

**United Church of God, *an International Association***  
**Council of Elders Meeting Report**  
**March 4, 2008—San Antonio, Texas**

Chairman Robert Dick called today's meeting to order at 9 a.m. After the opening prayer and reviewing the day's agenda, he asked Secretary David Johnson to discuss some issues.

**Secretary-Generated Items**

Mr. Johnson walked the Council through the amendment process timeline, citing April 11, 2008, as the planned date when the call-and-notice packet for the annual meeting of the GCE will be sent to the elders. He also reminded the Council of the deadline for dealing with Statements of Concern and congregational input.

Mr. Johnson discussed the storing of corporate records. Bylaw 9.6.1 requires a book of the minutes of all the meetings be kept. The GCE has access to those minutes at the home office in the presence of the secretary. He asked if the corporate records could be stored electronically. Mr. Dick stated that would require a determination of whether that would be within the scope of the bylaw.

**Roles and Rules Committee**

Bill Eddington presented material concerning the Elder Expulsion Appeal Committee and the Member Appeal Committee. He presented a paper for Council review on each of the committees.

The Council was asked to make a decision concerning the Member Appeal Committee because the terms of the members of that committee expire on April 30, 2008. Mr. Eddington also asked whether there was a need to continue to have an east and west composition of that committee. It was decided that the MAC could operate with just one team of five permanent members and two alternates. Mr. Dick mentioned that the Council has verbally stated in the past that an overhaul of both of these committees is in order. The Roles and Rules Committee is to bring forth some proposals for the streamlining of each of the committees.

Mr. Eddington discussed that along with presenting some revisions to the above-mentioned committees, there also needs to be a scope, responsibilities and process document created for the Amendment Committee.

**Doctrine Updates**

Leon Walker updated the Council on doctrinal issues. First, he presented an edit to the Passover ceremony. The edit sought to replace the phrase "Christ's broken body" with the phrase "the scourging that Christ endured." Mr. Walker mentioned that some

manuscripts don't have the term *broken* in 1 Corinthians 11:24, though other manuscripts do have *broken*. Luke 22:19 states, "This is My body which is given for you." Also, the Scriptures tell us that none of His bones were broken. Mr. Walker explained that "to break bread" is an English idiomatic expression and does not imply that Christ's body was literally broken. We should emphasize the healing aspect of Christ's sacrifice. The edit was unanimously approved by the Council.

The next question discussed was whether women could be Feast choir directors. The determination of the Doctrine Committee was that this was not a doctrinal issue but an administrative issue. Mr. Walker stated that there is no need for a resolution on this question because it is something for the administration to deal with. Richard Thompson asked how choir directors are chosen. Mr. Franks responded that Doug Horchak is the overall Feast coordinator and that he has asked Steve Myers to be the overall music coordinator, who then proposes individuals to direct Feast choirs. The names of the choir directors are then approved by the Ministerial Services Team.

### **Decision on Bloc Voting**

Mr. Dick reviewed some of the comments that Council members had expressed earlier regarding this issue, reiterating the historical facts that were part of our beginning. Mr. Dick had asked at the end of the previous discussion that Council members bring back draft ideas from which a formal statement could be crafted.

Some of the Council members had started drafts of a letter that could be sent to the GCE on this issue. In going around the table, a number of comments were presented that could be included in the one letter crafted by the Council. Mr. Dick asked that all those who had given input meet for lunch and work on a unified draft. The letter was written over the lunch break and was presented later in the day for Council review and further edits. The final product will be presented for Council approval tomorrow.

### **Strategic Planning Issues**

Mr. Dick led a discussion on how the new Strategic Plan will be rolled out. Since some components of the plan are still under construction, the concern is whether the administration has the time to produce the necessary material prior to the call-and-notice packet being sent. It was noted that the GCE has been kept informed over the last six months through Chairman's Commentaries and *United News* articles about the efforts of the Council and administration in putting together the new plan.

Since the Bylaws require that the Council approve the Strategic Plan, Operation Plan and budget prior to call-and-notice, there was a roundtable discussion on this issue.

Jason Lovelady informed the Council that all the material from the second retreat will be compiled and delivered to the Council by March 10. The Council would have until March 21 to review the documentation prepared by the administration and provide comments and recommendations preparatory to an April 1 teleconference for considering

final approval. The key consideration is when can full adoption of the new strategic planning document take place? If we are unable to satisfactorily complete work by the deadline, then the Council will ballot on the proposed Strategic Plan, Operation Plan and budget that were presented and discussed at these current meetings.

Mr. Dick asked for consent without resolution on the above-mentioned time period and proposed idea. The decision to move forward with this plan was unanimous.

### **Web-Based Forum**

Mr. Kubik set up a screening to show the Council a sample of the Web-based forum. The Council will use it for the next few weeks to become more familiar with the capabilities. Instructions on how to use the Web-based forum and a document of approved Council guidelines for its use will be sent to the GCE in the future.

### **Executive Session**

The Council concluded the open session at 4:15 p.m. and went into executive session for the remainder of the afternoon.

John Foster  
*Council Reporter*

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