

Congregational Meeting: September 21, 2014

Chairman Bruce Rhodes opened the meeting at 6:07 p.m. with prayer. A quorum was in attendance (147 members).

The minutes from the May congregational meeting were accepted.

New Members – Carol Van Der Woude

MOTION was made by the board to accept the following persons into membership:

Erik & Katy Gullickson	Greg & Mary Nash
Steve & Sue Harbaugh	Tim & Sally Stall
Karen Schroeder	

The motion was seconded and the proposed members were accepted by voice vote.

Financial Report – David Cartwright Income Statement for Period Ending June 30

	YEAR TO DATE				
	Actual	(52 Weeks)	Budget	Variance	Prior Year (52 Weeks)
INCOME					
Tithe & Offering Income	1,830,748		1,724,972	105,776	1,757,631
Interest Income	2,276		1,000	1,276	1,665
Estate & Major Gift Income	59,050		0	59,050	0
Home School Ministry Income	279,586		295,850	(16,264)	298,378
TOTAL INCOME	2,171,660		2,021,822	149,838	2,057,674
NET EXPENSES--Note A					
Administrative Expense	1,063,945		1,013,959	49,986	982,551
Property Expense--Note B	233,638		158,350	75,288	170,732
Communications	32,745		19,600	13,145	23,047
Children & Family Ministries	16,685		17,433	(748)	27,210
Home School Ministries	281,498		295,850	(14,352)	288,352
Young Adult Ministries	23,731		17,900	5,831	14,285
College & Career Ministry	1,025		1,860	(835)	1,534
Worship Ministries	44,099		43,050	1,049	43,989
Adult / Equipping Ministries	21,443		28,400	(6,957)	24,825
Other Program Expense	2,623		4,000	(1,377)	5,065
Denominational / Association Support	27,400		27,400	0	28,000
Church Plant	26,562		43,220	(16,658)	0
Local Impact	38,703		32,800	5,903	34,906
Regional Impact	102,600		104,000	(1400)	105,870
Global Impact	214,547.93		214,000	548	232,595
TOTAL NET EXPENSES	2,131,245		2,021,822	109,423	1,982,959
OPERATING INCOME / (LOSS)	40,415		0	40,415	74,715
HSM Transfer—Note C	1,912		0	1,912	-10,027
Year End Surplus Transfer	(45,000)			(45,000)	
GENERAL FUND OPERATING INCOME / (LOSS)	(2,673)		0	(2,673)	64,689

The year-end income statement shows good news. We expected to see a little drop in income due to the number of people going with the church plant. Yet the tithe & offering income remains strong, showing increase over the prior year.

The general fund operating income shows a loss because of the transfer of surplus funds. At the end of the fiscal year we had a surplus. A portion of the surplus has already been distributed; \$45,000 remains as a fund to be designated by the board.

We are increasing the amount given to the capitol replacement fund as we plan for future needs.

Senior Pastor Report – David Jones

September 21, 2014

The Bridge

The new church is off to a solid start. They are running between 150-200. There is life there. I praise the Lord for answering our prayers. Continue to pray for God to use them to reach Algonquin.

When I visited the launch, I met a couple who attended Hope Community Church in Schaumburg, but live in Algonquin. Their pastor, Jon Moody, suggested they go to the Bridge. They tried it out, and are going to stay. We planted Hope sixteen years ago; now they send a family to the Bridge. Living Grace in Cary also sent families to the Bridge. This demonstrates how churches can partner to plant new churches.

So we have cause for celebration. But we also have some work to do. We have lost some good people. I noticed several empty chairs and pews this weekend where mature and gifted former members used to sit, but now are at the Bridge. This highlights our need for ongoing leadership development. There is an opportunity for others to step up.

Church Planting

This is still a major aspect of our mission. Our intention is to train two church planters in the 2015-16 ministry year, with possible plants in Lake Zurich, Palatine, or some other Northwest Suburb. We have already set aside some money. This year is going to be a recruiting year. I recently talked with one prospect, and will connect with another this coming week.

Six EFCA churches in the Northwest Suburbs have banded together to form a church-planting network. This includes our church (Barrington), The Bridge (Algonquin), Living Grace (Cary), Cross View (Antioch), Our Savior (Wheeling) and Life Spring (Spring Grove). Others may join in time. We are calling the network: *Reach Chicago/Northwest Suburbs*. We are going to pool our resources to plant churches in our area. All of these churches would pitch in to help shoulder the cost,

as well as help with selection, training and support of the planting pastors. This is an exciting development.

Vital Signs

- *Attendance.* We are starting to see the effect of the Bridge's launch on VCB. Our attendance in the month of July was up about 10 percent, year over year (from 703 to 780). In August, however, we dipped 2 percent from the previous year (from 745 to 731). The Bridge held practice services in August, so the core group was already gone for the most part. Now that we are in September, we are down about 10 percent, which is not surprising. But here's the kingdom perspective: the combined attendance for the two churches last weekend was 880. That is a net gain. So it may take us a while to rebound to the numbers we had this past winter and spring (we averaged 820 from Jan to June).
- *Giving.* While our attendance has dipped a bit, our giving has actually gotten stronger. As of last weekend, we are up 11 percent year-over-year (+8 percent for the calendarized budget). Our people continue to give faithfully to the Lord's work. This is particularly noteworthy since more than \$200K in annual giving went out the door with the Bridge—more than 10 percent of our budget! So VCB has not suffered at all, financially. I believe firmly that God is rewarding our faithfulness and sacrifice.

Preaching & Evangelism

I continue to work hard at preaching. Last year I gave a sustained effort to get better at application. My focus for this year is to get better at making my sermons more accessible for newer believers and those who do not yet know the Lord. While this will not entail a radical overhaul, it will mean the inclusion of sidebars geared toward those who are new to the faith. I want you to feel comfortable bringing your unsaved friends and family to church with you, knowing that there will be something in the message for them.

ASP Search Update

At the May congregational meeting, we voted on a budget that included a new position: the Associate Senior Pastor. This person would work closely with me to oversee and develop the staff, implement strategic plans, oversee the finances and help shepherd the congregation. Think of the role this way: take half of Dick's job, add to it one-third of my job, and throw in one-sixth of John Vosnos' job. We did not want to use the term "executive pastor" because it sounded too corporate. An alternative title has since been suggested: "Administrative Pastor." We may switch to that.

Due to the strategic importance of this position, the elders decided to serve as the search team. We created a job description and posted it at several ministry websites, as well as the EFCA, TEDS, and our own website. We have received about 45 resumes to date. We narrowed them down to a top ten, and then a top four. Now we are down to three prospective candidates. I spent a whole day with one of them this past Thursday, and I will do the same with another this coming Wednesday. Both have good potential.

Once we have a candidate, we will host a meet-and-greet event, where you will have a chance to meet him and ask any questions you might have. Then we will call a special congregational meeting to vote on the candidate. Please pray for discernment as we continue to narrow in the candidate.

Senior Administrative Assistant

As you may know, Helen Cobler is retiring at the end of October. Helen has served with distinction for many years. She has been a blessing to the staff, and especially to me. But she wants to be able to devote more time to caring for her family. We are very sorry to see her go, but we understand her reasons and support them.

So we looked for someone who would thrive in that strategic position. I am happy to report that we have extended an offer to one of our members, Dana Leahy, and she has accepted. Dana, her husband Bill, and their three daughters, have been part of VCB for over four years now. Dana brings to the job gifts of organization and administration, along with a winsome way of relating with people. While she has some big shoes to fill, we trust that she is up for the challenge. We are looking at a start date of October 16, so Helen can have some time to train Dana. We do not anticipate a change in responsibilities—Dana will support me and the Associate Senior Pastor, as well as oversee the other administrative staff.

Be sure to thank Helen for her excellent service. Thankfully, she and Randy are not going anywhere—they will continue to be active at VCB as volunteers. And please welcome Dana to the staff.

Nominating Team

The team is composed of: Jim Adkins, Lisa Appleby, Betsy Corning, Keith Hanson, Barb Kulik and myself. We have been meeting for several months now. We have candidates for the facilities and worship deacon openings. We are still working on the elder opening and the deacon of global impact. We expect to meet the deadline for congregational notification before the November congregational meeting. This is one of those quiet ministries that go on behind the scenes, but it is massive in terms of strategic importance. Please pray that we find the right people to help lead our church.

Building Project

Last year we put a lot of effort into assessing the adequacy of our building for our ministry needs. We hired an architect to do a site analysis and create a master plan for maximizing this location.

- We investigated the option of buying land and building a new building, but found that was prohibitively expensive.
- We investigated the option of buying an existing building and retrofitting it. But no suitable building could be found in Barrington; we would have had to go to Lake Zurich or farther. We decided that we are still committed to our mission in Barrington, and to this location in particular.
- We looked at enlarging our sanctuary, but that is not our choke point right now—our needs are for classroom space and gathering space. Also, it would have cost about \$7M.

So this left us with two options: 1) complete a medium-sized renovation, involving some new construction; or 2) do nothing. We did not sense that we should simply stand pat. So we felt good about moving ahead with a \$3.5M building project, and even shared this at the congregational meeting a year ago. Well, some events in the life of the church took our focus off this project for a season. Now we are at the place where we are ready to pick it up again.

In anticipation of this work on the building, we expanded half of Dick Ehrle's job into a full time position and hired Bob Schroeder to be our facilities manager. Bob has a long resume of work both as a builder and manager. He started in mid-June, and hit the ground running. The early returns have been very encouraging. He has a kingdom view on facilities usage. I have asked him to come and share his heart briefly.

Facility Stewardship – Bob Schroeder

The building is the bridge to our mission of sharing the gospel. All areas of our church have an impact on visitors. We need to view our church from the perspective of a newcomer.

Kingdom thinking must embrace facility stewardship. We need to consider these areas:

1. User friendliness
2. Building services
3. Safety and security
4. Engineering
5. Grounds—from entry to exit

Goals can be accomplished through a building program, asset replacement planning and volunteer workers.

Continuation of Senior Pastor Report

Two questions. First, *should* we do this? What is our rationale for asking God's people to sacrifice?

- *Mission.* Our building says a great deal about us a church, particularly to newcomers. We can reflect apathy or excellence, or something in between. The problem for those of us who have been here for a long time is that we no longer see the ragged carpet, the scuffmarks, the chipped paint or the stains in the ceiling tiles. But newcomers do. We want to create a warm, inviting environment for our guests, some of whom are not yet believers. At some level, it is a matter of Christian hospitality. This is an argument for maintenance as much as it is for renovation.
- *Space.* While we have enough children's ministry space on the weekends, we are hurting during the week. Classical Consortium, AWANA, HEART and MOPS max out our facilities. We are redlining in some rooms (Jennifer has switched some rooms around as a temporary fix). Also, we lack adequate gathering space as a church. The proposed new construction would add about 11,000 square feet of new space, primarily instructional and gathering space. We would gain a proper check-in area for the children's ministry, and more space for adults to linger in fellowship after the services, helping to foster Christian community.
- *Flow.* It is no secret to anyone that our building was built out over time and, as a result, is convoluted. We need to improve flow through the building, so newcomers will not get turned around.
- *Security.* Our children's ministry area is wide open. This makes many young parents nervous. We need to tighten down access to our children's ministry area so moms feel more secure leaving their little ones there.
- *Safety.* Our building is not in compliance with a number of safety issues. We cannot ignore these; they must be dealt with, even if we decide not to go forward with a major renovation project.
- *Wear and Tear.* Our building gets a lot of usage, which is good stewardship. But then we need to maintain and replace items on a regular basis, which is also good stewardship. This is one of the reasons we hired Bob. He and his team are doing a fantastic job. But there are parts of the building that are

desperately in need of repair or replacement (some of the furnaces and air conditioners are old). There are also many rooms and hallways that could stand to be freshened up. [Show some pictures from around the building.]

- *Continuity.* We have a mishmash of stuff throughout the building—different carpets, different paint colors, different desks, different tables, different chairs, different cabinets, different clocks, different signs, etc. [Show pictures.] Our church is not a Goodwill store! We do not need to find a place for everyone's hand-me-downs. We need to bring a greater level of unity to do the way we do things, for the sake of excellence. A renovation project like this one will allow us to sweep through the building and bring some measure of continuity throughout.

In light of these concerns, I have no problem asking our church to step up and give sacrificially over the next three years. Helen and I will contribute to this, personally.

We have done two classrooms and two bathrooms as showrooms, to give you an idea of the vision for the project.

Second, *can* we do this? Yes, I believe we can—for several reasons. First, the feasibility study that we did a while back revealed general support for the project. It furthermore suggested that we could raise about \$2.5M. But it must be kept in mind that we had not yet done a full explanation of the need for the project, so the consultants expected that the number would rise as the congregation learned more about it. Also, our church has grown since that study was done. Second, a general rule of thumb is that a church can raise two times its annual budget over a three-year period for a building project that does not involve the worship center (if the worship center is involved, they can generally raise three times annual budget). Our annual budget is \$1.9M. This would suggest that a \$3.5M project is within our reach. God has blessed many of our families with both means and generosity. We expect that the church will step up and respond. We are not really doing this for ourselves, but for the people that we are trying to reach.

We want to build a missional component into this as well. Saint Paul's Cultural Center in Turkey is preparing to plant another church in Antalya. They are going to need about \$1M to buy land and build their own building (many landlords will not rent to a church). It is my hope that VCB can step up and contribute about \$150,000 to this project. The Turks are one of the largest unreached people groups in the world. Saint Paul's has shown itself effective in reaching the people of that nation. We want to help them.

Timeline:

- Present the plan (tonight)
- Meet with small groups to present the need more in depth (Oct)

- Vote whether to begin a capital campaign (Nov congregational meeting)
- If favorable, begin capital campaign (Jan)
- In gathering weekend (Mar 14-15)
- Revise scope of project as needed (April)
- Vote to begin construction (May congregational meeting)

If the congregation votes to move forward, we need some people to step up and help make this happen. First and foremost, we will need a point person to oversee the capital campaign. We will also need to assemble a team around that person, with experience in fundraising and communications. If we cannot get the wisdom that we need from inside our body, we will need to find it somewhere—although the board is not particularly enthusiastic about hiring campaign consultants. Finally, we will also need some people with skills in the trades to help with the renovations when the time comes.

Another question is whether or not we would take on debt if the pledges come up short. It is our hope to raise all of the money and not take on any debt, apart from some kind of bridge loan. If the pledges come in a bit short, the board will need to decide whether to take on a small amount of debt or simply downsize the scope of the project.

I believe that this is going to be a spiritual adventure for our church.

Kenya 2015

OT and Kim are putting together another short-term missions trip to Kenya this coming July. It will likely have several components: pastoral training; education; medical work and other humanitarian aid, etc. If you have skills in one of these areas, I would encourage you to pray about whether you should be part of this team. Not sure if I will be able to go myself, but I would love to see every person in our church go on a missions trip at least once in his or her life. You do not come back the same.

Israel 2016

After we returned from the study tour in Turkey and Greece, I made a brief mention from the pulpit that we are considering another tour to Israel in 2016. Just from that brief mention, we have had over forty people express interest in the trip. Now that does not mean that all of them will go (no money has been deposited), but it does show that interest is high. So we are going to start promoting it in January for May/June of 2016. We need at least 25 people to make the trip viable, although 50 is the optimal size. Last time it cost \$3,700 per person. We expect it will be similar this time, perhaps a little higher due to inflation.

The church neither pays money nor makes money from these trips. The participants bear the actual cost. We simply pass the money through to the tour company. About the only “cost” to VCB is the labor done by Helen Cobler and me.

But we are providing our people with an opportunity to take, essentially, an Equipping Center class on location. It is well worth the effort.

A question and answer period took place.

Strategic Plan Update – Bruce Rhodes

A concise, one page summary of the strategic plan was presented with specific actions and goals. The four goals are: Evangelize Non-Believers, Establish Community, Equip Believers, and Empower Servants.

We have many programs in place at the church. The leadership will be looking at how the different ministries are related. Leadership meetings that include the elders, the deacon board and the staff have been initiated and will take place several times per year.

Village in Action – Julie and Chuck Fischer

Empowering Servants: the goal is to educate and equip believers to be the hands and feet of Jesus, moving out in Christ's love, making a difference in people's lives. The core group will:

1. Vet outside ministry partners
2. Communicate with the congregation
3. Match volunteers with ministry needs
4. Educate and equip

Because our church receives many requests from organizations—as many as one per week—we need a consistent, fair repeatable and documented process.

A one stop-shop web page is planned. It will provide education on ministry partners with volunteer opportunities.

On-line Directory & Men's Ministry – Jim Crouter

We have a new on-line directory. In order to fulfill the goal of community—helping people get to know others (especially helpful to new people), everyone needs to upload a picture to the site. Or give a picture to Jim; he will upload it and return the picture.

The strategy for men's ministry is connected to the goals of our strategic plan.

- Programs that invite non-believers to come and see (evangelizing).
- Programs that encourage the men of VCB to come and follow (community).
- Programs for men to come and grow (equipping).
- Programs for men to lead (empowering).

Two ministry teams are planned.

1. Men of Issachar for ministry leadership. 1 Chronicles 12:32
2. The Mighty Men—a group that will get it done; accomplish what needs to be done. 1 Chronicles 11:10

Mesh – Jennifer Burns

MESH stands for Marriage Enrichment, Support and healing. There are four ways that this will take place:

- Premarital/Early Marriage Counseling and Care
- Making good marriages better through date nights (October, February, June)
- Recovery/restoration: Biblical counseling through mentor couples. A weekend seminar on Biblical counseling was held in September with additional weekends planned for October and November.
- Equipping Center classes
Currently Eric & Ruth Littaur are teaching the class *Love and Respect*

Update on Constitution Revision – Bruce Rhodes

The team has completed a draft for review by the congregation. The significant changes include:

- Split into Articles and Bylaws
- Clarification of roles for congregation, deacons, elders, staff and ministry teams
- Two mandated congregational meetings per year (additional meetings may be scheduled)
- Process for approving new members

The schedule for approval is as follows:

1. The draft will be available for review on website this week.
2. Separate presentation will take place outlining the changes.
3. A vote will take place in February.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm with the hymn *Take My Life and Let It Be*.

