

News from the Board of Directors Meeting, November 9-11, 2008, Indianapolis

Financial reports reassuring

Financial reports to the board showed net operating income of more than \$200,000 through October, and gift income for the year breaking the \$1 million level. While these reports represent tremendous staff efforts during challenging economic times, an overall loss of \$2.1 million in net assets due to unrealized losses in market securities was also reported.

“Even as we have seen our market investments decline in value, we have been able to achieve an operational income that could reach \$250,000 plus by year end,” reported Rick Reisinger, Vice President and Treasurer.

Directors noted the importance of receiving increased investments from individual and institutional investors through the end of the year to strengthen the resources for future loan demand at loan rates beneficial to churches.

It was noted by CE staff that early signs indicate the economy is affecting some congregations in

meeting loan payment obligations. Emphasis has been placed on working with congregations facing loan challenges to help them meet payments and avoid or minimize delinquencies.

“Loan projections still show a steady potential for loan demand in 2009, but we are finding several churches delaying their projects due to the concern about the economy,” said Reisinger.

Special investment offer expires 12/24/08!

Join us in our 125th Anniversary by Extending the Witness! Invest \$100 or more to start saving today and earn 4.24% for 24 months. Plus, your investment provides money for Church Extension to loan to Disciples churches that continue to have growing capital needs. Call us at 800.274.1883 or visit our website: www.churchextension.org

Powell reaffirms business plan in current economic climate

President Jim Powell’s words of assurance to directors lifted up Church Extension’s longstanding principles as a solid anchor “even as we have our



mission and business plan to direct us.” The president expressed appreciation to the directors in helping focus on the fiscal integrity of Church Extension and went on to say, “I am glad as well that we know our job is to help Disciples help other Disciples.”

He told directors that the primary need currently is for investments to help meet the loans needed by Disciples congregations.

In reference also to the tightening economy, Powell noted the shift in focus of staff to work more quickly and closely with congregations struggling to make loan payments.

In his report to directors, Powell also discussed the process of Church Extension directors and its Mission Alignment Response Team. “The main thing I have heard from nearly all directors and staff is that these conversations will only be helpful if we keep our eyes focused on the emerging and changing needs of congregations engaged in mission in this day,” said Powell.

Sharon Watkins discusses mission alignment process

The future alignment of general ministries program units and the process now underway by a General Board-appointed Mission Alignment Coordinating Council (MACC) was the topic at the opening plenary of the board meeting with Sharon Watkins, General Minister and President providing an update and answering directors' questions.

Watkins provided a quick overview from restructure to today, noting the point where we need to address the change of size and structures of general ministries, needs of congregations today and the continuing decrease of mission funding to support our current structures. She also noted the need to understand more fully the role of the General Board in fulfilling mission.

The anticipation of MACC, Watkins reported, is to propose to next summer's General Assembly projected changes in general ministries program structures, anticipating that the planning and aligning process will understandably continue beyond 2009. "It will be an enabling resolution to help the church as a whole with a conceptual framework," Watkins said.

Watkins affirmed and encouraged the initiative currently underway by Disciples Home Missions, Higher Education and Leadership Ministries, and Church Extension to continue to pursue conversation around common areas of program ministries for new church ministries, leadership development and transformation.

Directors experience New Beginnings Assessment Service

In an abbreviated simulation, directors participated in a sampling of the newly launched New Beginnings Assessment Service being offered to clusters of congregations in close partnership with participating regions.

New Beginnings is an assessment service designed for congregations in the "fourth



Lori Adams and Matt Rosine

quadrant" of their lifecycle and facing significant situations related to their facilities, location and/or financial resources. Directors, under the direction

of staff members Rick Morse, Lori Adams and Matt Rosine, drew upon the demographics and data of a sample congregation in the midst of an assessment. Board members gathered in small groups, working as "local church leaders" in determining options and future directions for the congregation.

Rosine, Congregational Services Consultant for New Beginnings, reported to directors that more than 120 congregations have participated in the assessment service. More than 70% of the congregations to date have chosen to enter into a form of redevelopment such as relocating, restarting the congregation or beginning a new community of faith.

Other Board actions

Deborah Morgan, board member and senior pastor of East Dallas Christian Church, drew upon John 15:1-5, "I am the true vine, you are the branches... apart from me you can do nothing," setting a scriptural base for the fall Board of Directors meeting.

The Board reviewed and revised Loan Policies, approved the 2009 budget and confirmed dates for upcoming meetings:

- March 8-10, 2009
- July 29, 2009 (morning prior to start of General Assembly)
- November 8-10, 2009

Election of directors

One new and two returning directors were elected to three year terms on the board of Church Extension. Yolanda Smith, Chief Financial Officer of New Direction Christian Church, Memphis, Tenn., will join returning directors Barbara Albert, Fort Collins, Colo., and Linda Gardner, Fullerton, Calif.

Nancy Brink, Omaha, Neb., will become board chairperson, succeeding Willie Garcia of Yonkers, NY.

Leaving the board following six years of service were Don Houk, Fort Worth, Tex., and Gary Straub, Louisville, Ky.



Yolanda Smith