter into an official relationship with missionary Patrick Bentrott through Global Ministries (Board packet pages 21-26) which will be discussed further under New Business.

Nurture Division Report

Brian Kirk presented the Nurture Division Report (Board packet page 19) highlighting the summer camp schedule. The Family Camp dates and directors are not finalized. The camping program will again utilize the National Council of Churches curriculum. Printed materials advertising the summer camping program will be developed and distributed as soon as possible after the final schedule is determined.

There will be an educational event on March 28th at the Festus First Christian Church. This event will include boundary training, a segment on Christian education by Karen Tye, and perhaps a Pro-Reconciliation/Anti-Racism workshop. More information will be distributed about this event as it draws nearer. The Super Cluster will be held on Thursday, January 22 at Affton Christian Church.

Nominating Committee Report

Margie Pride announced that the committee currently comprises only Sharon Keith and herself, and there is a need for at least one more member. The group will plan to have one sit-down meeting and accomplish the rest of its work via telephone and email. There is at least one vacant board position to be filled and a report will need to be given at the Area Assembly in September.

Area Minister's Report

Penny Ross-Corona presented the Area Minister's report (Board packet page 20) noting that a large portion of her day-to-day activities are of a confidential nature and cannot be represented in more detail. She noted again the tremendous benefits of the newly implemented record keeping and reporting procedures which enable the Board to have accurate, timely, and more comprehensive financial information.

Penny went on to describe her trip to the Dominican Republic and Haiti which is scheduled for February 4-19. She is one of 14 people taking the immersion trip to visit the area and the missionaries currently working there. Upon her return she will share her experiences with various groups, including perhaps the Disciples Women who are currently studying Haiti. Before she leaves, she will let all Area clergy know who will be on call for pastoral emergencies while she is gone.

Old Business

The management letter that was issued with the 2007 audit will be copied and distributed at the next meeting.

New Business

Steven Williams moved to approve an official relationship with Global Ministries Missionary Patrick Bentrrott. Kay Marshall seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Please note that the Bentrrotts have a blog at kimandpatrick.blogspot.com and update it almost daily with their reflections. Included on the blog is a wish list of desired supplies and shipping information. Karen Yount out of Kansas City also has close ties to Haiti and will be traveling there in June. Her contact information will be posted on the SEGA website (www.segadisciples.org).

Booklets entitled "Be A Global Mission Church" were distributed. Directors were asked to review the information and be prepared to discuss at the next meeting.

Financial Coordinator Melissa Feldhaus introduced a motion regarding the annual Area audit. After some discussion and amendment, it was presented by Joy Faires as follows: "Since our by-laws only require an annual audit and not an external auditor specifically, I move that beginning with the audit of 2008 financials, we find a qualified member (or members) from SEGA congregations with at least one CPA, and approved by the SEGA Board to perform the audit. This person (or persons) shall not be a signatory on Area accounts or be a current member of the SEGA Board. The same person(s) should perform the audit no more than 2 years in a row." (Please refer to Board packet pages 27-29.) The motion was seconded by Steven Williams and passed unanimously.

The Area Minister's Compensation package (Board packet page 30) was presented and needed its annual IRS required approval for the housing allowance portion. Margie Pride moved to approve; Joy Faires seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

The housing allowance for LifeWind Christian Church's Rev. Larry Hill (Board packet page 31) was presented. Norma Ellington-Twitty moved to approve; Margie Pride seconded. Motion carried.
Doug Cripe announced that Director Angela Boyd has resigned her at-large position on the Board. The Nomination Committee will look at replacing her in this capacity.

The April 18, 2009 Board meeting will be held at Orchard Crest Camp. John Morton will do the devotion. The plan for this meeting is to conclude the Board's business before lunch and then have the stewardship seminar by Ed Varnum after lunch. Toward this goal, we will not share congregational news during the Board meeting.

The August 8, 2009 meeting location has yet to be decided. Troy Dooley will check with Abbey Road.

The Area Assembly will be on September 19, 2009 at Union Avenue Christian Church.

The meeting adjourned at 1:58.

Respectfully submitted by
Susan Moore
SEGA Administrative Assistant