

## October 2018 Council of Elders Meeting Summary

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Department leader staff joined elders for dinner and discussion about “how do you cultivate prayer in your ministry area(s)?”

Financial Secretary David Hoekstra presented a contribution and attendance analysis. Not much has changed as these measures continue to be lower than they were for the past couple of years. The per capita giving for unrestricted and for total (including Always Making Room) are higher than in years past. This is an indicator of maturing disciples.

Treasurer Marc Kole presented his report.

- Total unrestricted gifts ("general or operating fund") for 2018 YTD is approximately \$921,000, or \$101,000 below budgeted levels. Total giving for 2018 is now \$47,000 behind amounts received for the same period of 2017, and \$110,000 behind 2016. September receipts of \$109,700 were \$4,000 below budget for the month, but \$30,000 more than September of 2017. (September 2017 was negatively impacted by the lack of availability of online giving.) September has historically been a rather strong month for unrestricted receipts. This September's total received was the second highest amount during 2018 and slightly more than what was expected. Current forecast of total unrestricted gifts for 2018 shows a projected shortfall of approximately \$165,000 from the approved annual budget.
- Operating expenses are \$186,000 less than budget through the first nine months, with a \$21,300 variance generated in September. The Board-approved expense reduction plan began in April, and has resulted in significant savings, both in September and Year To Date. Approximately half of the positive expense variances have come from the planned reductions in mission partnerships and reserve funding. Unbudgeted staff turnover also continues to generate positive variances. Finally, the remainder of the YTD positive variance is primarily timing-related. The operating deficit of \$13,000 through September is better than budget and 2017 YTD, and is being generated by the giving shortfall.
- Gifts restricted for the building project have totaled \$610,700 for the first nine months, with \$82,000 received during September. Costs related to the building project in 2018 are approx \$1.2 million through September. Total costs of the project are approx \$1.4 million.
- Cash available for operating purposes stands at \$190,000 as of September 30, a decline of \$5,000 from the end of the year, and an increase of \$26,000 from the end of August, primarily due to the lower spend during September. The operating cash balance was \$120,000 as of September 30, 2017.

Marc presented financial management's response to the 2017 auditing committee report. Nothing major was identified, no one is going to jail, some items were clarified, some items were immaterial, some minor process and compliance items were identified and will be addressed.

Properties committee chair Ron Wassenaar presented the 10 year capital expenditure plan based on urgency/priority and cost to assist elders in the budget development this year and planning for future years.

Mike Smith shared that the Always Making Room contingency fund still has about \$100,000. We are now past discovering the major additional costs and are happy the fund is at this size. Now the committee is researching and considering what options are available. A recommendation will come from the building committee to elders.

Doug Purdue and Ram & Tara Aryal requested their memberships with Thornapple come to an end as they affiliate with other churches. Prayers were offered in gratitude for their time among us and for God's blessing in their new church homes.

The congregational meetings were heavy on conversation about the possibility of selling the 3 easternmost lots on Burton St. The conversation is ongoing. New ideas surfaced. The congregation remains split about what to do. The earliest that any action would happen is the February annual meeting.

Pastor Rob shared a document coming out of the elder/staff retreat around the 5 mission priorities. The goal is to shape more concrete and practical actions from the more abstract priorities. The mission language remains helpful: helping people find and follow Jesus Christ.

Pastor Andrew closed with a devotion on kindness, the fifth fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5).