

Westbrook Church
Elders Notes

July Meeting

The July Elder Council meeting began with prayer and a devotional led by Scott on women's role in ministry, focusing on chapters 6 through 10 of Sarah Summers book Men and Women in the Church. A thoughtful study, with hard questions, followed.

Following discussion, the Elders were asked to continue in their study of the book and be prepared to discuss chapters 11 through 15 at the next meeting.

Financial Update.

Bob Webster – Bob presented a written review of the finances of the church as they stand at the end of July projected into the remainder of the calendar year. We have fallen far short of our weekly goal of slightly more than \$30,000 and have essentially used up nearly all of the reserves with which we began the year. Bob fears we have not hit the bottom in giving. The most recent payroll was met by using funds from dedicated accounts.

The Finance Committee recommends that we study and then take immediate action to curtail spending through the balance of the year with an expectation that we will fall \$200,000 and \$300,000 short of budget. It was recommended we go back to any who had previously offered special funding for the Youth Pastor (and who had not yet made a special gift) and seek their financial support.

A spending freeze was discussed, with the understanding that certain commitments may have already been made that should be honored. It was recommended and agreed, as well, that

we approach Jeff Feder to act as an interim and volunteer CFO to assist in meeting our financial responsibilities.

There was an agreement on an aggressive communication to our congregants and a strong biblical appeal for financial participation. This would take the course of information from the pulpit presented by Bob, e-communication through Scott, and individual meetings. Even with this challenge, we must also celebrate where God's light is shining brightly, as in the various camps, where several youngsters committed their life to Christ.

Meeting with Tom Aul.

Tom was invited to share his response to the invitation to become the Deacon in charge of the Stewardship Team. Tom described the "think tank" that he would introduce to assist in this responsibility. He described his desire to have a mix of specific talents, as well as a diverse group representing men and women and younger and older participants in this committee. He also identified two individuals not associated with the church but brothers in Christ and excited to participate with Westbrook in Kingdom building.

The Elders offered Tom additional names as potential participants, and tentatively gave the go-ahead to invite non-members and non-Westbrook attenders as members of his "think tank" committee.

Tom also shared some provocative and exciting ideas regarding stewardship that are based on sound biblical principles but a more than just passing the basket on Sunday mornings. The Elder Council was very excited by Tom's commitment to this important role, and the

creativity and enthusiasm he has already brought to him thinking. He sees October as the roll out of a comprehensive plan.

Given Tom's pending back surgery, the Elders spent time in prayer with Tom as he completed his portion of the meeting.

Senior Pastor Update.

Part 1 – Neil described that the Executive Team had met with Scott and reviewed the goals established through the Senior Pastor Evaluation process that was begun in November of 2010. Consistent with those goals, Scott indicated he would be working to create a three to five year ministry plan, introduce a preaching and teaching feedback mechanism.

Senior Pastor Update.

Part 2 – The Elders discussed the staffing changes and issues identified by Scott which would help meet the anticipated shortfall in giving for 2011. This included reduction in staff and in support of Global Outreach missionaries.

It was also recommended that Jeff Feder be given an opportunity to participate as an interim CFO on a non-pay basis to assist us in financial and other issues. There was a consensus that this would be appropriate and Jeff would be given that opportunity.

Understanding the Congregation.

The Elders have been conducting surveys to better gain understanding as to why we have had so many people leave the church, even after a long and oftentimes deep commitment. It was agreed that we send survey information to Pallin, so that Pallin could work together with others to sort the information.

There does seem to be a strong sense that the volunteers must be released to achieve in their areas of giftedness. We continue to have pressure to allow Westbrook to flourish with greater lay person opportunities.

There was a discussion of Life Groups and their very significant role in the church. This fall a second wave of Life Group support will occur.

Scott also discussed his commitment to creating a recovery program at Westbrook and identified ability for Oakwood to step alongside us and an intern who assists in this effort. There was a suggestion that this may not be a priority at this time.