

Media Center Restricted Fund Established

A very exciting opportunity is now one step closer to fruition at the home office in Cincinnati! After months of planning and legwork, the goal of having a video studio is now closer to becoming a reality. During a teleconference on July 7, the Council of Elders approved the creation of a restricted fund for the construction and equipping of a home office “Media Center!” Peter Eddington, operation manager for Media and Communications Services, and I brought the idea forward for Council consideration. After much discussion the Council of Elders approved the fund, and a copy of the final resolution is attached for you to read.

The media department desires to take advantage of the latest technology wherever it can, and has planned for several years to have a video recording studio at the home office when funds become available. With this in mind, the Media Center Restricted Fund has been created to help bring the finances together to accomplish this goal. Since the new facility will be more than just a “video studio,” it was decided to label the area as our “media center”—a term which more aptly describes the multifunctional capabilities of the proposed space.

In the home office there is an area on the second floor directly above the mailroom that can be converted into studio space. In addition, there is also room for three additional small offices for future staff growth. The media center portion would be about 24 feet by 33 feet in size. Many of the costs involved are one-time, initial construction and equipment costs. These include the actual walls for the center, the on-camera set, studio lighting, camera equipment, audio equipment, digital editing software, electrical power, air conditioning and production supplies. It is for these setup costs that the restricted fund has been established, and any monies received need to be above and beyond the normal tithes and offerings of the Church’s regular income. (In establishing the center, we don’t want to impact other important budgetary considerations, but feel that this is a very worthwhile endeavor to which people may want to give special support.)

The restricted fund has a targeted goal of \$150,000, and once \$75,000 has been received the project will begin, provided a couple of other considerations in the Council’s resolution are met. Regular reports on progress of the fund and the media center project will be given over the coming weeks and months, including reports in *United News* and home office e-mail updates.

Therefore, if you would like to support establishing the media center, please feel free to note on your contribution that it is for the “Media Center” or “Video Studio.” As you will note from the full text of the Council’s resolution, in the event a shortfall is experienced in the Church’s regular income, the construction and equipping of the studio will be placed on hold until projected non-restricted income for the Church’s regular budget is met.

By way of background, and as a reminder, there are several factors to consider with regards to a media center for the Church. Here at the home office we do not have a specific area for video recording and production. We do have a video editing room, but it is small and full of editing equipment for producing our sermon tapes and other educational videos.

One of the main reasons we could use such a media center, is to take advantage of the increasing capabilities of the Internet. As you have probably read, the Internet and television are converging in many ways—with many users accessing television programs on the Internet, and

vice-a-versa. The Internet is a very cost-effective medium that we want to capitalize upon as much as possible. With broadband Internet technology now available to the average consumer, and with a second version of the Internet on the horizon (with speeds hundreds of times faster than we currently have available), it is important that we work diligently to use these tools to the maximum. Our lowest costs per response from our listeners and readers come via our Web sites on the Internet. In addition, it is projected that by the year 2007, 70 percent of U.S. households will have broadband Internet access—making real-time, full-frame streaming video a reality.

Having a video recording environment will enable us to provide content for a 24/7/365 video/TV Web site with commentaries and programs on all kinds of subjects, as they relate to the gospel of the Kingdom of God. In addition, timely commentaries, even at a moment's notice of breaking news, can be uploaded to the Web immediately. Once programming is completed, it can be made available to the public around the entire world at virtually no cost to the Church.

As well as using the Internet, we can continue to take advantage of free community television, similar to the way two of our congregations presently do. The current cost per response from the two locally produced TV programs in Beloit, Wisconsin, and Portland, Oregon, is very good—because the airtime is free or only costs a few dollars. Some of the staff and volunteers working with these existing programs will marshal their efforts to help with the new programming. The Church can do much more to take advantage of free cable-access channels and, in addition to the Internet, can preach the gospel very cost effectively.

Please note that we are not looking to secure expensive broadcast television time slots. We are planning to build upon the foundation, experience and skill of those men who have already been involved in video production at various levels over the past 8 to 10 years. There is so much more that we could be doing without a huge budget and building a fine studio today costs 20 percent of what it did just 10 years ago!

We must continue to preach the gospel until Christ returns. This will be one more item in our “tool belt” of gospel-preaching methods. We must be about our Father's business—both in preparing the brethren and preaching the gospel. Time will tell, but we believe that the seeds we are sowing will germinate and bear fruit at the appropriate time. We must continue to do our part to follow Christ's commands that He gave us in His final words on this earth. Video production for the World Wide Web is just one more way to do this.

Through careful allocation of budget and resources, adding a video recording studio or “media center” to our capabilities is a good and necessary step if we are to keep up with technology and the job at hand. We are not talking about spending a large portion of our budget on this project—perhaps 3 to 5 percent of the media department budget.

May God continue to bless the various efforts of His people to take care of Christ's flock and preach the gospel of the Kingdom. The United Church of God, *an International Association*, takes this mandate very seriously! Please continue to pray for the resources to become available to accomplish God's will, and we hope that the Media Center Restricted Fund will help greatly in this regard!

Roy Holladay

United Church of God, Media Center Restricted Fund Resolution

Approved by the Council of Elders, July 7, 2004

Whereas, the Church desires to develop electronic media efforts to complement and expand printed media efforts, and

Whereas, the Church desires to implement newer video technologies wherever possible for use on the Internet, cable television (i.e., not commercial television until authorized by the Council of Elders) and for in-house educational projects, and

Whereas, it was previously resolved that it is the intent of the Council of Elders to implement the strategies of the document "Broadcast Television Media Strategy" within the scope and budget parameters outlined therein and dependent upon funds available and priorities of Church programs from year to year,

Now therefore, it is hereby resolved, that the Council of Elders establishes a restricted fund to be administered by the home office to receive donations for the construction and equipping of a media center (video studio) in the area above the existing mailroom, and that complete details of this fund be communicated to the membership, and

It is further resolved that it will be communicated to the membership that donations to the Media Center Restricted Fund are to be above and beyond normal tithes and offerings, and

It is further resolved that the restricted fund shall have a targeted goal of \$150,000 upon which time the fund will be discontinued and details communicated to the membership, and any additional funds received beyond that amount shall be allocated to Category One income until contributions for the fund cease, and

It is further resolved that when the restricted fund totals \$75,000, that the additional \$30,000 appropriated for the media center (video studio) in the 2004-2005 Media and Communications Services Budget be released and used towards construction of the media center facility, and that equipping of the studio begin using the restricted funds as they become available, and

It is further resolved that, notwithstanding any provision above, no monies from the restricted fund or the budgeted appropriation shall be spent until such time as it becomes apparent, according to an assessment by the Church Treasurer, reported to the Council, that the total non-restricted income for fiscal year 2004-2005 will likely be at least equal to the total income budgeted for that fiscal year, and that such an assessment will be made in mid-January, 2005, and in the event a shortfall is projected a new assessment will be made monthly thereafter until total non-restricted income for the fiscal year will likely be at least equal to the total income budgeted for that fiscal year.